

CABINET

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 1st December, 2022.

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

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor L. Burnett (Chair); Councillors R.M. Birch, B.E. Brooks, G. John, S. Sivagnanam, E. Williams, M.R Wilkinson and M.R. Wilson.

Also Present: Councillor E. Goodjohn.

C147 ANNOUNCEMENT –

The Leader welcomed all parties to the Cabinet meeting and reminded everyone present that the meeting was being Live Streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.

She asked if all participants please ‘mute’ themselves when not speaking in order to avoid any background noise or feedback when other participants were speaking, and if a participant wished to speak if they could put their hand up (to be seen on screen) or use the ‘raise hand’ function.

Members were asked to ensure that all debate was raised verbally and not via the ‘chat’ function for the sake of the recording. The ‘chat’ function could be used to highlight any technical issues and/or to get the attention of the Chair or Democratic Services Officer.

The Leader said that it was World Aids Day and the Vale of Glamorgan Council was delighted to be part of the leadership group for Fast track Cardiff and the Vale, which was a ground-breaking voluntary organisation working to eradicate HIV and the stigma of HIV by 2030. GPs in the Vale of Glamorgan had signed up to an innovative pilot called ‘Texting for Testing’ in which everyone over the age of 16 would receive a text inviting them for a confidential test by post. GPs in in the Western Vale were the first to participate in the pilot and feedback had been excellent. She encouraged anyone who received a text to participate.

C148 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meetings held on 17th November, 2022 be approved as a correct record.

C149 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor L. Burnett	The interest related to Agenda Item 11 - Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme (AVCs). The Leader advised that she had a personal but not prejudicial interest in the matter as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme. She had an exemption as described in the Members' Code of Conduct and as such was able to remain in the meeting and vote on the matter.
Councillor B.E. Brooks	The interest related to Agenda Item 11 - Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme (AVCs). Councillor Brooks advised that she had a personal but not prejudicial interest in the matter as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme. She had an exemption as described in the Members' Code of Conduct and as such was able to remain in the meeting and vote on the matter.
Councillor R.M. Birch	The interest related to Agenda Item 11 - Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme (AVCs). Councillor Birch advised that she had a personal but not prejudicial interest in the matter as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme. She had an exemption as described in the Members' Code of Conduct and as such was able to remain in the meeting and vote on the matter.
Councillor M.R. Wilson	The interest related to Agenda Item 11 - Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme (AVCs). Councillor Wilson advised that he had a personal but not prejudicial interest in the matter as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme. He had an exemption as described in the Members' Code of Conduct and as such was able to remain in the meeting and vote on the matter.
Councillor R. Sivagnanam	The interest related to Agenda Item 11 - Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme (AVCs). Councillor Sivagnanam advised that she had a personal but not prejudicial interest in the matter as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme. She had an exemption as described in the Members' Code of Conduct and as such was able to remain in the meeting and vote on the matter.

C150 Q2 UPDATE: AUDIT WALES WORK PROGRAMME TIMETABLE 2022/23 – VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL (REF) –

The reference from Governance and Audit Committee of 24th October, 2022 was presented.

Governance and Audit Committee Members were requested to review and note the progress made on the Vale of Glamorgan Audit Work Programme as at Quarter 2 and had noted the report.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the comments of the Governance and Audit Committee be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C151 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER QUARTER 1 UPDATE (REF) –

The reference from Governance and Audit Committee of 24th October, 2022 was presented.

Recommendation (2) of the Cabinet report had recommended the removal of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and the WCCIS risks and recommend the inclusion of Cost of Living risk and the reframing of the Environmental Sustainability risk to Project Zero on the Register.

Committee resolved to retain the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and had recommended to Cabinet the removal of the Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS) risk from the Register, to accept the inclusion of a Cost of Living risk and for the reframing of the Environmental Sustainability risk to Project Zero on the Register.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the removal of the Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS) risk from the Register be approved, the inclusion of a Cost of Living risk be accepted and the Environmental Sustainability risk to Project Zero be reframed on the Register.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C152 HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAMME STRATEGY (REF) –

The reference from Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee of 7th November, 2022 was presented.

The Committee had discussed the cost of the provision of Bed and Breakfast accommodation following the huge increase in in recognised homelessness that occurred during the pandemic. There was discussion regarding modular accommodation use and that the Vale of Glamorgan used modular units such as those on Court Road.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the draft Housing Support Programme Strategy be approved and adopted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C153 FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/24 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN REFRESH (REF) –

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee of 16th November, 2022 was presented.

The Leader had attended the meeting and referred to the number of comments made by Committee on Pages 2 and 3 of the reference. With regard to mitigating the use of external consultants, the Leader said the Council did forecast what skills may be required and how to train staff accordingly. However, in recent budget discussions and whilst looking at the draft Annual Delivery Plan for next year, one of the themes had been organisational resilience. After 12 years of austerity the Authority was lean, and as such on occasion there had been a need to bring in additional capacity where required. Staff were offered opportunities to acquire skills in particular areas but occasionally it was necessary to bring in consultants for short-term periods of work.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the resolutions of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be fed into the Budget Working Group as part of next year's budget discussions.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C154 GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST ADVISORY GROUP –

The minutes of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Advisory Group meeting held on 30th September, 2022 as contained within the agenda, were submitted.

As part of the discussion concerning Public Rights of Way work, the Advisory Group had requested that the Leader be asked to make representations to Welsh Government seeking additional funding to assist with the maintenance and upkeep of the Coast Path in the Vale of Glamorgan area.

The Leader said that funding was received from sources such as Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government but was happy to write to the Minister to draw attention to the success of the Heritage Coast and also inviting them to visit.

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the minutes of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Advisory Group meeting held on 30th September, 2022 be noted.

(2) T H A T the Leader would write to Welsh Government seeking additional funding to assist with the maintenance and upkeep of the Coast Path in the Vale of Glamorgan area, draw attention to the success of the Heritage Coast and also extending an invitation to the Minister to visit.

Reason for decisions

(1&2) In noting the minutes.

C155 JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM –

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Forum meeting held on 17th October, 2022 as contained within the agenda, were submitted.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Joint Consultative Forum meeting held on 17th October, 2022 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

C156 CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE –

The minutes of the Cardiff Bay Advisory Committee meeting held on 26th October, 2022 as contained within the agenda, were submitted.

Councillor Wilson had been newly appointed as Chair of the Committee. He advised that future meetings were being planned for January and March 2023 with a potential visit to the Bay concerning environmental conditions.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Cardiff Bay Advisory Committee meeting held on 26th October, 2022 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

C157 SHARED COST ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS SCHEME (AVCs) (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to request an amendment to the Pensions discretions to allow for the introduction of a Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) scheme. The standard AVC scheme was run by Prudential, who had confirmed this could now be extended to the shared cost scheme.

The Leader referred to Paragraph 5.1 of the report which referred to the 1.25% health and social care levy. This had been reversed out since the report was prepared which meant the savings in 5.3 and 5.4 were overstated.

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 adoption of the Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) Scheme to enable employees who are Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) members to apply for a salary sacrifice AVC subject to meeting the scheme criteria be approved.
- (2) T H A T the amendment of the Local Government Pension Scheme Review of Discretionary Powers under the LGPS Regulations 2014 (attached at Appendix A to the report) be approved.
- (3) T H A T Contract Standing Orders be waived to enable the award of the contract to AVC Wise for a period of 3 years.
- (4) T H A T the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to execute the contract with AVC Wise.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) The approval of the adoption of the scheme would be a significant benefit for Councillors and staff who were members of the LGPS and would also result in large savings in National Insurance for the Council.

- (2) To ensure the policy was up to date.
- (3) To enable the direct award of contract to AVC Wise.
- (4) To execute the agreed contract.

**C158 COUNCIL TAX UNOCCUPIED DWELLINGS: 2023/24 (EL/PR)
(SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to reaffirm the previous decision not to grant any discount in Council Tax for empty properties and furnished second homes for the 2023/24 financial year.

The report proposed that the Council consulted on the levying of a Council Tax premium in 2023/24 in respect of long-term empty properties and in 2024/25 in respect of second homes.

This was in line with the Council's objective to increase the supply of housing in the Vale of Glamorgan. The headline annual need for affordable housing in the Vale of Glamorgan from 2021 to 2026 was 1,205 dwellings.

The Leader requested that Recommendation (2) be amended to use paragraph 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution (urgency decision procedure) to allow the consultation to begin immediately, which was agreed.

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 previous decision be reaffirmed that no discount be allowed in 2023/24 in respect of unoccupied dwellings as defined in classes A, B and C to the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998, as amended.

(2) T H A T the use of paragraph 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution (urgency decision procedure) be authorised to enable consultation to start immediately and allow Cabinet to determine that the Council enters a period of consultation as defined in Sections 12A and 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as inserted by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 regarding the following:

- A Council Tax premium be levied in 2023/24 in respect of long-term empty properties;
- A Council Tax premium be levied in 2024/25 in respect of second homes.

(3) T H A T the report be forwarded to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee for consideration as part the consultation.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) The Council was required to determine its policy on discounts in relation to unoccupied dwellings as defined in classes A, B and C to the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998 each year.
- (2) The Council was required to determine its policy on the introduction of premiums in respect of second homes and long-term empty properties as defined in Sections 12A and 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as inserted by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
- (3) To ensure that the relevant Scrutiny Committee be included as part of the consultation process.

C159 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report the purpose of which was to set out the limited discretions available to the Council for consideration when re-adopting the Council Tax Reduction National Scheme for 2023/24.

The report proposed that Cabinet recommended to Full Council the re-adoption of the Council Tax Reduction National Scheme for 2023/24 together with the limited discretions available to the Council.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

RESOLVED –

- (1) That Cabinet recommend to Full Council that the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations SI 2013/3029 (“the Prescribed Requirements Regulations”) and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 SI 2014/66 be adopted.
- (2) T H A T any amendments to Regulations made by the Welsh Government were reflected in the scheme.
- (3) T H A T the national scheme be adopted with the following discretions:-
 - That the Council should continue to allow Extended Payments up to a maximum of 4 weeks.
 - That the Council should continue to disregard War Widow and War Disablement pensions in assessing income for Council Tax Reduction.
 - That the Council should continue to allow Backdated Reductions for a period up to 26 weeks.

(4) T H A T the use of paragraph 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution (urgent decision procedure) be authorised to allow the report to be considered at Full Council on 5th December, 2022.

Reasons for decisions

(1-3) To enable the Council Tax Reduction Scheme to be approved by Council by 31st January, 2023 and be in place for implementation from 1st April, 2023.

(4) To allow the consideration of the report at the next Council meeting.

C160 PRECEPT PAYMENT DATES 2023/24 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to approve the dates on which precepts were to be paid to the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and the Town and Community Councils within the Vale of Glamorgan area.

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 payment due to the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales be paid in 12 equal instalments on the last working day of each month.

(2) T H A T payment due to Town and Community Councils be paid in 3 equal instalments on the last working days of April, August and December 2023.

Reasons for decisions

(1&2) The dates were determined to optimise the Council's cash flow in line with the regulations.

C161 VALE OF GLAMORGAN PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD HEALTHY TRAVEL CHARTER LEVEL 2 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide an update for Cabinet on the Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board's Healthy Travel Charter and seek approval for the Council to sign the Level Two Charter.

The Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board (PSB) developed the initial Staff Healthy Travel Charter in partnership with the Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team.

The Council signed-up to the Level 1 Healthy Travel Charter in 2019, the Level 1 Charter included 14 commitments for 2019-22 around public transport, walking and cycling, communications and leadership, agile-working and ultra-low emission vehicles.

Good progress had been made against these 14 commitments with all being met by the end of October 2022 deadline.

Approval was now sought to sign-up to the new 'Level 2' Healthy Travel Charter, which set out more stretching requirements to be implemented over a two-year period.

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 Council should commit to the Level 2 Healthy Travel Charter and work with PSB partners to promote healthier and sustainable travel options.

Reason for decision

To enable the Vale of Glamorgan Council to participate in the work of the PSB, facilitating and encouraging healthy and sustainable travel options.

**C162 STRONG COMMUNITIES GRANT FUND 2020-2025 (DL/SP)
(SCRUTINY – ALL) –**

The Deputy Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the Strong Communities Grant Programme (SCGF) in the current year and sought approval for the award of funding to the third round of applications to the Main Grant Fund.

Councillor Brooks said that supported projects were making a real difference to the quality of life and range of services available to people and communities in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Councillor Wilson said that the desire was to create more sustainable and strong communities and this type of grant funding supported that. He said it was a vigorous application process as it was public funding but encouraged potential applicants to apply. Officers were available to support applicants through the process if required and he encouraged applications from across the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Leader said that £837k in grant funding had been distributed to support local organisations and groups since 2017, and thanked the Creative Communities team for providing advice and support regarding the 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 content of the report and appendices be noted, that grant funding of up to £146, 860.57 be approved and the Evaluation Panel's recommendations as outlined in Appendix A to the report be endorsed.

(2) T H A T the "roll forward" of £29,991.43 under-committed funds from this year's Strong Communities Grant Fund in order to supplement the funding available for the next financial year be approved.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To enable Strong Communities Grant Funding to be awarded to submissions as outlined in Appendix A attached to the report, in line with the Council's Constitution and the scope of the scheme.

(2) To ensure that the current year's unallocated funds were protected for Strong Communities Grants in 2023/2024.