

No.

## **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

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

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

Present: Councillor J. Protheroe (Chair); Councillor E. Goodjohn (Vice-Chair); Councillors G.D.D. Carroll, P. Drake, R. Fisher, C.P. Franks, S.M. Hanks, B. Loveluck-Edwards, and N. Wood.

Also present: Councillor L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources).

### 150 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.”

### 151 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors H.C. Hamilton and Dr. I.J. Johnson.

### 152 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 be approved as a correct record.

### 153 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

### 154 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025-2030, PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE CALENDAR 2024/25 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 was presented by the Director of Corporate Resources.

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The Cabinet report presented the Vale of Glamorgan Annual Performance Calendar for 2024/25 which outlined the activities that would be subject to consideration by Members throughout the year. The report also outlined how engaging with Elected Members was proposed in shaping the processes, key plans and reports aligned to the Annual Performance Calendar to enable the performance requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (LG&E) to be met and contributed to the national goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG).

The Director advised that there were two additional aspects of the Performance Calendar that required consideration this year – the development of a new Corporate Plan and the arrangements for undertaking a Panel Performance Assessment (PPA).

The report also set out, at paragraphs 2.2 – 2.7, the approach being taken to develop the new five-year Corporate Plan 2025-2030 which would be published in April 2025. Work on a new Corporate Plan would include the development of new Well-being Objectives and a more outcome focused approach.

The report detailed the scope and indicative timetable (paragraph 2.8) for undertaking the Council's PPA in Autumn 2024. Introduced by the LG&E Act, the purpose of the PPA was to provide independent, external challenge to help inform the Council's improvement journey by building on its own annual self-assessment. The PPA would assess the extent to which the Council was meeting the performance requirements (that was, exercising its functions effectively, using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively and exercising good governance) and also presented the opportunity to consider work being undertaken as part of the development of the Corporate Plan 2025-30. It was proposed that the focus for the PPA concentrated on the changes being made and the approach being taken to deliver what was needed to make the outcome more future focused and able to increase the organisation's resilience.

The Director added that key findings and learning from the review of last year's Annual Self-Assessment approach were also detailed within the report as were proposals to further enhance the process in readiness for the 2023/24 self-assessment.

The Council's Self-Assessment covering the period 2023/24 would be published in December 2024 and this timeline aligned with the existing performance management arrangements and would enable key performance and governance related insights to be brought together throughout the year into a summary judgement on how well the performance requirements of the LG&E Act were being met.

In conclusion, the Director referred to Appendix A of the report which contained information regarding the rolling programme of collaborative work with Members throughout the 2024/25 Annual Performance Calendar to develop their skills and knowledge and strengthen their involvement in shaping and refining the key plans, reports and processes that would support them in their key role of assessing

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whether the Council was achieving its Well-being Objectives, delivering value for money and improving the well-being of its citizens.

Following the Director's presentation of the report, the Chair requested that the Committee consider the report in three sections, as was reflected within the report structure. Therefore, Committee was requested to raise questions in relation to the development of the Corporate Plan ("the Plan") in the first instance, then any questions in relation to the Panel Performance Assessment and finally in relation to the Council's Self-Assessment process.

In relation to development of the Corporate Plan 2025-30, Members of the Committee raised questions as follows:

- Had the current 2020-25 Corporate Plan served its purpose and, if not, what had not worked?
- Would the new Corporate Plan include specific objectives that could be measured against?
- Was consideration being given to changing how the Council currently produced reports and plans in relation to its performance monitoring processes to ensure that progress was accountable but also an appropriate use of officer resources?
- What steps were the Council taking following recent surveys to improve public engagement and also how the Council would monitor if engagement activities had been successful or not?
- Would the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be able to see how the Council had set objectives within the new Corporate Plan from the various sources of evidence gathered during the development period?

In response, the Director of Corporate Resources advised that the current Corporate Plan had served its purpose from the perspective of grounding the Vale of Glamorgan Council over a significant period of time and political administrations. The existing objectives within the current Plan were very wide ranging but had been written prior to a pandemic and the subsequent recovery period. The current Corporate Plan had helped to guide the Council through the pandemic recovery period, the declared climate emergency, the increase in housing demand as well as helped to improve on the Council's public engagement work. Moving forward, Members would have further opportunity to reflect on the success of the current Plan in the self-assessment process, which was due to be reported in the Autumn of 2024, and therefore, it was felt that the current time was the most effective time to refocus on the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Director also advised that the 2025-30 Corporate Plan had not been written yet and that all Members would have the opportunity to feed into new Plan. It was recognised that there needed to be a clear set of objectives linked to the relevant impact for Vale of Glamorgan residents set out within the Plan under the context of making savings which was essential. The new Plan would include a new set of outcomes including as a result of the Council's collaborative work and therefore, this would differ to the previous Corporate Plan, as the current Plan would only set out outcomes that the Council was solely responsible for. Therefore, the new Plan

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would include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that would underpin the objectives within the Plan that Members would be in a position to approve and hold the Council accountable for. The objectives within the new Plan would be broad but the performance measure framework would include significant detail.

It was proposed that the current large number of Service Plans be consolidated down to 5 Directorate level plans to support delivery of the Corporate Plan and to support with producing performance monitoring reports. It was recognised that KPIs should be meaningful to demonstrate how service areas were working effectively and to demonstrate the impact of such work for members of the public to see. In response to a subsequent comment raised by the Chair of the Committee on the importance of service users being placed at the centre of the Council's efforts, the Director advised that they would be happy to bring further information back to Committee for its consideration to demonstrate how the new Plan's objectives and performance management framework had been drafted as well as the relevant information used to inform the drafts.

The Director went on to apprise the Committee on the questions posed in the Self-Assessment survey to deliberately identify issues to understand the priorities of individuals engaging with Council services. This was a good starting point and would lead into engagement events over the summer months as well as online consultation to allow officers to draft the new Corporate Plan in the autumn of 2024. Officers had also taken steps to try to simplify language within the new Plan draft in order to resonate more with readers and to reflect that the outcomes of the Corporate Plan were not just a numbers game.

In summary, the Director advised that the Committee would be able to see how the Council had set objectives from the evidence gathered and that a draft Corporate Plan would be presented in the autumn of 2024.

The Chair then invited questions in relation to the Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) which could be summarised as follows:

- Was the Panel process the first time the Council was undertaking said process and would be it timely?
- Who would be appointing the membership of the Panel and was consideration being given to the political balance of its members?

In response, the Director of Corporate Resources confirmed that it was the first time the Council had undertaken the PPA process and that it was the right time to undertake the process as this had been introduced as a requirement by the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act in 2021. The current timing was late enough to allow drafting of the new Corporate Plan based on meaningful objectives but still allowed the Council adequate time to respond to the Panel assessment for which the Council was required to publish a response.

In terms of the Panel membership, the membership criteria set out within the report were the minimum requirements but could be increased upon. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) were supporting with the first phase of membership appointments to help facilitate the process by providing a list of useful

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contacts, however, the decision on the membership would be a decision of the Council's Cabinet. A PPA report would be presented to Full Council in due course. The Elected Members on the Assessment Panel would be external to the Vale of Glamorgan to ensure that the Panel brought external challenge with the purpose of peer led improvements. The Director would discuss with the WLGA the matter of political balance on the Panel, to ensure a balance of experience and perspective on the Panel, based on what the WLGA was seeing in other Local Authorities.

With the Committee's permission, the Leader of the Council added to the officer's response by advising that the Administration welcomed constructive feedback as this helped to make progress and highlighted that the Council was already in the Self-Assessment process, with the Chairs of Scrutiny Committees invited to take part. The Council invited external views, as well as in-house, and that recent Estyn report success commended the Council on being very honest in its assessment processes. The Vale of Glamorgan Council worked across boundaries in Wales, with other local authorities, as there was a recognised mutual agreement that all public services were working towards a common goal to the benefit of local residents. There was also a number of established and professional peer assessors based across Wales which the Vale of Glamorgan would be considering as part of its Assessment Panel independent member membership.

In conclusion, the Chair summarised that the Vale of Glamorgan Council needed the best people for the job irrespective of their political affiliation.

The Chair then welcomed questions in relation to the third section of the report on the Council's Self-Assessment process and raised the single question presented on what the Council was going to do differently this time round?

In response, the Director advised that when performance monitoring reports were presented to Committee, the covering report would also be supported by an easy-read summary of the assessment alongside the covering report. Reports would also include more case studies to bring to life the impact the Council's work was having. Committee would be provided with a further Self-Assessment report with additional details in the near future.

In response to a subsequent point raised by the Chair as to the timetable for the self-assessment, and the timings stated for public engagement being over the summer months, the Director acknowledged the Chair's concern with regards to timing and advised that officers were going to extend the engagement period by bringing it forward two weeks and that by going to well attended events over the summer there was potential to engage directly with residents as well as using the results of the Let's Talk survey. Members would be consulted on any judgements made following public engagement in a future report to Committee.

The Council was currently assessing the technical processes and approaches for the new Corporate Plan rather than being at the point of making fundamental decisions and therefore, it was felt that the current time was a good opportunity to go out for public consultation and events to engage with service users.

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With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T both the Cabinet reference and appended report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be referred back to Cabinet as follows:
  - In addition to the membership criteria for the Performance Assessment Panel, as set out in paragraph 2.12 of the report, consideration also be given, alongside advice received from Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) colleagues, to whether political balance of the Panel should be sought, to ensure a wide range of experience and perspective prior to the Panel being appointed by Cabinet.
  - Consideration be given to the scheduling of consultation activities, for the Self-Assessment and Corporate Plan, to maximise levels of engagement over the July – October 2024 period, which also covers both the political recess and academic holiday period.
  - The Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be presented with a report, at the appropriate time within the development process for the 2025-30 Corporate Plan, to demonstrate how the Plan Objectives and Performance Management Framework have been drafted as well as the information used to inform the drafts.

Reason for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of both the Cabinet reference and appended report to outline the approach to developing a new Corporate Plan for 2025-2030, arrangements and proposed scope for the Panel Performance Assessment and to present the Vale of Glamorgan Annual Performance Calendar for 2024/25.
- (2) To ensure the Council fully discharges its duties under both the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to publish annual Well-being Objectives, keep performance under review and consult and report on our performance through an annual self-assessment relating to the previous financial year.

155 PROJECT ZERO UPDATE REPORT (CX) –

The report was presented by the Operational Manager for Corporate Strategy and Insight, the purpose of which was to advise Members of progress across the Council in responding to the climate emergency, the nature emergency, and delivering commitments as part of Project Zero including work being undertaken through the Public Services Board.

The report and Appendix A detailed the wide range of activity being undertaken to ensure the Council continued to deliver against commitments in the Climate

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Change Challenge Plan and to take forward Project Zero. This included the RAG (red, amber, green) rating of progress against the steps in the Climate Change Challenge Plan. Progress from October 2023 to March 2024 included: the launch of new Project Zero training modules, support for business decarbonisation, the roll out of services to support the new Wales Workplace Recycling Regulations, ongoing development of a number of key strategies and plans, further roll out of EV charging infrastructure, ongoing work on active travel, the building of energy efficient council housing and the building of carbon zero schools, the delivery of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to three community buildings as well as ongoing conversion of lighting to LED, and extensive work by the Local Nature Partnership and the Restore the Thaw Landscape project to support and enhance nature and biodiversity across the Vale.

The Officer highlighted that the report provided Members with an update regarding the finances associated with Project Zero and the use of the Project Zero reserve. The report also provided updates on the Public Services Board (PSB) work to tackle the climate and nature emergencies which was a priority in the PSB Well-being Plan and detailed in section 2.6 of the report.

In conclusion, the Officer referred to Appendix B of the report which showed the updated Performance Indicators for 2024/25 and also updates on the approach to programme management.

Following the Officer's presentation of the report, Councillor Franks requested further detail in relation to statements made within the report on liaison with Town and Community Councils via the Public Service Board (PSB), the introduction of energy saving investment in public buildings, and the Welsh Government report in relation to pollution in Wales.

In response, the Operational Manager, with input from the Director of Corporate Resources, advised that liaison with Town and Community Councils was ongoing and undertaken throughout the year via PSB and Town and Community Council Exchange meetings and confirmed that the most recent invitation went out to all Community Councils who were encouraged to attend. However, the attendance of Town and Community Councils (TCCs) at these meetings would vary based on the topics for discussion at each meeting. The PSB had discussed methods of liaison with TCC representatives previously and it was felt that the exchange meetings had been a useful forum on a range of matters. The exchange meetings allowed the opportunity to bring PSB partners directly to TCC representatives and therefore officers encouraged as much attendance as possible from TCC representatives alongside those that were members of the Council's Community Liaison Committee.

In relation to Councillor Franks' queries on the energy saving investments in public buildings, as well as the Welsh Government Pollution in Wales report, officers advised that they did not have the information to hand at the meeting and were not familiar with the stated report and therefore, they would provide a response to the Councillor following the meeting, having liaised with their relevant colleagues. In reply, Councillor Franks stated that engagement with TCCs via the PSB was a very arms-length approach and therefore questioned whether it was the best

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forum for communication and engagement with TCCs. Councillor Franks welcomed further information in relation to energy saving investments that had taken place in community centres and would be happy to discuss the Welsh Government Pollution report with officers following the meeting.

Councillor Hanks then requested whether the Committee could be provided with a presentation on the Council's electric vehicle fleet as well as the infrastructure used to support the fleet as well as further information on whether a reuse pop-up shop was being planned for the recycling centre in Llandow and the Vale Agri hub.

In response, the Director advised that the Committee would be provided with a report in relation to the Council's electric vehicle fleet and that enquiries would be made with the appropriate colleagues in relation to the Councillor's request for information on the Llandow Recycling Centre. Further information would also be provided to the Committee following the meeting in relation to the Agri hub which was a Hensol development.

The Vice-Chair of the Committee then raised the following questions:

- Now that recycling efforts had been made to encourage the separation of waste within organisations, following Project Zero grant funding, was any grant funding available to replace public bins?
- A large proportion of Vale of Glamorgan street lighting was now LED, which was significant steps towards decarbonisation, however, what final steps would be taken to convert all of the Council's street lighting to help reach the 2030 net zero target?
- When project bids had been made by service teams using Welsh Government funds in relation to Project Zero, were any efforts being made to reach out to other sections of the Council to promote the availability of grants more widely to make sure that the grants process was quicker and taken up as much as possible?

In response to the Vice-Chair's first and third question, the Director of Corporate Resources advised that public separated recycling bins had been trialled in the past however, there had been significant changes in street furniture in recent years. Project Zero funding was allowing officers to make further trials going forward and it had initially been proposed that trials would begin in the Cowbridge area within communal areas for flat properties as well as the public realm, with the hope to then progress on to other public areas. However, that was subject to a pilot taking place in the first instance. Energy improvement works had been undertaken at three community centres following the availability of Welsh Government funding and the three centres had been selected based on works having the greatest impact for the centres. Officers would be meeting with Welsh Government at one of the community centres in the near future to discuss food insecurity and to show the improvements to the building and would take the opportunity to demonstrate what could be achieved with funding. It was also confirmed that officers worked closely with colleagues as part of the Project Zero reserves process to ensure funding applications were robust and to share ideas and learning and encouraged the development of suitable funding proposals.



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The Operational Manager for Engineering was then invited to address the Committee in answer to the Vice-Chair's second question who advised that some significant capital investments over the previous five years had meant that over 90% of the Council's street lighting in both residential and main road areas had been completed. Therefore, the lighting that was left to convert was likely considered as ornamental or bespoke and therefore was more difficult and costly to convert. The relevant team wished to continue with making progress, however this was subject to appropriate resources being available. However, it was recognised that the Vale of Glamorgan had done extremely well in converting its lighting stock to date.

The Chair of the Committee then advised that 78% of carbon emissions were in relation to the procurement supply chain and therefore queried if the Council had given thought to establishing a commissioning board to explore what the Council was buying before engaging with consumer partners? The Chair also noted that Project Zero was developing on lots of projects however, queried whether officers had a sense that these efforts were enough and/or would the Council ever be in a position to know if progress being made was enough to reach target?

In response, the Director of Corporate Resources advised that officers had had discussions with Ardal to achieve the same objective that the Chair was proposing before the Council entered any procurement process. A future report would be presented to the Committee which would demonstrate the Council's efforts to look at what was coming up in terms of future requirements and subsequently looking at the impact on the environment if such procurement were to progress. Officers were of the opinion that progress was being made and the Carbon Management Plan, which would be presented to Committee in the near future, would set this out in more detail. The Council would also shortly be reporting carbon emissions data for 2023/24 as part of Welsh Government's public sector reporting requirements and the data could be considered alongside the Council's Carbon Management Plan to demonstrate the Council's direction of travel and how successful decarbonation efforts had been to date.

The Vice-Chair subsequently added that it would be beneficial for Members to be able to see how far the Council was progressing in relation to individual projects in the Council's Carbon Management Plan as well as success in comparison to the overall raw data. The Chair subsequently echoed the Vice-Chair's comments and added that it was critical for Members to see carbon association against each project especially under the umbrella of a sparing budget and to support any future spending.

Councillor Carroll then stated that the 2030 net zero target needed to be an honest target and considered against whether the appropriate infrastructure was available to meet it. It would therefore be useful for Members to see more analysis on whether the 2030 target was actually realistic as well as a comparison of how efforts within one service area of the Council may negate efforts taking place elsewhere in the Council, for example, the Council's efforts in relation to delivering the Revised Local Development Plan against Project Zero commitments. Councillor Carroll echoed the Chair's points in relation to the

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procurement supply chain being pertinent as the point was not currently raised enough and the industry needed to be changed.

In response, the Director for Corporate Resources advised that the 2030 net zero target had been set by Welsh Government for public services and therefore was an external target put upon the Council. It was acknowledged that the target was incredibly challenging to meet and integrate as business as usual. The scheduled Carbon Management Plan report would provide Members with the detail they requested as well as an emphasis on how far away the Council was from achieving the target. It was acknowledged that the significant percentage of carbon emissions within the procurement supply chain was one of the biggest challenges for the Council and officers were of the mind that there was a lot more work still to be done.

In conclusion, the Chair stated that the 2030 date for the net zero target was concerningly close but, it was not plausible to push the target date back, as efforts needed to be made in order to try and achieve it to the benefit of everyone. Therefore, Project Zero had to be at the heart of everything the Council did.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the following aspects of the report be noted:

- the progress detailed in the report, and Appendix A, in relation to the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan and the work of the Public Services Board,
- the RAG rating of progress from October 2023 to March 2024 in Appendix A,
- the funding available in reserves and the projects awarded funding to date,
- the updated Corporate Performance Indicators relevant to Project Zero, as set out at Appendix B.

(2) T H A T the comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be referred back to Cabinet, alongside those of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024 Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting, as follows:

- A report on the Council's electrical vehicle fleet and necessary infrastructure be added to the Committee's Forward Work Programme for future consideration.
- That reports intended for the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee in relation to Project Zero and the Carbon Management Plan be received by the Committee on the same agenda wherever possible going forward and amended on the Committee's Forward Work Programme accordingly.
- Whether Council reports, in relation to procurement processes, should give explicit consideration to reducing the Council's carbon footprint at both the pre-commissioning and de-commissioning stages of the process, in

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addition to the already existing efforts to reduce carbon to support the Council's ambition to be net zero by 2030.

- Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee Members be provided with further information in relation to the Agri Hub, as referred to in steps PZC4.2 and PZC9.4 of the Project Zero Climate Challenge Plan, recognising that the scheme was still in the early stages of development.
- Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee Members be provided with further information in relation to whether a re-use pop-up shop should be established at the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Llandow, given that the facility was to remain in its current location for the foreseeable future.

(3) T H A T the report, as presented, be distributed to all Elected Members, members of the Public Services Board and all Town and Community Councils for their information.

#### Reasons for recommendations

(1) Having regard to the contents of the report to ensure that Members were aware of: how Project Zero and the related work of the Public Services Board was being taken forward, the RAG rating of progress from October 2023 to March 2024 against the steps within the Climate Change Challenge Plan, the available funding and the projects awarded funding to date, and the updates made to the Corporate Performance Indicators relevant to Project Zero.

(2) To enable Cabinet to consider the comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee as part of its consideration of progress in delivering the Climate Change Challenge Plan.

(3) To update all Elected Members and other stakeholders on the arrangements in place to deliver Project Zero.

#### 156 UPDATE ON THE PEOPLE STRATEGY (DCR) –

The purpose of the report was to provide an overview of current work and progress against the People Strategy and was presented to the Committee by the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

The current People Strategy (brought before Cabinet in February 2023) was a key strategic enabler, setting the vision and direction for all people related activity across the organisation.

Aligning with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Five ways of working, it made a clear statement about how the Council valued and treated its staff and the culture it wished to foster. It also outlined how everyone would be provided with a supportive and nurturing working environment to achieve and support the vision of 'Working Together for a Brighter Future'.

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The Officer advised that the People Strategy had 3 over-arching themes, strongly aligned to the Corporate Plan, Annual Delivery Plan, Wellbeing Objectives and Project Zero. Those were:

- Redesigning for Responsiveness,
- Striving for High Performance, and
- Driving Employee Experiences.

The Officer drew Committee's attention to the key activities within the above themes, as sectioned within the report, to inform the Committee of progress and provide the opportunity for discussion on future projects and areas for ongoing improvement.

Following the Officer's presentation of the report, the Chair raised two questions as follows:

- Would the Council be looking to develop its recruitment and selection processes to support neurodiverse applicants?
- With there still being gaps within certain occupations across the Council, were the Council making efforts to develop its existing workforce?

In response, the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development advised that they were passionate about making developments in the Council's recruitment and selection processes to support neurodiverse individuals and that pictorial analysis of the Council's recruitment processes would be taking place which could suggest changes to some of the Council's current practices. The Council was already making efforts to grow its current workforce and had seen real success within its Social Care Programme, Fast Track to Care Programme and the Quick Start Programme to date. The Council had also taken steps to increase its apprenticeship programme and to encourage apprenticeships from graduates across various sectors of the Council.

Councillor Carroll then referred to Section 2.32 of the report in relation to diversity networks and expressed their concern that the Council seemed to be continuing efforts to promote the Council's Diversity Networks in contrast to recommendations raised by Welsh Government following a recent independent review panel in March 2024 which found that diversity network schemes were not effective.

In response, the Officer advised that the specific statement Councillor Carroll made from the report they could see working in partnership with the Networks and there was evidence of improvements for the Council's workforce with the establishment and use of its various networks. The Council was not ignoring the UK Government's report but recognised that its networks were not just operating within isolation and would be happy to discuss the matter further with Councillor Carroll following the meeting.

The Leader of the Council also added that they themselves had attended a lot of the Council's networks events and had witnessed them being highly beneficial to the individuals involved first hand. Therefore, current networks had the full

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support of the organisation to support Council staff. The Leader had recently attended training on being an ally and/or a proactive by-stander which highlighted the importance of political leaders being seen to support all areas of society.

In response to a subsequent comment from Councillor Carroll that the comments of the Leader and Officer appeared to be contradicting each other, the Chair summarised that the Officer and Leader were stating that they were working together and requested that a report be brought back to Committee on the benefits and positive impacts on the Council's diversity networks.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the report as presented, on progress against the Council's People Strategy, feedback provided and discussions on future activity moving forward, be noted.
- (2) T H A T the comment of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be referred back to Cabinet as follows:
  - A report on the benefits and positive outcomes of the Council's Diversity Networks, as referred to in paragraphs 2.32 – 2.34 of the report, be circulated to all Elected Members of the Council by email in due course.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report to inform Committee of the progress against the People Strategy and future plans moving forward.
- (2) To enable the Cabinet to consider the views of the Scrutiny Committee on progress being made under the People Strategy.