

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 17th November 2021.

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

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

Present: Councillor M.R. Wilson (Chair); Councillor P. Drake (Vice-Chair); Councillors G.D.D. Carroll, G.A. Cox, V.P. Driscoll, G. John, Dr. I.J. Johnson, and S. Sivagnanam.

Also present: Councillors N. Moore (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), L. Burnett (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration) and P.G. King (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport).

553 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

554 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors R. Crowley and J.W. Thomas.

555 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 21st October, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

556 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

557 DRAFT WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION STRATEGY (REF) –

The report from Cabinet on 8th November, 2021 had been included within the agenda, however, as the reference had been unable to be included within the agenda at the time at despatch this had subsequently been uploaded to the website and circulated to the Committee prior to the Scrutiny meeting.

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation, in presenting the report, advised that the Welsh Language Standards (Standards 145 and 146) required Local Authorities to:

- produce and publish a five-year Strategy setting out how they intended to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of Welsh more widely in their area;
- include a target for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in the area by the end of the five-year period;
- include a statement explaining how the organisation intended to reach that target;
- review the Strategy and publish a revised version of it on the website within five years of the date of publication of the strategy (or the date of publication of a revised version of it);
- after five years, assess the extent to which the Council had followed that Strategy and met the target it had set;
- publish the assessment on the website, showing the number of Welsh speakers in the Local Authority's area, and the age of those speakers;
- note in the assessment a list of activities arranged or funded by them to promote the Welsh language during the previous five years.

Appendix A to the report provided an assessment of the 2017-22 Promotion Strategy and a draft of a new five-year strategy for the 2022-27 period. The report sought Cabinet approval to consult on the documents in order to inform and finalise the 2022-27 Promotion Strategy and to inform the development of an action plan to pursue its commitments.

Mr. David Thomas, External Consultant, had been engaged to undertake the assessment and was present at the meeting. Mr. Thomas informed Committee that the actions within the future five-year Strategy for the Vale of Glamorgan should mirror the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022 – 2032. The Consultant drew Committee's attention to one of the Standards around whether a Local Authority had increased or maintained its number of Welsh speakers. Mr. Thomas advised Committee that the Vale had maintained the figures over the years but noted that pupil figures had increased by 11%. He also mentioned that in his view the Council was underselling itself on the work it had undertaken to date. The Action Plan would also be key to the work going forward and would be developed over the coming months. It was noted that an 8-week consultation was to take place with the intention that a further report be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in the new year.

During the consideration of the report the Chair requested that a table of data be provided in future documentation referring to the number of Welsh speakers in deprivation areas. The Chair also suggested that Early Years Education was also important in promoting the Welsh language and that such promotion could also be enhanced via social media and that the need to include encouraging conversational Welsh within the business community within the Action Plan.

Councillor Dr. Johnson commented that in his view it was also important to have a sense of fun, humanity and interaction to encourage and develop the Welsh

language within communities. The importance of reflecting real life experiences and how people lived their lives through the medium of Welsh was considered to be an essential element for the Action Plan.

Councillor Sivagnanam echoed the importance of consulting with communities and requested that further information and the perspectives of English speaking families who had moved into the area and who had placed children in Welsh Medium Schools be reflected in the work.

The External Consultant drew attention to the fact that the latest Census information when available would also be included in the Strategy as well as the need for case studies to be incorporated. He was due to attend a Forum meeting on 22nd November, 2021 and would seek to obtain such information from that arena.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the reference, report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T Cabinet be informed of the comments of the Committee as part of the consultation process.
- (2) T H A T a further report and accompanying Action Plan be presented to the Scrutiny Committee following the consultation period.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To ensure that the comments of the Committee are included within the consultation report.
- (2) In order that the Committee can consider the matter further following the consultation.

558 PROJECT ZERO – DELIVERING THE CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE PLAN (REF) –

The reference from the Cabinet meeting on 25th October, 2021 was presented to the Scrutiny Committee as contained within the agenda.

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation commenced by advising that the report detailed the proposed governance arrangements for Project Zero and that a Board had been established to take forward the Climate Change Challenge Plan.

Councillor Carroll, during the discussion, queried the impact of Project Zero on Council housing in the Vale and in response the Head of Service advised that he was aware that a significant amount of work had been undertaken under the WHQS however, he would seek specific detailed information on this aspect and forward it to Members. The Leader of the Council, with permission to speak, advised that the

Council was committed to Zero Net, Zero Use housing and that plans were currently being put together albeit that planning permission may also have to be sought.

Councillor John referred to a recent meeting he had attended in Llantwit Major where a number of interesting ideas had been put forward by local residents, he however, recognised the need to ensure that everyone was moving in the same direction and had encouraged and advised interested parties to contact the Vale Council for advice before going any further.

Councillor Cox enquired as to whether the Project Board would be inviting experts in various fields to assist in the process and whether a two-way feed back process would be established with Town and Community Councils in the Vale. In response, the Head of Service informed Committee that expertise would be invited and referred to examples of work currently being undertaken in relation to electric charging points and work with Welsh Government's Energy Service.

Having regard to Town and Community Councils the Head of Service stated there was a commitment to community leadership in the Plan and following agreement with the Leader of the Council (which was given at the meeting) the Council would ensure that regular updates were provided to Town and Community Councils via the Cabinet reports in order that the matter could be placed on their agendas for consideration.

Councillor King, with permission to speak, drew attention to the proposed acquisition of small electric cars (via the CCRD (City Deal)) that could be hired by people to trial which he considered to be a really good opportunity.

The Chair suggested that it would be beneficial if updates could be provided on the Council's website to advise of progress and to raise public awareness of the work being undertaken and that the Third Sector be also included.

The Chair also further suggested that an emphasis should be placed on reuse as well as recycling and that consideration be given to retrofitting houses.

The Deputy Leader, with permission to speak, stated that one of the issues for the Council was in relation to people having the right skills to address some of the aspirations.

In conclusion, the Head of Service informed Committee that he would reflect all the comments and the suggestions of the Committee in the Action Plan with it subsequently being

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the resolutions of Cabinet be supported.
- (2) T H A T further progress updates on Project Zero and the Action Plan be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at a minimum of three times per year.

Reasons for recommendations

(1&2) Having regard to discussions at the meeting.

559 THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN (ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS) ORDER 2021 (ERO) –

The Electoral Registration Officer commenced by advising that following completion of a programme of electoral arrangement reviews of each County / County Borough Council in Wales, the Local Democracy Boundary Commission for Wales (“the Commission”) submitted all 22 of its Final Recommendations Reports to the Welsh Minister for Finance and Local Government for consideration.

A number of associated Orders had also been made by Welsh Government including The County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan (Electoral Arrangements) Order 2021 (“the Order”) made on 11 October 2021 which was attached at Appendix A to the report.

It was noted that the revised electoral arrangements would come into force on 5th May, 2022, in readiness for the 2022 Local Elections, at which point the current electoral wards would be abolished. As a consequence of the Order a number of Polling Districts would be within different electoral wards and a number of Polling District reference changes had been necessary and these were detailed at Appendix B and C to the report. It was also noted that the Polling District references would also apply to Community Wards and that Town and Community Council boundaries would remain unchanged by the Order with the Community Review for the Vale of Glamorgan to be held in 2023.

The Electoral Registration Officer drew attention to the list of polling districts advising that the reference to JGO at Appendix C was an error and should be deleted.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan (Electoral Arrangements) Order 2021 (“the Order”) attached at Appendix A to the report be noted.

(2) T H A T the consequential electoral ward boundaries be noted, and that Cabinet be recommended to approve the revisions to the Polling Districts as detailed at Appendix B to the report.

(3) T H A T Cabinet be requested to note the reference to the Polling Districts as detailed at Appendix C subject to the deletion of the reference to the polling district JGO as this was a typographical error.

(4) T H A T the report be referred to Cabinet and Council for consideration and for reference to the Community Liaison Committee and all Town and Community Councils within the Vale of Glamorgan.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) Having regard to the contents of the report and in order to refer the matter to Cabinet and Council for consideration and approval of the Polling Districts detailed in Appendix B.
- (3) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (4) In order that Cabinet and Council are sighted on the Order, the associated electoral ward boundaries, and the reference changes to the Polling Districts; and that the Community Liaison Committee and all Town and Community Councils are apprised of the same.

560 POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS: MINI-REVIEW (RO/ERO) –

A mini-review of Polling Places and Stations had been undertaken with consideration given to feedback from Presiding Officers and representations made by stakeholders following the Senedd and Police and Crime Commissioner Elections in May 2021. Regard had also been given to the Covid safety measures in place at the time and anticipated for the May 2022 Local Government Elections.

The Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, in presenting the report, advised that as part of the mini-review, visits had been made to each of the current and proposed Polling Places and Stations identified as requiring attention and Local Ward Members had been consulted. It was further noted that the proposed changes set out at paragraphs 2.1 – 2.17 of the report were for implementation in readiness for the Local Government Elections in May 2022.

The mini-review also proposed to create an additional Polling Station at an existing Polling Place where two electoral wards used the same Polling Place.

The outcome of the mini-review and its proposed changes to Polling Places and / or Stations in a number of electoral wards reflected electoral ward changes made by The County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan (Electoral Arrangements) Order 2021 (“the 2021 Order”). The Returning Officer advised that since drafting the report the landlord of the Glenbrook Inn had advised that an additional room had become available and therefore that Appendix 5 to the report be amended to refer to Polling Stations A and B being within the Glenbrook Inn.

Councillor Carroll, in referring to the size of the polling district for HC1 and HD1 and the distance for residents to travel to the proposed station at Glenbrook Inn, enquired as to why the car park of a nearby supermarket could not be utilised. In response

the Returning Officer stated that because of the issues relating to the topography of the car park it was not regarded as a suitable polling place.

Having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein the Scrutiny

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the report be referred to Cabinet for approval in order to agree the proposed changes to the Polling Places and / or Polling Stations as set out in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.17 of the report.

(2) T H A T, subject to Appendix 5 being amended to refer to Polling Stations A and B being within the Glenbrook Inn, Cabinet be requested to refer the report to Council for consideration with a view to approving the proposed changes with immediate effect and to all Town and Community Councils and the Community Liaison Committee for information.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) Having regard to the Council's statutory functions under the Representation of the People Act 1983; and pre-Cabinet scrutiny of the proposals contained in the report which would assist with improving electors' voting experience and raise awareness and following discussions at the meeting regarding Glenbrook Inn.