

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
19TH FEBRUARY, 2025

REFERENCE FROM HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 5TH FEBRUARY, 2025

“ INITIAL BUDGET 2025/26 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26
TO 2029/30 PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATION (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 16th January, 2025 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer and the Head of Housing and Building Services.

Following presentation of the report, Officers advised the following in response to Members' questions and comments:

- Extensive work was being carried out with Officers involved in the reshaping programme, in order to work through the proposals, with a view to getting ahead of the usual schedule of the budget setting process.
- Although as many responses as possible to the budget-specific consultation had been sought, the aim for consulting with residents on the budget was to draw from a variety of the Council's public engagement exercises to gain a more holistic picture of residents' priorities for the Council's services.
- Finance Officers worked in conjunction with the Communications team to share information with the public regarding the Council's finances, and to ensure that language used in consultation documents was as accessible and jargon-free as possible.
- Officers had developed a range of different ways to get key messages regarding the budget across to residents, including reaching new audiences through the use of Instagram for the first time this year.
- Publishing Equality Impact Assessments regarding savings proposals, alongside the consultation itself, had enabled engagement with residents to be conducted in a more meaningful way this year.
- Responses to the budget consultation were at approximately 500 responses received, which was significantly greater than last year's level.
- Although it was right to continue to lobby for an improved settlement from Welsh Government, in order for change to be implemented, all 22 Welsh Authorities would need to agree to a review of the funding formula.

With no further queries or comments, Committee subsequently:

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the contents of the Cabinet reference and the appended report on the Initial Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Plan

2025/26 to 2029/30 Proposals for Consultation be noted, and the following views of the Committee be referred for scrutiny at the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee:

- That lobbying should continue around an improved settlement for the Vale of Glamorgan from Welsh Government;
- The importance of conveying the information contained in the proposals to residents in an understandable format, and to gain resident views effectively.

Reason for recommendation

For the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee to be advised of the views of this Committee, in order for a composite response to be developed and referred back to Cabinet.”