

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:  
20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2022

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2022

**“C782 REVENUE MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL TO 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The revenue position for 2021/22 would continue to be challenging for the Council both operationally and financially due to the ongoing implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. This impacted both as a result of incurring additional expenditure but also from a loss of income. Confirmation had been received from Welsh Government that funding to cover some of the issues would be received up to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2022.

An efficiency target of £500k had been set for the year and services were working towards achieving their targets, however it was currently anticipated that savings may not be fully achieved in the current year. There still remained some issues relating to unachieved savings targets from previous years.

Adverse variances were being projected for some services this year and the use of reserves would be required to resolve those issues in the short term.

The Leader, in referring to the report, said nearly £9m of Hardship funding had been received but there remained a hold on some expenditure for matters such as Free School Meals and Social Care costs as the Council was still awaiting some further information. Welsh Government had confirmed there would be grant funding to support the Council for the loss of income throughout the financial year. The Council had also processed the Welsh Government grant for a £735 payment for Social Care workers.

Councillor King, in referring to the report, said that the use of reserves to offset the overspend from Neighbourhood Services and Transport had been reported previously and recognised as linked to Waste Management and recycling. While the level of recycling placed the Vale of Glamorgan Council as second best in the UK, it was still a costly operation that had not been made easier by the pandemic. He paid tribute to all the staff concerned in providing services and working during challenging times, particularly the loaders and drivers of the vehicles.

The latest added challenge as a result of the Omicron variant infection rate and anticipated rate of sickness absence and availability of drivers. The Council had diverted any spare capacity to maintain the priority collections of food waste, black bags and recyclables and delayed the collection of garden waste. The anticipated peak of sickness absence now coincided with the need to prioritise road gritting. As such, the Council may not be able to offer the same service as previous years

regarding the collection and recycling of Christmas trees. Details of the amended Christmas tree collection service would be released through the usual media channels later in the week, using 5 vehicles and 15 staff over a two-week period but with no guarantee that those staff would be available. As such, alternative Christmas tree recycling options where trees could be taken to a specific site across the Vale on set days in addition to existing options for ring and request services and Household Waste Recycling Centres. If residents were unable to access any of those recycling options, the trees could be collected as part of the normal black bag waste arrangements later this month with the trees going to the energy from waste facility in Cardiff. The Leader added that trees could also be cut up and placed in green bags for collection as well as taken to recycling centres without the need for an appointment.

Councillor Gray said that Officers, staff and carers had also worked throughout the Christmas period and pandemic and in terms of revenue monitoring paid tribute to those who had processed the Covid recovery claims. There had been interesting and robust conversations about finances at various Scrutiny Committees where there had been cross-party acknowledgment of the pressures being faced, as well as some of those pressures being moved forward to the next year also. He was pleased that the use of reserves to support services was possible but acknowledged that a number of people were continuing to wait for care. Options were being put together to help people to become carers as part of a fast track to care programme so as to have enough carers to provide the sort of support that the most vulnerable people in society require.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the position with regard to the Authority's 2021/22 Revenue Budget be noted.
- (2) T H A T the report be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) To inform Cabinet of the projected revenue outturn for 2021/22.
- (2) To advise Members of financial position.”