

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 19TH DECEMBER, 2024

REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 20TH NOVEMBER, 2024

“ CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN (REF) –

The Carbon Management Plan 2024 – 2030 had been referred to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration. The Principal Energy and Decarbonisation Officer presented the report and provided a presentation for Members advising that this was the Council’s third Carbon Management Plan, and it was aligned to the five ways of working. The Carbon Management Plan 2024 – 2030 set out the corporate carbon emissions for 2022/23 and activity required to ensure carbon emissions were reduced across all corporate Council activities.

The Plan had been produced collaboratively with key Council service areas and contained actions required by those same service areas to ensure targets were owned by those having direct responsibility for the service area.

Councillor Carroll enquired as to whether the Council would be receiving the £50m proposed to decarbonise across all activities and if the Council did not receive the funding, he asked how the Council envisaged it would raise the money.

The Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer informed Committee that there was no answer to this particular issue at this stage. The £50m highlighted the scale of the issue and the challenge working with suppliers would entail, it was further noted that it was not just a challenge for the Vale Council but for all Local Authorities in Wales. Councillor Carroll said that the reason he posed the question was that the Council had committed itself to be carbon neutral by 2030, and asked whether it be wiser to refocus to 2050? The Operational Manager said that it was important for the Council not to take its eye off the ball and that the Council would continue to aim for 2030 as intended. The Council regularly tried to obtain grants where possible although it acknowledged that it would be a challenge.

The Chair stated that as part of the Committee’s Task and Finish Group work looking at economic principles, face to face meetings had been held with buyers of the Council and she had been extremely impressed with the Housing Team who were working to make the Council properties energy efficient and she wished to offer her thanks to them formally.

Councillor Dr. Johnson said that the target was ambitious and that it was disappointing that the Council was not entirely sure that as much progress could be made by 2030. The Council he said did not appear to be approaching the target at any quick pace although he recognised that it was the lack of funding that was important in this situation. He enquired how the Council was going to prioritise the projects that it was proposing to go ahead with and how it would set about securing

more funding to implement the work. He also said, in his view, the two pie charts did not appear to align and asked for further clarification. In response the officer advised that for Scope 1, this was what the Council was directly responsible for, Scope 2 the Council was not inherently responsible for and for Scope 3 this was the grid and energy that sat within the Council buildings. The Head of Service again commented that the Council was trying to prioritise its resources as best as it could, with Councillor Dr. Johnson stating that the Future Generations funding was actually an issue for Welsh Government and UK Parliament.

Councillor Hanks enquired how many pool cars the Vale used, with the officer advising that 10% of the fleet were electric and that grant applications had been made in September for further electric vans.

Councillor Goodjohn said that he considered that the Council was in a good position in relation to its capital funding although revenue was an issue as was the same for all other Local Authorities in Wales. It was important that the Council forged ahead, however, he commented that with regard to modal shift, suggesting that the Council took the opportunity to encourage its employees to travel to work on any other means as opposed to their cars with it being important that employees used public transport wherever possible. The officer said that e-bikes had been a permanent staff benefit however with regard to business travel usage, she would need further discussions internally before considering the way forward. Councillor Goodjohn was of the view that anything the Council could do to strengthen the long-term arrangements would be a good way forward.

The Chair said that she was positive about the potential that procurement changes could bring. It was important to look at Project Zero although she also asked if the Council was considering the potential issues with regard to CO2 emissions in order to secure the funding. The officer advised that this was an area that the Property Services Department were increasingly looking at and following a query regarding changing behaviours, the officer advised that at the moment the behaviour change had not been qualified.

The Leader, with permission to speak, said that the Vale was one of the first Councils in Wales to declare a Climate Change Emergency and that focusing on 2050 would have been an easy option and in her view it had been the right decision to aim for 2030 although it was ambitious. The Council she said would continue to progress to 2030 and that all Local Authorities were sharing their learning in working in this regard.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T Resolutions (1) and (2) of the Cabinet reference be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet considers focusing its approach to behavioural change as a dedicated work stream and researches the contribution that behavioural change could have on the Council meeting its Net Zero Targets.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.”