

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 19TH DECEMBER, 2024

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

“ CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 18th July, 2024 as contained within the agenda was presented. Cabinet had referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for its consideration. The Operational Manager Property advised that the report provided the Committee with details of the progress made to the 2023-24 Plan against the objectives and additional targets contained within the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2023 to 2028. The report also provided an overview of the work that had been undertaken in relation to property assets and key strategic property projects, notably office accommodation changes. New workstreams and projects had been established to respond to the specific requirements associated with the Reshaping Programme and the emerging budgetary position. The Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) set out the methodology for managing the Council's land and property assets to ensure that they were suitable and sufficient to facilitate the delivery of Council services.

The Plan, which set out a series of objectives with actions and targets associated with each were referred to as below:

Objective 1: To ensure an efficient, effective, and sustainable use of land and buildings to deliver fit for purpose property to support the Council's service delivery;

Objective 2: To identify and pursue opportunities to generate capital receipts and income opportunities from the disposal or lease surplus property;

Objective 3: To ensure that Premises Managers / Duty Holders manage Council assets so that they comply with appropriate statutory, regulatory, and corporate standards, and are maintained to an appropriate level;

Objective 4: To work in partnership and collaborate with other public sector bodies within the Vale of Glamorgan to achieve efficiencies and enhance service delivery.

Appendix A to the report provided Committee with an update to the 2023/24 year in relation to each of the actions' targets associated with the four objectives of the CAMP. The Operational Manager for Property, in presenting to Committee, stated that the way the Council managed its land and property assets had a direct impact on the services it provided and the CAMP sought to ensure that the Council achieved the optimum use of its property assets whilst supporting service delivery across the Council. It was further noted that it was not just about saving money, but also about ensuring that the Council achieved maximum efficiency from its assets and had the right assets in the right place at the right time in order to appropriately support service provision.

Councillor Franks, in commenting on the report, said that he could not see that much progress had been made and enquired in particular about what other schemes the Council was currently pursuing under the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process. The Operational Manager Property advised that the CAT process could take some time as the Council also had to have consultations with applicants with a number of discussions ongoing. The CAT process / guidance was available on the website although it was accepted that this was a long process there were justified reasons why it was important that discussions took place, in particular working with service colleagues to ensure that all the financial implications that were required were reported to Cabinet as appropriate. The process also required any community groups to provide a Stage 2 application if they were invited to do so which could take some time to complete. The Council also undertook the work within the resources and capacity that was available. The officer advised that both the CAT Group and the Council did their best to adhere to the timescales as outlined within the guidance, however, as some CATs were complex this would also have an impact. A review of the process was currently being undertaken by Welsh Government and further updates would be provided to Members as appropriate.

Councillor Dr. Johnson enquired as to how much of the savings that were highlighted within the report the Operational Manager could see happening, in particular with reference to the Dock Offices asset and the Colcot. The Operational Manager said that the Docks Office saving had been slightly delayed, but the Council was working with the Levelling UP Fund (LUF). With regard to the Colcot savings these were currently being reviewed as part of the budget setting process and the Director of Resources advised that he would provide the detailed information to Councillor Dr. Johnson as soon as possible. Currently the department was also working closely with the Social Services Department regarding their relocation to other spaces, even possibly the Civic Offices in due course, it being noted that no action would be taken without Social Services colleagues being involved.

Councillor Hanks enquired as to how much of the Dock Offices was currently occupied, with the Operational Manager advising that it was below 50% occupancy, and that work was being undertaken to move the remaining staff across to the Civic and other locations. It was noted that at the moment the HR department had been decanted within the Civic Offices to accommodate this space and they would be the last ones then to be decamped back as appropriate. It was anticipated that savings in respect of the Dock Offices could be made with future proposals being for a partner to work with the Council when everyone had been decanted.

Having considered the report, it was subsequently.

- (1) T H A T the Cabinet reference and report be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet be requested to consider that where any small parcel of Council land surplus to use and of minimal market value could be earmarked for the benefit of Community organisations to use for growing etc.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) Having considered the reference and following discussions at the meeting.”