

## HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

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

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor J.E. Charles (Chair); Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors: G. Ball, C.A. Cave, A.M. Collins, C.M. Cowpe, R. Fisher, E.J. Goodjohn,  
J. Lynch-Wilson, J.M. Norman, and C. Stallard.

Also present: Councillors C.P. Franks, W.A. Hennessy, G. John (Cabinet Member for  
Leisure, Sport, and Wellbeing) and E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and  
Health).

### 296 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chair 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.”

### 297 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor I.R. Buckley.

### 298 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 be approved as a correct record.

### 299 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

### 300 FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024/25 (REF) –

The Operational Manager for Accountancy presented the four financial items on the meeting agenda, items 4, 5, 6 and 7, by providing the Committee with presentation slides to support the information already set out within the agenda papers.

The officer began by introducing the reference and appended Cabinet report from the 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 Cabinet meeting and summarised that the report restated the

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) assumptions approved by Council in March 2023 and set out new and emerging financial issues as well as the Financial Strategy and process for approving the 2024/25 Budget and MTFP at Council in March 2023. The Cabinet report set out how the Council proposed to set a budget for 2024-25, and across the MTFP, considering the Financial Strategy principals, the economic outlook, the current five-year position, and the current working approach.

The Financial Strategy would focus on ensuring that the Council's resources would be targeted to deliver the Council's objectives and, in challenging times, ensure services to the most vulnerable were maintained. The financial position continued to be really challenging with increasing banking base rates and relatively high inflation rates in the market which obviously had a knock-on effect for the Council's finances.

In terms of future funding, the Council had projections for some increase in government grants and Council Tax, but those were very much high level, and it would not have clarity about how accurate those projections were until far later in the calendar year. There was a significant funding gap in 2024/25 and across the medium term forecast at £6.430m. There were forecast cost pressures of £17.020m but likely funding of only an additional £10.590m coming through from Welsh Government grant, Council Tax, and planned use of Council reserves.

The report also set out how the Council would seek to close the revenue gap that was expected to increase as increases in cost pressures from social care were factored in. It was important that the Council challenged all the identified cost pressures and continually reviewed them to assess if they would become permanent or could be mitigated in any way.

In conclusion, the Officer advised that to ensure that identified cost pressures were sound and required, the Council would also set a savings framework to identify savings or investment opportunities. Like many other Local Authorities, the Vale of Glamorgan Council had made a lot of savings in previous financial years and was now keen to identify transformation themes looking at alternative target operating models and digital innovation to make further / future savings.

Councillor Cave thanked the Officer for the useful presentation slides to support the Committee's understanding of complex finance reports and asked the Officer whether they could provide an example of digital innovation for the Social Services directorate. In reply, the Officer advised that they were not able to give a specific example under the remit of the Committee, however the ethos in relation to future digital innovation broadly looked at services and current practices to improve ways of working. This move forward was in the very early days of development. Subsequently, Councillor Cave thanked the Officer for clarifying the position which was also their own understanding and added that innovation came from many places and working practices and therefore Members would be interested to know of any future plans so that a broader conversation with regards to digital innovation could be held.

Councillor Cowpe then referred to the fact that the report, quite rightly, stated that services be "maintained" for most vulnerable individuals, however suggested that the wording of the report should be to "improve." In response, the Officer acknowledged

Councillor Cowpe's point and advised that the Council was continually looking to improve. There would be investment proposals put forward as part of cost pressures and although the Council had historically been in a position where the gap was such that it was unable to progress very many of the identified investment cost pressures, the Council would be looking at where it could improve or transform services as well. An increase in need for services would need to be considered going forward as well as investing in capital schemes that may have been limited in the past. The Director of Social Services also added that it was a very worrying financial picture for the Directorate with an obvious increase in demand and all services being required to find savings.

The Vice-Chair then noted that many of the services within the Social Services directorate were subject to statutory provisions and related spending and therefore it was recognised that digital innovation was necessary going forward to make improvements to services. Digital innovation was being suggested to make efficiency savings, however the costs to provide services as well as national inflation had increased.

In response to a comment from the Chair that it would be very difficult for finance officers to set future budgetary figures, Councillors Cowpe, Cave and Thomas suggested comments to be passed back to Cabinet in response to the Cabinet reference and appended report as follows:

Councillor Cowpe requested that a comment be passed to Cabinet to reconsider the wording of the report to encourage "improvements" in service areas where needed rather than simply "maintaining" services. Members were aware that there were significant gaps in funding and that officers were working very hard, however this did not negate the need for the Scrutiny Committee to push forward on areas for improvement.

Councillor Cave requested that a comment be passed to Cabinet to request greater emphasis on digital innovation within the report in order to continue to provide and strive for service improvements. In support of Councillor Cowpe, Councillor Cave also stressed that it was important for the Scrutiny Committee to highlight the fact to Cabinet that the Committee did not wish to lose sight of striving for service improvements.

The Vice-Chair then expanded on their earlier comment in relation to statutory provisions and related spending and requested that a comment be passed to Cabinet to consider the continued need to reflect on financial pressures and existing statutory cost pressures when undertaking future budget setting.

The Committee subsequently took a vote on whether to include Councillor Thomas' comment as the third comment referred to Cabinet and the Committee voted in favour.

With no further comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

## RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T both the Cabinet reference and appended report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the following comments of the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee be passed to Cabinet:
  - (a) Cabinet be requested to look at the wording of the report to encourage ‘improvements’ in service areas where needed rather than just ‘maintaining’ services going forward.
  - (b) Cabinet be requested to place greater emphasis on points of innovation in order to continue to strive for service improvements.
  - (c) It be emphasised to Cabinet that in light of the fact that the existing cost pressures in relation to the Social Services Directorate are statutory provision, the Council has very little choice over the spending in relation to the related services that continue to be managed by skilled and appreciated staff and therefore consideration of this be undertaken in the context of future budget setting by Cabinet.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of both the Cabinet reference and report on the Financial Strategy 2024/25 to review the financial pressures over the medium term and put in place a strategy for delivering the 2024/25 budget and sustainable finances over the medium term.
- (2) To ensure the Council has clear and transparent financial reporting and an appropriate level of challenge to the management of its finances with a key element of the challenge process being through the Council’s scrutiny function.

## 301 DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024/25 AND INITIAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROPOSALS 2024/25 TO 2028/29 (REF) –

The Operational Manager for Accountancy presented the Cabinet reference and appended report from the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 Cabinet meeting as contained within the papers.

The Cabinet report provided the Council's Draft Capital Strategy for 2024/25 attached at Appendix 1. The Capital Strategy provided a framework which outlined how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of corporate objectives, along with an overview of how associated risk was managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. The report also set out the current five-year Capital Programme for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29.

Therefore, the report outlined the Council’s need to acquire, dispose or enhance assets such as land, buildings, roads, vehicles, and plant to provide sustainable

service provision to support its objectives. As resources available to meet the capital requirements of the Council were limited, the Strategy explained how priorities were set and outlined the sources of funding available, including the level of borrowing the Council would need and could afford to undertake and its investment strategy.

The Officer advised that based on the final settlement for 2023/24 from Welsh Government, the Council was expecting similar capital funding for 2024-25 but it was difficult to predict capital resources over a long-term period as the level of general capital funding provided by Welsh Government was usually advised on a year by year basis and their priority areas of spend which would change over a period of time. Also, the cost of a capital scheme was significantly more than it was a couple of years ago.

For schemes specifically under the remit of the Committee, the officer drew Members' attention to Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report and references to the Social Services asset renewal in relation to Ty Dyfan Residential Home 2023/34 as well as the Social Services Invest to Save Scheme that spanned 2023-26 at £625k per financial year.

In terms of Leisure Services, the Officer highlighted the pipeline scheme in relation to Changing Rooms at the Buttrills playing field and noted that this scheme was still subject to a business case being provided to support the proposal coming forward.

In terms of next steps, the Officer advised that new capital bids would be invited for return in October 2023. Council Directors had been requested to submit their capital bids which would then be evaluated by the Council's Strategic Insight Board in November 2023, with any revised capital proposals being brought to Cabinet and Scrutiny in January 2024 once the Council knew what its Welsh Government settlement was.

With no comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** both the Cabinet reference and appended report be noted.

#### Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of both the Cabinet reference and report on the Initial Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2028/29.

#### 302 QUARTER 1 REVENUE MONITORING 2023/24 (DSS) –

The Operational Manager for Accountancy presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise Committee of the Quarter 1 Revenue Monitoring position for 2023/24.

The revenue position for 2023/24 continued to reflect challenging demand and inflationary pressures, with increasing demand in respect of Children's and Adults Social Care and significant increases in the cost of placements and care packages.

Across the services inflationary pressures were also being experienced in respect of pay, most notably where market forces were being utilised and for the funding gap between provision for the 2023/24 pay award and the likely pay award for 2023/24.

The Social Services budget position, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, was set at £88.858m for 2023/24. A virement of £33k from Learning and Skills was requested. The Budget assumed £600k efficiencies which were currently on track to be achieved in year.

The Officer drew the Committee's attention to the Social Services Programme table at paragraph 2.9 of the Cabinet report and advised that the Programme would utilise a contribution of £1.338m of funding and additional efficiency savings of £81k to reduce the use of reserves as part of the agreed 5-year period.

The Social Services budget was also expected to utilise £2m of step in funding from the Social Services reserve as commissioning of Social Services care hours had increased more than the initial projections for 2023/24. The potential for this had been recognised when the budget was approved by Council in March 2023.

The projected outturn for Social Services in 2023/24 after the use of reserves was an adverse variance of £4.246m and was further detailed in Appendix A. The planned drawdown from reserves for 2023/24 was £4.027m with a further £3.246m projected to offset the additional adverse variance. This posed significant, additional budgetary pressures that would need to be addressed as part of the 2024/25 budget proposals.

Key pressures for the directorate included:

- Rising cost associated with placements for Children and Young People.
- Additional legal costs associated with increased complexity and incidence of care proceedings.
- Increase in care hours required for Adults which could in part be explained by a return to care following Covid and also Demographic pressures; and
- The service was also reporting an increase in residential and nursing placements, an increase in direct care placements and respite.

Likely use of reserves included:

- £2m use of reserves to reflect increased take up of commissioned hours at a more rapid pace than the budget had allowed for, the base budget would be corrected as part of the planning for 2024/25.
- £1.163m use of reserves for Children's Services to support additional costs associated with market forces payments, adoption allowances and legal costs and the budget programme.
- A further £200k of reserves to develop a financial strategy for Children's Services.
- £257k for Resource Management and Safeguarding as part of the Social Services budget programme.
- £408k for Adult Services as part of the Social Services budget programme.

- Additional use of reserves to offset the additional costs of placements and care hours were likely to be required to reflect the increased need £2.329m; and
- Additional use of reserves to offset additional costs of Children's placements and legal costs £917k.

Challenging savings and efficiency targets had been set out for 2023/24, this included a target of £2.75m for schools and £4.628m Corporate savings. The progress against these savings targets was reflected in Appendix B to the report.

In conclusion, the Officer added that there were no specific Leisure Services pressures at the current time in the budget, but finance officers would keep the matter under review as the financial year progressed.

With no comments or questions raised by members, the Committee subsequently

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the position with regard to the Authority's 2023/24 Revenue Budget be noted.
- (2) T H A T the virements as set out in Table 1 of the report be noted.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report to inform Committee of the projected revenue outturn for 2023/24.
- (2) To update the original budget for 2023/24 for virement requests.

#### 303 CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL TO 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2023 (DSS) –

The report provided an update on the progress of the Capital Programme for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 with details by scheme shown in Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 provided a summary of the position of the Capital Programme by Directorate, from approval at Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 through to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023, including any changes requested within the report.

The Operational Manager for Accountancy began by advising that many service areas were continuing to experience an increase in costs associated with the delivery of schemes and officers were reporting the requirement to re-negotiate submitted tenders. Schemes were being closely monitored throughout the year to identify overspends and slippages and some slippage was anticipated to be reported in Quarter 2.

The approved Programme, as at final proposals was £103.968m. Slippage from the 2022/23 Capital Programme of £8.733m had been previously agreed and added to

the approved Programme. During the financial year, additions totalling £13,112m gave a total current approved Programme of £125,813m.

Specific to the remit of the Committee, the Officer advised of a single request under the Healthy Living and Social Care Additions, Virement and Re-profiling section of the report. The request asked to combine the Cartref Porthceri External Repairs Phase 2 and Salisbury Road No. 91 (YOS) External Repairs Phase 2 with the Cartref Porthceri Residential Home – Drainage Repairs and Underpinning of Building scheme.

Two Delegated Authorities had also been approved that were within the remit of the Committee. Both requested the inclusion of new schemes and were funded by S106 monies. The first to upgrade play equipment and undertake ancillary works at Celtic Way Park and Play Area, Rhoose for £181k and the second for improvements to toilets and changing rooms at Llantwit Major Leisure Centre for £238k.

In conclusion, the Officer added that finance officers would continue to work with project managers and sponsors to ensure value for money and that all possible funding opportunities were identified and fully explored.

With no comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the progress made on delivering the 2022/23 Capital Programme within the remit of the Committee, as attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
- (2) T H A T the use of Delegated Authority within the remit of the Committee, as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report, be noted.
- (3) T H A T the use of Emergency Powers within the remit of the Committee, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
- (4) T H A T the changes to the 2022/23 and Future Years' Capital Programme within the remit of the Committee, as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report, be noted.

#### Reason for recommendations

(1-4) Having regard to the contents of the report to advise Committee of the progress on the Capital Programme, the use of Delegated Authority, the use of Emergency Powers and changes to the Capital Programme.

#### 304 RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF A LEISURE CENTRE WORKING GROUP (DEH) –

The Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek the Committee's approval to re-establish the Leisure Centre Working Group as a sub-group of the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee as well as detail the



purpose of the Working Group and the role it was expected to play for the Scrutiny process.

Additionally, the report highlighted the Welsh Audit report on the service in 2021 which included the need for Elected Members to be involved in the monitoring processes for the Council's Leisure Management Contract.

The Chair began the item by thanking all Vale of Glamorgan and Legacy Leisure staff for their support and time to undertake tours of the Leisure Centres for the Committee Members. The Chair expressed how impressed they were with the visits and the work being undertaken at the various centres to the benefit of Vale of Glamorgan residents.

The Chair then advised that the members of the re-established Working Group would naturally include themselves and the Vice-Chair of the Committee and therefore sought nominations from four other Members of the Committee. To which, multiple Members raised their hands in nomination and the Chair took the first four hands as shown being Councillors Cave, Norman, Stallard and Lynch-Wilson.

Following the Working Group appointments, the Officer took the opportunity to update the Committee on a matter outside the remit of the report related to the significant roof improvement works planned at Penarth Leisure Centre and confirmed that relevant staff were being informed on the implications. It was a £2m scheme to replace the entire roof and side glazing which would cause some unavoidable disruption to normal services at the Centre to ensure relevant health and safety measures were taken to protect both customers and staff over the coming weeks. The Council would be releasing further information regarding the works due to start at the end of October and officers would keep Committee informed of future press releases.

The Chair then referred to paragraph 4.1 of the report which referred to energy saving features and queried if solar panelling would be added to the new roof being established. In response, the Officer advised that the Council would like to install solar panelling however, the costs related to the roof replacement project were already significant. Therefore, installing solar panels on the new Penarth Leisure Centre roof was not viable. However, the Council was looking at installing panels on other Leisure Centre facilities.

The Vice-Chair then expressed the view that it was a shame that the new roof at Penarth Leisure Centre would not include solar panels however, as a separate point, advised that during the latest Committee site visit to Cowbridge Leisure Centre, it was noted that there were issues with the customer lift, quality of the swimming pool floor as well as the condition of the men's changing rooms and therefore asked the officer for a progress update in relation to these matters.

In response, the Officer advised that repair works to the lift facility would be the first priority to ensure that customers had access to services available at the Centre and staff were currently waiting on a start date for the lift works to begin. In relation to the swimming pool floor, work had been undertaken to look into the relevant materials to replace the floor and officers were looking to make a capital bid in the

near future. Huge investment had already been made in relation to changing rooms in other Centres and works were currently ongoing within Llantwit Major Leisure Centre. Therefore, it was intended to improve changing room facilities across all Leisure Centres in the Vale of Glamorgan. It was hoped that funding would be obtained from Sports Wales in order to undertake the improvement works. Further updates on all Leisure Centre improvements would be provided to the re-established Working Group to ensure that the full Committee was subsequently updated.

With the Chair's permission, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport, and Well-being advised that the improvement works currently being undertaken at Llantwit Major Leisure Centre had been funded via S106 contributions following local housing development and therefore encouraged Cowbridge Ward Members to investigate the same for Cowbridge Leisure Centre. As a supplementary point, the Cabinet Member added that S106 funding must be allocated and spent within designated criteria and that they would be happy to support any Elected Member enquiries in relation to S106 monies going forward.

In addition, the Officer advised that they were in regular contact with the Council's S106 Officer and that they were usually alerted to any opportunities in S106 funding, however there had been a recent change in S106 personnel for the Council so they would also check if there was any designated funding available.

As a Cowbridge Ward Member, Councillor Fisher advised that he had very recently been in contact with the Council's S106 Officer to discuss funding available for sustainable transport and therefore would add to his enquiries in relation to monies available for Leisure Centre repairs.

In conclusion to the debate, and for the benefit of newly elected members on the Committee, the Vice-Chair noted that there was significant housing development in the Cowbridge area and therefore likely to be funds available. However, they added that funds available for transport were designated under a different S106 criteria and therefore, the availability of funds available for leisure centre repairs was subject to designated funds being available.

With no further comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T Councillors J.E. Charles, N.C. Thomas, C.A. Cave, J.M. Norman, C. Stallard and J. Lynch-Wilson be elected to the Leisure Centre Working Group.
- (2) T H A T the re-established Working Group invite the relevant Cabinet Member to any future meetings or site visits undertaken by the Group.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report to re-establish a Working Group for the Leisure Centres of the Vale of Glamorgan from members of the Healthy

Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee.

(2) To ensure that the views of the Working Group are shared appropriately with the executive of the Council.

### 305 THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN AND CARDIFF INTEGRATED FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 (DSS) –

Following an introduction by the Head of Children and Young People Services, the Service Manager for the Integrated Family Support Team (IFST), Karen Worman, presented the report to provide Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to consider the 2022-23 Annual Report for the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff IFST before it was submitted to the Welsh Government as required.

The Officer began by advising that through the provision of its Flying Start, Families First and IFS, the Council had in place a coherent framework for delivering the range of preventative, protective and remedial family support initiatives set out in relevant Welsh Government strategies. By providing intensive and specialist help to families when risks were escalating, the IFST had a key role to perform both in reducing harm to children, and the volume of avoidable admissions into care.

The primary issues referred to the service continued to be around substance misuse, although the service also supported those affected by domestic abuse or mental ill health. The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, as presented, and prepared in accordance with s.62 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, provided information on the effectiveness of the service provision and highlighted any challenges which impacted upon the successful delivery of the service.

The team would work with two families intensively at any given time and hold a caseload of 15 families and intensive intervention was undertaken over six weeks to begin with, at two to three visits a week. After the initial six weeks, there was a review that was held in relation to the goals that were formulated with the family. The IFST continued to support families for a 12-month period in total offering booster sessions during that time, if there was any lapse, so the model itself was based on behavioural change. The cycle of change was underpinned by evidence-based tools, namely in relation to motivational interviewing, solution, and brief focused therapy.

The IFST continued to meet performance targets. Families were receiving the right support at the right time to effect long term behavioural changes. The team had transitioned back to face to face working following the ending of Covid-19 restrictions and, through staff enthusiasm and commitment, the IFST continued to deliver an excellent service to families through meaningful co-production, resulting in children living at home with their parents / carer where this was safe. Referral rates from the Vale had been consistent and continued to represent a similar proportion of the families worked with as a whole across the two Authorities.

IFST was funded via a Revenue Support Grant (“RSG”) with a 50/50 split between Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and the service had met the grant funding amount

for the current financial period however, the financial situation could look different for the next financial year in light of pay awards to be considered. The Officer also noted that, in August 2022, aligned services to the IFST being the Early Intervention Team and the Community Reinforcement and Family Therapy Team, which were funded through the Area Planning Board, unfortunately were not recommissioned due to the Area Planning Board taking an alliance approach to the services that they were delivering. Therefore, in terms of the step-up step-down support that came between the two teams, the IFST were unable to offer the same going forward.

In terms of referrals to the team, the performance target was to receive 120 referrals per year across Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan however, the target was surpassed by reaching 144, which was higher than expected. Cardiff made 100 referrals and Vale of Glamorgan 44 referrals (involving 97 children). The team target based on the number of staff available during 2022/2023 was to work with 64 families. The team worked with 67 families during the period, 48 for Cardiff and 19 for the Vale of Glamorgan, with 59 completed interventions.

The majority of referrals remained in relation to alcohol or substance misuse, with the top being alcohol, cannabis and cocaine, which was also echoed within the Family Drug and Alcohol Court. The numbers in relation to mental health or domestic abuse as a reason for referral looked low in terms of the primary reason at the initial referral stage however, by the end of the intervention period the majority of families experienced mental health, and the same for domestic abuse.

Included in the performance data was the number of 'no space' referrals and the number of inappropriate referrals. Families were monitored and prioritised using a tracker to risk assess and ensure timely allocation of resources. The Officer elaborated that a 'No space' referral was a referral that had been received and was deemed to be appropriate but, due to capacity within the team, could not be progressed. It was evident from the statistical data set out in section seven of the Annual Report that the demand for the service outweighed the capacity within the service area.

In conclusion, the Officer took the Committee through the challenges and issues faced by the service as well as priorities over the next 12 months as set out in sections 10 and 11 of the Annual Report.

Following the Officer's presentation and subsequent questions raised by the Committee, the Chair thanked officers for a clear and easy to read report and invited questions from members to which, in response, Officers added the following points of advice in relation to the content of the report:

- Funding for IFST was on a 50/50 basis across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. In line with this funding, IFST sought to offer an equal service across the region, although the differing sizes of the two local authorities inevitably generated different levels of demand. Officers in the Vale of Glamorgan had continued to work extremely hard over several years to maximise the level of service afforded to families in the Vale of Glamorgan. This has included broadening the remit to include domestic abuse for the local authority.

- The reference in paragraph 2.6 of the report in relation to capacity and the reassessment of the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer to increase the team's capacity for intervention work related to an independent review of the team and whether the role was required or could be absorbed within the team with the opportunity to generate capacity and effectively deliver more to more families.
- It had been discussed at the agenda conference for the meeting whether or not the Annual Report should continue to be provided to the Committee on a rolling basis considering that when the report was first presented to the Committee this was due to the service being grant funded and therefore requiring close monitoring. The Report was very interesting to Members, but officers would suggest that the report was no longer included on the Committee's Forward Work Programme as a rolling annual item. This did not prevent the report being brought to the Committee's attention in the future should there be any developments in relation to the service.
- The Directorate would not have the capacity to provide several reports just for information/noting via email to Members, however, it was feasible that reports selected by the Chair of the Committee could be circulated to Members via email in the future on the basis that Members could subsequently request reports be brought to a future Committee meeting should they deem it necessary.

The Chair concluded the debate by confirming that both themselves and the Vice-Chair of the Committee would continue to monitor meeting agenda content and hold discussions with officers on the same at monthly agenda conferences.

With no further comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Integrated Family Support Team Annual Report for 2022/23, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Integrated Family Support Team Annual Report be removed from the Committee's Forward Work Programme as a rolling item.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report to provide Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to consider the 2022-23 Annual Report for the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Integrated Family Support Team before being submitted to the Welsh Government as required under Welsh Government guidance.
- (2) To ensure that the Committee's Forward Work Programme is responsive to the evolving areas which require scrutiny.

## 306 ANNUAL CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT: 2022/2023 (REF) –

The Head of Resource Management and Safeguarding presented the biannual reference from Cabinet raised at the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 Cabinet Meeting.

The Council had a corporate responsibility to ensure that there were effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who required specific Council services. Therefore, the Annual Report for 2022/23 provided an overview of the Corporate Safeguarding activities that had taken place across the Local Authority since the mid-year report was presented to the Committee.

The Officer advised that a comprehensive Annual Report was attached at Appendix 1 to the covering report, which brought together safeguarding activity undertaken across all Council Directorates. This provided a more holistic representation of safeguarding activity across the Council.

The Officer also drew the Committee's attention to section two of the covering report, setting out key issues for consideration in relation to the implementation of an electronic transfer system for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, completed DBS checks for Elected Members, ongoing and sustained increases within safeguarding activity such as Section 5 Allegations Against Practitioners and development of a data dashboard by the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

With no comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T both the Cabinet reference and appended report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of both the Cabinet reference and report on the update provided to Cabinet on the work that has been undertaken in relation to corporate arrangements for safeguarding across the Council.

## 307 DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT 2022/2023 (REF) –

The Director of Social Services presented the reference from the 7<sup>th</sup> of September Cabinet meeting. The Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment Report, attached at Appendix A to the Cabinet report, drew on a wide range of information sources to assess the progress made by the Council in meeting its Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23 as aligned to its Corporate Plan Wellbeing Objectives. The findings would enable the Council to identify how it could further enhance its internal processes and use of resources to improve and support achievement of its Annual Delivery Plan commitments and its Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.

The Director advised that the Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report largely reflected the matters related to the Social Care Directorate that had already been set out and

subsequently endorsed by the Committee via the Challenge Version of the Annual Director of Social Services 2022-2023 Report at the previous July Committee meeting.

With no comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T both the Cabinet reference and appended report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of both the Cabinet reference and report as part of a programme of consultation on the Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment Report 2022/23.

308 ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN MONITORING REPORT: QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE 2023/24 (DSS) –

The performance report presented the Council's progress at Quarter 1 [Q1] (1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023) towards achieving its Annual Delivery Plan (2023/24) commitments as aligned to its Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.

Three Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives were attributed a Green performance status at Q1 to reflect the good progress made to date in meeting the Council's Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23. One Corporate Well-being Objective was attributed an Amber performance status at Q1.

In relation to the planned activities within the remit of the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, 74% (90 out of 121) were attributed a Green performance status and the final 26% (31) were attributed a Red status. Of the 11 measures reported, 64% (7) were attributed a Green performance status and 36% (4) were attributed Red status.

The Director of Social Services advised that areas for improvement outlined in the presentation (Appendix A) had been revised to reflect an overview of service plan specific improvement areas aligned to the Annual Delivery Plan, emerging areas of development and activity, and emerging areas of concern specific to each Scrutiny Committee's remit across all 4 well-being objectives. This reflected the changes requested by Elected Members on performance monitoring and aligned with the 13 Principles in the Effective Scrutiny Action Plan. This approach would enable Members to focus on upcoming priority areas and areas where further probing should be considered, alongside progress against the Annual Delivery Plan commitments.

Appendix B set out the Performance Exceptions within the remit of the Committee and, at the time of the report being published, the Directorate was unable to provide commentary on all of the included service plan actions. However, a verbal update could be now provided by the Director on any action should the Committee have any questions.

With no comments or questions raised by Members, the Committee subsequently

**RECOMMENDED –**

(1) T H A T the Quarter One performance results and progress towards achieving the Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24 commitments, as aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan Wellbeing Objectives within the remit of the Committee, be noted.

(2) T H A T the remedial actions to be taken to address areas of under-performance and to tackle the key challenges identified within the remit of the Committee be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) Having regard to the contents of the report to ensure the Council clearly demonstrates the progress being made towards achieving its commitments in the Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24 aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of Vale of Glamorgan citizens.

(2) To ensure the Council is effectively assessing its performance in line with the requirement to meet our performance requirements as outlined in the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and reflecting the requirement of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that it maximises its contribution to achieving the well-being goals for Wales.