

HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Decision Notice – Hybrid Meeting, 10th January, 2024.

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

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

Present: Councillor A.M. Collins (Chair); Councillor B. Loveluck-Edwards (Vice-Chair); Councillors J. Aviet, G. Ball, S. Campbell, S.M. Hanks, W.A. Hennessy, S. Lloyd-Selby, M.J.G. Morgan and H.M. Payne.

Also present: C. Ireland (Citizens Advice Cardiff and Vale Representative), G. Doyle, D. Dutch, V. John and H. Smith (Representatives from Tenant Working Group / Panel); Councillors L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), C.P. Franks, E. Goodjohn, H.C. Hamilton, G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing), Dr. I.J. Johnson, S.D. Perkes (Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement) and E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

AGENDA ITEM 1. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor S.J. Haines.

AGENDA ITEM 2. MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 6th December, 2023 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment concerning Minute No. 608, page 3 where Councillor Campbell queried land sales. The Head of Service explained the land sales referred to within the report alluded to land purchased by the Council rather than sales of land by it. However, the subsequent email to Committee Members from the Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer corrected this by stating that the land sale did in fact apply to a parcel of land sold by the Council to a leaseholder. The sale was in respect of leasehold property in Penarth for which the Council held the freehold as a successor to Penarth Urban District Council. The leaseholder requested to purchase the property and the sale was agreed, being one of the few such properties not previously sold.

AGENDA ITEM 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor J. Aviet declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 – Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Proposals 2024/25, Rent Setting 2024/2025 and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2024/25. The nature of her interest was that she was a Vale of Glamorgan Council tenant. This was a personal interest only and not prejudicial as per paragraph 19.3.3(b)(ii)(A) of the Council's Constitution.

Councillor W. A. Hennessy declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 – Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Proposals 2024/25, Rent Setting 2024/2025 and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2024/25. The nature of his interest was that he was a Vale of Glamorgan Council tenant. This was a personal interest only and not prejudicial as per paragraph 19.3.3(b)(ii)(A) of the Council’s Constitution.

Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby declared an interest in Agenda Item 4 - Draft Vale of Glamorgan Council Annual Delivery Plan 2024-25. The nature of her interest was that she was the Chair of the Trustees for the Vale Foodbank which worked with the Council to support residents with cost-of-living issues, etc. The Councillor had dispensation to speak and vote on general matters relating to the Vale Foodbank, and to speak only when matters regarding finance or property in respect of the Vale Foodbank, are to be considered at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings (paragraphs (d), (f) and (h) of the relevant regulations).

Councillor H.M. Payne declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 – Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Proposals 2024/25, Rent Setting 2024/2025 and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2024/25. The nature of her interest was that paragraph 2.32 of the report referred to property connected to the Llamau Housing Trust. However, she had dispensation to speak only at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings when matters regarding housing and homelessness were discussed relating to finance and property given the Councillor’s role for Llamau (paragraphs (c), (d), (f) and (h) of the relevant regulations).

AGENDA ITEM 4. DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-25 (REF) –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the following comments be shared with the Director of Corporate Resources to inform revisions to the Annual Delivery Plan, prior to Cabinet considering a final draft in due course:

- For Objective 3, “To support people at home and in their community” more details and emphasis be given on what the Vale of Glamorgan Council would do to improve and develop assistance and support to older members of the community in helping them maintain their self-respect and dignity as well as to enable them to live in their homes for longer, in order to address the challenges around an increasingly aging population.
- If the consultation period could be extended to the end of January 2024 in order to allow wider and further consultation with local communities and other stakeholders such as trade unions, etc.

Reason for recommendation

In order for the Director of Corporate Resources and Cabinet to consider the comments and feedback of Members of this Scrutiny Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 5. FINAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)
BUDGET PROPOSALS 2024/25, RENT SETTING 2024/2025 AND HOUSING
REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25 (DEH) –

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T Cabinet be recommended to approve the final Housing Revenue Account budget proposals for 2024/25.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet be recommended to approve an average rent increase of 6.7%, as set out in paragraph 2.25 of the report.
- (3) T H A T Cabinet be recommended to approve the increase suggested for other services as set out in paragraphs 2.28-2.35 of the report.
- (4) T H A T Cabinet be recommended to approve all changes to rents and that service charges be implemented from 1st April, 2024, with the first week of April being a non-chargeable rent week and that increase notices be sent to tenants two months in advance of the new charges coming into effect as required by the Renting Homes (Wales) Act.
- (5) T H A T Cabinet be recommended to approve the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023/53 (draft) attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Reason for recommendations

- (1-5) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 6. 3RD QUARTER SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION
TRACKING 2023/24 AND UPDATED COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK
PROGRAMME SCHEDULE 2023/24 (DCR) –

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the status of the actions listed in Appendices A to D to the report be agreed.
- (2) T H A T the updated Forward Work Programme Schedule for 2023/24 attached at Appendix E to the report be approved and uploaded to the Council's website, subject to the following amendments being made:
 - For January 2024, the rent setting report entry be renamed to the “Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Proposals 2024/25, Rent Setting 2024/2025 and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2024/25” and to add the urgent item concerning the Safer Vale Partnership Strategy 2023-2028 to the Work Programme for January 2024.
 - For February 2024, the Revenue and Capital Monitoring reports for Quarter 3 would need to move to March’s meeting instead.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To maintain effective tracking of the Committee's recommendations.
- (2) For public information.

AGENDA ITEM 7. MATTER WHICH THE CHAIR HAD DECIDED WAS URGENT –

RESOLVED – T H A T the following matter which the Chair had decided was urgent for the reason given beneath the minute heading be considered.

AGENDA ITEM 7(i) CALL-IN: SAFER VALE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2023-28 –

Matter which the Chair has decided was urgent in order that the Scrutiny Committee has the opportunity to consider and scrutinise this report within the deadline period of twenty working days of receipt of the Call-In Request, as per 7.24(c) of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Constitution

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Committee were satisfied that the Safer Vale Partnership Strategy 2023-28 was appropriate and had adequate delivery and scrutiny arrangements.
- (2) T H A T the relevant Vale of Glamorgan Council Officers meet with the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee in order to discuss a mechanism for the regular reporting, oversight and scrutiny of the Strategy going forward as well as further updates on the governance, engagement and communication around this to the Committee.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) In order to inform Members of the Committee on the progress being made with regards to the Strategy.