

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
19TH DECEMBER, 2019

REFERENCE FROM ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 17TH DECEMBER, 2019

“ INITIAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROPOSALS 2020/21 TO 2024/25 AND
CAPITAL MONITORING 2019/20 (DEH) –

The Principal Account presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the progress of the Capital Programme for 2019/20 and to submit for consultation the Initial Capital Programme Proposals for 2020/21.

Appendix 1 to the report detailed financial progress on the Capital Programme as at 30th September, 2019.

At the time that the report had been produced, the Provisional General Capital Funding for 2020/21 had not yet been announced by Welsh Government (WG). At the meeting, the Principal Accountant stated that on 16th December 2019, WG had provided its draft budget settlement and stated that an amount of £6.796m would be allocated to the Vale of Glamorgan Council for Capital projects. This was around £500k more than previous projections.

Appendix 2 to the report set out the Initial Proposals for the Capital Programme between 2020/21 and 2024/25 relating to this Committee.

New capital bids were invited for return by 27th September, 2019 and the number of bids received were 41 (3 from Learning and Skills, 21 from Neighbourhood and Transport Services, 4 from Managing Director and Resources, 12 from Regeneration and Planning and 1 from Social Services). Departments were requested to rank and assess their own bids in order of importance before submission and bids from each Department were forwarded to the Insight Board for evaluation.

The value of capital bids received for the Council as a whole totalled £6.973m in 2020/21 and £20.473m over the five year period. While the evaluation process had been carried out this year for all capital bids in the normal manner, the settlement for 2020/21 had not been confirmed. It was therefore proposed that at this point, due to the uncertainty in the level of funding that would be provided, no schemes would be approved for inclusion in the Capital Programme and further assessment would be carried out by the Budget Working Group once the level of funding was known and consultation had taken place.

A list of all the capital bids received relating to this Committee was shown in Appendix 3 to the report and the Principal Accountant stated that these were ranked in order of priority sub categorised between the two Service areas. The largest bid related to Carriageway resurfacing/Surface treatments, for which a bid of £12.250m had been made for the period 2020/21 to 2024/25. This represented over £2m per year. The Principal Accountant advised that Welsh Government had indicated it would no longer allocate funding for this from 2020/21, so next year would be the last year that funding would be provided.

An allocation for Asset Renewal had currently been included in Appendix 2 over the five year period of the programme. Asset Renewal budgets for each Directorate would be reviewed and schemes would be identified prior to the approval of the Final Capital Proposals for 2020/21 to ensure that funding was allocated to priority schemes.

There had been a number of changes approved by Cabinet since the final budget proposals 2019/20 to 2023/24 were approved in February 2019. These changes including capital sums carried forward had been included in Appendix 2.

The next stage was for the estimates to be submitted to Scrutiny Committees for consultation. Each Scrutiny Committee would be asked to first consider the Initial Capital Programme proposals as shown in Appendix 2 and to make any recommendations for changes and to consider the capital bids shown in Appendix 3. If changes were requested or particular bids were supported, then the reasons needed to be recorded in order to assist the Cabinet and the Budget Working Group in drawing up the final proposals. Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee was the lead Scrutiny Committee and would consider both the Initial Capital Budget Proposals and any recommendations that other Scrutiny Committees made. The responses of Scrutiny Committees must be made no later than 19th December, 2019.

Managers would be asked to revisit the recommended schemes contained in the final proposals prior to presentation to Cabinet and to confirm final costs and spend profiles.

Currently, the approved timetable required Cabinet to approve the final budget proposals by no later than 3rd February, 2020 and that Cabinet's final Capital Programme proposals would be considered by Council at a meeting to be held on 24th February, 2020 to enable the Council Tax to be set by 11th March, 2020.

A Committee Member commented that there was no information in relation to the WelTAG Stage 2 transport studies for Dinas Powys. In reply, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport stated that funding for this had been set aside as a reserve and not included in the Capital programme.

In reply to a query regarding the new Council Camera Car to monitor parking infringements, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport stated that new funding of £70k had been allocated to purchase a vehicle, which would be operated by the Enforcement Team. The Committee noted that a report on the role and

structure of the Enforcement Team would be provided over the forthcoming months and Members would be given opportunity to see the car in person.

A Committee Member referred to money allocated for bus shelters and queried whether Colcot Road was a 'primary route'. The Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport stated that the Council had been successful in a bid to Welsh Government for improvements along the A48, and money had also been set aside for Port Road. She stated that she would look at the shelter on Colcot Road.

With regard to the reduction in funding for Carriageway resurfacing/Surface treatments, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport stated an amount of £2.5m had been allocated this year. After 2020/21, Welsh Government would no longer be providing funding, so this could mean a reduction of £1m. It had been recognised that £2.5m was required to maintain roads at the current standards. The Committee therefore agreed that this needed to be emphasised with Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDED –

T H A T the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet, for emphasis to be given to bid NST1 - Carriageway resurfacing/Surface treatments, which should be successful in order to maintain roads to an acceptable standard and because resurfacing is recognised as a major challenge as standards could deteriorate very quickly.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the impact of a reduction in Welsh Government funding for Carriageway resurfacing/Surface treatments and the importance to maintain road surface standards.”