

**CABINET**

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 6th March, 2025.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor L. Burnett (Chair); Councillors B.E. Brooks, R.M. Birch, G. John, S.D. Perkes, S. Sivagnanam, E. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Also Present: Councillors G.M. Ball, C. Iannucci-Williams, J. Lynch-Wilson and Dr. I.J. Johnson.

**C271 ANNOUNCEMENT –**

The Leader commenced by advising of some housekeeping issues and advised that the meeting was being livestreamed, recorded and would be uploaded to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting.

**C272 MINUTES –**

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 20th February, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

**C273 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

No declarations of interest were received.

**C274 CAR PARKING (REF) –**

The reference from Special Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 28th January, 2025 was presented.

Councillor Wilson said a thorough debate had taken place at the Scrutiny meeting with a number of issues considered, and thanks were given to those Scrutiny Members, members of the public and Councillors who were not members of the Committee for their participation. The following were proposed as actions to take forward as a result of those discussions.

- Cabinet requested more evidence be gathered concerning Court Road car park prior to any decision being taken regarding its future.
- Cabinet requested more evidence be gathered concerning on-street parking and the matter would be deferred for consideration at a future Cabinet meeting.

- Cabinet would proceed with the decision to charge at Bron y Mor and Cliff Walk coastal car parks, once both had been resurfaced.
- Cabinet would proceed with the decision to charge at Cold Knap coastal car park.
- Proposals concerning two coastal car parks located in the Western Vale at Portabello and West Farm would be subject to consultation with the Dunraven Estate and Ogmere Commoners Association before any charging proposals would be considered.

The reason for charging was to maximise churn and reduce congestion in the proposed areas. Current parking regulations would be replicated in those car parks. Consideration was also being given to the creation of a combined countryside and resort car park season ticket and if taken forward would follow in a future Cabinet report for consideration.

The Leader referred to a Guiding Principles document that had been produced in 2016 where a lot of the detail remained relevant to the current position with car parking in the Vale of Glamorgan, although some updating to reflect the current situation would be required and would be re-considered as part of ongoing evidence gathering. The Cabinet Member's proposals reflected the discussions that had taken place at the Special Scrutiny Committee and the Leader looked forward to matters coming back for Cabinet consideration in the future.

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the comments of the Special Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 28th January, 2025 be noted.
- (2) T H A T the decision to charge at Bron y Mor and Cliff Walk coastal car parks, once both had been resurfaced would proceed.
- (3) T H A T the decision to charge at Cold Knap coastal car park would proceed.
- (4) T H A T proposals concerning two coastal car parks located in the Western Vale at Portabello and West Farm would be subject to consultation with the Dunraven Estate and Ogmere Commoners Association before any charging proposals would be considered.

#### Reason for decisions

(1-4) Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

### **C275 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (REF) –**

The reference from Governance and Audit Committee held on 17th February, 2025 was presented.

The Leader said there was a lot of positive discussion about the Panel Performance Assessment at the meeting and a number of comments made by the Committee for Cabinet to consider in Recommendation (2) of the reference.

- Cabinet agreed that the findings of the assessment demonstrated the values of the organisation, and echoed the thanks passed on to the staff and Elected Members.
- Cabinet agreed that after 15 years of austerity the level of resource and the capacity of local government across Wales had been reduced which forced the Council to take difficult decisions.
- Cabinet agreed that the Council needed to improve public communication, particularly in relation to the decisions being taken, which was a challenge but essential.
- Cabinet agreed that working in collaboration with partners and stakeholders was extremely important.
- Cabinet agreed that it was important for the Council to consider findings of the Audit Wales report around financial sustainability of public bodies in Wales with reference to the difficulties that Councils were facing in terms of medium- and longer-term financial planning. If a move to a multi-year settlement moves forward that would allow for that planning to take place.
- Cabinet would be considering improvements to the Scrutiny function as part of a report later on the meeting agenda.
- There was an intention to increase Community Asset Transfers alongside other partnership working, but detail for each was a matter for discussion with relevant partners.
- Cabinet noted the challenges in improving public engagement in order to have sufficient reach within communities balanced with a need to provide frontline services.
- Cabinet agreed that it was difficult to take certain decisions regarding service delivery.
- Cabinet agreed there was further scope to engage with young people regarding future Panel Performance Assessments.
- Work was already underway to consider areas of partnership working that may not add real value.
- Cabinet agreed that there needed to be increased conversation with Health concerning health related services going forward.
- Cabinet agreed that the Code of Conduct be reflected in spirit as well as in practice and how that was to be enforced would be considered.

Councillor Wilson thanked the Committee for making its comments, in particular in association with the new Corporate Plan and the move to a county wide approach rather than focusing on the Council as an organisation. He added that it was also important to develop the capacity of volunteers going forward.

**RESOLVED – T H A T** the comments of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 17th February, 2025 be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

**C276 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY  
2025/26 AND UPDATE FOR 2024/25 (REF) –**

The reference from Governance and Audit Committee held on 17th February, 2025 was presented.

The Leader referred to the annual Treasury Management briefing that had taken place for Members recently as a crucial area for Members to consider.

Committee noted the report and referred the Treasury Management Policy statement set out in Appendix 3 referred to Cabinet for approval, as well as the proposed 2025/26 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy including the following specific resolutions detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

RESOLVED – T H A T the comments of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 17th February, 2025 be noted alongside the Cabinet report later on the meeting agenda.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

**C277 VALE 2030 - DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN CORPORATE PLAN  
2025-30 (REF) –**

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 19th February, 2025 was presented alongside a Cabinet report later on the meeting agenda.

Committee questioned how the new Corporate Plan would be delivered as well as some of the new ways of working but felt similarly to the Panel Performance Assessment that it was important to be ambitious for both the Council and the communities it served.

Committee requested that the wording within the document in relation to objective 5 relating to goals and in particular those of the Welsh Language and the new customer services strategy be strengthened and clarified, which had been passed on to Officers for action. The report later on the meeting agenda showed that further consideration be given to making the document more user friendly and amendments made to the document that made it clearer what improvements the Council was trying to make.

RESOLVED – T H A T the comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 19th February, 2025 be noted alongside the Cabinet report later on the meeting agenda.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

**C278 INITIAL BUDGET 2025/26 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26 TO 2029/30 PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATION (REF) –**

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 19th February, 2025 was presented.

Committee raised queries regarding the funding formula and whether the Council continued to lobby Welsh Government, as well as consideration of three references from Environment and Regeneration, Homes and Safe Communities and Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committees that had been referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee as the lead Scrutiny Committee for the matter.

There was discussion concerning cost pressures in the report which would be considered fully as part of the budget report and there remained concern about the unplanned use of reserves and the overall shortfall of funds for Local Government as a whole, albeit an improved position against expectations for the current year.

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee commented on the Car Parking matter that had been considered earlier as part of the meeting agenda. They also referred to the Council undertaking an educational piece of work with schoolchildren around the issues of littering prior to summertime and a review and pause of the reduction of bins within the Vale of Glamorgan following the 25% removal, which was an ongoing piece of work.

Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee queried whether Cabinet would take on board comments from the public. The Leader said that the consultation for the budget formed part of the report later on the meeting agenda. Committee also commented that the level of funding to local services and schools was something to be proud of.

Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee asked that lobbying continue around an improved settlement for the Vale of Glamorgan from Welsh Government, which the Leader said had continued at local, regional, Wales and UK levels. The importance of conveying the information contained in the proposals to residents in an understandable format, and to gain resident views effectively was reflected in the consultation results, but the Leader said that Members had access to relevant information and were also able to talk to residents and gather responses.

Councillor Wilson said that whilst the review regarding bins was ongoing, members of the public could contact their local ward Member or C1V with any concerns. The aim of the review was to reduce the amount of domestic rubbish in public bins,

ensure that bins were in the right places and encourage the public not to leave rubbish by bins that were already full and deter fly-tipping.

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the comments of the Environment and Regeneration, Homes and Safe Communities and Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committees that were referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

(2) T H A T the comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 19th February, 2025 be noted.

Reason for decisions

(1&2) Having regard to the contents of the references and discussions at the meetings.

**C279 QUARTER 3 REVENUE MONITORING 2024/25 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report to advise Cabinet of the Quarter 3 Revenue Monitoring position for 2024/25.

Unplanned use of reserves which continued to be a concern was currently projected to be approximately £12.701M and represented continued pressure across a number of services, including school budgets with a number of schools predicting deficits at year end though levels were reducing. School transport and increased demand for Additional Learning Needs were both national matters needing to be addressed.

There were additional pressures in Children’s and Young Peoples services due to demand and complexity of need, though some pressures were able to be mitigated with the establishment of local residential provision.

Generally there had been an improvement across other Council services due to additional income and grant income in-year, including some pay grant funding allocated corporately and to schools, as well as some cost-savings within the Council. There had also been some additional surplus in respect of Council Tax and external borrowing costs. The improved corporate position has been used to increase the amount of reserves set aside to off-set school deficits by a further £2m.

Challenging savings and efficiency targets had been set out for 2024/25 which included a challenging target of £6.7m in corporate savings, with progress against those reflected in the associated Appendix to the report with 77% of savings in-year achieved.

The analysis of reserves reflected the planned draw down for revenue and capital schemes and the unplanned use of reserves would give a year-end balance of £53.4m.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the position with regard to the Authority's 2024/25 Revenue Budget be noted.

(2) T H A T the Quarter 3 Revenue Monitoring 2024/25 be referred to Scrutiny Committees for consideration.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To inform Cabinet of the projected revenue outturn for 2024/25.

(2) To ensure that Scrutiny Committees were updated with regard to the in-year Revenue Monitoring position at Quarter 3.

**C280 CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL TO 31ST DECEMBER, 2024 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –**

The Leader presented the report to advise Cabinet of the progress on the 2024/25 Capital Programme for the period 1st April, 2024 to 31st December, 2024 and to request changes to the Capital Programme.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the progress made on delivering the 2024/25 Capital Programme be noted.

(2) T H A T the use of Delegated Authority as set out in the report be noted.

(3) T H A T the use of Emergency Powers as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

(4) T H A T the following changes to the 2024/25 Capital Programme and future years' Capital Programme be approved:

- Llantwit Major Comprehensive School – Learning Resource Centre – Remove this scheme from the 2024/25 Capital Programme.

- Jenner Primary – External doors and window refurbishment – phase one - Carry forward this scheme budget of £25k into the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Victorian Schools – Replacement of residual cast iron rainwater goods – Carry forward this scheme budget of £30k into the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Jenner Park Primary – Brickwork repairs and damp treatments – Carry forward this scheme budget of £20k into the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Vehicle Replacement Programme – Carry forward £1.558k of this scheme budget to the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Coast Protection and Land Drainage General – Carry forward £125k of this scheme budget to the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Dinas Powys Flood Resilience – Carry forward £500k of this grant funded scheme budget to the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- SPF Murchfield Village Hall Roof – Vire £7k from the St Joseph's PV Panel scheme to this scheme budget in the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- Retaining Wall Windsor Road – Carry forward £300k of this scheme budget into the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Road Safety – A48 Cowbridge Bypass Improvement Scheme – Reduce this grant funded scheme budget by £150k in the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- 20MPH – Reduce this scheme funded by Welsh Government grant by £398k in the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- SPF Brompton Bike docks – Reduce this Shared Prosperity Grant funded scheme budget by £40k in the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- Eastern Shelter and Barry Island Promenade Refresh and ANPR – Carry forward £325k of this scheme budget into the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Housing Improvement Programme – Carry forward £4.983m of this programme into the 2025/26 Capital Programme as detailed in paragraph 2.28.
- Brilliant Basics – Vire £13k from the underspend on the Porthkerry Park Play area refurbishment scheme budget to this scheme in the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- Cosmeston Lakes Country Park – Boardwalk – Vire £5k from the Cosmeston Work scheme budget to this scheme budget in the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- UK Government Shared Prosperity fund – Amend schemes on the 2024/25 Capital Programme under the Shared Prosperity fund in Place as detailed in paragraph 2.18.
- Transforming Towns Grant - Holton Road – Remove this grant funded scheme from the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- Country Park Toilets – Carry forward this scheme budget of £113k to the 2025/26 Capital Programme.
- Empty Homes Grant – Reprofile this scheme in the current and future year's programme as detailed in paragraph 2.30.
- ICT Oracle Archive System – Increase this scheme budget by £15k in the 2024/25 Capital Programme, to be funded by a revenue contribution.
- City Deal – Reprofile this scheme budget as set out in paragraph 2.31.



(5) T H A T the 2024/25 Capital Programme be amended to included new leases arrangements that have been commenced in 2024/25 that meet the threshold for inclusion under IFRS16.

(6) T H A T the Quarter 3 Capital Monitoring 2024/25 be referred to all Scrutiny Committees for consideration.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) To advise Cabinet of the progress on the Capital Programme.
- (2) To advise Cabinet of the use of Delegated Authority.
- (3) To advise Cabinet of the use of Emergency Powers.
- (4) To allow schemes to proceed in the current and future financial years.
- (5) To enable the Council's Accounting to comply with the IFRS16 Leasing standard that has been implemented in 2024/25.
- (6) To ensure that Scrutiny Committees are updated with regard to the in-year Capital Monitoring position at Quarter 3.

### **C281 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2025/26 TO 2029/30 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report to set out final proposals for Cabinet Members to consider, before making their recommendations to Full Council, in respect of the final capital budget for the financial year 2025/26 to 2029/30 and to consider the Capital Strategy for 2025/26.

On 10th February, 2025, Welsh Government (WG) announced the final 2025/26 General Capital Funding settlement which was £7.606m, made up of £4.229m grant and £3.377m of supported borrowing. This was £620k greater than the general capital funding of £6.986m that was allocated for 2024/25.

As no further indication had been received from Welsh Government currently, it has been assumed that from 2026/27 onwards, the level of capital funding would be flatlined at £7.606m and will then remain constant for the remainder of the period of the programme.

The total value of capital schemes over the next five years was £434.229m, including £15.6m for the Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme (excluding the pipeline schemes), £233.8m for the Housing Improvement Programme and £21.785m for the levelling up scheme.

Welsh Government had confirmed that it was making revenue support available to Councils to enable Authorities to consider borrowing to undertake highways works under a Local Government Borrowing Initiative.

The Council was advised in 2023 that it had been awarded grant for the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund totalling £19.785m. Match funding of £2m was required and the Council had entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with UK Government based on the original timeframes. The Levelling Up grant, if approved, would be used to fund the refurbishment of the Docks Offices, the construction of a new Barry Watersports Centre, the development of a new Linear Park, and a Marina and subsequent facilities and infrastructure.

Councillor Wilson welcomed the news concerning highways works under a Local Government Borrowing Initiative.

This was a matter for Executive decision and referral to Full Council.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T Cabinet recommend to Full Council that the Capital Strategy 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

(2) T H A T Cabinet recommend to Full Council that the final Capital Programme for the years 2025/26 to 2029/30 as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.

(3) T H A T Cabinet recommend to Full Council that Officers have the authority to vire £10k or below between schemes that were already approved within the five year Capital Programme.

(4) T H A T Cabinet recommends to Full Council that the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, be given delegated authority to make additions, deletions or transfers to or from the:

- i. 2025/26 to 2029/30 Housing Improvement Programme as appropriate.
- ii. 2025/26 to 2029/30 Asset Renewal budgets as appropriate.
- iii. S106 funded schemes subject to Member consultation as required under the existing process.
- iv. Decarbonisation Schemes.
- v. Building Strong Communities Fund schemes.
- vi. Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.
- vii. Discretionary Adaption Grant Schemes.
- viii. Vale Regeneration Schemes.
- ix. Shared Prosperity Fund.

(5) T H A T the use of the urgent decision procedure as set out in Section 15.14 of the Council's Constitution be granted to enable the Capital Strategy 2025/26 and

Final Capital Programme Proposals 2025/26 to 2029/30 to be considered by Full Council on 10th March, 2025.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To approve the Capital Strategy for 2025/26.
- (2) To set and approve future capital programmes to 2029/30.
- (3) To enable officers to progress schemes more quickly where low value virements below £10k were required.
- (4) To enable the Housing Capital budget, Asset Renewal budgets, S106 schemes, Decarbonisation Schemes, Building Stronger Communities Fund, Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, Discretionary Adaption Grant Schemes, Vale Regeneration schemes and Shared Prosperity Fund to be managed effectively.
- (5) To allow the Capital Strategy 2025/26 and Final Capital Programme Proposals 2025/26 to 2029/30 to be referred to Full Council on 10th March, 2025 for consideration and approval.

**C282 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2025/26 AND UPDATE FOR 2024/25 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report, considered alongside the reference on the meeting agenda, to provide an interim report on the Council's Treasury Management operations for the period 1st April to 31st December, 2024 and to submit for consideration the proposed 2025/26 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Policy.

The report had been updated since considered by Governance and Audit Committee on 6th January, 2025 as the final budget settlement had been announced by Welsh Government which included additional grants towards the Housing Revenue Account Improvement Program as well as changes to leasing figures in relation to IFRS16.

The report also considered capital expenditure and Council borrowing which was currently in an under-borrowed position. With regards to the Investment Strategy, the primary purpose of any surplus was to protect the principal sum.

This was a matter for Executive decision and referral to Full Council.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

## RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the Treasury Management interim report for the period 1st April to 31st December, 2024 be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet recommend that Full Council approve the revised policy for making Minimum Revenue Provision from 2024/25 onwards.
- (3) T H A T the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to amend the prudential indicators for 2024/25 in respect of other long term liabilities to enable the timely implementation of IFRS16.
- (4) T H A T Cabinet recommend that Full Council approve the proposed 2025/26 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy including the following specific resolutions (detailed in Appendix 2).
- The Authorised Limit for External Debt be set at £265.394m for 2024/25, £296.207m for 2025/26, £331.078m for 2026/27 and £381.753m for 2027/28.
  - The Operational Boundary for External Debt be set at £244.170m for 2024/25, £263.914m for 2025/26, £297.677m for 2026/27 and £347.407m for 2027/28.
  - The Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority within the total Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary as estimated for individual years to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long-term liabilities.
  - An upper limit of £0m for 2024/25, £10m in 2025/26, £10m in 2026/27 and £10m in 2027/28 be set for total principal sums invested for over 364 days.
  - The amount of projected borrowing that was fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that was fixed rate be set as shown below (and further detailed in Appendix 1).

Table 1 – Upper and lower Limits for fixed rate borrowing

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
Under 12 months	20%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	40%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	40%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	40%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

- Any breaches of the Prudential Indicators would be reported through to the next meeting of Cabinet, with the exception of the Authorised Limit for External Debt which would require prior Full Council approval.
- (5) T H A T the Prudential Indicators set out in Appendices 1 and 2 be approved.
- (6) T H A T Cabinet recommend that Full Council approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement set out in Appendix 3.
- (7) T H A T use of the urgent decision procedure as set out in Section 15.14 of the Council's Constitution be approved in order for the Treasury Management and

Investment Strategy 2025/26 and Update for 2024/25 to be considered by Full Council on 10th March, 2025.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To present the Treasury Management Interim Report.
- (2) To agree the basis of the Minimum Revenue Provision calculation for 2024/25 onwards.
- (3) To enable the timely implementation of IRFS16.
- (4) In order for the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy as prepared be approved as required by the Local Government Act 2003.
- (5) In order for the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy as prepared be approved as required by the Local Government Act 2003.
- (6) In order for the Treasury Management Policy Statement to be approved.
- (7) To allow the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2025/26 and Update for 2024/25 to be referred to Full Council on 10th March, 2025 for consideration and approval.

**C283 DRAFT BUDGET 2025/26 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26 TO 2029/30 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –**

The Leader presented the report to put forward draft proposals for the Budget 2024/25 and outline the financial position across the medium term 2024/25 to 2028/29 for approval by Full Council on 10th March, 2025.

The Leader passed on thanks to everyone who had participated in the four-week consultation period, including from all Scrutiny Committees and individual responses.

Welsh Government recognised the pressures being felt by all Local Authorities and the Provisional Settlement of 3.3% in December 2024 was more than the anticipated 1%, but Councils continued to lobby for a funding floor at 4.3%. The Final Welsh Government Settlement was made on Thursday 20th February and included an extra 0.5% for the Vale of Glamorgan as well as an additional £30m announced nationally for social care Pathways of Care Transition grant and the Highways Management Local Authority Borrowing Initiative.

Council Tax was low in the Vale of Glamorgan with the 2024/25 Council Tax at 5.63% below the Welsh Average, but that had to be balanced against issues such as the cost of living crisis and such an increase to that extent was not under consideration.

A Council Tax increase of 5.9% was proposed for 2025/26, down from the initial 6.9% proposal as a result of the additional funding that had been received and as

previously stated would be revisited should additional funding become available to bring Council Tax down or invest in services.

This was a matter for Executive decision and referral to Full Council.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the updated financial position be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet recommended that Full Council approve a Council Tax increase of 5.9%
- (3) T H A T Cabinet recommended that Full Council approve the budget for 2025/26.
- (4) T H A T the forecasts across the medium term to 2029/30 and the approach to deliver sustainable finances be noted.
- (5) T H A T the amendments to Fees & Charges presented for approval in January following further review, consultation and the views of Scrutiny as set out in paragraphs 2.120 to 2.128 be noted.
- (6) T H A T the realigned reserves which sought to match the risks the Council now faced and the comments of the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer on the adequacy of reserves and robustness of estimates in paragraphs 2.135 to 2.145 be noted.
- (7) T H A T the ongoing review of reserves focusing on service commitments and spend against all reserves to require prior Senior Leadership Team approval be noted.
- (8) T H A T the arrangements put in place to ensure the delivery of the £8.771m savings programme and ensure the management and mitigation of those cost pressures not awarded be noted.
- (9) T H A T use of the urgent decision procedure as set out in Section 15.14 of the Council's Constitution be approved in order for the Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30 to be considered by Full Council on 10th March, 2025.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) It was important for Cabinet to be regularly appraised of the Council's medium term financial position.
- (2) Setting the annual rate of Council Tax was a key policy decision for Council.

- (3) Setting a balanced budget was a statutory responsibility and decision for Full Council.
- (4) Sustainability was one of the fundamental principles of the Financial Strategy.
- (5) To confirm fees and charges for 2025/26.
- (6) The review of the reserves was one of the fundamental principles of the Financial Strategy and given that the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer had a statutory duty to comment on the adequacy of reserves and robustness of estimates.
- (7) Social Care demand and school spending posed significant risk to the Council's reserves and additional controls were required to protect them to support wider risks and transformation of services.
- (8) To ensure all savings could be delivered in full for 2025/26 and also that the unawarded cost pressures did not come forward as overspends.
- (9) To allow the Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30 to be referred to Full Council on 10th March, 2025 for consideration and approval.

**C284 VALE 2030 - DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report to enable Cabinet to consider the revised draft Corporate Plan 2025-30, Vale 2030 post consultation.

The Leader said that there had been a lot of discussion across the consultation process and thanked everyone who had contributed as part of that process.

It was deliberate to go through the Panel Performance Assessment while the Vale 2030 Plan was being developed as the feedback from the independent Panel provided an extra dimension for consideration and helped inform the five Vale 2030 Objectives.

The feedback from the Panel Performance Assessment was detailed in paragraph 2.24 of the report as well as in the reference from Governance and Audit Committee.

The Leader advised that Appendices D (Executive Summary) and E (Plan on a Page) had not been published along with the other report papers initially but had subsequently been published on the website and circulated to Members and would form part of the report for consideration at Full Council.

Councillor Williams said there had been considerable consultation on the Vale 2030 Plan. With regards Social Services, demand for services was increasing but available budget which led to difficult decisions being taken. The Plan was constructive and identified areas where the Council had improved but needed to be

promoted more widely. Officers have already taken on board that related actions from the Plan fit in with the needs of residents and was a matter of discussion at a recent Corporate Prenting Panel meeting.

Councillor Wilson referred to Section 4 of the Plan which referred to 'Our Well-being Objectives – Delivering Vale 2030' which showed that the Council had listened to the outcomes of surveys and related objectives.

The Leader also referred to Page 21 of the Plan which laid out the Council's contract with partners as part of 'Our Commitment to those Working with us.'

This was a matter for Executive decision and referral to Full Council.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T Vale 2030, the updated draft Corporate Plan (Appendix A), the consultation feedback report (Appendix B), the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix C), the Executive Summary (Appendix D) and the Plan on a Page (Appendix E) be noted.
- (2) T H A T the comments from discussion of Vale 2030, the revised draft Corporate Plan by the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th February, 2025 be noted.
- (3) T H A T Vale 2030, the draft Corporate Plan (Appendix A) be endorsed and the report, Appendices be referred to Full Council on 10th March, 2025 for consideration and approval.
- (4) T H A T use of the urgent decision procedure as set out in Section 15.14 of the Council's Constitution be approved in order for the final Corporate Plan to be referred to Full Council on 10th March, 2025 for consideration and approval.
- (5) T H A T Cabinet endorsed and recommended to Full Council that delegated authority be given to the Director of Corporate Resources in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources to make any factual updates to the content of the Plan prior to publication (for example, information relating to budgetary information).

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) To enable Cabinet to consider Vale 2030 – the revised Corporate Plan, consultation feedback and the Equality Impact Assessment and the Executive Summary of the Plan and Plan on a Page.
- (2) To enable Cabinet to consider the comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee as part of its consideration of the Plan.



- (3) To ensure that Vale 2030, the Corporate Plan could be presented to Full Council in March for consideration and approval.
- (4) To allow Vale 2030, the Corporate Plan to be referred to Full Council on 10th March, 2025 for consideration and approval.
- (5) To ensure Vale 2030, the Corporate Plan when published contained the most up to date information available (for example information regarding the budget for 2025-26).

## **C285            RESHAPING SCRUTINY(EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report to provide Cabinet with an overview of the principles of Reshaping Scrutiny and sought endorsement to progress the work further.

Scrutiny Committees in Councils in Wales were legislated for under the Local Government Act 2000. The Act introduced the requirement for Councils to establish Overview and Scrutiny Committees to hold the Executive to account and improve transparency and accountability in Local Government, however, the number of meetings per year and reports that Scrutiny were dealing with often hindered that accountability.

An audit of Scrutiny work over the last year highlighted that across 40 meetings held by the Committees during that period that, of the 163 items on the agenda, there were a number of items simply for noting. The Vale of Glamorgan Council had talented, intelligent Members with a wealth of experience and expertise that needed to be harnessed in order to fully tackle issues.

A further consideration was how the public were able to engage with Scrutiny and whether that was effective, or sometimes better placed as part of task and Finish work or Scrutiny enquiries. The Panel Performance Assessment also stated that there was greater value to be gained from Scrutiny in the Vale of Glamorgan.

There as a proposal as to how Scrutiny Committees could fit with the current objectives in Vale 2030 and how work would be taken forward in future, e.g. separate briefings or separate meetings to shape a Policy before it was determined.

Alongside the scheduled group Member sessions on the 12th and 13th March, the Leader said that Members were also able to attend Scrutiny Committees should they wish to do so.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

## RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the existing Scrutiny arrangements and their effectiveness in meeting desired aims, based upon feedback provided from a range of stakeholders be noted.
- (2) T H A T the proposed principles and approaches identified as part of Reshaping Scrutiny in supporting the delivery of the Council's new Corporate Plan be endorsed.
- (3) T H A T the hosting of further Member engagement sessions by Officers be approved to provide an overview of the proposals and offer Members the opportunity to participate in the design of any proposed changes.
- (4) T H A T the scheduled group Member sessions on the 12th and 13th March, 2025 be noted.
- (5) T H A T the report be referred to the Democratic Services Committee; the Governance and Audit Committee; and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.
- (6) T H A T a further report be presented to Cabinet on conclusion of the above and prior to consideration by Full Council.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To enable the Council to assess whether Scrutiny Committees were fully and effectively fulfilling their functions for both Members and residents in shaping policy direction.
- (2) To help ensure that Scrutiny Committees were effectively fulfilling their functions, enhancing the Council's ability to achieve its strategic goals and objectives, delivering high-quality services to residents, and to allow for the dedication of resources to continue the design of future scrutiny arrangements in collaboration with Officers and Members.
- (3) To maximise opportunities for Members to participate in shaping any proposed changes and ensure they have a voice in any potential changes to the Scrutiny function.
- (4) To ensure that Cabinet were aware of the upcoming group Member sessions, which were designed to provide an overview of the proposals and offer Members the opportunity to participate in the design of any proposed changes, crucial for informed decision-making and active participation.
- (5) To ensure that the proposals and findings within the report were thoroughly reviewed and considered by the relevant Committees, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation and input from various perspectives, essential for informed decision-making and effective governance.

(6) To provide Cabinet with updated information and progress on the proposals, the most current insights to make informed decisions, enabling Cabinet to consider the proposed implementation and impact of any proposed changes.

**C286 FUNDING AND DELIVERY OF THE GREENLINKS COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICE (DL/SP) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –**

The Deputy Leader presented the report to agree the continuation of Sustainable Transport Planning Contributions (Section 106 funding) for the Greenlinks Community Transport Service until 31st March, 2026 if alternative funding sources could not be found.

It was acknowledged that the service had picked up post-pandemic, largely due to the work of the Transport Officer appointed in March 2024, but was not as yet back to pre-pandemic levels. The donation of two electric vehicles to the service helped the Council work towards its Project Zero targets.

Councillor John praised the Greenlinks service as an asset for the people of the Vale of Glamorgan, especially for those in the Western Vale in villages where there was no alternative service.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

**RESOLVED –**

(1) T H A T the Greenlinks Community Transport Service continued to be funded by Section 106 Sustainable Transport Contributions until March 2026 should other sources of funding not be available.

(2) T H A T should the Section 106 contributions be required, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services and Head of Sustainable Development, be granted delegated authority to agree the sources of funding, in instances where use of that funding for Greenlinks would be consistent with the terms of the Section 106 agreement.

(3) T H A T a further report be presented to Cabinet later in 2025 once other sources of funding to run the service and potentially purchase a new replacement electric minibus have been explored.

**Reasons for decisions**

(1) To continue to provide a flexible means of passenger transport for those who could not easily access other forms of public transport in a cost effective and reliable manner as part of the local bus network across the Vale of Glamorgan.

(2). To ensure Section 106 sustainable transport contributions, if required, could be allocated to the Greenlinks budget in a timely manner.

(3) To allow other sources of funding such as the Shared Prosperity Fund and Welsh Government grant to be considered to fund the service longer term and to assist in the purchase of a replacement vehicle.

**C287 LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES AT COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE SITES (DL/SP) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –**

The Deputy Leader presented the report to seek authorisation to licence a pilot, on water leisure activity in Cosmeston Country Park.

The Council had been approached by a leisure operator who would like to explore the opportunity of using part of the eastern lake at Cosmeston Country Park for water-based activities from May 2025 through to September 2025 to test the suitability of the location. The proposal would be a pilot project and the matter would come back to Cabinet for consideration at the conclusion of the pilot.

Local ward Members were consulted on the proposals and three responses were received, regarding

- concern for the ecology, ornithology and biodiversity;
- noting that the proposal was for the summer and not over the winter period;
- potential for noise pollution for local residents;
- safety of users of the water activity equipment.

The Deputy Leader said that the concerns of the local Members would be shared with relevant staff and the provider, considered during the pilot scheme and would form part of the report back to Cabinet at the conclusion of the pilot.

The Deputy Leader proposed an additional Recommendation that on conclusion of the pilot, the matter for any future use be considered as part of an update report to Cabinet.

Councillor John said that people seemed to visit certain areas as there was a purpose or an attraction, and the proposal was an opportunity to pilot the leisure opportunity before reporting back to Cabinet after its conclusion in September. He understood there were concerns, but the proposal was only a pilot at this stage.

Councillor Wilson welcomed the pilot and that it remained to be seen if it would be successful. He felt the use of CCTV would be a benefit, that the site would be well managed between the Council and the operator and hoped that younger people who wanted to make better use of Cosmeston would utilise the water activity equipment and make them more confident in and around water. He looked forward to the pilot and subsequent feedback being reported to Cabinet, as well as the views of Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

The Leader also acknowledged that concerns had been raised concerning risk-taking behaviour over the summer period at Cosmeston on the environmental and conservation areas of the lake. Young people had told the Council what leisure activities they would like to see and there was an opportunity to pilot an activity that they have said they would want and would be on the non-conservation area of the lake.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T Cabinet agreed to pilot an on-water aqua leisure activity with a third-party operator (for a maximum of 20 weeks through late spring and summer from May 2025 through to September 2025) as a water-based leisure opportunity on the eastern lake at Cosmeston Country Park with terms aimed at minimising any impact on the general visitors and users of the park and in a suitable location to minimise any impact on those areas of nature conservation.

(2) T H A T the Director of Place be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chief Executive, Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance/S151 Officer, Operational Manager (Property) and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places, to agree fees/charges, terms and conditions for new the pilot leisure use with the operator and to authorise the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into the appropriate legal agreements on behalf of the Council in that regard.

(3) T H A T the report be referred to Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 11th March, 2025 for their consideration.

(4) T H A T Officers investigate tourism and commercial opportunities regarding the Medieval Village buildings and report further to Cabinet.

(5) T H A T on conclusion of the pilot, the matter for any future use be considered as part of an update report to Cabinet.

#### Reasons for decisions

(1) To increase opportunities for leisure activities in lower impact areas to support the wider provision of green and blue space and secure future income to support the costs of running Countryside facilities.

(2) To allow commercial arrangements to be identified and agreed on a pilot basis for the summer of 2025.

(3) In order that the Scrutiny Committee could consider the report prior to any final agreement with the relevant Leisure operators which would be required by

1st April, 2025.

- (4) To promote opportunities for sustainable tourism and realise income opportunities.
- (5) To consider the matter on conclusion of the pilot before deciding any further future similar use.

**C288            AUDIT WALES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE OF THE PLANNING SERVICE-PLANNING PROTOCOL, PLANNING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, AND AMENDED SCHEME OF DELEGATION (CEERS) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –**

The Cabinet Member proposed to Cabinet an updated Planning Protocol, Planning Committee Terms of Reference and amended Scheme of Delegation, and sought approval to report to Full Council, via Governance and Audit Scrutiny Committee a response to Audit Wales recommendations.

Councillor Sivagnanam said that the review conducted over the summer in 2023 had been in-depth and thorough and was a generally positive review. Recommendations were made concerning governance and that an amended Planning Protocol, Planning Committee Terms of Reference, and Amended Scheme of Delegation was proposed.

Following consultation, the Protocol had been updated to reflect the modern Planning system and processes that affected decision-making, as well as making the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders clearer. There was also updated advice on what would happen in the event of Planning Committee resolving against Officer Recommendations.

Councillor Williams said that as a member of the Planning Committee he was pleased that the Protocol explained the role of a Planning Member and that there were clear requirements for Planning Members and the constituents they represented.

Councillor Sivagnanam said that the Planning process could be complex and it was important to make those process known and accessible for the quasi-judicial Committee. Members of that Committee need to be aware and reminded of their duties when taking decisions.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) T H A T the attached Planning Protocol, Terms of Reference and Amendments to the Scheme of Delegation (Appendices B, C and D) be endorsed.

(2) T H A T the report and appendices be referred to Governance and Audit Committee for their consideration, prior to being referred to Full Council for approval of the three appended documents.

(3) In the event that Governance and Audit Committee proposed any changes to the appended documents, those changes be referred back to Cabinet for consideration, prior to reporting to Full Council.

(4) T H A T the Head of Sustainable Development be authorised to agree the final format of and any necessary minor typographical changes prior to its publication/incorporation into the Constitution.

(5) T H A T the recommendation for performance measures and targets to be included in future service/directorate plans be endorsed.

#### Reasons for decisions

(1) To provide for scrutiny of the findings of the Audit Wales review of the Planning Service's governance arrangements.

(2) To provide for scrutiny of the findings of the Audit Wales review of the Planning Service's governance arrangements.

(3) To provide for scrutiny of the findings of the Audit Wales review of the Planning Service's governance arrangements and to ensure that any issues raised by Governance and Audit Scrutiny Committee were given due consideration by Cabinet.

(4) To ensure the timely progression of the response to the Audit Wales recommendations.

(5) To ensure the Council responded appropriately and implemented areas of improvement as identified by Audit Wales, to strengthen governance of the Planning service.