

CABINET

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 6th February, 2025.

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

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

Present: Councillor L. Burnett (Chair); Councillors B.E. Brooks, R.M. Birch, S.D. Perkes, S. Sivagnanam, E. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Also Present: Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson

C237 ANNOUNCEMENT –

The Leader commenced by advising of some housekeeping issues and advised that the meeting was being livestreamed, recorded and would be uploaded to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting.

C238 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor G. John.

C239 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meetings held on 9th and 16th January, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

C240 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

C241 Q2 SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT 2024/2025 (REF) –

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, held on 18th December, 2024 was presented.

Discussion at the meeting concerned a number of initiatives that had been introduced by the Council to manage the key drivers in tackling presenteeism and the Council considered it very important that staff were given the support they required and were working with colleagues within the Health and Safety, Occupational Health and Organisational Development and Learning sections to support staff.

Committee also discussed whether mental health should be split into a range of criteria, where possible, and whether benchmarking could be undertaken with other Local Authorities which the Leader said was already being explored. There was also discussion about the types of illnesses that staff suffered with regards working where heavy lifting was involved, e.g. waste and recycling. Lastly Committee had discussed inconsistent numbers throughout the year.

Committee made a number of recommendations relevant to Committee but no recommendations for Cabinet consideration.

RESOLVED – T H A T the discussion and comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, held on 18th December, 2024 be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C242 QUARTER 2 REVENUE MONITORING 2024/25 (REF) –

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, held on 18th December, 2024 was presented.

Committee noted that the discussion had taken place after an announcement from Welsh Government concerning budget proposal but discussed various issues including the use of planned and unplanned reserves, whether planned savings for the year were on track and whether there were areas of concern regards school deficit positions. There had been further discussion concerning devolved school budgets including a presentation to Scrutiny Committee detailing the support provided to schools regarding budget management.

Committee made a number of recommendations, two of which were relevant to Cabinet concerning consideration of setting savings targets for procurement exercises and that the maximum budget the Council had available for a procurement exercise be shared with bidders, making it clear in the Invitation to Tender that the maximum budget could not be exceeded. The Leader said that both those aspects were matters for the Head of Finance to consider and would feed back to Committee in due course.

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the discussion and comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, held on 18th December, 2024 be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Head of Finance would feed back to Committee in due course concerning Committee Recommendations (5) and (6).

Reason for decisions

(1-2) Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C243 COUNTER FRAUD POLICIES (REF) –

The reference from Governance and Audit Committee held on 6th January, 2025 was presented. Appendix A to the report detailed the updated Counter Fraud Strategy and Framework.

Governance and Audit Committee queried whether the national fraud initiative survey checklist had been considered when drafting the new policies before passing the matter to Cabinet for approval without comment.

RESOLVED – T H A T the Council's updated Counter Fraud Policies, including the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy and Framework, be approved.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C244 WORK TO TACKLE POVERTY AND THE CURRENT COST OF LIVING CRISIS (REF) –

The reference from Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee, held on 8th January, 2025 was presented.

The Director of Corporate Resources and the Policy Officer presented the report to Committee who then asked for any update on increasing the number of warm space projects located within the rural Vale of Glamorgan. The Leader was aware of additional funding from Welsh Government that would be used to support more warm space initiatives going forward.

Committee made three recommendations, two of which were noted with the third commenting that while Committee commended the important work that was being undertaken, as outlined in the report and the presentation by officers at the meeting, further Warm Space projects located in the rural Vale of Glamorgan would be welcomed. The Leader said that the Council worked closely with other partner organisations and with the additional Welsh Government funding hoped that there would be further warm space projects available in the Vale of Glamorgan.

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the discussion and comments of the Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee, held on 8th January, 2025 be noted.

(2) T H A T with the additional Welsh Government funding that had been made available, the provision of further Warm Space projects located in the rural Vale of Glamorgan would be welcomed.

Reason for decisions

(1-2) Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C245 JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM –

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Forum meeting held on 2nd December, 2024 were presented.

Updates provided at the meeting included the Reshaping Programme, the Corporate Plan and the Culture Plan.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Joint Consultative Forum meeting held on 2nd December, 2024 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

C246 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the Council's Panel Performance Assessment and proposed response to the recommendations for areas of improvement.

Taking part in the Panel Performance Assessment had been timely as it coincided with the development of the new Corporate Plan and would work hand-in-hand to increase performance. The Vale of Glamorgan Council was only the third Local Authority to have undergone the process which was a new experience for all concerned.

Appendix A to the report contained the report of the independent Panel of peers, with the Overall Conclusion that "The Panel assessed the Vale of Glamorgan to be a good Council within the current context of high service demand, operational pressures, and resources. It is a values-based organisation with a good internal culture and solid external relationships. There is a clear commitment to delivering on the Corporate Plan, with a particular focus on prioritising the needs of vulnerable people. Staff are enormously proud to work for the Council, and there is a strong sense of ambition for the future."

The Leader, when referring to paragraph 2.10 of the report concerning Local Context, said it was important to talk about the Vale of Glamorgan as a County

rather than as a Council which was being addressed in the new Corporate Plan. Paragraph 2.11 referred to Strengths and Areas of Innovation and the Leader said she was pleased that it had been recognised that the Council had established itself as a values-based organisation built on a strong positive culture, with that culture demonstrating “a strong appetite for innovation and a willingness to do things differently”.

The Panel’s report made four Recommendations contained in paragraphs 2.17 to 2.20 of the report, with the Council’s response to those Recommendations detailed in paragraphs 2.25 to 2.38.

The Leader was pleased with the outcomes of the Panel Performance Assessment and grateful for the opportunity to reflect on how the Council might improve and thanked the Panel for the time they spent in the Vale of Glamorgan and for their insight into Council practices. Councillor Wilson also thanked the Members, Officers and various stakeholders who contributed to the Assessment.

The Deputy Leader endorsed the findings of the Assessment, particularly in regard to being considered as a values-based organisation and looked forward to further feedback and discussion at Governance and Audit Committee.

This was a matter for Executive decision and thereafter Full Council.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the content of the report and appendices be noted.
- (2) T H A T the report and appendices be referred to Governance and Audit Committee for their consideration at the meeting of 17th February, 2025, with any comments reported back to Cabinet for further consideration.
- (3) T H A T the report and appendices, and the views of the Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet, be referred to Full Council for consideration and approval.
- (4) T H A T Full Council considers the report and the views of the Cabinet and Governance and Audit Committee and approves the Council’s response to the Panel Performance Assessment.
- (5) T H A T following consideration and approval by Full Council, delegated authority be granted to the Director of Corporate Resources to send the response to the Panel Performance Assessment to the members of the Panel, the Auditor General for Wales, HM Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales and the Welsh Ministers.

(6) T H A T Cabinet receive updates on the progress to implement the recommended areas of improvement in due course, including as part of the Council's next Annual Self-Assessment report later in 2025.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To enable Governance and Audit Committee to consider the report, to discharge their duties under Part Six of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act, 2021 and for Cabinet to subsequently consider the views of the Governance and Audit Committee.
- (3) To enable Full Council to consider the report and the views of Cabinet and Governance and Audit Committee.
- (4) To enable Full Council to consider and approve the response to the Panel Performance Assessment.
- (5) To comply with the requirement for the Council to publish its response to the Panel Performance Assessment and provide this to a range of specified recipients.
- (6) To ensure the actions taken to progress the recommended areas of improvement are reported to Cabinet, consistent with the requirements of the Act.

C247 PAY POLICY 2025/26 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The item was agreed to be moved to the end of the agenda to allow any Senior Officers in attendance to leave the meeting while the matter was discussed.

The Leader presented the report to ask Cabinet to consider and endorse the Council's annual Pay Policy for 2025/26 prior to its submission to Full Council for approval.

Paragraph 4.5 of the report referred to the Policy having been developed incrementally since 2012 to incorporate the range of factors described, including pay awards and changes to senior structure. Appendix A to the report was the Employee Pay Policy 2025/26 with salary levels laid out by the Joint National Council for relevant roles.

This was a matter for Executive decision and thereafter Full Council.

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

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the required changes to the Council's Pay Policy 2025/26 as set out in the report and as incorporated in the revised statement at Appendix A be endorsed.

(2) T H A T the revised Pay Policy be referred for consideration by Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th February, 2025 prior to final consideration and approval by Full Council on 10th March, 2025. Should Scrutiny Committee make no further comments then Cabinet would consider the Pay Policy as agreed and therefore refer the Pay Policy to Full Council for consideration.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To respond to the legal requirements under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) Amendment Regulations 2014, the Local Government (Wales) Act 2015 and related advice from the Welsh Government.

(2) To respond to the legal requirement under the Localism Act 2011 and to provide openness and accountability in relation to how the Council rewards its staff.

C248 RESHAPING: DIGITAL SERVICE STRUCTURE (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report to seek Cabinet's agreement to changes to the structure of the Digital team as it related to technology and business improvement activities.

It was evident that if the Council wished to achieve its digital ambitions that the right structure needed to be in place to support those ambitions and focus on delivering value to the organisation and reduce the time supporting legacy infrastructure and applications. Some changes to ICT infrastructure had already simplified practices and also enabled appropriate resource to provide support for those not as digitally included as others.

Changes to the Digital team would affect employees directly and involve discussions with Unions as part of a full consultation with any staff affected.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T a change to the structure of the teams in Digital as set out in the report and the associated Part II report on the agenda be considered and noted.

(2) T H A T subject to approval of the Part II report later on the agenda, Cabinet receives an update on the work of the Digital Service as part of future reports on the Reshaping Programme.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To ensure that the Digital team was sufficiently resilient to meet current and future service needs.

(2) To provide Cabinet with an update on that area of the Council's activity in due course.

C249 UK GOVERNMENT SHARED PROSPERITY FUND TRANSITION YEAR (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –

The Leader presented the report to update Cabinet on the extension of the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund, and to delegate specified powers to named Officers in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder to enable the delivery of the transition year funding.

The current programme was due to end in March 2025 but the Council had been awarded transition funding for the next year prior to details regarding any future funds were received, with the Vale of Glamorgan allocated £14,029,222 as a mix of revenue and capital funding.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the content of the report be noted.

(2) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Place (in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, the Chief Executive, Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services) to approve the use of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund transition year allocation for internal and externally commissioned projects.

(3) T H A T the Director of Place (in consultation with the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to negotiate terms and conditions for the appointment of third-party suppliers/providers for internal and externally commissioned projects.

(4) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Place (in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and

Resources, Chief Executive, Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services) to submit and take all necessary actions to finalise a transition year Delivery Plan with the Lead Body (Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council) (RCTCBC), linked to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding allocation on behalf of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

(5) T H A T in pursuance of Resolution (3), the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services (in consultation with the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer) be authorised to prepare, complete, and execute the required legal documentation to enable third-party suppliers/providers to be appointed for internal and externally commissioned projects.

(6) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Place (in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, the Chief Executive, Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services) to approve any changes to governance and resources structures to assess and determine applications from third parties to use the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Allocation.

(7) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services to prepare, complete, and execute the required legal documentation with third party grant applicants.

(8) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Place (in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Chief Executive, Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services) to undertake all necessary actions to agree the terms of the Service Level Agreement with the Lead Body (RCTCBC) for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding allocation.

(9) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer (in consultation with the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Chief Executive, and Director of Place) to approve additions, deletions or transfers to or from the Capital Programme for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/2026 where required.

(10) T H A T Cabinet and the relevant Scrutiny Committees receive a further report in Q1 of 2025/26 relating to the delivery of the existing Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan 2022-2025 and to the 2025/26 Delivery Plan.

Reasons for decisions

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

(2) To approve the use of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund transition year allocation of £4,705,592 for internal and externally commissioned projects.

(3) To appoint third-party suppliers/providers for internal and externally commissioned projects.

- (4) To approve the 2025/26 Shared Prosperity Fund Delivery Plan.
- (5) To obtain prepare, complete and execute the required legal documentation to enable third-party suppliers/providers to be appointed for internal and externally commissioned projects.
- (6) To approve governance and resources structures to assess and determine applications from third parties to use the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Allocation.
- (7) To prepare, complete and execute the required legal documentation with third party grant applicants.
- (8) To negotiate, complete and execute the Service Level Agreement for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding allocation with the Lead Body (RCTCBC).
- (9) To obtain authority for the funding to be included within the capital programme 2025/26 and maximise the Council's ability to utilise the sum allocated in the best possible manner.
- (10) To ensure that Cabinet and Scrutiny were kept informed and could scrutinise the delivery of the 2022-2025 Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan and the 2025/26 Delivery Plan.

C250 SURVEILLANCE AND THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report to provide Cabinet with an updated Policy regarding surveillance, with Appendix A detailing the types of activity undertaken as part of public functions.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of the report and the updated policy (Appendix A) be noted.
- (2) T H A T, subject to Resolution (1), the updated policy (Appendix A) be endorsed.

Reasons for decisions

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

(2) To ensure the Council had an up-to-date policy, supported by the Council's Executive.

C251 TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY OF FUEL (NBS) (SCRUTINY – HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report which advised Cabinet of the tendering process for the supply of fuel for the Council's fleet.

The UK experienced fuel supply disruptions in late 2021 due to consumer behaviour, rather than as an actual shortage of fuel, which had an impact on Council operations. As a result, a more reliable fuel supplier was secured.

To ensure future fuel security the tender for supply of fuel would consider not only the cost of fuel but also the customer service offered by suppliers and their commitment to keeping the Council's fleet running. Transitioning to a zero carbon fleet under Project Zero would take time and investment and it was essential that the Council maintained a diesel supply whilst at the same time seeking to reduce carbon fuel use.

In collaboration with Cardiff Council, the tender was posted on Sell2Wales with both Councils evaluating responses and appointment of a single supplier to both, aligning to long-term sustainability goals and ensuring continuous service delivery while exploring synthetic fuel options.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the report be noted, with a view to taking decisions on the award of the contract detailed within the Part II report later on the agenda.

Reason for decision

To advise of the current position with that particular contract.

C252 ONE STOP SHOP PROCUREMENT EXERCISE (PSHTE) (SCRUTINY – HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report to inform Cabinet of the One Stop Shop (OSS) procurement exercise and to request Delegated Authority to award the OSS contract to the most advantageous support provider.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement, to award the One Stop Shop contract to the most economically advantageous support provider resulting from the procurement process as described in the report.

(2) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services to prepare, negotiate where necessary and execute all contractual documentation required to enter into the new arrangement (for the avoidance of doubt, should the new arrangement include a move to a different premises then that should include any documentation required in connection with the occupation of such premises).

Reasons for decisions

(1) To comply with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, which required contracts exceeding a value of £300k to be agreed by Cabinet.

(2) To ensure that the contract could be awarded in a timely manner to ensure service continuity for the vulnerable people that the One Stop Shop supported.

C253 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL HOUSING – POLICY ON APPLICATION OF THE WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD '23 (PSHTE) (SCRUTINY – HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report to approve the revised policy on application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standards as required by Welsh Government. Councillor Perkes said that other reports had been brought before Cabinet that included pilot schemes concerning decarbonisation and different home-heating methods that had been supported previously and referred to the eight Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) requirements that would also work towards reducing the environmental impact of people's homes and moving towards more sustainable homes detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report.

Councillor Wilson as Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services said he was keen for the WHQS to be implemented so homes would be maintained to a good standard which also have a positive impact on the housing sector as a whole.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the revisions to the 'Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard', attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be accepted in principle.
- (2) T H A T the report be referred to the Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- (3) T H A T, subject to no changes to the Policy being recommended by the Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee, the Policy be agreed.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To approve in principle the revised 'Vale of Glamorgan Council Housing – Policy on Application of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard' as required by Welsh Government, to enable the matter to be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
- (2) To permit the matter to be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee and for any recommendations of this Committee to be considered by Cabinet prior to the final Policy being agreed.
- (3) To ensure prompt agreement of the Policy should no amendments be suggested.

C254 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC –

RESOLVED – T H A T under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act, the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

C255 RESHAPING: DIGITAL SERVICE STRUCTURE (EL/PR) (EXEMPT INFORMATION – PARAGRAPHS 12, 13, 14 AND 15) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report to seek Cabinet's agreement to changes to the structure of the Digital team as it related to technology and business improvement activities.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T a change to the structure of the teams in Digital as set out in the report and the associated Part I report on the agenda be approved.
- (2) T H A T, subject to Resolution (1), and approval of the associated Part I report on the agenda, delegated authority be granted to the Head of Digital, in consultation with the Leader, Director of Corporate Resources and Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development to implement the proposal as set out in the report.
- (3) T H A T Cabinet receives an update on the work of the Digital Service as part of future reports on the Reshaping Programme.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To ensure that the Digital team was sufficiently resilient to meet current and future service needs.
- (2) To enable the service changes to be delivered.
- (3) To provide Cabinet with an update on that area of the Council's activity in due course.

C256 TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY OF FUEL (NBS) (EXEMPT INFORMATION – PARAGRAPHS 12, 14 AND 12A) (SCRUTINY – HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report to request approval to accept the most advantageous tender and execute the contract for the supply of fuel for the Council's fleet.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the award of the 'Supply of Fuel' contract to Estuary Oils Ltd be approved.
- (2) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment and Housing and Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services, to prepare and execute joint contract arrangements with Cardiff City Council and Estuary Oils Ltd. for the supply of fuel.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To comply with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, which required contracts with a value in excess of £300k to be agreed by Cabinet.
- (2) To enable the contract documentation to be finalised with the successful contractor.