

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 16TH DECEMBER, 2019

REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 24TH OCTOBER, 2019

“416 RESHAPING SERVICES: TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL
ENGAGEMENT IN OPERATING LOCAL SERVICES AND ASSETS (REF) –

Throughout the Reshaping Services programme the Council had engaged with Town and Community Councils with work to date being primarily focused on developing relationships and an understanding of the capacity, appetite and desire of Town and Community Councils to take a greater role in the provision of localised services and the operation of local assets that may be valued by local residents. However, where the Vale of Glamorgan Council may not be able to, or be the most appropriate body to continue such services in the future, the discussions had continued. As a result, an event was held in July 2019 to consider the issues, which was well attended by Town and Community Councils.

The report to Cabinet set out a series of proposals for consideration that met the aim of the Reshaping Services strategy, which was to protect priority services wherever possible. The proposals concentrated on an initial phase of assets (public conveniences and allotments) and services (grass cutting) as a means of developing pragmatic proposals for the coming financial year.

At the Cabinet meeting on 7th October, the Managing Director and the Director of Environment and Housing Services had stated that it was important that Town and Community Councils knew what the Vale of Glamorgan Council intended to progress around the Reshaping Services agenda with the report being able to provide information so that Town and Community Councils could plan more effectively and set their own budgets accordingly.

In considering the report it was noted that the Community Asset Transfer guidance process was a vehicle to encourage community groups, Town and Community Councils to consider opportunities and set out the process for the submission of Expression of Interest, however it was noted that this was not the only vehicle as long leases or even trial pilots could be considered. Following the Town and Community Council event that had been held in July 2019, a further event would be arranged before the end of the current financial year. It was accepted that as a Council, the information relating to what services it may not be able to provide due to resourcing issues was shared, with discussions to take place of how some services could be continued within communities if Town and Community Councils wished to do so. Other considerations to take into account the Chairman listed for example were TUPE considerations, the transferring of assets by lease or any other way, the

use of the Charter with Town and Community Councils and the Council's own view in relation to what type of strategic assets it would wish to retain.

The Head of Human Resources, who was present at the meeting, advised that any TUPE arrangements would be considered within the TUPE process, also highlighting other considerations like the ACAS service and COT 3.

Having regard to legal advice in relation to the engagement of Town and Community Councils in operating local services and assets, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that One Voice Wales could provide assistance to Town and Community Councils on this matter and condition surveys would accompany any transfer. All these considerations would be made when Town and Community Councils had put forward any suggestions for discussion.

Having considered the report, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T Cabinet be urged to progress discussions with Town and Community Councils.

(2) T H A T TUPE arrangements, the Council's view on strategic arrangements, any legal advice required, setting up a fund to assist with the transfer of assets be considered by Cabinet when discussing matters with Town and Community Councils and that progress on the agenda be urged in view of impending budgetary discussions within the Vale and the Town and Community Councils' budgetary processes themselves.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To ensure that momentum is maintained.

(2) That various aspects outlined above are considered during the process.”