



# THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

## SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2006-07

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## **Introduction**

This is the third Annual Report of Scrutiny at the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

The report sets out to give a flavour of the work and developments which have taken place in the field of Scrutiny in the Vale of Glamorgan during 2006/07.

It also highlights some of the main findings and recommendations arising from an internal review of the effectiveness of Scrutiny arrangements undertaken during the year and sets out recommendations for the way forward over the next two years.

Accompanying this covering report are detailed reports, together with statistical information, on the work of the Council's four Scrutiny Committees during 2006/07 :

- Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety)
- Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources)
- Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)
- Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning)

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## **Why Is Effective Scrutiny Important ?**

Effective Scrutiny is important for several reasons :

- Under the Council's Constitution, Scrutiny is essential to ensure that important decisions and activities are tested robustly, but constructively
- Good Scrutiny helps to ensure that the Council has effective governance arrangements
- Effective Scrutiny is an important part of how the Council is judged by external regulators such as the Wales Audit Office
- Perhaps most importantly, meaningful Scrutiny of decisions, policies and services is essential to make sure that the Council is accountable to local people

In the early days following the introduction of new political management arrangements, much effort went into establishing and embedding the concept of Scrutiny and developing the processes necessary to move Scrutiny

forward. The ongoing challenge for Members involved in Scrutiny will be to demonstrate that the time, energy and resources devoted by both Members and officers makes a difference to the people of the Vale of Glamorgan.

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## What is Overview and Scrutiny ?

The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities like the Vale of Glamorgan Council to adopt Executive arrangements, which effectively results in decisions being taken on behalf of the Council on most major issues by a small number of elected members (the Executive or Cabinet). The Executive, acting collectively or individually, makes decisions in line with Council approved policy.

Members who are not in the Executive are charged with maintaining an overview of Council business and scrutinising areas of particular interest or concern. Their role is to hold the Executive to account, when deemed necessary, in the business they undertake and to assist in the development and review of Council policy. The latter task involves looking in detail at areas of service delivery or issues of general concern and making recommendations to the Executive or to the whole Council. This could include suggestions for improvements or different ways of doing things.

**Scrutiny Committees are an essential and integral part of Council decision - making arrangements and have been given wide-ranging powers of review and Scrutiny and the ability to make reports and recommendations on any matters relevant to the area and its inhabitants.**

The Centre for Public Scrutiny suggest that there are four principles to good public Scrutiny, namely :

- provide a “critical friend” challenge to executives as well as external authorities and agencies;
- reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities;
- take the lead and own the Scrutiny process on behalf of the public;
- make an impact on the delivery of public services.

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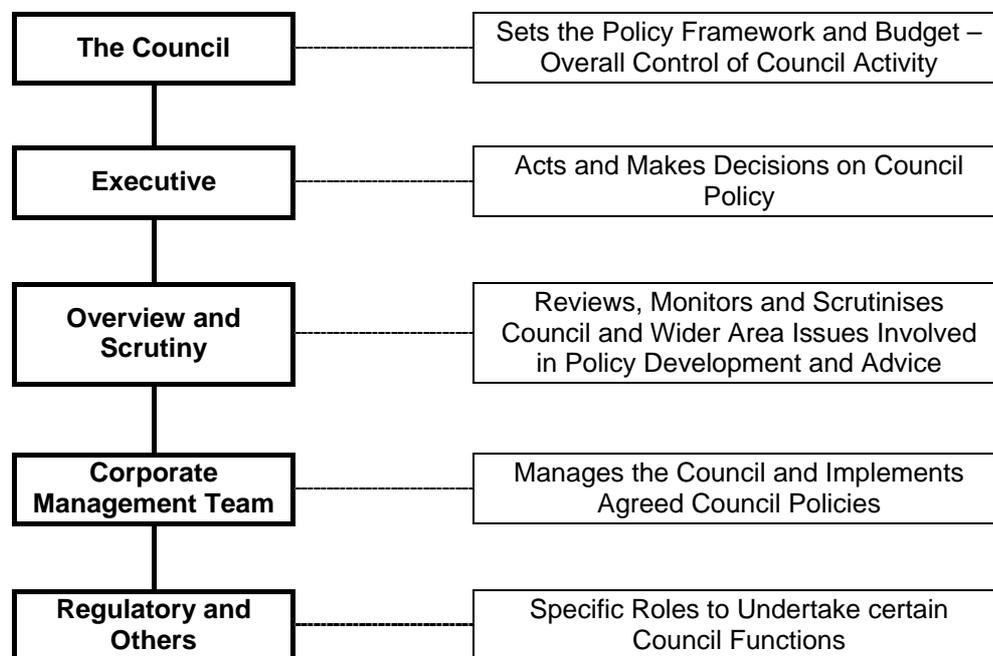
## Where Does Overview and Scrutiny Fit In ?

Scrutiny should :

- Contribute to policy development and review
- Publicly hold the Executive to account.
- Examine matters of wide public interest.

Scrutiny Committees do not take decisions relating to the responsibilities of the Council but are empowered to make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or the Council.

This can be summarised by the following diagram :-



The Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements are designed to complement and add value to the work of the Executive and other parts of the Council. In doing so, the aim is to see that it accords, for instance with the principles of effective scrutiny suggested by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, i.e.:

- Is Member led and owned.
- Has a proactive influence on the development of policies.
- Aids in the dissemination of best practice.
- Champions the whole community, engaging with its representatives, partnerships and other organisations.

- Is undertaken with probity and transparency.
- Applies the processes of Scrutiny to external as well as internal matters wherever they impact on the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Scrutiny encourages the Council to measure, and report in public upon, its own performance. It assists ensures openness and accountability about the way decisions are made and enables the Executive to be held to account.

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## Where Are We Now ?

During the summer of 2006, a review to evaluate the effectiveness of Scrutiny arrangements was undertaken. The review was designed to examine how well Scrutiny had embedded itself within the decision-making process and to provide a snapshot of its effectiveness. It should be noted that the review was conducted prior to the subsequent change to the political administration of the Council and associated roles and responsibilities of Members. The report emanating from the review highlights the key strengths and weaknesses of the current Scrutiny arrangements, proposes areas of improvement and identifies good/notable practice across the UK.

The review took place using the Centre for Public Scrutiny “Principles of Effective Scrutiny” and considered the perceptions of Scrutiny Members, Executive Members and Directors / Heads of Service. A survey was circulated to all the key stakeholders and four focus groups were held for Scrutiny Members using the CfPS framework to consider issues in greater detail.

Overall there was a good response rate to the survey from all stakeholders and all four focus groups were well attended by Scrutiny Members with political representation by all parties.

It was evident from the survey that the Council has made significant progress in developing the Scrutiny function since the last review in 2003. The comparison of stakeholder views has also been useful, adding a depth of perception to the overall findings. It is clear from the review that members and officers are increasingly becoming more engaged with Scrutiny.

The study highlighted the key strengths/achievements since 2003 to be:

- Good progress has been made in relation to policy performance and review and Scrutiny is effective at conducting improvement reviews
- Training needs of Members have been addressed through the Member Development Strategy and the publication of a Scrutiny Handbook

- The establishment of the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen Group has helped to promote good cross-party working and information sharing
- Additional officer support in the Improvement and Development Team has played a vital role in improving Scrutiny
- Scrutiny has established strong working relationships with senior officers
- Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of Democratic Services Officers and Improvement and Development Team staff has assisted in developing and refining the Scrutiny process

Notwithstanding the improvements highlighted above, the review identified some key issues and areas of development as follows:

- Revise and restructure membership of Committees
- The length of agendas remains an issue, which has a direct impact on the ability to scrutinise decisions
- Scrutiny's role in relation to external review and policy development continues to be under-developed
- A perception that Scrutiny is unable to influence decision-making at the Executive level
- The need for Scrutiny to carefully review and evaluate the choice of topics for their annual work programme
- Scrutiny Members need to be encouraged to lead the Scrutiny process through appropriate support and development
- The need to reinforce good Scrutiny-Executive relations through the development of mechanisms to promote co-operation and participation
- Scrutiny should better engage the views of the public, so that it can have a greater impact on local communities

Related to the above, there is some correlation between these findings and those contained in Wales Audit Office follow up report on progress on Democratic Renewal within the Council. The WAO report partly touched upon the Scrutiny function and recommended a number of similar improvement areas. These matters will be progressed as part of the business of the Democratic Renewal Working Group during the next municipal year.

## **Budget**

The £10,000 Scrutiny Budget continued to be used for attending conferences and undertaking research in respect of Reviews, as well as payments for the hiring of venues and equipment for Committee meetings within the Vale.

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## **The Way Forward**

We will continue to explore ways of generating increased interest among the public, press and its partners by demonstrating that Scrutiny can make a difference. The Wales Audit Office has commended the excellent quality of the Council's Scrutiny Handbook and its contents will remain under review and be adapted to meet changing demands as necessary. The Handbook provides a useful tool for participants in the Scrutiny process and is available on the Council's own website and that of the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

The Scrutiny Chairmen / Vice-Chairmen Group will continue to provide a "sounding board" for new initiatives within the field of Scrutiny and is key to the continuing development of effective practices and procedures.

Performance indicators for Scrutiny were introduced in 2006/07. Their effectiveness will be monitored during the coming year.

Links will continue to be developed with other local authorities so that exchange of good practice and, indeed, joint Scrutiny working can continue.

The Council will continue its commitment to regional and national Scrutiny Networks.

The Scrutiny pages of the Council's website [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) will continue to be enhanced by the provision of additional information

The improvement areas arising from the 2006 review feature as 15 recommendations throughout the body of the full review report. The recommendations have been endorsed by the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen Group and by the four Scrutiny Committees and are set out at the end of the report as actions for 2007/08 – 2008/09.

Copies of the final report and its findings are available in the Member's Room. Alternatively, Members can request a copy of the full report from the Improvement and Development Team in the Chief Executive's Department. The recommendations have been endorsed by the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen Group and by the four Scrutiny Committees and are intended to be implemented over a two year period.

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## **How People Can Become Involved In Scrutiny**

### **Attend meetings**

All Scrutiny meetings are generally held in public except where matters of an exempt or confidential nature are under consideration. (Access to Information Rules). Agendas for meetings are available at the Civic Offices and Council Offices and facilities i.e. libraries within the Vale of Glamorgan, 3 days prior to the meeting.

### **Witnesses**

Scrutiny Committees can call a range of individuals to e.g. explain matters within their remit or discuss matters of local concern. They can be members of the public, representatives from local organisations and officers of the Authority.

### **Co-opted Members**

Committees are able to recommend to Council the appointment of people/organisations as non-voting co-optees (including on a Task and Finish Group).

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## Contact Details

For further information about this Annual report or any aspect of Scrutiny work in the Vale of Glamorgan Council please contact :

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## Actions for 2007/08 –2008/09

- R1 Organise a Scrutiny event for non-executive members to explore and further develop the effectiveness of Scrutiny.
- R2 Develop a pre-work programme evaluation and checklist when scoping reviews to assess the suitability of potential work programme items paying particular regard to the Council's risk register, corporate priorities and Cabinet forward work programme.
- R3 Review the Scrutiny Handbook to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and transparent.
- R4 When managing committee business, that Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen consider inviting Executive Members.
- R5 Develop and implement a post-review analysis to evaluate review outcomes against review objectives.
- R6 Further develop website content to enable the public to engage with the Scrutiny process.
- R7 Produce an executive public summary of the Scrutiny Annual Report that is accessible to the public.
- R8 Investigate the feasibility of further developing task and finish groups for appropriate Scrutiny work programme items.
- R9 Organise a workshop enabling members to discuss and review any changes required to the process for developing Corporate Plan priorities.
- R10 Explore the feasibility of reducing the size of committee membership.
- R11 Investigate the feasibility of member development of specialist functions within Scrutiny, enabling members to increase their expertise in certain Scrutiny areas.
- R12 Develop a proposal to facilitate in increasing public participation in the Scrutiny process and meetings.
- R13 Revise the format of Scrutiny meetings by restructuring the content of meetings and the development of themed agendas.
- R14 Annually produce a summary of consultation activities from the previous year to feed in consultation outcomes to assist in the development of a yearly work programme.
- R15 Implement a series of triangulation meetings on a quarterly basis for each Scrutiny Committee involving relevant Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, officers and Executive members to discuss work programme items and any matters of concern.

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **(COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND SAFETY)**

The Committee's scope of responsibility covers the following service areas:

- Housing,
- Community Safety and
- Social Services.

### **Membership**

At the beginning of 2006, the membership of the Committee was as follows:

Councillor Mrs. M.E.J. Birch (Chairman); Councillor R.F. Curtis (Vice-Chairman); Councillors R.J. Bertin, Ms. R.M. Birch, Mrs. J.E. Charles, P. Church, J. Clifford, S.C. Egan, C.L. Osborne, Mrs. A.J. Preston, Mrs. M. Randall, A.J. Readman, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe, K.R. Stockdale, W.C. Vaughan, Mrs. M.R. Wilkinson and C.J. Williams.

As noted above, the Scrutiny Committee consists of 17 Members plus a representative from each of the following organisations who have been appointed in a co-opted non-voting capacity:

- Shakespeare Residents Association
- Colcot Residents Association
- Gibbonsdown Residents Board
- Vale Housing and Homelessness Forum
- Vale Housing Federation
- Vale Council Residents Forum
- Shelter Cymru.

Following a change in administration in December 2006, which is referred to later in the report, the membership of the Committee changed. Set out below is the current membership:

Councillor Mrs. M.E.J. Birch (Chairman); Councillor K.R. Stockdale (Vice-Chairman); Councillors R.J. Bertin, Ms. R.M. Birch, Ms. L. Burnett, Mrs. J.E. Charles, P. Church, Mrs. V.M. Hartrey, N.P. Hodges, H.J.W. James, G.C. Kemp, Mrs. A.J. Moore, A.G. Powell, Mrs. A.J. Preston, B.I. Shaw, J.W. Thomas and W.C. Vaughan. Plus the non – voting co-opted representatives referred to above.

Early in 2007, the Council also unfortunately lost a Member who had served on the Scrutiny Committee and the Committee wished to record their thanks in this Annual Report to the late Councillor A.J. Readman who, through his hard work and dedication, contributed to the Scrutiny process of the Vale in

particular with his involvement in the Homelessness and Domestic Abuse Reviews of the Committee and to the Council in general.

Scrutiny Committees may also appoint Sub-Committees and as such a Housing Sub-Committee of this Committee was reappointed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2006. The work undertaken by the Housing Sub-Committee for the year is detailed later in this document.

## **Current Forward Work Programme 2006 / 2007**

Performance Monitoring had again remained an integral part of the Scrutiny Committee's remit with monitoring reports being submitted on a regular basis as well as the following :-

- examining the initial revenue and capital budget proposals
- re-establishing the Housing Sub-Committee
- Revenue and Capital Financial Monitoring
- an update on Emergency Planning matters
- continuing to raise the Committee's profile including the role and importance of scrutiny in general
- undertaking Reviews, i.e. Homelessness Review and Domestic Violence Abuse Review
- consideration of both the Council's Corporate and Improvement Plans.

Continued monitoring of service performance on a quarterly basis also allowed the Committee the opportunity to agree service performance targets and receive explanations for those service targets not achieved.

On 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007, the Committee approved and welcomed new proposals by the Interim Director of Social Services on the reporting methods for Children and Family Services Performance Information. The new proposals would be around clear aspects of decision-making and would highlight any key operational issues for both Members and officers to consider.

Throughout the year the Committee's work programme continued to be reviewed and updated in light of emerging issues, for example delays in undertaking the reviews and the overspend in the Department of Social Services budget.

## **Cabinet Member Involvement**

The Committee continued to encourage the attendance of Cabinet Members for Housing and Community Safety and Social Care Services at meetings to facilitate questioning on the portfolio service areas. Cabinet Members responded to this by attending on a regular basis without the Committee having to formally invite them. This pattern of involvement has also continued by the Cabinet Members of the new administration which took over in December 2006.

## **Meetings**

During the municipal year 2006 / 2007, the Committee met 15 times with one of the meetings in October having to be reconvened due to insufficient time to deal with the business. Out of the 15, four were Extraordinary meetings which had been called to deal with extra items of business and items requested by the Chairman.

## **Engaging with the Community**

At the beginning of the year, the Committee planned to rotate venues for its meetings throughout the Vale of Glamorgan and as a result, visited Llantwit Major Childrens Centre and the Memorial Hall, Barry. Other venues were considered but due to insufficient capacity at the time, the Committee was unable to hold meetings on as many occasions as originally planned. It is envisaged that this practice will continue as an ongoing initiative but to include themed agenda items, i.e. issues that are pertinent to the local area where the meeting will be taking place. The Committee will consider this as and when matters relate to particular areas.

The meeting in the Memorial Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2006 also resulted in an attendance of over 200 persons who were afforded the opportunity to speak and make representations both orally and in writing. The Committee considered that this was an excellent example / way forward for engaging the community in the Scrutiny process.

## **Work Undertaken During the Year**

### **➤ Workshops / Visits**

The Committee also took part in two workshops in order to gain further knowledge and encourage debate on various topics. These included the Older People's Forum, the Care and Repair Service, the Catering Service and Barnardo's. Representatives from each of the service areas attended the workshops, provided presentations to Committee and general and frank discussions ensued in respect of the topics. Members considered this an invaluable way of increasing their knowledge base and engaging with staff.

Members of the Committee were also afforded the opportunity in January 2007 to visit the CCTV Unit at the Civic Offices and gain a working knowledge of the issues at hand.

## ➤ **Reports**

Committee received the Community Safety Partnership Annual Report for 2005 / 2006 and requested that feedback be presented to the Committee on an annual basis.

In undertaking monitoring of services Members noted particular concerns in respect of the overall spend on Social Services and the costs of out of county placements. Residential Care provision was also considered by the Committee, in-house provision had always been a matter the Committee was conscious of and Committee welcomed negotiations taking place with a children's care home provider in a joint initiative with the Council. This however has yet to be completed. Other discussions in relation to residential care involved the residential care home owner who had taken the matter of care home fees to arbitration the outcome of which was pending and together with the overspend in Social Services could have a significant impact on the Authority. Further reports were requested on these matters which will be reported during the forthcoming year.

## ➤ **Joint Review of Social Services**

A Joint Review of Social Services was carried out by the Social Services Inspectorate in Wales and the Wales Audit Office between January 2006 and April 2007. The presentation of the findings had initially been given to some Groups of Councillors, staff, service users and other stakeholders in May 2006 who had had a significant involvement in the review itself. However, the final report was not available until February 2007. Members had agreed to consider their annual work programme for 2006 / 2007 once the findings of the report were known, however the delay in receiving the report had been overtaken by the overspend issues within the Social Services Department of the Council. The Joint Review will therefore be considered by the Committee together with the Social Services Change Plan.

## ➤ **Meeting in the Memorial Hall**

An Action Plan had been referred to the Committee from Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 in order for the Scrutiny Committee to consider the current budget issues within Social Services and the proposed Action Plan. The background to the report was that the Director of Community Services had been charged with developing an Action Plan to identify how spending across Social Services could be reduced in order to deliver a balanced budget.

The Scrutiny Committee requested that a public meeting take place in order that representatives of voluntary organisations, the Local Health Board, NHS and members of the public could be invited to attend to express their views on the proposals contained in the Social Services Budget Action Plan. Due to the large number of attendees and the evidence presented the meeting took

place over two days. The representatives were afforded the opportunity to present their views to Committee either at the meeting, in writing or both. As a result, the Scrutiny Committee considered that the recommendations be referred to the Full Council itself as detailed below:-

## RECOMMENDATIONS –

“(1) T H A T in addition to the recommendation on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2006 that the Action Plan be referred to Full Council, the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) be requested to also support the following recommendations and the referral of such and the Action Plan to Full Council:

- That in the Committee’s opinion the proposals, would contravene the Council’s policy framework in areas of statutory duties to the county’s vulnerable residents and the breaching of formal agreements with outside partners of the Council.
- That whilst some sections may be acceptable, others are not. The least acceptable are the cuts in the front-line services and the review does not provide an adequate risk analysis. There needs to be a deeper and wider consideration of the effects of the cuts to services for very vulnerable people.
- The whole Social Services Department needs review for economies and there should not be a concentration of cuts on front line services. Support services in the areas of policy, information, performance and monitoring, training and commissioning need to be included.
- The Social Services Department needs a radical root and branch restructuring to be efficient to deal with the possibility of further and future deficits. Business Process Re-engineering (being used for OneVale) could be employed in this department.
- The whole Council needs to review where it is spending money across all the departments in the light of the needs of vulnerable people which should be our priority e.g. a delay in OneVale and certain other projects would not be life threatening or affect an individual’s life expectations to the degree that front-line social services cuts would.
- We should nurture our agreements and partnerships with the National Health Trust, the Local Health Board, other Local Authorities and all the voluntary bodies who provide much of the work we want done. Some organisations will fold if we cut their support. This is poor house-keeping because we will either spend a great deal more money in re-establishing them or suffer the increased cost of supporting the then even-more vulnerable people which will fall on the Social Services Department anyway.

- Since we are seven months into the financial year is it necessary to implement these cuts now? We should concentrate on a rational, even a moral outcome for the next financial year.
- That the Scrutiny Committee expresses its total dismay at the lack of consultation with stakeholders on the proposals.”

The Full Council considered the above recommendations at its meeting in December 2006 and requested that the Chief Executive prepare a revised action plan for consideration. This culminated in a Change Plan for Social Services being drawn up which is referred to at the end of this report.

During this time a change in administration of the Council also took place as a result of a notice of motion being accepted which removed the existing Leader and the Cabinet.

### ➤ **Scrutiny Reviews (Improvement) undertaken during the year**

The Committee agreed to undertake two Reviews, which Members of the Committee had highlighted, to consider service delivery issues and notable practices. Both the Reviews had been held over from the previous year. In particular the Homelessness Review had increased its capacity due to the request by Members to visit various establishments and interview various representatives, for example, Assembly Members and users of the service.

#### (i) Homelessness Review - 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2006

The scope had originally been drawn up to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's homelessness strategy and the impact on the community which would identify the gaps between the Welsh Assembly Government's Homelessness Strategy and the existing Vale of Glamorgan Strategy. However, due to the level of interest in the subject the parameters of the scope were expanded to enable full Member participation. It was the first review to be undertaken in the Authority which had fully engaged the Scrutiny Members and encouraged them to lead the process and participate in workshops, conduct interviews and attend site visits.

The report had also sought to reflect the concerns and needs of the community by interviewing and consulting with a variety of partner agencies and service users to develop key study examples.

The Committee made the following recommendations on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2006, which were forwarded to Cabinet:

1. That the Executive Member with the housing portfolio adopts the role of a champion for homelessness issues within the Vale of Glamorgan.

2. That the next issue of the Corporate Plan currently being drafted include homelessness issues and making the relevant links to the Community Strategy.
3. That the remainder of the Section 180 monies be utilised to undertake an audit of homelessness/rough sleeping in the Vale of Glamorgan by March 2007 as required by the Welsh Assembly and to establish a system for proactive monitoring of homelessness within the county.
4. That the Housing Service review and reconfigure existing staff resources so that 'prevention' is the initial response to all homelessness enquiries.
5. That a feasibility study utilising corporate funds, which have been set aside for that purpose be undertaken including capital and revenue costs to develop a multi-agency information website and housing advice centre within existing resources in an accessible location in Barry.
6. That the Homelessness Forum (with the support of the IDT Review Team) identify duplications in provision with partners and examine overall resource capacity within the Vale of Glamorgan. The findings from the research of the Homelessness Forum will form the basis of re-commissioning of Homelessness Services within the Vale.
7. That the Homelessness Forum develop a mechanism for providing a promotional Housing Road Show / Outreach Service to cover all parts of the Vale of Glamorgan by September 2007.
8. That the temporary WAG funded post of the new Private Sector Co-ordinator be added to the establishment under the terms of the grant and that on appointment, the remit of the new Private Sector Co-ordinator include:
  - Shadowing Housing Benefits staff and co-ordinating improved joint working;
  - Read-only access to Housing Benefits information and identifying and resolving potential problems;
  - Co-ordination of regular liaison meetings between housing Benefits and Homeless Prevention Teams;
  - Nomination of lead Housing Benefits officer or the placement of a Housing Officer within Housing Benefits Section to liaise with the Homelessness Team;
  - Development of Housing Benefits Performance Indicators for pre-tenancy determinations and clients on indicative rents;
  - Review of discretionary payments;
  - Regulation of quality of landlords in order to increase housing stock.
9. That a review of the ANITE Homelessness database be conducted to examine opportunities for further development.

10. That, in light of the new suitability order, the Housing Department continues to examine alternative accommodation options to increase the level of temporary accommodation in the Vale of Glamorgan and that the timescale for turning void properties around be improved in order to ensure that 'at risk' groups are accommodated.
11. An Action Plan is developed to tackle the identified gaps between the All Wales Strategy and Vale of Glamorgan Homelessness Strategy and Prevention Plan, as set out in this report.
12. That the Homelessness Forum undertakes a training needs analysis in order to identify any training needs which may be undertaken within the Council at little or not cost.
13. That the Council invests in the production of a video/DVD highlighting the realities for young people leaving home and to be shown at all Vale of Glamorgan schools.

The Cabinet having considered the above matters RESOLVED :

1. T H A T it be accepted that the Executive Member with the Housing portfolio be designated the Champion for homelessness issues within the Vale of Glamorgan.
2. T H A T notwithstanding that Corporate Plan Actions CW8, 9, 10 and 11 already addressed this issue, it be accepted that homelessness issues be linked to the Community Strategy and be included in future issues of the Corporate Plan.
3. T H A T Section 180 monies be utilised to undertake an audit of homelessness/rough sleeping in the Vale of Glamorgan.
4. T H A T a Housing Service Review and reconfiguration of existing staff resources so that prevention was the initial response to all homelessness enquiries, had already been implemented by the Cabinet.
5. T H A T a further report be submitted to Cabinet assessing the feasibility of developing a multi-agency information website and housing advice centre linked with the possible integration with the Council's OneVale programme and the Council's new website Content Management System.
6. T H A T the position in respect of the Homelessness Forum identifying duplications in provision with partners in addition to examining the overall resource capacity within the Vale of Glamorgan, be noted and that a further report be submitted to Cabinet in relation to the feasibility of undertaking such including any resource implications for the Council.
7. T H A T recommendation (7) of the review be accepted in principle, the feasibility and financial implications of providing a promotional housing road show / outreach service be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.

8. T H A T the appointment of a new Private Sector Co-ordinator with the remit as set out in the report be accepted, subject to the above post being added to the Council's establishment as a "temporary post" and no commitment being given to fund the post beyond the period of the WAG funding.

9. T H A T, as the ANITE Homelessness database was Oracle based, it could be integrated within the OneVale initiative.

10. T H A T recommendation (10) of the Review be noted and that work was presently ongoing and would be subject to a further report to Cabinet in December 2006 / January 2007.

11. T H A T an Action Plan in respect of identifying gaps between the All Wales Strategy and the Vale of Glamorgan Homelessness Strategy and Prevention Plan as detailed in the report be subject to a further report to Cabinet as soon as practicable.

12. T H A T recommendation (12) of the Review be accepted.

13. T H A T recommendation (13) of the Review be accepted in principle and that the Director of Community Services be requested to approach Media For Schools and Area 41 to ascertain whether they would be prepared to engage in making an appropriate video and in addition, the matter be referred to the Children and Young People Partnership for further consideration.

(ii) Domestic Abuse Review - 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2007

The Review entailed establishing the roles and responsibilities of the Council and key agencies in relation to domestic abuse as well as identifying gaps in service provision and areas of good practice.

The Review identified that the Vale of Glamorgan had fallen behind other authorities in its ability to tackle and prevent domestic abuse and although the Domestic Abuse Forum met on a regular basis and had many dedicated members there was no co-ordinated approach. The Forum lacked direction, there was no strategy or action plan in place and there was a lack of monitoring by or links with the Community Safety Partnership.

As a result of the review a number of recommendations were therefore made in relation to how the Council could address the shortcomings and move forward in order to contribute to tackling and preventing domestic abuse in the Vale.

During the Review workshops and interview sessions together with Member visits to establishments had been carried out particularly for example at the Barry Unit on Barry Island. Members had had a key role in interviewing stakeholders and clients and one of the major issues identified was the need

for a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator within the Vale. The review however highlighted that there were good working relationships and the local Authority had adopted a joined up approach with its partners but that it needed to be further streamlined.

A questionnaire had also been prepared during the consultation period in respect of the review which, when analysed, revealed that respondents felt that:

- the report had been easy to read;
- all the key points in relation to domestic abuse were covered in the review;
- the draft report set out a clear picture of domestic abuse in the Vale whilst identifying gaps in provision;
- the recommendations were accurate and consistent with the review findings.

Therefore, as a result of the review, a number of recommendations were made in relation to how the Council could address the shortcomings and move forward in order to contribute to tackling and preventing domestic abuse in the Vale and the following recommendations were made by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2007:

1. Barry Court be encouraged to apply for specialist Domestic Violence status and that practitioners ensure that all victims are aware of the practical assistance they can access via the Witness Care Scheme.
2. An appropriate representative is sought from the Local Health Board to attend the Domestic Abuse Forum Steering Group to further promote joined up working at a strategic level.
3. A review be carried out on the membership of the Domestic Abuse Forum to ensure that all services, both statutory and voluntary, working with victims, perpetrators and children of domestic abuse are represented. (Council departments should not be over represented on the Forum.)
4. Appropriate lines of communication and reporting links are established between the Domestic Abuse Forum and the Community Safety Partnership.
5. A Local Domestic Abuse Strategy and supporting action plan be prepared and implemented and that it is aligned to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, the annual Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Area Adult Protection Committee (AAPC) Business Plans. The local strategy needs to be realistic and focused on agreed priorities for the Vale of Glamorgan.
6. A set of outcome based performance indicators are developed to measure progress in the delivery of the agreed action plan. These

should be regularly reported to the Health Social Care and Well-being Partnership Community Safety Partnership, the LSCB and the AAPC and include the monitoring of survivor feedback.

7. Housing Services provide training on housing policy and the role of agencies to the Domestic Abuse Forum.
8. The Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator explores all possible funding opportunities and initiatives to identify the feasibility of developing a dedicated counselling and support service for children who have suffered or witnessed domestic abuse.
9. The Domestic Abuse Forum updates and republishes the Domestic Abuse information Directory booklet originally published by the Community Safety Partnership.
10. The recently formed steering group and the domestic abuse co-ordinator consider treating the LSCB action plans arising from serious case reviews as an urgent priority.
11. A feasibility study be conducted to evaluate appropriate venues in the Vale for a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Unit.
12. Awareness be raised through publications on the Internet on the problems and issues associated with Domestic Abuse and the support services available. The promotion should make it clear that domestic abuse is not acceptable behaviour.
13. A Cabinet Member be identified as a Champion for tackling and preventing domestic abuse.
14. A report in respect of the Domestic Abuse Unit at Barry Island be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in respect of the use of the building.
15. The review itself be amended where necessary to reflect the appointment of the new Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator and the recent change to the Chairmanship of the Domestic Abuse Forum.
16. A protocol be considered for adoption for incorporation into a Service Level Agreement with Women's Aid for the provision of time limited support for women and their children to enable independence.
17. The above recommendations be referred to Cabinet for approval / consideration.
18. Where appropriate progress on the above be referred back to the Scrutiny Committee within six months.

**Cabinet** received the review on 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2007 and made the following resolutions :-

## RESOLVED -

1. T H A T recommendations 1 - 15 above be accepted with the additions that in respect of (11) and (14), further reports be also presented to the Cabinet.
2. T H A T, in respect of recommendation 13, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety be identified as the Champion for tackling and preventing domestic abuse.
3. T H A T recommendation 16 above be deferred for consideration pending the review of Service Level Agreements generally within Social Services.

## **Examples of Achievements by the Scrutiny Committee during the Municipal Year**

1. The public meeting conducted by the Committee, whereby Members of the public and outside organisations were invited to attend to discuss / make representations on the Social Services Budget Action Plan. Considerable forward planning was required by Democratic Services Officers and Members to ensure that the venue / layout / acoustics were in place. Referring the Action Plan to Council for consideration.
2. Members took part in the Scrutiny Committee reviews of Homelessness and Domestic abuse by interviewing clients and working with outside organisations to improve service delivery which also resulted in processes being agreed and accepted by all Scrutiny Committees as acceptable ways forward for the undertaking of Scrutiny Reviews.
3. Building a greater knowledge base by taking part in in-depth discussions in workshops on various topics and by full involvement in to the Scrutiny Review process.

## **Call-Ins**

The main decisions are made by the Executive. However, Members of the Council, even if not a member of the Scrutiny Committee, can call-in a decision for the Committee to scrutinise. During 2006 / 2007 the following call-in was considered:

**7<sup>th</sup> December, 2006 - Housing Investment  
Cabinet Minute No. C2743**

The matter had been called-in by Councillor R.F. Curtis to allow the Scrutiny Committee an opportunity to examine the policy change. As a result of the call-in, the Scrutiny Committee considered the matter in full and reaffirmed the decisions of the Cabinet.

**Requests for Consideration of Matter**

Four requests for consideration of matter were received as detailed below:

1.	Review of vehicle accidents	24/10/06	By Cllr M.K. Wilson	Subsequently withdrawn as dealt with by Scrutiny Economy and Environment
2.	Quality of provision of bus shelters	27/11/06	By Cllr M.K. Wilson	Referred to Scrutiny Committee Lifelong Learning for consideration and that the recommendation that measures be immediately put in place to collect statistics in respect of incidents of vandalism (identifying bus shelters specifically) and associated costs be supported and that a report on the same be made to this Committee in six months
3.	Allocation of disabled parking bays	07/12/06	By Cllr R.F. Curtis	Recommended to the Scrutiny Committee Economy and Environment that a Member of the Scrutiny Committee sits on the Task and Finish Group, which was duly accepted. A report was submitted to the Committee on 23 <sup>rd</sup> April, 2007 which resulted in a further report being requested from the Interim Manager for Social Services
4.	Social Services Matters	12/02/07	By Cllr J. Charles	Report by Chief Executive to Committee on 12 <sup>th</sup> February, 2007

## **References from Cabinet to the Scrutiny Committee**

Cabinet referred two reports to the Scrutiny Committee as detailed below :-

### **1. Pressures on Services and Budgets for People with Learning Disabilities**

The report was referred to the Scrutiny Committee by Cabinet in order to keep the Scrutiny Committee informed of the pressures on services and budgets for people with learning disabilities. The report stated that despite the identification of general trends, it was accepted that it was difficult to quantify the impact of pressures on services in the future and on future expenditure. Members also suggested that an overview of funding within Social Services throughout Wales should be provided with advice to local authorities on how best to provide the services given the limited funding available. It was also considered that the way forward was for collaboration with other local authorities, the NHS and that the service area was looking at other initiatives to enhance performance and joint services. The Committee then called for a report on the future savings initiatives that could be made within the service area.

### **2. Social Services Budget Action Plan**

Cabinet had, on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, considered the report, which outlined options for addressing the budget issues within the Social Services Department. The predicted overspend for the service was anticipated to be £5.5m and the Director of Community Services had been charged with developing an Action Plan to identify how spending across Social Services could be reduced in order to deliver a balanced budget for the Department. The Cabinet had RESOLVED that the Action Plan be referred to the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety), Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) as the lead Committee and to the Audit Committee and that due to the serious nature of that budget situation the proposals in the Action Plan, with the exception of decisions requiring formal Cabinet approval, be implemented with immediate effect. The Scrutiny Committee recommended that in order to consider the Social Services Budget Action Plan, representatives of voluntary organisations, Local Health Board and members of the public be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to express their views on the proposals contained in the Plan. Full details of the meeting that took place and the recommendations that the Committee made to Full Council can be found on pages 3, 4 and 5 to this report.

## **References from the Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet**

The Scrutiny Committee made five referrals to Cabinet during the year :-

### **1. 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 – Promoting preventative development in Children’s Services – Illustrative schemes**

The Committee had requested a report on spend to save initiatives it outlined examples of potential future service developments that would, if implemented, maximise the effectiveness of expenditure on statutory children’s services. Cabinet was requested to endeavour to implement as many of the schemes and subsequently RESOLVED T H A T, in view of the budgetary implications, the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) be referred to the Budget Working Group for consideration.

### **2. 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2006 – Change Agent Team project to support the reduction of delayed transfers of care in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan**

Cabinet was requested by the Scrutiny Committee to -

address the shortfall in Social Services to ensure that the residents of the Vale of Glamorgan receive the care packages they had been identified for.

Cabinet, having considered the recommendation RESOLVED -

- T H A T the concerns of the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) be noted.
- T H A T it be confirmed that the overspend on the Social Services budget is being addressed as a matter of priority.

### **3. 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2006 – Housing Sub-Committee Report**

The Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) had received a report from the Housing Sub-Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2006 and after due consideration made the following recommendations to Cabinet:

#### Vale of Glamorgan Private Sector House Conditions Survey -

1. T H A T Cabinet be requested to support a bid for capital funding to be submitted in the sum of £80k. for the 2007 / 2008 financial year to fund a full Vale of Glamorgan Private Sector House Conditions Survey in 2007.
2. T H A T notwithstanding the above recommendation, officers investigate the possibility of joint working with other local authorities regarding the production of the Private Sector House Condition Survey.

Section 180 Housing Act 1996 Voluntary Sector Funding Proposals -

1. T H A T Cabinet be requested to agree the following Section 180 funding allocations:
  - Home Access Trust - Accommodation Funding and Bond Board Services. Money to be used to part fund salary of the Bond Officer - £5k..
  - Llamau Housing - JIGSO - Advice and assistance to single people aged 16 plus who are homeless / threatened with homelessness to include bond services, landlord / tenant support and generalist housing advice - £12k..
  - Vale Furniture Grant Project - to provide grants to homeless people who cannot fund the purchase of furniture - £6k..
2. T H A T the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety be authorised to reallocate the balance of £17k. to fund the Rough Sleeper Count and any balance of the fund carried forward to 2007 / 2008 unless a suitable project could be identified in the interim.

Chartered Institute of Housing Conference and Exhibition 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2007 -

T H A T Cabinet be recommended to consider nominating a member of the Housing Sub-Committee to attend the Institute of Housing Conference and Exhibition to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2007."

Cabinet, having considered the above three matters:-

RESOLVED -

- 1 T H A T the contents of the report be noted.
- 2 T H A T all references to bids be referred to the Budget Working Group.
- 3 T H A T approval be granted for the Housing Sub-Committee to nominate a member of the Sub-Committee to attend the Institute of Housing Conference and Exhibition along with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety to be held between 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2007.

Resolution 2 above was finally confirmed on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 when Cabinet RESOLVED T H A T the Section 180 Funding allocations as detailed above be made and £17, 000 be utilised for an audit of homelessness / rough sleeping to be undertaken.

#### **4. 28th March, 2007 - Penarth Heights**

The Committee had raised concerns in respect of the costs incurred to date at the above site and requested that Cabinet take urgent steps to recover the remaining properties when planning approval had been received which Cabinet duly noted.

#### **5. 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 – Private Sector Property Appreciation Loans**

A property appreciation loan was a mortgage which would only be available to households on a low income who were not able to access funding from high street lenders. The Scrutiny Committee was requested by the Housing Subcommittee to refer to Cabinet that the concept of Private Sector Property Appreciation Loans be supported and Capital Funding be considered by the Budget Working Group. Cabinet endorsed the recommendations of the Committee.

### **References from Scrutiny Committee to Scrutiny Committee**

Four references were received during the year:-

#### **1. 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 - Quality and Provision of Bus Shelters**

A request for consideration of matter had been made to both the Scrutiny Committee Economy and Environment and the Community Wellbeing and Safety Committee. This Committee agreed to deal with the matter at the same time as a reference was received from Economy and Environment. They had recommended that measures be put in place to collect statistics in respect of incidents of vandalism (identifying bus shelters specifically) and associated costs and that a report on the same be made in six months.

Community Wellbeing and Safety also requested a copy of the report as above and that the current report and its recommendations be referred to the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee in light of a youth report that they had considered, in order that they could further consider the issues of youth annoyance in relation to the use of bus shelters.

As a result of the referral the Scrutiny Committee Lifelong Learning at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2007 requested that they receive an update report on the provision of youth services within the Vale and that a further report be presented to the Committee on the result of the six months collection of statistics in respect of incidents of vandalism and associated costs.

#### **2. 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 - Budget Proposals**

The views of the Scrutiny Committee were reported to the Lead Scrutiny Committee Corporate Resources as part of the overall budget process.

### **3. 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2007- A Review to evaluate the levels of Nursery Provision in the Vale of Glamorgan**

As a direct result of the reference the Scrutiny Committee requested that they receive a copy of the Impact Assessment report on equalities, a further report on early years provision in areas of deprivation and early years provision in the context of Welsh Medium nursery provision.

### **4. 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2007 - Provision of Individual Disabled Parking Bays**

The Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) had made a number of recommendations. However this Committee, on 16<sup>th</sup> April, noted the recommendations and requested that a further report explaining the issues raised be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> May by the Interim Director of Social Services.

## **Reference Received from other Committees**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2006 - Planning fees for Childminders**

The Planning Committee had considered draft proposals from WAG in respect of reducing the fees for the submission of planning applications relating to childminding and referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration. The Scrutiny Committee recommended that the proposals to reduce the fees for the submission of planning applications relating to childminding be supported. However, the Planning Committee Members felt that ad hoc tampering with the traditionally uniform planning fee structure could create a dangerous precedent and subsequently RESOLVED that the proposals to reduce the fees for the submission of planning applications relating to child minding be rejected.

## **Reappointment of the Housing Sub-Committee**

The reappointment of the Housing Sub-Committee was agreed during the year together with a further enhancement to its terms of reference that “when necessary to progress matters the Housing Sub-Committee be allowed to directly report to the Cabinet / Council after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.”

The Housing Sub-Committee’s terms of reference, membership, and work undertaken during the year is detailed as below :-

### Terms of reference:

- Audit of housing need and the provision of affordable housing, including grants, allocations and new housing developments;
- Void management;
- Cyclical Maintenance Programme;
- Methods of paying rents;
- Community safety issues on housing estates;
- Rolling programme of visits to housing estates;
- Supporting people;
- Homelessness; and
- Enforcement of Private Housing Standards.

### Membership of the Sub-Committee (to November 2006):

Councillor R F Curtis (Chairman); Councillor S C Egan (Vice-Chairman);  
Councillors Mrs. M.E.J. Birch, P. Church, J. Clifford, Mrs. A.J. Preston,  
A.J. Readman, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe and K.R. Stockdale.

Also invited to attend as non-voting co-opted members, one representative of each of the following organisations:

Shakespeare Residents Association  
Colcot Residents Association  
Gibbonsdown Residents Board  
Vale Council Residents Forum  
Vale Housing and Homelessness Forum  
Vale Housing Federation  
Shelter Cymru

### Changes in Council Member Membership following the Change of Administration within in the Council in December 2006

Councillor K.R. Stockdale (Chairman); Councillor A.J. Readman (Vice-Chairman); Councillors R. Bertin, Mrs. M.E.J. Birch, Ms. R.M. Birch, Mrs. J.E. Charles, P. Church, Mrs. A.J. Preston and J.W. Thomas.

Non-voting co-opted Members remain as above.

### Forward Work Programme

- Housing Investment
- Energy Policy
- Affordable Housing
- Homes4U Policy

- Homelessness Leasing
- Joint Schemes (Social Services)
- Private Sector Property Appreciation Loans
- Homes4U Shop Front
- Penarth Central Renewal Area and Future of Area Renewal
- Void Presentation
- Rent Setting/Service Charging

### Meetings

The Sub-Committee met five times during the period and reported its findings/ observations to the Scrutiny Committee.

### Work undertaken during the year by the Sub-Committee

- **Vale of Glamorgan Private House Condition Survey –**

Recommended

‘(1) T H A T Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) be requested to support a bid for capital funding to be submitted in the sum of £80k. for the 2007 / 2008 financial year to fund a full Vale of Glamorgan Private Sector House Conditions Survey in 2007.’

(2) T H A T, notwithstanding the above recommendation, officers investigate the possibility of joint working with other local authorities regarding the production of the Private Sector House Condition Survey.’

- **The Homelessness Strategy and Plan –**

Had been under review by the Scrutiny Committee and the revised strategy would be reported to Cabinet in due course. It was therefore suggested that for the financial year, existing priorities for Section 180 funding be used.

- **Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order 2006 –**

There was a risk that there would be insufficient Social Housing Grant (SHG) available to undertake reconfiguration of existing accommodation. Members expressed concern that Treharne Hostel was being used to accommodate children and it was recommended ‘that the Director of Community Services provide a further report to the Housing Sub-Committee outlining the options to increase the provision of temporary accommodation, with specific information to deal with the inappropriate use of Treharne Hostel.’

- **Void Management/Costings Procedure –**

The Council had commissioned Tribal/HCH to undertake a Housing Investment Review. Following discussions with Members, staff and tenants,

a clear request for a review of the void management / lettings procedure had been established with the need for it to be based around certain principles. Members had asked the Director of Community Services to report on a more detailed proposal for consultation with tenants.

- **A Housing Investment Risk Appraisal and Implementation Plan in respect of Housing Investment –**

Had been considered by Cabinet on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2006. The Sub-Committee considered the reports and resolutions of Cabinet and recommended ‘that the Housing Sub-Committee support the recommendations of Cabinet as set out above and request all party support from Members to assist in the process of producing a viable Business Plan to support the Stock Retention Strategy.’

- **Penarth Central Renewal Area –**

The works in the renewal area were funded by annual bids to the Welsh Assembly Government and the Council’s capital programme. As the Penarth project came to a conclusion it was hoped a new renewal area could commence.

Resources had been allocated for a neighbourhood renewal assessment to determine whether the area between Dock View Road and Holton Road from the Gladstone Road Bridge to Hill Street met the criteria to be declared a renewal area. This study was being combined with a town centre living study, which would examine the shopping area of Holton Road to formulate a sustainable Strategy, Action Plan and Programme of Regeneration. A report was likely to be completed by the end of 2007.

- **Private Sector Property Appreciation Loans –**

Capital allocation to private sector housing renewal had declined and as a consequence, the Council had prioritised its budgets and limited the availability of grant aid to Disabled Facilities Grants and properties in the Penarth Central Renewal Area. The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 enabled local authorities to offer various forms of assistance to their communities to assist housing renewal. To explore this opportunity further and develop a private loan scheme, the Council joined with other South Wales authorities to form the South Wales Loans Consortium. Ms. Elen Probert, Environmental Health Officer for Cardiff Council, had been joint funded by the local authorities, which formed the Consortium, Swansea, Cardiff, Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Torfaen, to consider a number of options to deliver a pilot loan scheme: The Welsh Assembly Government were seeking to contribute 25% of the resources the Council would be committing to the two-year pilot scheme and it was recommended ‘that the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) be requested to recommend to Cabinet that the concept of Private Sector Property

Appreciation Loans be supported and capital funding be considered by the Budget Working Group.

- **Costs and Benefits of the Supporting People Programme -**

A report was referred to the parent Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2007 for consideration, as the Housing Sub-Committee was concerned about the potential impact across a number of service areas. This report will be put before the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2007.

Presentations received by the Sub-Committee during the year included:

- Homelessness Leasing Scheme
- Affordable Housing.

### **Re-appointment in 2007 / 2008**

It is the Sub-Committee's intention for the Housing Sub-Committee to seek reappointment again for 2007 / 2008 to continue, on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee, to consider Housing matters as a priority and make recommendations as and when appropriate.

### **Future Work Programme 2007 / 2008**

The Scrutiny Committee will continue consideration of the following as part of its work programme for 2007 / 2008:

- Quarterly Performance Monitoring
- Revenue and Capital Expenditure Monitoring
- Budget Proposals
- Improvement Plan
- Progress Update in respect of the Review of Domestic Violence Abuse and the Homelessness Review
- Safer Vale Partnership Annual Update
- To consider the reappointment of the Housing Sub-Committee
- Service Planning
- Emerging strategies from the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy

### **AND it was also agreed to:**

- Establish two Task and Finish Groups to review the shortage of Occupational Therapist services in the Vale and CCTV in the Vale. The Committee, at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2007, agreed to add to the programme the setting up of two Task and Finish Groups to consider CCTV and the shortage of Occupational Therapist services in the Vale and will agree the scope for these at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2007;

- Receive a report on the work of PACTS in the Vale of Glamorgan which may form part of a Task and Finish Group at a later stage;
- Undertake a review of the Social Services Change Plan. As a direct result of the change in administration within the Council and the Social Services budget deficit, the Committee, together with the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources), will consider the Social Services Change Plan as its major review throughout the year and assist in enabling the necessary changes, developments and improvements to be put into effect against the significant financial and time pressures.

The impact of the significant overspend on Social Care Services has had a major effect on all services within the Authority and as a result, there is an urgent need to undertake the work outlined in the Change Plan which the Scrutiny Committee will be commencing at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2007.

The Work Programme for 2007 / 2008 will be developed in line with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme and the parameters outlined in the Scrutiny Handbook. The Work Programme is an evolving process which Members of the Committee can change as they consider appropriate.

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **(CORPORATE RESOURCES)**

The Committee's scope of responsibility covers the following service areas:

- Chief Executive's,
- Democratic Services,
- Human Resources and Equalities,
- Finance, ICT and Property,
- Legal Services and
- Regulatory Services.

### **Membership**

At the beginning of 2006, the membership of the Committee was as follows:

Councillor C.J. Williams (Chairman); Councillors Ms. M.E. Alexander, Ms. L. Burnett, Mrs. J.E. Charles, P. Church, J. Clifford, A.D. Dobbinson, N.P. Hodges, G. John, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, N. Moore, C.L. Osborne, A.G. Powell, Mrs. A.J. Preston, B.I. Shaw, A.C. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Following a change in administration in December 2006, the membership of the Committee changed. Set out below is the current membership:

Councillor H.J.W. James (Chairman); Councillor Mrs. C.V.L. Clay (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Ms. L. Burnett, Mrs. J.E. Charles, Miss J. Cole, A.D. Dobbinson, M.R. Harvey, N.P. Hodges, T.H. Jarvie, F.T. Johnson, Mrs A.J. Moore, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, C.L. Osborne, A.G. Powell, B.I. Shaw, K.R. Stockdale and M.R. Wilson.

Each Scrutiny Committee may also appoint Sub-Committees and / or Task and Finish Groups. During 2006 / 2007, this Scrutiny Committee appointed the following Task and Finish Group:

- Use of Consultants.

### **Current Forward Work Programme 2006 / 2007**

In April 2005 the Scrutiny Committee identified a number of issues for inclusion in their work programme and these related to the following:

- Corporate Projects Review - To consider the impact of corporate projects across the Vale including how these had contributed to the regeneration of the community.

- Job Evaluation - To review the effectiveness of the Job Evaluation process, how successful this had been implemented within the Council and the impact of staff.
- Looked After Children - A Review of Looked After Children costs for the Council, including the use of independent providers and the link between Education, Social Services and Housing.

## **Meetings**

During 2006 / 2007 the Committee met 14 times. 11 of the meetings were scheduled with the remaining three extraordinary meetings.

## **Task and Finish Groups**

As stated above, this Scrutiny Committee established a Use of Consultants Task and Finish Group in 2006 / 2007 comprising four elected members, one from each political group. Further details are shown below.

## **Use of Consultants**

The Scrutiny Committee undertook an analysis of the use and associated costs of consultants who were commissioned to undertake work on behalf of the Council during the financial year 2004 / 2005. A report on this subject was considered in March 2006. The Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group with a view to undertaking a more detailed assessment of the use of consultants.

Given the practical / technical difficulties likely to be encountered by officers in accessing financial records for the financial year periods 2001 / 2002 and 2002 / 2003 the Group accepted the review should only cover the financial years 2003 / 2004 and 2004 / 2005. In addition, the Group also acknowledged that where consultants commissioned under the value of £5k. that this be discounted from the review. However, the Group did request that where consultants were commissioned under £10k., that such be subject of the review but only in specific cases where the Group had requested the projects inclusion.

The review would also include best practice in England and Wales in relation to procedures / processes.

The work of the Group will continue during the forthcoming Municipal Year with its findings to be reported to this Scrutiny Committee in the latter part of the year.

## **Work Undertaken During the Year**

The work of the Committee in the past year included Monitoring / Reviewing / Assessing the following:

- Corporate Plan Review
- Improvement Plan Review
- Monthly Revenue and Capital monitoring
- Quarterly Performance Service monitoring
- Trading Accounts monitoring
- Initial Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals
- Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy
- ICT Facilities for Members
- Asset Management Plan
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Expenditure in Children and Family Services
- One Vale E-Government Programme Implementation
- Use of Consultants.

## **Examples of Achievements by the Scrutiny Committee during the Municipal Year**

### **Initial Budget Proposals (Housing Revenue Account, Revenue and Capital)**

The Scrutiny Committee gave careful and lengthy consideration to the service areas' budgetary proposals, which fell within the Committee's remit and also to the recommendations of the three other Scrutiny Committees in relation to the initial Budgetary Proposals (Revenue and Capital), which fell within their respective, remits.

The Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations of the three other Scrutiny Committees and also made specific recommendations to the Cabinet on their behalf and on matters that fell within its own purview.

All of the recommendations from the four Scrutiny Committees on the initial Capital and Revenue Budget Proposals were subsequently referred to Cabinet for consideration. Cabinet subsequently referred these matters onto the Cabinet Budget Working Group for further consideration. These were subsequently taken into account during the Working Group's deliberations on the subject.

## **Call-Ins**

A total of six call-ins were made on the following Cabinet decisions:

## 1. Penarth Headland Link (Cabinet Minute No. C2593) -

Called-in by Councillor L. Burnett for the following reasons:

- there has been no consultation over the postponement, curtailment or cancellation of this major project
- decisions on this project were taken behind closed doors and excluded local people and businesses from having any input whatsoever
- this proposal does compare like with like and I would ask that a comparison of how the current proposal differs from the original in content and cost
- the proposal was only considered from a planning and financial viewpoint. I would ask that all other relevant departments, for example, Economic Development, Tourism, Leisure be consulted.

This matter had also been called-in to the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment). A meeting was subsequently held in the Paget Rooms. The meeting had been well publicised, attracting an audience of some 360 which included the local A.M. and M.P., representatives from various local organisations and the general public.

Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) at an extraordinary meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August recommended to Cabinet the following:

### (1) T H A T Cabinet recognises

- the Penarth Headland Link has enormous potential in terms of the economy of Penarth and the wider Vale of Glamorgan, including business opportunities, jobs, sustainability, “green tourism” and the chance to exploit the benefits of a connection to Cardiff Bay;
- cancellation of the project at this stage would involve the loss of the £7.5m. offered by the Welsh Assembly, loss of the £1m. offered by Cardiff County Council through the Harbour Authority and the need to repay the £1.8m. already claimed from the Assembly;
- for the project to go ahead, it is imperative to limit the cost and risk to which the Vale of Glamorgan Council is exposed.

### (2) T H A T Cabinet defers the car park proposal from the scheme unless and until discrete funding is available for that scheme, particularly if that deferment is necessary for the Walkway project itself to proceed without delay.

### (3) T H A T Cabinet instructs officers urgently to examine all potential avenues for limiting costs, including:

- consideration of suggestions from the “preferred” tenderer as well as any other source as to how to limit costs;
- review of a ‘basic’ draped steel beam solution as well as the option of a ribbon structure currently envisaged;

- reversion to costs of an ‘unenanced’ scheme in all possible respects;
  - review of the timing of the construction period so that the phasing of the construction better suits supplier delivery times, seasonal constraints etc;
  - refinement of the contract requirements in order to reduce the current allocation of £6.5m. for temporary works;
  - approach to other tenderers as well as the “preferred” tenderer to explore their design solutions to achieve an appropriate technical solution within available finances.
- (4) T H A T Cabinet recognises the use of the New Engineering Contract (NEC) offers the means to achieve an auditable route to cost minimisation, while also providing major incentives to the Contractor to keep costs down, thus ensuring that the Contractor’s Target Cost is the best estimate of the outturn cost of the works, and that risks are shared between the Council and the Contractor and seeks clarification of the costings in terms of risk, to ensure that there is no exaggeration of the risks to which the Council is exposed.
- (5) T H A T Cabinet instructs officers to seek assistance and mentoring through the WLGA and through professional bodies to ensure that the Council benefits to the full from experience elsewhere on the management of costs and risks through the New Engineering Contract approach.
- (6) T H A T Cabinet instructs officers to undertake an urgent review of the maintenance liabilities of the proposed materials and details of the whole life costs (net present value), including whether these maintenance costs can be mitigated through the use of alternative materials.
- (7) T H A T Cabinet requests an urgent review of the figures provided, to ensure that no inappropriate costs are attributed to the Headland Walkway Project, whether in the figures for costs already incurred, the “client’s costs” and other spending by the Council other than through the construction contract, for the estimated cost of materials and construction to be reviewed, and for the apparently high costs for Temporary Works and Preliminaries to be brought down significantly.
- (8) T H A T the recommendations of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) held on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2006 be endorsed.

These recommendations were then forwarded to Cabinet for consideration and, as Members will be aware, matters are ongoing.

## **2. Provincial House Office Accommodation (Cabinet Minute No. C2644 resolutions 1 - 3) -**

Called-in by Councillor M.R. Wilson and considered at the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2006. The purpose of the call-in was to scrutinise why the costs of implementing the project had increased and why the additional costs were to be funded by utilising reserves. The Cabinet decision was subsequently noted by the Committee. However, in noting the decision, the Committee will undertake a site visit of the offices on completion of the ongoing relocation of the Learning and Development directorate.

## **3. School Investment Strategy (Cabinet Minute No. C2646) -**

Called-in by Councillor Mrs. M. E. Alexander to scrutinise the details of the Strategy and was considered at the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.

The Scrutiny Committee requested that an extraordinary meeting of this Committee be convened in January 2007 to consider the final proposals in relation to the implementation of the Strategy. It should be noted that such a meeting has yet to be held due to delay as a result of the due diligence process.

## **4. Changes to Finance and H/R Function (Cabinet Minute No. C2658) -**

This matter was called-in by Councillor M. R. Wilson to discuss the merits of appointing external consultants to review the position relating to the appointment to the staff establishment of the relevant Operational Manager post and the appropriateness of the use of the Council's Urgency Procedure. Following the Committee debating the matter it decided to note the position and take no further action.

## **5. Appointments to Outside Bodies (Cabinet Minute No. C 2832) -**

Councillor H.J.W. James called-in this matter to seeking Cabinet to justify the relevance of Cabinet member portfolio appointments to certain bodies and to clarify the lawful status of such within the Council's Constitution and Members Allowance Scheme.

The Committee considered this matter at its meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2007 and requested Cabinet to reconsider the following matters:

- (1) T H A T Cabinet be invited to reconsider the following appointments:
  - (i) Arts Council of Wales: South Wales Area Committee - Cabinet be requested to ascertain whether such an appointment still exists.
  - (ii) Barry YMCA Management Committee - Cabinet be requested to review the Council's role in / relationship with Barry YMCA, to include consideration of operational and financial matters and the

status of the Council's representatives of the Management Committee.

- (iii) Friends of Bellevue Park - Cabinet be requested to consider the appointment of an additional Member, i.e. Councillor P. Church, in order that both Local Members are representatives.
  - (iv) Local Health Board - Cabinet be asked to note that membership would need to be reconsidered in the light of proposed organisational changes within the Directorate of Community Services.
  - (v) South Wales Police Authority - Cabinet be invited to reconsider the matter in the light of the decision of the South Wales Police Authority Joint Committee in 2004 that the Vale of Glamorgan Council would be the one constituent Council on the South Wales Police Authority represented by a Conservative Member (i.e. thereby reflecting political balance across the constituent Councils).
  - (vi) Steel Action - Cabinet be requested to consider whether the representative should, in fact, be the Leader given her portfolio included responsibility for regeneration.
  - (vii) Vale of Glamorgan Buildings Preservation Trust - Cabinet be requested to ascertain whether the appointment of the Chairman, or any Member, of the Planning Committee as the Council's representative constitutes a potential conflict of interest.
  - (viii) Waterfront IT Centre Board - Cabinet be requested to consider the addition of the Cabinet Member for Education and Training to the list of representatives.
- (2) T H A T .....
- (3) Cabinet is also recommended to delete the words "attendance allowance" from the original recommendation (2) of Minute No. C2832: 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2006. This was to reflect the fact that attendance allowances were now incorporated within the overall allowances payable within the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.

(Note: (2) above was not relevant to Cabinet).

## **6. Timetable of Meetings 2007/08 (Cabinet Minute No. C2959 resolution 2)-**

Councillor Mrs M. Kelly Owen called-in this matter expressing concern with regard to proposals to delay the commencement time of Council and Scrutiny Committee meetings from the current 6 p.m. practice to 7 p.m. She considered the proposal to be a retrograde step and contrary to nationally established employment policies / practices, which promote equal

opportunities. As a consequence, due to carers' responsibilities women would be significantly disadvantaged given that they were generally acknowledged as the main carer within the family unit. If implemented, the proposal would negate achievements made in the field of equal opportunities and of achieving a healthy and civilised "Work Life Balance".

The Committee considered this matter at its meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2007 and requested Cabinet to reconsider their original resolution (2) viz: **T H A T it be recommended to Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and the Mayor that those meetings of Scrutiny Committees and Council scheduled for 6.00 p.m. commence instead at 7.00 p.m.** given the reasons raised above.

### **Requests for Consideration of Matter**

Two requests for consideration were received from Councillor M.R. Wilson in relation to Cabinet Minute No. C2759, Vale of Glamorgan Community Radio and from Councillor R. F. Curtis in respect of Cabinet Minute No. C2780, Vale Waves: Increasing frequency of publication. Both requests were subsequently withdrawn following consultation with the Members concerned.

### **References from Cabinet to the Scrutiny Committee**

A number of references were referred from the Cabinet to Scrutiny in 2006 / 2007 including:

1. Housing Investment (Cabinet 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2006).
2. Disability Discrimination Act – Accessibility of Council Buildings (Cabinet 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2006).
3. Report on Compact between the Vale of Glamorgan Council, the Vale of Glamorgan Local Health Board, Cardiff and the Vale NHS Trust and the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services (Cabinet 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2006).
4. Social Services Budget Action Plan (Cabinet 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2006).
5. Initial Housing Revenue Account, Initial Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals - (12 recommendations were noted and referred to the Cabinet Budget Working Group at Cabinet 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2006 Minute No.'s C2819, C2820 and C 2821 refer).
6. Initial Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals (Cabinet 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2006).
7. OneVale Programme (Cabinet 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2006). Taking Forward Sustainability (Cabinet 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2007).
8. Relationship Manager's Annual Letter 2005 / 2006 (Cabinet 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2006) and
9. OneVale Programme (Cabinet 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2007).

## **References from the Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet**

The Scrutiny Committee referred five matters to Cabinet relating to the following:

1. Revenue Monitoring for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2006 to 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2006 (Recommendation 4 accepted by Cabinet 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2000 Minute No. C2553 refers).
2. Salary Sacrifice Childcare Support for Employees (three recommendations deferred by Cabinet 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 pending further report on costings (Minute No. C2600 refers).
3. Proposed Quarterly Performance Monitoring Process (All recommendations accepted by Cabinet 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 (Minute No. C2625 refers).
4. Penarth Headland Link (1 recommendation accepted – Cabinet 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 Minute No. 2626 refers).
5. Initial Housing Revenue Account, Initial Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals - (12 recommendations were noted and referred to the Cabinet Budget Working Group at Cabinet 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2006 Minute No.'s C2819, C2820 and C 2821 refer).

## **References from Scrutiny Committee to Scrutiny Committee**

A total of seven references were received from the Council's three other Scrutiny Committees during the year and these are detailed as follows:

Community Wellbeing and Safety	(2) (Initial Housing Revenue Account Proposals and Initial Capital Budget Proposals)
Economy and Environment	(2) (Initial Revenue Proposals, Initial Capital Budget Proposals)
Lifelong Learning	(2) (Initial Revenue Proposals and Initial Capital Budget Proposals)
Community Wellbeing and Safety - 23 <sup>rd</sup> October and 27 <sup>th</sup> October, 2006.	Social Services Budget Action Plan

## **Other References to the Scrutiny Committee**

1. Social Services Budget Action Plan - from Audit Committee 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.

## **Outstanding Items 2006 / 2007**

Matters relating to Use of Consultants - Task and Finish Group will need to be progressed during the forthcoming year.

## **Future Work Programme 2007 / 2008**

The Committee will continue consideration of the following as part of its work programme for 2007 / 2008:

- Quarterly Service Performance Monitoring
- Monthly Revenue and Capital Monitoring
- Initial Revenue Budget and Initial Capital Programme proposals
- Local Development Plan
- Improvement Plan
- Service Planning
- Emerging Strategies from the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy
- Social Services Change Plan.

The Committee at its meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2007 when considering the draft Annual report gave consideration to matters which could be dealt with as a project that can be effectively undertaken through desk top/ Task and Finish method in the absence of IDT Officers. It was agreed that the following matters in addition to the above issues would be included in this Scrutiny Committees work programme for the forthcoming municipal year:

- Efficiency Savings – To review achievement of efficiency savings and any consequential impact on the Council's ability to deliver services.
- Ward Member Consultation – To review current arrangements with the purpose of developing effective consultation arrangements between officers and individual elected members on service issues that arise within electoral wards.
- Job Evaluation - To review the effectiveness of the Job Evaluation process, how successful this had been implemented within the Council and the impact of staff. To review progress that has been made and the current methodology employed; the timetable and process of implementation; to assess the risk for the Council and financial implications and consultation with staff.
- Local Service Boards - To take an overview with the view to assessing the implications for the Councils Scrutiny function, to assess strategic and operational progress of the Board and the appropriateness of the inclusion of the Vale Partnership on such a Board. To review progress and how issues are dealt with in both a strategic and operational way by all partners; to compare the methodology with that used by other

Councils; impact on the Council; to agree a process for effective Scrutiny by Corporate Resources Committee and establish communication between Board (both as members and partner organisations).

- Making the Connections – To review progress within the Council and to identify best practice within Welsh local authorities. To review progress that has been made and the current effectiveness and future opportunities of current partnerships; quantify the benefits of existing and potential joint working; to explore joint working beyond the local government environment e.g. health, fire, police, etc.; to compare methodologies employed by other councils in relation to Making the Connections agenda; to agree process for effective Scrutiny by Corporate Resources Committee and establish communication between South East Wales Boards (both as members and partner organisations).

The Work Programme for 2007 / 2008 will be developed in line with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme and the parameters outlined in the Scrutiny Handbook. The Work Programme is an evolving process, which members of the Committee can change, as they consider appropriate.

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **(ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT)**

The Committee's scope of responsibility covers the following service areas:

- Economic Development,
- Leisure and Tourism Services and Countryside and Environmental Projects,
- Visible Services (Waste Management and Cleansing, Highway Maintenance, Engineering Design and Procurement, Parks and Ground Maintenance),
- Public Works and Highways,
- Planning and Transportation, and
- Building and Visible Services.

### **Membership**

At the beginning of 2006, the membership of the Committee was as follows:

Councillor N.P. Hodges (Chairman); Councillor S.T. Wiliam (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Ms. L. Burnett, P. Church, J. Clifford, Miss J. Cole, R.F. Curtis, N.J. Gibbs, Mrs. V.M. Hartrey, G. John, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, Mrs. A.J. Moore, Mrs. A.J. Preston, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe, W.C. Vaughan, E.T. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Following a change in administration in December 2006, the membership of the Committee changed. Set out below is the current membership:

Councillor N.P. Hodges (Chairman); Councillor S.T. Wiliam (Vice-Chairman); Councillors R.J. Bertin, Ms. L. Burnett, J. Clifford, Miss J. Cole, G.A. Cox, A.D. Dobbinson, E. Hacker, Mrs. V.M. Hartrey, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, Mrs. A.J. Moore, Mrs. A. J. Preston, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe, W. C. Vaughan, A.J. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Each Scrutiny Committee may also appoint Sub-Committees and / or Task and Finish Groups. During 2006 / 2007, this Committee appointed the following Task and Finish Groups, each comprising seven Members nominated in accordance with the requirements of political balance:

- Traffic
- Town Centre
- Recycling and Waste Management
- Rhoose Point.

## **Current Forward Work Programme 2006 / 2007**

The key areas identified for the work programme included the following elements:

- Quarterly Service Performance Monitoring
- Budget
- Monthly Revenue and Capital Monitoring
- Dealing with the Challenge of Traffic
- Town Centre Improvement and Regeneration
- Local Development Plan
- Improvement Plan
- Scrutiny Reviews:
  - (i) Recycling and Waste Management
  - (ii) Rhoose Point and the impact thereon of development north of the railway line, Rhoose.

## **Meetings**

During the period, 11 scheduled meetings and four extraordinary meetings were held; three site visits were also held.

## **Task and Finish Groups**

As stated above, this Committee established four Task and Finish Groups in 2006 / 2007. Further details are shown below.

### **1. Traffic**

Established under Minute No. 385 to facilitate the in-depth discussion and investigation of the following Forward Work Programme item - dealing with the challenge of traffic. The Group set its scope at the initial meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 having particular regard to the limited timescale as required by the Committee and the need, therefore, for the subject identified for consideration to be focused and to have achievable outcomes (Minute No. 559). Cabinet had deferred consideration of matters pertaining to the provision of disabled parking bays in January 2004 for a joint report from the Directors of Environmental and Economic Regeneration and Community Services in order that the issues relating to both traffic management and social need could be assessed. To expedite progress that topic was selected for consideration and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) invited to participate in future deliberations.

The Group, on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2007, made the following four recommendations:

1. T H A T the current Policy and Procedure for the provision of individual disabled parking bays (IDPB) be retained.
2. T H A T the Director of Social Services be permitted to support an individual's application, based on a needs-assessment, and that in such cases, the Social Services Directorate provide the funds required to provide the IDPB.
3. T H A T, in order to reduce the waiting list for the provision of IDPBs, Cabinet be requested to increase the level of funding by £10k. per annum from 2007 / 2008.
4. T H A T the above recommendations be considered by the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety).

The Committee subsequently endorsed recommendations (1), (3) and (4) but amended recommendation (2) as follows to reflect the concerns of the Group in relation to the severe financial constraints within the Directorate of Social Services:

“T H A T the Director of Social Services be permitted to support an individual's application, based on a needs-assessment, and that in such cases, the Social Services Directorate may provide the funds required to provide the IDPB if deemed necessary.”

Cabinet received recommendation (3) above on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 and deferred consideration thereof pending consideration of the issues by the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety).

The Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) received the reference on 16<sup>th</sup> April, noting it for the present but requiring a further report from the Director of Social Services for consideration early in the 2007/08 municipal year.

## **2. Town Centre**

Established under Minute No. 385 to facilitate the in-depth discussion and investigation of the following Forward Work Programme item - town centre improvement and regeneration. The focus of the Group had been agreed following its initial meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2006 as:

To assist in the development of an holistic approach to the regeneration of Holton Road by examining

- the identity to be created for the area
- the barriers to attracting and retaining vibrant businesses in the area of Holton Road under consideration
- the accessibility of Holton Road given the need to minimise the retail leakage and maximise investment and, consequently, footfall

- and identifying potential solutions / remedial measures.

The Group met twice more, undertaking an inspection of Holton Road prior to its last meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 – at which meeting oral submissions were received from two local traders in addition to a wealth of statistical (and other) information. The Group subsequently made the following recommendations:

1. T H A T the number of retail outlets vacant in the Barry Town Centre be considered with different marketing techniques being employed.
2. T H A T the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) recommend to Cabinet the lobbying of Central Government in respect of business rates and the possibility of introducing a sliding scale for new businesses.
3. T H A T Cabinet consider how it could assist local businesses within the area in particular relating to advertising.
4. T H A T consideration be given to trimming the trading area of Holton Road.
5. T H A T grants be utilised to assist retailers in the area.
6. T H A T car parking charges remain free until further regeneration of the area takes place.
7. T H A T accommodation above retail outlets be recommended for conversion to residential use.
8. T H A T future literature on the town be encouraged to include details of all the new facilities available within the town.
9. T H A T the outcome of the town centre living study be presented to the Scrutiny Committee when available.
10. T H A T the Town Centre Manager continues to encourage retailers into the area by advising of the strengths of the area and outlining the proposed future developments.
11. T H A T a supermarket be encouraged to the area.
12. T H A T further exploration be undertaken to encourage a coffee shop/tea room to be established within Holton Road.
13. T H A T Barry town centre be linked to any promotions that the Vale of Glamorgan as a Council undertakes throughout the Vale.
14. T H A T promotional material for Barry include a rebranding of the town along the lines of -

“Once seen as a Skoda but its now on the up and up.”

15. T H A T the Scrutiny Committee maintains a watching brief on the future regeneration of the town.

It is anticipated that the Committee will receive the Final Report of the Task and Finish Group early in the 2007/08 municipal year.

### **3. Recycling and Waste Management**

The Committee had selected recycling as a topic for Scrutiny Review - subsequently widened to encompass waste management (Minute No. 81). At the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group in October 2006, the focus of the review was established (Minute No. 462), namely

- recycling and composting targets
- waste minimisation
- education and awareness raising (including schools).

At the next meeting, the Group was informed that this Council had been invited to enter into a partnership arrangement with Cardiff, Newport and Monmouthshire in respect of future waste management procurement options. That arrangement involved Member involvement in a Joint Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet had resolved that the Members of the Group represent the Council. Given the circumstances, the Group considered that the Scrutiny Review work should be deferred. The Committee endorsed that viewpoint (Minute No. 560).

Since that time, visits to public and private partnerships at four locations in England had been undertaken. At a meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> April, Members from Cardiff, Newport, Monmouthshire and the Vale of Glamorgan discussed the information gathered on the visits to Project Integra in Hampshire, the Somerset Waste Partnership, Shropshire Waste Partnership and the North London Waste Authority.

The Assistant Director for Waste from the South East Centre of Excellence attended the meeting to talk about partnership working in waste management. In addition, Steven Philips, Corporate Director with Cardiff Council provided an update on how work was progressing across the four Authorities with regard to joint working on waste management.

The purpose of the meeting was to enable the members to discuss what was learnt from the various visits and agree some key findings with regard to waste management partnerships. Workshops were held on:

- Benefits and Challenges of Partnership Working
- Issues surrounding regional working
- Governance and accountability arrangements.

A number of key issues were identified and discussed which would inform a report of the joint scrutiny exercise which would be finalised at a further plenary session in May. Following this further plenary session, the report would be presented to the Committee for consideration in June.

#### **4. Rhoose Point and the impact thereon of development North of the Railway Line, Rhoose**

The Committee had selected the above as a topic for Scrutiny Review and had established a Task and Finish Group to undertake a scoping exercise. That Group met on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 when the Monitoring Officer detailed the parameters within which Scrutiny Reviews were recommended to operate and to outline / propose a scope. Those parameters indicated, inter alia, that Scrutiny Reviews were intended primarily to focus on strategic issues and not on analysis of individual decisions taken by quasi judicial committees. Given the complexities of the issues, the need to develop a tightly focused scope was accepted. At the same time, attention was drawn to the Council's limited resources in terms of undertaking a comprehensive review given not just the proposal that IDT undertake no new Scrutiny Reviews in 2007 / 2008, but the technical advice likely to be required and the lack of funding to facilitate the commissioning of external experts. The Group would meet again prior to the end of the current municipal year to consider the above matters further.

#### **Presentations / Invited Speakers / External Experts /Witnesses**

During the period, Committee received, amongst others:

- Mr. S. Hodgetts, Commercial Manager, Cardiff International Airport, to facilitate consideration of a request for consideration;
- contributions from two residents of St. Donats to discussions on a request for consideration in respect of safe routes to schools;
- contributions from 22 persons, including the local AM and MP, local residents, and representatives from various organisations including the Penarth Society and the Penarth Marina Residents Association at the meeting held in the Paget Rooms on Penarth Headland Link;
- Mr. E. Bampton and Mr. R. Shaddick (WAG - DEIN) and Mr. B. Lewis and Mr. S. Pritchard (ABP) to facilitate a request for consideration relating to the Waterfront development;
- Mr. D. Sylvester, Treasurer, Sully Centurions Cricket Club, who spoke on matters pertaining to the Glebefields, Sully.

## **Examples of Achievements by the Scrutiny Committee during the Municipal Year**

The Committee referred the following matters to bodies other than the Cabinet in order to engage more widely:

1. Traffic Task and Finish Group: Provision of Individual Disabled Parking Bays - referred to Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety);
2. Coastal Access Improvement Programme - referred to the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Advisory Group;
3. Glebefields, Sully - referred to the Welsh Church Act Estate Committee;
4. Initial Revenue Budget Proposals 2007 / 2008 - referred to Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources);
5. Initial Capital Programme Proposals 2007 / 2008 - referred to Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources);
6. Quality and Provision of Bus Shelters - referred to Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) and to the Community Safety Partnership.
7. Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) requested to look at "sustainability" from a corporate viewpoint - possibly to incorporate the same into the Committee's Forward Work Programme.
8. Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) requested to commission a report on contractor procurement.

Members of the Task and Finish Groups have built upon their knowledge base and given detailed consideration to the matters within their remit, prior to forwarding recommendations for action to the Committee.

## **Call-Ins**

Six call-ins of a Cabinet decision were considered by the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment):

1. **23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2006 – Start up grants for small businesses –**

Submitted by Council M.R. Wilson to receive a detailed presentation and report of start up grants in the VOG area, to be informed about the scheme so that an assessment can be made as to whether £30k. is an adequate budget and whether the £2k. maximum amount can actually make a difference to the feasibility of a start-up business.

Cabinet Minute No. C2432 was subsequently accepted and Committee asked for a benchmarking exercise to be undertaken to ascertain, if the maximum grant of £2k. per applicant was adequate, that a budget of £30k. was sufficient and that a report on the matter be brought before a future meeting. The current position is that a further report is being prepared.

## 2. **23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2006 – Entrepreneurship Centre –**

Submitted by Councillor Ms. L. Burnett for the following reasons:

- there is no explanation for the change of name from the Entrepreneurship Centre to the Business Support Centre a change that would seem to infer support for existing business rather than promoting new enterprise
- it is not clear at what stage the name change was sanctioned and by whom. The new name was advertised in the Business in Focus supplement in the Western Mail approximately 12 hours after the Cabinet decision
- the approval of an increase in budget by £175,614 from uncommitted funds is not fully explained and it is requested that figures are produced to fully quantify the extent of such funds within the Directorate
- this decision has yet again been determined under emergency powers. I would ask for an explanation as to the reasons why it has been necessary for this and four other decisions to use the Chief Executive's emergency powers.

Cabinet Minute No. C2434 was subsequently accepted and Committee asked for a report to be brought to a future meeting on the Economic Development Strategy of the Council. The current position is that the preparation of a Strategy is underway with work being undertaken, for example, in assessing employment land requirements for the Strategy and for the Local Development Plan process.

## 3. **23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2006 – Land to the North of the Railway Line, Rhoose: Draft Development Brief –**

Submitted by Councillor G. John for the following reason:

- the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee were given unanimous support by the Members present (25<sup>th</sup> April, 2006 – when Cabinet had been requested to defer endorsing the draft brief for public consultation purposes pending the outcome of the scrutiny review). May I have an explanation to the decision that the Cabinet considers the development brief to be a separate issue. Committee considered that future development would have an adverse impact on Rhoose Point, in view of the many issues raised by residents, and it was certainly not a separate issue.

Cabinet Minute No. C2441 was subsequently referred to Council. After lengthy consideration, Council noted the report of the Director in respect of the matter.

**4. 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 – Reappointment of Cabinet Advisory Committees -**

Submitted by Councillor N.J. Gibbs for the following reason:

- Scrutiny Committees are the true Advisory Committees. Resources used for the Advisory Committees should be channelled through the Scrutiny Committees and Sub-Committees to give advice to the Cabinet and Council.

Cabinet Minute No. C2481 was subsequently upheld for the current municipal year and a further report requested at the end of that period reviewing the cost and effectiveness of such bodies. Following the change in the administration of the Council, Cabinet Advisory Committees were abolished in December, 2006.

**5. 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 – Barry Steam Railway Project –**

Submitted by Councillor N.J. Gibbs for the following reasons:

- what financial resources have been used on the development of the estate? What is the full list of land holdings and buildings acquired by the Council over the last 10 years? What finance has been made available in anyway for this project? How will the recycling of receipts work in detail? These questions, amongst others, need to be answered prior to the ratification of the above resolutions.

After receiving a detailed report, Committee noted the position and agreed to undertake a site visit to view the progress of the Railway Project and all the buildings brought or being brought into beneficial use as a consequence of the funding provisions referred to at the meeting. That visit took place on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, the sites visited including the Innovation Quarter and related buildings and Barry Island Railway Station.

**6. 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2006 – Penarth Headland Link –**

Submitted by Councillor Ms. L. Burnett for the following reasons:

- there has been no consultation over the postponement, curtailment or cancellation of this major project
- decisions on this project were taken behind closed doors and excluded local people and businesses from having any input whatsoever

- this proposal does compare like with like and I would ask that a comparison of how the current proposal differs from the original in content and cost
- the proposal was only considered from a planning and financial viewpoint. I would ask that all other relevant departments, for example, Economic Development, Tourism, Leisure be consulted.

A meeting was subsequently held in the Paget Rooms. The meeting had been well publicised, attracting an audience of some 360 which included the local A.M. and M.P. representatives from various local organisations and the general public. A total of 22 persons from that audience addressed the Committee and approximately 10 written submissions were received following the meeting (the initial use of the specially prepared scrutiny comment form which, in addition to inviting comments / questions, explains the role of scrutiny in the context of the Council's decision making process as well as giving useful contact details should further information be required). The large audience at this meeting represented the first time widespread public interest had been engendered in attending a meeting of any Scrutiny Committee. Feedback from Members after the event (as reported to the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen's Group in October 2006) was positive, the meeting being seen as part of the ongoing development of the scrutiny process and the ability to engage the public in the scrutiny process, being also an opportunity for lessons to be learned and/or implemented as a consequence.

A variety of recommendations were then forwarded to Cabinet for consideration and, as Members will be aware, matters are ongoing.

### **Requests for Consideration of Matter**

11 requests for consideration were made as follows:

1	Expansion of Cardiff International Airport	23/5/06	From Cllr. M.R. Wilson	No action	-
2	Fairtrade	23/5/06	.. . . .	Referred to Cabinet	Subsequently (and independently) considered and agreed by Council
3	Penarth Pier	23/5/06	.. . . .	Site visit and future report	Site visit on 25/07/06  Further report received on 03/10/06
4	Safe routes to schools: West Camp, St. Athan - St. Donats -	11/7/06	By Cllr. G. John	Cabinet requested to authorise a further assessment of each of the three above routes as early as possible in	Reassessments undertaken

	Llantwit Major			the new school year	
5	Quality and provision of bus shelters	24/10/06	By Cllr. M.R. Wilson	Referred to Scrutiny (CW&S) and to the Community Safety Partnership. Statistics to be collected and a report in six months	Scrutiny (CW&S) referred the report to Scrutiny (LL) and supported recommendation (2). Scrutiny (LL) subsequently noted the recommendations of E&E
6	Review of vehicle accidents	24/10/06	By Cllr. M.R. Wilson	Referred to Cabinet to designate the two vacant posts as hard to fill etc.	Noted and further report requested
7	Vale Business Club	16/1/07	By Cllr. M.R. Wilson	Wider publicity advocated to maximise accessibility to the Club and an invitation extended to Members to attend meetings as an observer	Several Members have now attended meetings of the club
8	Barry Waterfront development	13/2/07	By Cllr. Mrs. A.J. Moore	Representatives from ABP and WAG DEIN to address the Committee following a decision on the preferred bidder (due 13/4/07)	Invitation to be extended early in 2007/2008
9	Leisure and Tourism Strategy	27/2/07	By Cllr. M.R. Wilson	Matters to be considered further in conjunction with the draft Tourism Strategy	Draft Tourism Strategy to be submitted to this Committee early in 2007/2008
10	Glebefields	27/2/07	By Cllr. A.M. Ernest	Referred to Welsh Church Act Estate Committee	The WCAEC noted the reference as submitted by this Committee on 16 <sup>th</sup> April, 2007 but, in response to a report from the DFICTP later in the meeting, did progress the matter to a satisfactory outcome (as had been requested by this Committee).

11	The site of the former Knap Pool	17/4/07	By Cllr. R.J. Bertin	Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) requested to commission a report on contractor procurement. Cabinet requested to approve the method of funding for the initial drainage works and to review the drainage scheme previously agreed. A press release to be issued with regular updates thereafter, and a progress report in due course.	References awaiting consideration by both Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. Press release in hand.
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### **References from Cabinet to the Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee received six references from the Cabinet relating to:

1. Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan - Results of the Draft Delivery Agreement Consultation
2. Achieving Fairtrade County Status
3. Supplementary Planning Guidance: Public Art - Results of the Public Consultation Exercise
4. Security Services Accreditation to Security Industry Training Organisation (SITO) Standard
5. Waste Management Services - Peer Review
6. Home to School Transport - Safe Routes to School and Tendered Services.

### **References from the Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet**

The Committee referred eleven matters to Cabinet relating to the following:

1. Fairtrade status for the Vale of Glamorgan
2. Safe Routes to School: West Camp, St. Athan-St. Donats-Llantwit Major
3. Penarth Headland Link

4. Corporate Plan
5. Review of Vehicle Accidents in the Vale of Glamorgan
6. Leisure Charges 2007/08 and Leisure Membership Scheme
7. Visible Services - Recycling Centre, Domestic Permits
8. Sports, Arts and Play Development Team - Annual Report
9. Public Opinion Survey 2006 - results.
10. Knap Lake Shelters refurbishment.
11. Urban Parks programme: Victoria Park, Barry.

### **Other References to the Scrutiny Committee**

1. Annual Report 2005 / 2006: Planning and Enforcement Appeals - from Planning Committee
2. Community Regeneration: Scrutiny Review - from Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee
3. Allocation of Disabled Parking Bays - from Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety)
4. Shop Front Design Guidance - from Planning Committee.

### **References from the Scrutiny Committee to Council**

1. Land to the North of the Railway Line, Rhose: Draft Development Brief.

### **Outstanding Items 2006 / 2007**

The two major issues outstanding are both the proposed Scrutiny Reviews referred to above.

### **Future Work Programme 2007 / 2008**

The Committee will continue consideration of the following as part of its work programme for 2007 / 2008:

- Quarterly Service Performance Monitoring

- Monthly Revenue and Capital Monitoring
- Initial Revenue Budget and Initial Capital Programme proposals
- Improvement Plan
- Service Planning
- Emerging Strategies from the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy
- Local Development Plan
- Recycling and Waste Management
- Rhoose Point and the impact thereon of development north of the railway line, Rhoose.

The Committee has also agreed that the Task and Finish Groups established in 2006/07 to deal with the latter two items above should be reappointed, and will give consideration to the optimum method of dealing with the following additional item to be included in the Work Programme, namely Sustainable Integrated Public Transport.

The Work Programme for 2007 / 2008 will be developed in line with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme and the parameters outlined in the Scrutiny Handbook. The Work Programme is an evolving process which members of the Committee can change as they consider appropriate.

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **(LIFELONG LEARNING)**

The Committee's scope of responsibility covers the following service areas:

- Schools (Pupil Support, School Improvement and School Support);
- Post 16 Education and Training;
- Libraries;
- Community Education and Youth Service.

### **Membership**

#### May 2006 - January 2007

Councillor C.P. Franks (Chairman); Councillor S.C. Egan (Vice-Chairman);  
Councillors Mrs. M.E.J. Birch, Ms. R.M. Birch, Mrs. C.V.L. Clay, J. Clifford,  
E. Hacker, Mrs. V.M. Hartrey, F.T. Johnson, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen,  
C.L. Osborne, A.G. Powell, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe, B.I. Shaw, W.C. Vaughan,  
Mrs. M.R. Wilkinson and E.T. Williams.

Following a change in administration in December 2006, the membership changed and the following were appointed at the Council meeting in January 2007:

#### January 2007 - May 2007

Councillor A.D. Hampton (Chairman); Councillor E. Hacker (Vice-Chairman);  
Councillors Mrs. M.E.J. Birch, Ms. R.M. Birch, J. Clifford, Miss J. Cole,  
A.M. Ernest, Mrs. V.M. Hartrey, F.T. Johnson, G.C. Kemp, Mrs. A.J. Moore,  
A.G. Powell, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe, B.I. Shaw, S.T. William, A.C. Williams and  
E.T. Williams.

The Scrutiny Committee also, under legislation, was afforded the opportunity to include in its membership co-opted members and the following organisation's representatives were appointed with voting rights in relation to education functions:

Roman Catholic Church  
Church in Wales  
Parent Governor - Primary Sector  
Parent Governor - Secondary Sector.

Each Scrutiny Committee shall also be entitled to recommend to Council the appointment of a number of people / organisations as non-voting co-optees and again the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) recommended to Council the following representative appointments:

Primary Sector  
Secondary Sector  
Special Educational Needs Sector  
Headteachers  
Free Churches.

## **Current Forward Work Programme for 2006 / 2007**

The key areas identified for the work programme included the following elements:

- A review of nursery roles across the Vale of Glamorgan to establish the level of service provision and placement take-up across the Council;
- Budget;
- Positive action to improve the education of certain groups of children;
- Annual Budget process;
- Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports;
- Service Plans;
- Monthly Revenue and Capital Programme Monitoring;
- Emerging strategies from the Corporate Plan and the Community Strategy;
- Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

## **Meetings**

During the period, 13 meetings were held, of which 10 were held at outside venues, mainly schools throughout the area.

## **Work Undertaken During the year**

During the year, Committee were significantly involved in the preparation of a review of nursery roles across the Vale of Glamorgan to establish the level of service provision and placement take-up across the Council.

The review to date has involved:

- the establishment of the scope of the review;
- the adoption, in principle, of a number of recommendations relating to the review, namely
  - that information be provided on the Council's website to raise awareness of the free provision which is available to ensure maximum take-up of the resources;
  - review the making of the policy for allocating nursery places to see if it is feasible to make it more flexible so that if there is a genuine case for a child to attend an alternative provider, it be seriously

- considered (this was also in line with the Welsh Assembly Government's directive of increasing parental choice);
- that Scrutiny committee receive a further report to consider whether it is feasible to review Council policy to enable the nursery providers to offer full-time places and enable parents to pay the difference (if they have the capacity to do so) to satisfy the Welsh Assembly Government's initiative of increasing parental choice;
  - introduce a childcare database that is readily available, that joins up both Authority operated facilities and privately run playgroups to enable parents to make an informed choice about the appropriate form of childcare;
  - undertake a feasibility study for introducing transport provision to enable children who live in the rural Vale to have access to service based in other parts of the Vale.

A request to receive a further report on early years provision in areas of deprivation, and early years provision in the context of Welsh medium nursery education.

The involvement of Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety):

- the holding of a workshop involving invited guests with specialised knowledge of the subject to permit an exchange of views and to enable Members to determine what points should receive due consideration in the preparation of the final report;
- consideration will be given to a further report in May 2007.

Continued monitoring of service performance on a quarterly basis also allowed the Committee the opportunity to agree service performance targets and receive explanations for those service targets not achieved.

The Committee has continued to take a direct interest in the School Investment Strategy and held a meeting which concentrated solely on matters relating to the Strategy.

Representatives of MACE, the Council's consultants and a number of the Council's Headteachers were invited to attend the meeting and be questioned by Members.

A further report was presented to Committee in April 2007 which advised of Cabinet's deliberations of an analysis of the potential capital receipts and cash flow implications of the School Investment Strategy and which recommended proposals for progressing the Strategy. The decisions of Cabinet were endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning).

The Committee considered the Council's response to the Community Focused Schools Initiative and endorsed a decision of Cabinet regarding the development of Community Focused Schools.

An extensive review of school budgets was undertaken with the assistance of a number of members of the Schools Budget Forum.

The comments of the Committee were referred to the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources).

Committee noted the initial Capital programme Proposals for 2007 / 2008.

Having considered the initial Revenue Budget Proposals for 2007 / 2008, the concerns of the Committee were referred to Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources).

The Committee agreed to continue meeting in Lifelong Learning establishments wherever possible.

The Committee invited Mr. Richard Harries of the Wales Audit Office, to attend in order that he may be questioned on the contents of his report 'Review of Progress with School Improvement and Strategic Management.'

Mr. Harries had been unable to attend the meeting, and Committee had requested that he be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

Committee were updated on the impact and outcomes of the Vale Learning Network's Learning Challenge Fund Projects.

## **Call-Ins**

Two call-ins of Cabinet decisions were considered by the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning):

### **1. Reappointment of Cabinet Advisory Committees -**

Cabinet Minute No. C2481 of 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2006, was called-in by Councillor S.C. Egan and was considered by Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2006.

Scrutiny Committee recommended that Cabinet Minute No. C2481 be endorsed.

### **2. Restructure of the Lifelong Learning Service - Employment Training Section -**

Cabinet Minute No. C2773 (1) and (3) of 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2006 was called-in by Councillor M.R. Wilson and was considered by Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2006.

Scrutiny Committee recommended that Cabinet Minute C2773 (1) and (3) be noted.

## **Requests for Consideration of Matter**

No requests for consideration were made by any member of the Committee.

## **References from Cabinet to the Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee received two references from the Cabinet relating to:

1. Welsh Library Statistics - Library Plan for 2005/08
2. School Investment Strategy.

## **References to Cabinet from the Scrutiny Committee**

On 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, Committee noted the position with regard to the Revenue and Capital Monitoring for 2006 / 2007 and requested Cabinet to consider providing additional resources to the Youth Service.

Cabinet noted the concern of Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) and resolved that consideration of the concern await the outcome of the impending Youth Service Review.

## **Presentations**

During the period, Committee received a presentation on School Performance Data.

## **Invited Speakers / External Experts**

During the period, Committee received, amongst others:

- Mr. S. Doyle and Mr. S. Green of MACE Consultants together with the Headteachers of Cowbridge Comprehensive School, Llantwit Major School and St. Cyres Comprehensive School to facilitate consideration of the School Investment Strategy;
- Contributions from -
  - Val Lewis - Children and Young people's Framework Co-ordinator
  - Debbie Maule - Children's Partnership Co-ordinator
  - Mrs. S. Howell - Headteacher, High Street Primary School, Barry
  - Antonia Bridges - Programme Co-ordinator (Sure Start)
  - Mrs. J. Hayward - Headteacher, Barry Island Primary School
  - Mr. A. Smith - Headteacher, St. Illtyds Primary School, Llantwit Major

to assist in consideration of the Scrutiny Review to evaluate the levels of Nursery Provision in the Vale of Glamorgan.

- The following members of the School Budget Forum:
  - Mrs. F. Hopkins - Headteacher, St. Athan Primary School
  - Mr. B. Brayford - Headteacher, Ashgrove School
  - Mr. M. Clinch - Headteacher, St. Richard Gwyn School
  - Mrs. J. Hayward - Headteacher, Barry Island Primary Schoolwho contributed towards the Scrutiny Review of the Education Budget.

### **Outstanding Items 2006 / 2007**

Three items remain outstanding from 2006 / 2007:

- Update report on Youth Provision Within the Vale;
- Invitation to Richard Harries of the Wales Audit Office to attend a future meeting to respond to questions regarding the contents of the Wales Audit Office report on the review of progress with School Improvement and Strategic Management (this matter will be considered at the May meeting of the Committee);
- Positive action to improve the education of certain groups of children (this matter will be considered at the May meeting of the Committee).

### **Future Work Programme 2007 / 2008**

The Committee will continue consideration of the following as part of its work programme for 2007 / 2008:

- Quarterly Service Performance
- Monthly Revenue and Capital Monitoring
- Initial Revenue Budget proposals
- Initial Capital Programme proposals
- Estyn Inspection Reports
- Improvement Plan
- Service Planning
- Emerging Strategies from the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.

Committee, on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2007, was requested to endorse the suspension of Scrutiny Reviews that would normally be undertaken by the Improvement and Development Team from the Forward Work Programme in order to support the actions for which the team members had a role in the Social Services Change Plan.

Although fully aware of the urgent need to reduce the overspend on the Social Services Budget, the Committee felt that endorsement of the recommendation would have a detrimental effect on scrutiny itself, and recommended that the proposal to suspend Scrutiny Reviews until May 2008 be not accepted.

The Work Programme for 2007 / 2008 will be developed in line with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme and the parameters outlined in the Scrutiny Handbook. The Work Programme is an evolving process which members of the Committee can change as they consider appropriate.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

The following matters relate to statistical information relating to the work of the four Scrutiny Committees during the current municipal year.

### Total Number of Scrutiny Committee Meetings held between May 2006 – April 2007

<b>Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Extraordinary</b>	<b>Scheduled</b>	<b>Workshops</b>
Community Wellbeing and Safety	4	11	2
Corporate Resources	3	11	-
Economy and Environment	4	11	-
Lifelong Learning	2	10	1

### Call-In Statistics

**May 2006 – April 2007**

<b>Scrutiny Committees</b>	<b>Community Wellbeing and Safety</b>	<b>Corporate Resources</b>	<b>Economy and Environment</b>	<b>Lifelong Learning</b>
No of call-ins Received	1	6	6	2
Withdrawn		-	-	-
Refused		-	-	-
Approved for call-in purposes	1	6	6	2
Cabinet decisions endorsed by SC	1	3	4	1
Recommendations referred to Cabinet		18	3	-
Cabinet Final Rejected Decisions -		3	-	
Noted -		7	2	
Endorsed -		6	1	1
Decisions Pending		1	-	
Referred to Full Council		-	1	
Recommendations referred to other Committees		-	-	

**Total number of Call-Ins Received - 15**

## Requests for Consideration of Matter

May 2006 – April 2007

Scrutiny Committee	No. of requests received	Requests withdrawn	Pending	No. of requests for further info.	No. of requests noted by Committee	No. of requests referred to Cabinet	No. of requests referred to other Committees
Community Wellbeing and Safety	4	1		1			2
Corporate Resources	2	2					
Economy and Environment	12	-	-	4	1	5	3
Lifelong Learning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Total Number of Requests Received - 18**

## References from Cabinet to Scrutiny Committee (Consultation)

May 2006 – April 2007

Scrutiny Committee	No. of references	No. Scrutiny Committee Noted / Endorsed	No. of Recs referred to other Committees or Council or for further reports	No. Recs referred to Cabinet	No. Recs Noted by Cabinet	No. of Recs accepted (a)/ rejected (r) by Cabinet
Community Wellbeing and Safety	2		2			
Corporate Resources	10	3 Endorsed 4 Noted 1 Decision Pending		12 (referred onto Budget Working Group)		
Economy and Environment	6	6				
Lifelong Learning	2	2				

**Total Number of References Received - 20**

## References from Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet

**May 2006 – April 2007**

Scrutiny Committee	Total No. of References Made	No. of recs Noted by Cabinet	No. of recs accepted/endorsed	No. of recs pending	No. rejected by Cabinet	No. partially agreed	Referred to other Committees/ Working Groups
Community Wellbeing and Safety	5*	1	1				1
Corporate Resources	5	-	9	3	-	-	12 (relating to initial budget proposals)
Economy and Environment	46	8	22	4	8	4	-
Lifelong Learning	1	-	-	-	-	-	1

\*N.B. These do not include the recommendations of the Scrutiny Reviews that have been dealt with separately in the body of the Community Wellbeing and Safety part of the report.

**Total Number of References received - 57**

## References received from Scrutiny Committee to Scrutiny Committee

**May 2006 – June 2007**

Scrutiny Committee	No. of references received	No. of Scrutiny Committee recs Noted / Endorsed	No. Recs referred to Cabinet	No. Recs Noted by Cabinet	No. of Recs accepted (a) / rejected (r) by Cabinet and referred on
Community Wellbeing and Safety	4	2 1 (and further report requested)			1 referred to Budget Working Group
Corporate Resources	8	1 20 (initial budget proposals received by Corporate Resources)			20 referred to Budget Working Group
Economy and Environment	-	-	-	-	-
Lifelong Learning	3	3			2 referred to Budget Working Group

**Total Number of References received - 15**

## References from Other Committees

May 2006 – April 2007

Scrutiny Committee	Total No. of References Made	No. of recs noted/accepted/endorsed	No. of recs referred to Cabinet	No. rejected by Cabinet / or pending	No. partially agreed	Referred to other Committees / Working Groups
Community Wellbeing and Safety	1 (Planning Committee)					Rec. referred back to Planning Committee who ultimately rejected the recommendation
Corporate Resources	1 (Audit Committee)	2 noted	-	-	-	-
Economy and Environment	4	2 noted 1 endorsed	1 Cabinet requested further report			
Lifelong Learning	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Total Number of other References received - 6**