

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting held on 10th February, 2020.

Present: Councillor L. Burnett (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair); Councillors B.T. Gray, P.G. King, Mrs. M.R. Wilkinson and E. Williams.

C219 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors N. Moore and K.F. McCaffer.

C220 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

C221 REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION – MUSEUM PROVISION IN THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN (REF) –

At the meeting of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee on 16th January, 2020, Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson presented his Request for Consideration which related to museum provision in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Councillor Dr. Johnson began by referring to the Expert Review of Local Authority Museum Provision published in 2015, which highlighted that 20 of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales funded some form of museum provision. One of the two not to fund a provision was the Vale of Glamorgan.

Councillor Johnson then raised a point regarding the length of time that it had taken for a report to be produced, stating that his original request had been submitted in January 2019. He then raised a second point regarding the content of the report which he felt did not cover the desirability of having a museum provision but talked a lot about why it could not be provided. He stated that the Council needed to be more creative and asked for more positivity and consideration of the Council establishing and operating an accredited museum in the Vale of Glamorgan. Councillor Johnson therefore wanted to see a wide discussion on the topic of museum provision across the Vale of Glamorgan.

In reply, the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources stated that he took on board the Member's point regarding length of time taken to produce the report. He stated that there had been an issue around capacity and a number of competing priorities. In terms of desirability around a museum in the Vale of Glamorgan, he stated that it was important for the report to set the context and for this to be led by Members on how the Council progressed, so it was important for the report to 'set the scene' first.

The Culture and Community Learning Manager then referred to the report which advised that the Vale of Glamorgan was home to two local museums: Barry Island

War Museum, located in the historic Barry Island Station, and the Cowbridge and District Museum, located in the Cowbridge Town Hall. Neither museum was in receipt of any Local Authority funding, but the Cowbridge Museum had received accreditation.

The Barry Island War Museum was operated by the Barry at War Group (Voluntary) and offers an authentic wartime experience.

The Cowbridge and District Museum was founded in the early 1980's and focused on Cowbridge's past. The museum exhibits were housed in the Town Hall cells. In April 2017, the Museum received formal accreditation from MALD – the Museums, Archives, Libraries Division (Wales).

Both Vale Museums were open only a few times per month and at specific times. Barry Library held a local studies collection which contained numerous items including books, maps and photographs. It also contributed to the online digital archive called the 'People's Collection Wales', a national digital initiative funded by the Museum's Archives and Libraries Division (MALD) and based in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Glamorgan Archives collected records relating to the history of Glamorgan and its people. Records could range from, papers, plans, photographs, parchments, personal diaries, and Council minutes. The Glamorgan Archives were particularly interested in hosting records that were in danger of destruction or decay so that they may be saved for future generations.

The Vale of Glamorgan did not have any Council operated or funded local museum provision. There was no statutory obligation on Local Authorities in Wales to provide museum services.

There was currently no provision for Council operated local museum provision in the Vale. Establishment of such a provision would require a establishing an increase to the existing budget, or establishment of a separate budget to facilitate the following considerations:

- Physical space for artistic collections. This may necessitate establishment of controlled environments to facilitate the preservation of historic works;
- Staffing for a museum archivist for the curation of physical or digital collections, and administrative support associated with accreditation, logistics and maintenance;
- Additional provision for marketing, communications and security;
- Increases to insurance and liability cover.

On average in Wales approximately 20% of museum running costs were covered by revenue. The remaining 80% of funding came from grants, national funding and / or subsidies from Local Authorities.

A Virtual Museum could be considered to enable sharing large amounts of information without the technical, and physical storage requirements. In the past The Vale Libraries Digital Project had encouraged local people to bring in their

photos for uploading to the People's Collection Wales. This type of project, if properly resourced, could help to collate an online innovative Virtual Museum for the Vale. Links to information via the National Archive was already available and could be further developed. Digitised information could be accessed via personal devices such as mobile phones, tablets, computers or dedicated digital interactive systems across the Vale of Glamorgan in libraries and historic venues.

A purely digital provision would however still incur revenue costs associated with management and maintenance of a digital platform, alongside staffing costs for a digital archivist, and ancillary costs associated with a digital platform such as software licences, hosting and digital security.

The standards and quality systems in most frequent use in Wales were the Accreditation Scheme for Museums in the UK and Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme Cymru (VAQAS). The Museums, Archives and Libraries Division (MALD) accreditation was a national UK accreditation awarded by Arts Council of England (ACE). Other relevant standards, including Investors in People, Investing in Volunteers, PQASSO32 and EFQM33 were also available.

The Accreditation schemes set minimum standards for museum provision. As at May 2015, there were 98 museums in the VAQAS accreditation scheme in Wales.

To retain Accreditation, museums must demonstrate compliance with all aspects of the standard by completing a return every three years. In the interim, museums were required to inform the Welsh Government's MALD of any planned significant changes to their operations.

Both obtaining and maintaining accreditation would have ongoing revenue implications in the monitoring and reporting which would be required.

The Welsh Government expert review of Local Museums in Wales (2015) acknowledged that although Museums in Wales were significant and housed important local information and artefacts in 20 of the 22 Local Authority areas, reductions in budgets was eventually likely to lead to reduced opening times, collections not being developed, charges being introduced for some services, staff reductions, exhibitions being curtailed and many other signs of services under stress leading inevitably to museum closures. Developing Council operated accredited museum provision at this time and under current financial challenges affecting statutory services would be difficult to rationalise. The implications and cost of running a museum in the Vale of Glamorgan should therefore be carefully considered.

There was no national funding available to Local Authorities from Welsh Government linked to the provision of museum services.

The total Arts development budget for 2019/20 was £129k. This budget was set to reduce to £108k in the forthcoming 2020/21 financial year. It was anticipated that operating a dedicated physical museum provision would cost an additional £100-150k (approximately) per annum. This was based on the existing running costs of the Arts Central Gallery space, at £84k for the 2019/20 financial year, and the

additional costs associated with maintaining museum collections, such as appropriate lighting, temperature and humidity-controlled conditions, additional security considerations and human resource implications. A separate consultation was due with regards to the use of the Arts Central Gallery space as part of the Council's strategy for Arts and Culture. Repurposing the space as a museum could be considered as part of those proposals.

Learning and Skills currently employed a single Arts Development Officer for managing its Arts provision in the Vale. There was currently no administration support for any Arts and Culture services. Additional staffing would be required in the form of a specialist museum archivist to manage and curate any physical / digital collections. Dedicated administration support would also be required for managing accreditation, monitoring returns and supporting any revenue management associated with the provision, should the Council's strategy on fees and charges be levied.

A number of Council funding streams exist to support community growth and facilities, including:

- Stronger Communities:
<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/working/Business-Support/Strong-Communities-Grant.aspx>
- Community Grants:
<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/working/Community-Grants.aspx>
- Business Funding:
<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/working/Business-Support/Business-Funding.aspx>
- Mayor's Foundation:
https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/The-Mayor/Mayors-Foundation-Grant-Fund.aspx

External funding streams were also available from MALD, the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries Wales, National Lottery Heritage Fund, and The Community Fund, for example. Each funding stream was contingent of meeting specified criteria, such as being an existing accredited museum, or for capital work.

In addition, the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources advised that there were many ways in which collections could be displayed, such as digital or offering a physical space in a school or community resources. Therefore, he stated that there were some opportunities there.

In outlining some of their initial thoughts, a number of Committee Members commented on the report which could be summarised as follows:

- There was opportunity to establish facilities for collections and there were other models away from a museum;
- There was an assumption that Barry would be the best location for a Vale Museum, but there were other locations;
- The cost to establish a museum, which was in the region of £150k, was prohibitive at a time of shrinking budgets and there was little justification in

spending money this way when the Directorate should be prioritising children, safeguarding and education;

- There was scope to work in partnership with Town and Community Councils;
- With regard to Barry, its history would be known across the world and so it was important to look at how collections could be displayed. Costs however were high and it was important not to undertake “vanity projects” at a time when the budgets were challenging;
- The report was too narrow in its focus and did not outline opportunities for tourism and the importance of raising civic pride;
- Where museums had been established this had also led to shops and restaurants being set up, so a museum in the centre of Barry would be a boost to the town;
- Digital and physical spaces did not necessarily increase footfall to town centres;
- There were a lot of national museums located in Cardiff and it would be nice for there to be some provision in Barry;
- Austerity did not mean that the Council could not be ambitious, and grants and funding were available, which had to be looked into otherwise our history could be lost;
- Llantwit Major had a Historical Society which used volunteers to look after collections in a local church. Therefore, the Council did not necessarily need to provide a physical building but the key was attracting volunteers. Perhaps there was opportunity to look at how collections could be provided on a small scale with the support of volunteers and to see what could be built up from there;
- Cowbridge had a vibrant museum which could be used as a model. The first step would be to assess the interest of volunteers to assist with any venture getting off the ground;
- St. Athan had recently seen an aviation museum set up, which had been well received. It was important to maintain cultural and historic heritage, but this was down to the money available, so the Council should start on a small scale to see if that was successful;
- The role of curators should not be forgotten as it was a professional undertaking to look after and manage collections;
- History and culture were a fundamental part of the new curriculum in Wales, so all schools had to offer something to its pupils;
- There were opportunities to obtain grant funding to maintain local history and culture, so this should not be at the expense of education.

In being asked to comment, the Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration stated that it was important for the Committee to understand some of the context and costings to develop a museum and one important aspect of the work of the Council was the Sense of Place Board. The Board had developed the Barry Story Book which was a fascinating read and so the Council was looking to maintain the culture and history of Barry in order to create a destination for tourists. Therefore, the Council needed to assess what it was doing, but if it was to create a museum then this needed to be done properly. There were questions to ask such as should it be the Vale of Glamorgan Council and discussions held back in 2012 had been challenging because of the number and range of history groups which needed to

work together. The Cabinet Member advised that the Vale of Glamorgan Council had been doing things to support local groups and she referred to the Iolo Morganwg Walk and local walks around Barry which were very popular. She therefore hoped that the Council could work more closely with these groups. In addition, a lot of information was available online which was maintained by local community groups. Finally, the Cabinet Member stated that heritage was taken very seriously, and the Vale was lucky in having some very diverse communities and so it was important to consider what the Council wanted to do and how it engaged with organisations and history groups to ensure that the cultural heritage was protected.

The Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources stated that there were electronic links contained within the report which showed what grants were available, some of which referred to volunteers. There were mechanisms and areas such as libraries that volunteers could help and other venues such as schools which could be used for events. He stated that the Council was happy to look to facilitate these.

A Committee Member recommended that the Council should scope the idea of working with local communities / groups to encourage volunteers. In reply, the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources stated that he would be happy to do this.

Councillor Dr. Johnson, in being asked to come back on some of the points raised, stated that he was glad that there had been a wide-ranging debate and he appreciated the financial issues, but £150k was not large for an organisation with a budget of £220m. He stated that he agreed with the comment around curators and the professionals needed to maintain collections and he supported the recommendation regarding a further report around opportunity for volunteers and working with community groups. He therefore asked for a full Cabinet report regarding the Council's plans to set out the work it was doing including all options available and within the wider context.

A Member of the Committee then made another recommendation regarding artefacts and displays within Vale of Glamorgan Council offices and facilities such as libraries, and she suggested that these spaces could be shared with historical societies and for this to be looked into further. In reply, the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resource stated that this would be considered.

The Cabinet Member also suggested that it would be worth the Scrutiny Committee inviting the Chairman of the Sense of Place Board to provide a presentation of the work undertaken.

Finally, the Committee considered the financial aspects and a Committee Member stated that the budget for the Arts and Culture should be maintained if not increased. The Committee agreed for this to be a formal recommendation to Cabinet.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T Cabinet agree for officers to scope opportunities to work with historic societies and community groups around the establishment of local exhibitions on a small scale and for the outcome of this to be reported back to the Scrutiny Committee.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet receives a report on museum provision in order for it to consider what the Council can do and to outline the Council's strategy.
- (3) T H A T Cabinet agree that the budget for the Arts and Culture is either held at the current level or increased in order to retain development.
- (4) T H A T Cabinet approves officers to look at possibilities of displaying artefacts in Vale of Glamorgan Council spaces such as libraries or community facilities in partnership with historical societies and community groups in order to share costs.
- (5) T H A T the Scrutiny Committee receive a presentation from the Chairman of the Sense of Place Board regarding cultural heritage.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To explore the possibility of establishing local exhibitions on a small scale and for the outcome of this to be reported back to the Committee.
- (2) In order to outline the Council's strategy and in order to maintain funding.
- (3) To maintain or increase spending on the development of the Arts and Cultural heritage.
- (4) In order to consider the feasibility of displaying artefacts in the Vale of Glamorgan Council spaces such as libraries and community facilities.
- (5) In order for the Committee to consider the work undertaken to protect cultural heritage.

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Councillor Burnett had attended the Scrutiny Committee meeting and noted there had been detailed and widespread discussions concerning the ongoing work in the Vale.

With regards to Recommendation (2), Cabinet requested that the matter be referred to the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Group in order to consider establishing a Task and Finish Group for the matter.

It was further noted that the Recommendations referenced the current ongoing consultation concerning the Arts Strategy and interested parties should use the

consultation to include comments on aspects such as museums as part of their returns, which would be relevant as part of wider conversations.

Cabinet, having considered the recommendations of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee,

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the contents of the report, the amount of work currently ongoing in this area, the current consultation process concerning the Arts Strategy and current budgetary considerations be noted and be referred to Full Council on 26th February, 2020.

(2) T H A T with regards to the Scrutiny Committee's Recommendation (2) above, the matter be referred to the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Group in order to consider establishing a Task and Finish Group for the matter.

Reasons for decisions

(1) In view of the contents of the report.

(2) In order that the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Group can consider the matter.

C222 DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2020-25 (L/PR) (SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – ALL) –

The report sought Cabinet endorsement of the draft Corporate Plan 2020-25 prior to consideration by Council and set out how the Council had developed the draft Corporate Plan 2020-25, including details of the consultation undertaken on the draft Corporate Plan 2020-25 between October and December 2019 and the feedback received. The report also set out the changes made to the draft Corporate Plan in response to the consultation undertaken and feedback received.

The report set out the key commitments in the Corporate Plan and how the Council would contribute to the national well-being goals.

The timetable and arrangements for developing the Annual Delivery Plan and Service Plans were included, as well as arrangements for the monitoring and scrutiny of the Corporate Plan, Annual Delivery Plan and Service Plans.

Councillor Burnett highlighted Paragraphs 2.12 and 2.14 of the report which discussed the consultation specifics and the key points that had arisen as part of that process.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the changes to how the draft Corporate Plan (Appendix A to the report) has changed in response to the feedback received and why some suggested changes have not been made as detailed in the engagement report (Appendix B to the report) be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix C to the report) be noted.
- (3) T H A T the views of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee verbally reported at the Cabinet meeting, following the Committee's review of the draft Corporate Plan in February 2020, be noted.
- (4) T H A T, subject to Recommendations (1) – (3) above, the draft Plan and Appendices A – C be endorsed and referred to Council for approval of the draft Corporate Plan 2020-25.
- (5) T H A T, subject to Recommendations (1) – (4) above, Cabinet recommends to Council that delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer in conjunction with the Leader and Managing Director to update the 'Our Council' section of the draft Corporate Plan post Council in March 2020 to reflect decisions made regarding the budget and resources for 2020-21, including details of how funding is allocated to different areas and expenditure.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To ensure the Council has an effective and up to date Corporate Plan informed by extensive consultation and which reflects the work being undertaken across the Council to improve the quality of life in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- (2) To ensure that in delivering the Corporate Plan the Council takes into account the diverse needs of the local community.
- (3) To enable Cabinet to consider the views of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
- (4) To enable Council to consider and approve the Corporate Plan 2020-25.
- (5) To ensure the Corporate Plan contains the most up to date information regarding budget and resources at the time of publication.

C223 DRAFT RESPONSE TO WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: CHANGES TO EXECUTIVE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS IN PRINCIPAL COUNCILS (LRPS) (SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

Current legislation provided that the executive governance arrangements of Principal Councils may take the form of a Leader and Cabinet model, an elected Mayor and

Cabinet model or such other model as prescribed in regulations by the Welsh Ministers.

Current legislation also provided that should there be a wish to change to an elected Mayor and Cabinet model this required a resolution of the relevant Principal Council, a petition by electors within the Principal Council area, a Direction or Order by the Welsh Minister; and thereafter a Referendum is required to be held of local electors.

The consultation document proposed a revision to the current timescales for such a Resolution, petition, Order and Direction to align with local government elections following the 2022 local government elections.

Linked to the above, the consultation document also consulted on:

- the introduction of a provision which ensured that if the executive governance arrangements of a Principal Council were to be changed, that the same arrangements must be in place for at least the next two electoral cycles;
- the use of electronic petitions;
- publication of notices; and
- the number of electorate required to trigger a Referendum.

A proposed draft response to the consultation document was attached at Appendix B to the report.

This was a matter for Executive decision

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

RESOLVED – T H A T the report and contents of the Welsh Government consultation document (attached at Appendix A to the report) be noted and the draft consultation response (attached at Appendix B to the report) be approved for submission to Welsh Government by 27th February, 2020.

Reason for decision

To apprise Cabinet of the consultation document and to consider the draft consultation response for submission to Welsh Government.

C224 MATTERS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN HAD DECIDED WERE URGENT –

RESOLVED – T H A T the following matters which the Chairman had decided were urgent for the reason stated in brackets following the minute heading be considered.

C225 REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 5TH FEBRUARY 2020 - FINAL PROPOSALS FOR THE REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 (REF) – (Urgent by reason of the need to obtain Cabinet approval in sufficient time to allow meaningful consultation at full Council on 26th February, 2020)

The Section 151 Officer / Head of Finance presented the reference from Cabinet of 3rd February (which was tabled at the meeting), together with the report and its appendices (as included on the agenda) which set out final proposals in respect of the final revenue budget for the financial year 2020/21, for the consideration of Committee Members, before referring any comments to Cabinet ahead of recommendations being made to Council.

The officer began by stating that the provisional settlement from Welsh Government (WG), when considering adjustments, was an increase of £6.626m (4.29%) from the previous year. The final settlement was not due to be received until 25th February, 2020. The officer then highlighted that in setting the proposed budget for 2020/21, funding had been provided towards cost pressures, including the remainder of the cost pressure associated with the increase in employer's contributions into the Teachers' Pensions Fund. This was estimated to cost the Council £1.204m in 2020/21. The Council proposed to provide funding to schools to fully fund this pressure.

An efficiency target of £247k had been proposed for 2020/21 which the officer explained would cover all service areas and was at a level which was significantly lower than the targets that had to be set in previous years. It had become increasingly difficult for services to deliver further savings without reducing service provision following £59m of savings which had been achieved in the last 10 years. It was considered that the target set for 2020/21 was of a level that could be achieved by services.

In order to deliver these budget proposals, the Head of Service remarked that it would be necessary to use £1m from the Council Fund reserve in 2020/21, as previously approved as part of the 2019/20 budget proposals. Although this was not ideal as it would move the financial pressure onto future years where higher levels of savings would need to be achieved, however it had been considered to be an appropriate approach.

It was proposed that the Band D Council Tax rate be set at £1,306.08 for 2020/21, which was an increase of 4.9% from the current year.

In light of no indication being received from WG for future years' settlements, it was considered prudent to assume that there may be a flatlined settlement going forward. If Council Tax continued to increase by 4.9% this could result in the possible total shortfall in funding for 2021/22 and 2022/23 of £10.596m. Whilst it had been possible to set efficiency targets at a lower level in 2020/21 this may not be the case going forward and in light of projected levels of shortfall in future years, services were requested to continue to plan ways of achieving further efficiencies which would be innovative and transformational with regard to service delivery.

The Council Fund provided cover for unforeseen expenditure whilst, in the short term, maintaining a working balance. Unforeseen expenditure could be substantial, and several instances could occur in a year. The level of pressure on Directorates in 2019/20 had evidenced this with overspends being reported in three of the Directorates. Whilst there was no set requirement for the minimum level for the Council Fund Reserve, the officer noted some commentators used 5% of the net budget as a guide. For the Vale of Glamorgan this was currently about £12m. However, in view of the prudent approach the Council took with regard to Specific Reserves, it was proposed that £10m should be the revised minimum level for this reserve.

A Committee Member stated that whilst he was pleased to hear that there had been an increase in the settlement the Local Authority was anticipating it would receive from WG for the financial year 2020/21, he was unimpressed by the proposal to increase Council Tax at a rate that was several times higher than that of inflation. He also noted that with regard to efficiency savings, the anticipated saving of £165k that the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport had outlined to Committee previously as part of the report 'Withdrawal of Discretionary Funding for Fare Paying School Transport Services' had not been included in the report and queried why this was the case. The officer replied that the saving that the Committee Member was referring to had been part of the budget for the preceding financial year and had therefore not been included in the report in question.

Another Committee Member noted that the report cited 5% of a Local Authority's net budget as the guideline minimum level for the Council Fund Reserve and asked the officer whether there was information available regarding what level other Local Authorities were setting for the same and other reserves, as it could provide useful context for Committee Members when considering such matters. The Chairman agreed that it would be a useful exercise to look at the reserves of other Local Authorities, and that it could provide some clarity as to why other Local Authorities were reported to have such high levels of reserves in comparison to those of the Vale of Glamorgan. The Chairman added that it would be necessary to use Council Tax to increase the Local Authority's Council Tax Base and mitigate the effects of the demographic time bomb that it was facing.

In response to the query as to why the level of reserve had been suggested at £10m, the Section 151 Officer advised that in view of the potential service area overspends as highlighted in another report on the same agenda, the current minimum level for the Council Fund of £7m was considered should be increased. The figure of £10m was therefore being proposed as an appropriate buffer for the Local Authority. In response to the query relating to the reserve levels set by other Local Authorities, the officer advised that the Wales Audit Office (WAO) had a few years previously published a report detailing Local Authority reserves in Wales which she offered to circulate to Committee Members for their information. The Head of Service advised that she could also approach the Welsh Local Government Association to ascertain if they had any more up to date information on this matter. The Chairman requested that this be carried out with a view to a report on the matter being tabled for discussion at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.

A Member requested that the details at Appendix H with regard to the reserves held by the Authority should be highlighted when the report was discussed at Council.

Having considered the report and there being no further questions, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T, having reviewed the Final Proposals for the Revenue Budget 2020/21, the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Wales Audit Office report as highlighted above in respect of Local Authority reserves in Wales be forwarded to all Members of the Committee for their information.
- (3) T H A T the Committee receives a report to a future meeting to provide the opportunity for further analysis and consideration of Local Authority reserves.
- (4) T H A T the details as outlined at Appendix H to the report be highlighted to Full Council when the report is to be presented.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) In view of the contents contained therein.
- (2&3) In order that the Committee receives further information regarding the reserve levels set by other Local Authorities and for further consideration to be undertaken.
- (4) In order that Cabinet consider the Scrutiny Committee's view before making a final proposal on the budget and for clarification purposes."

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Cabinet, having considered the recommendations of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee,

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Wales Audit Office report, as highlighted above in respect of Local Authority reserves in Wales, be forwarded to all Members of the Council for their information.
- (3) T H A T the details as outlined at Appendix H to the report be highlighted to Full Council by the Leader when the report is to be presented.

Reasons for decisions

(1) In view of the contents of the report.

(2&3) For information.

C226 REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 5TH FEBRUARY 2020 - DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2020-25 (REF) – (Urgent by reason of allowing Cabinet to consider the comments from Corporate Performance Resources Scrutiny Committee in association with Item 4 on this meeting agenda.)

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation commenced by outlining that the Council had developed the draft Corporate Plan 2020-25, following the consultation undertaken on the draft between October and December 2019 and the changes made in response to the feedback received.

The officer reported that the Corporate Plan was the Council's key strategic document and that it set out how the Council's vision of Strong Communities with a Bright Future would be delivered over a five year period. In developing the Corporate Plan 2020-25, included at Appendix A to the report, the officer advised that the Council had undertaken extensive engagement and had considered a range of information and data. This included:

- The Public Opinion Survey
- Big Conversation with Staff
- Performance data
- Key Population data for the Vale
- Consideration by Scrutiny Committees
- Partnership activities and priorities
- Stakeholder workshop
- Discussions with the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum
- Corporate Risks
- Budget consultation
- Discussions at Community Liaison Committee and Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee.

The approach to developing the Corporate Plan 2020-25 had taken into account the diverse needs of the population including people of different ages, rural and urban communities, business, and the work of key partners such as the Cardiff and Vale UHB, the Police, the Third Sector and Town and Community Councils. In developing the new Plan, the need to reflect the Council's community leadership role, mental health and staff wellbeing issues, the importance of culture, and the promotion of healthy lifestyles had also been recognised.

Appendix B to the report detailed the consultation undertaken, the feedback received and how the Council had responded. The officer noted that a number of interesting

and valuable points had been made which had helped to shape the revised Plan and would also inform the Annual Delivery Plan. These included:

- Greater emphasis on health and well-being
- More information regarding the actions the Council would undertake year on year
- Importance of information being accessible and engaging and how the Council communicated with residents and service users
- The importance of arts, culture and leisure
- The importance of volunteering and the range of community and individual benefits
- Overall support for the actions and objectives but interest in how they would be delivered.

The officer continued by explaining that the aim of the Plan had been to provide the strategic framework for 2020-25 and reflect how different activities would deliver a wide range of outcomes through four Well-being Objectives which were:

- To work with and for our communities
- To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
- To support people at home and in their community
- To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment.

The draft Plan set out a definition of each objective and the actions to be taken over the five years to achieve them. The officer noted that the objectives formed an holistic package of activity to deliver the Council's vision and to maximise its contribution to the national well-being goals in an integrated manner.

During the engagement and consultation stages of producing the draft Plan, feedback had been received suggesting that the Council could enhance the transparency of achieving its Well-being Objectives by being more specific about the action that would be taken each year to deliver the Plan. In response, it had been proposed that a new approach to corporate planning should be adopted and this would involve the publication of an Annual Delivery Plan to accompany the overarching five year Corporate Plan. The Annual Delivery Plan would set out the key activities to be undertaken to deliver on the commitments in the Corporate Plan by the Council each year and will be published each Spring. This would directly inform individual Service Plans which were also produced annually and contained annual performance measures and targets.

The officer continued by highlighting that the current approach to reporting and scrutiny of the Corporate Plan was based on a set of five performance reports aligned with each of the well-being outcomes and overall corporate health. However, the Well-being Objectives contained in the draft Corporate Plan were more integrated and cross-cutting than the existing Plan and demonstrated how the actions across the Council would contribute to multiple objectives, which in turn required a more integrated approach to the way performance was monitored, scrutinised and reported.

It was therefore proposed that a single report be developed to demonstrate progress and each Scrutiny Committee would receive a presentation of the progress made in the period from the perspective of that Committee's Terms of Reference. The resulting comments from each Committee would be drawn together to provide an holistic assessment of performance and be considered by Cabinet at a meeting dedicated to the Corporate Plan. A 'Performance Cabinet' meeting would provide an opportunity for Cabinet Members to present progress from the perspective of their portfolios and identify how the activity underway across the organisation was working together to deliver the Annual Delivery Plan and overall Corporate Plan. At the first meeting of each Scrutiny Committee following the Annual Meeting, it was further proposed that a presentation would be given of the Annual Delivery Plan in the context of the Corporate Plan and Terms of Reference of the Committee.

The officer concluded the presentation of the report by advising that following consideration by the Committee, Cabinet would be asked to consider the Committee's views and review and endorse the draft Corporate Plan 2020-25 as the basis for referral to Council for approval.

A Committee Member remarked that in his view the consultation with the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum had provided good feedback, particularly in relation to the importance of public transport and the difficulties experienced in getting through to the Council's Contact Centre. The Member emphasised that the Plan should answer those who had been consulted for feedback, and that the Council should in turn ensure that their needs were met.

Another Committee Member then asked whether the Corporate Plan had been prepared in collaboration with other documents that were referred to Scrutiny Committees for consideration (for instance the Capital Strategy), or whether these were drafted separately to one another. As the Corporate Plan aimed to give an overall idea of the direction in which the Council was moving, he was interested to know whether it informed other key Council documents and what the process behind this looked like. The officer confirmed that there was collaboration involved in the development of the Corporate Plan alongside other key documents, and a series of conversations take place between officers during the preparation of all significant Council strategies such as the Corporate Plan. He highlighted that whilst the aim of the Corporate Plan was to set out the Council's strategic commitments and provide a framework within which services were to be delivered, these were ultimately subject to the availability of resources, and the extent to which commitments could be delivered upon would be subject to the availability of funding to support the work.

The Chairman highlighted that the consultation with the Youth Cabinet had raised some good points and noted that this demographic had their own concerns and issues which should be addressed by the Corporate Plan, Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committees. The Chairman also asked how the draft Annual Delivery Plan was progressing. In response, the officer advised that sessions with Heads of Service had recently concluded in the development of their Service Plans. In parallel, conversations were underway with Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team regarding the identification of important priorities and what they would like to see being prioritised in the coming year. These would be brought together in the Annual Delivery Plan, a draft of which was to be considered by Scrutiny Committees in

March / April 2020. The officer also expressed a commitment to collaborating with external partners, assuring that the Council would not be aiming to tackle larger scale issues such as Climate Change on its own.

A Committee Member remarked that when the initial draft of the Plan had been brought to Scrutiny Committees for consideration, she had expressed concern regarding the depth of the consultation that would be taking place and in particular to the issue of equalities and ensuring that harder to reach groups' voices were heard. The Member continued by expressing the view that it was important now to manage the expectations of those who had responded to the consultation, and a conversation should take place about feedback, explaining to consultees why choices had been made about the inclusion of priorities in the revised Plan. The officer acknowledged the Committee Member's concerns regarding the depth of the consultation and continued by further acknowledging the need for ongoing conversations to take place with consultees, and in publishing the Delivery Plan the Council needed to be specific regarding the activity that was being undertaken in relation to delivering the objectives within the Corporate Plan. In conclusion the officer took the opportunity to assure Members that his Service area was up for the challenge and would continually be monitoring progress.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for his comprehensive report to the Committee, and there being no further questions, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the draft Corporate Plan 2020-25 be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet be requested to ensure that appropriate feedback is given to consultees e.g. Youth Cabinet etc.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents contained therein and the discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To ensure that feedback to responses is acknowledged.”

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Cabinet, having considered the recommendations of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee,

RESOLVED – T H A T the report be noted and appropriate feedback is given to all statutory consultees.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and to ensure feedback to responses is acknowledged.