

CABINET

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 14th December, 2023.

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

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

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

Also Present: Councillors A. Asbrey, C.P. Franks and Dr. I.J. Johnson.

C176 ANNOUNCEMENT –

The Leader welcomed all parties to the meeting of the Vale of Glamorgan Cabinet.

Members and Officers were reminded that the meeting was being livestreamed, recorded and would be uploaded to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting.

She asked if all participants to ensure that if participating in person in the Chamber that their microphone not be activated and for remote attendees to 'mute' themselves when not speaking to avoid any background noise or feedback when other participants were speaking, and if a participant wished to speak if they could activate their respective request to speak function or use the 'raise hand' function if attending remotely.

Members were asked to ensure that all debate be 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 Officers.

The Leader said the meeting was the last Cabinet meeting to be held in 2023. For many the Christmas period would be a time of relaxation with family and friends, but it was recognised that for many residents and businesses of the Vale of Glamorgan it would be 'business as usual'. The Council's Waste and Recycling Teams would continue to operate, as would the HGV drivers should there be a Christmas cold spell and the roads required gritting. Domiciliary Carers and those within the local Care Homes would be working, as would Telecare Operators who were on the phone 24 hours a day as vital support to assist vulnerable Vale of Glamorgan residents. The Housing team would be on call to support those who found themselves in difficulties over the festive season, along with organisations such as the Samaritans. Locally, the shops would still largely be trading over the Christmas period, as would public houses and restaurants. Also, the local Emergency Services would be on call and function over the holiday period. For all those working through Christmas and the new year be that as a carer, refuse lorry loader, shop assistant nurse, part of the road repairs team, emergency workers or restaurant, Cabinet

extended their thanks and gratitude and wished everyone a happy Christmas and prosperous 2024.

C177 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

This was received from Councillor B.E. Brooks.

C178 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 30th November, 2023 be approved as a correct record.

C179 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

C180 CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION REGIONAL CABINET –

The Leader said that the minutes were succinct and designed to be read alongside the meeting agenda items to show the decisions taken and were included for information.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Cardiff Capital Region Regional Cabinet held on 9th October, 2023 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

C181 COUNCIL TAX BASE 2024-25 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the Council Tax Base for 2024-25.

The calculation details were listed in Paragraph 2.1 of the report with the associated assumptions made listed in Paragraph 2.2. Figures had to be confirmed to Welsh Government by 31st December, 2023 following the certified draft copy sent to Welsh Government to meet their previous 14th December, 2023 deadline.

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 pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations, the amount calculated by the Vale of Glamorgan Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2024-25 shall be:

- For the whole area: 63,397
- For the area of Town and Community Councils:

Town/Community Council	Tax Base £	Town/Community Council	Tax Base £
Barry	21,193	Pendoylan	353
Colwinston	378	Penllyn	1,085
Cowbridge with Llanblethian	2,998	Peterston-Super-Ely	559
Dinas Powys	4,032	Rhoose	3,238
Ewenny	450	St. Athan	1,699
Llancarfan	489	St. Brides Major	1,480
Llandough	969	St. Donats	217
Llandow	447	St. Georges & St. Brides-Super-Ely	246
Llanfair	388	St. Nicholas & Bonvilston	761
Llangan	477	Sully & Lavernock	2,828
Llanmaes	259	Welsh St. Donats	330
Llantwit Major	4,367	Wenvoe	1,571
Michaelston	252	Wick	541
Penarth	11,790		

Reason for decision

It was essential that the Council Tax Base was set in order that it could be submitted to the Welsh Government and used by Councils and levying bodies to set the precepts.

C182 PRECEPT PAYMENT DATES 2024-25 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the payment of precepts for 2024-25.

She said that Council Tax bills also included the collection details for the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and Town and Community Councils, as well as South Wales Fire and Rescue although that was not in the form of a precept but collected as part of the Council Tax.

Councillor Wilson said it was useful for Town and Community Councils and other bodies to know when payments were due to assist with management of their cashflow.

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 2024.

Reason for decisions

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

C183 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to confirm the re-adoption of the Council Tax Reduction National Scheme for 2024/2025 based on regulations and to reconfirm the Council's discretions. The discretionary elements were outlined in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

Councillor Williams said the matter had to be considered annually and showed support for people in need, armed forces and veterans in the Vale of Glamorgan.

This was a matter for Executive decision and for referral to Full Council in January 2024.

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

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T Cabinet recommended 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 Cabinet recommended to Full Council to note that any amendments to Regulations made by the Welsh Government be reflected in the scheme.

(3) T H A T Cabinet recommended to Full Council that 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.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To enable the Council Tax Reduction Scheme to be approved by Council by 31st January, 2024 and be in place for implementation from 1st April, 2024.

(2) Extended payments should continue to be for up to 4 weeks as this provided an incentive for customers to move into work and allow them time to receive their first pay. The numbers affected by this would also continue to decline as customers moved onto Universal Credit and extended payments then did not apply.

(3) War Widow and War Disablement pensions should continue to be disregarded to allow the Council to continue to support Veterans and their families. Backdates should continue to be allowed for a maximum of 26 weeks to allow help to those with genuine cases for not applying sooner and to remove some of the burden of debt. Those cases would often otherwise be passed for further recovery action, putting further pressure upon them.

C184 COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS ON LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES AND SECOND HOMES (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the policy to be adopted for Council Tax Long Term Empty Properties and Second Homes for 2024-25.

A number of people responded to the consultation held in 2022 which informed last year's decision. Since that time, the number of identified second homes had risen from 402 to 508. The Leader said that there were grants available through the Council to anyone with a house to bring back into use for people in the Vale of Glamorgan who need those homes. There was currently a sizeable shortfall of available homes, and it was right to encourage bringing back empty properties for use by local people. It was recognised that there were exceptions, such as probate, which could affect the time it would take to bring a property back into use.

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 policy with regard to not granting any level of discount for unoccupied dwellings that have remained so for 6 months agreed for 2023-24, be agreed for 2024-25.
- (2) T H A T the long term empty property premium of 100% agreed by Full Council on 6th March, 2023 for the 2023-24 financial year continue for such properties from 2024-25 that remain so for the period up to (but not including) 24 months.
- (3) T H A T from 1st April, 2024 a premium of 150% be introduced for long term empty properties that have remained as such for a continuous period of 24 months or more.
- (4) T H A T from 1st April, 2025 a premium of 200% be introduced for long term empty properties that have remained as such for a continuous period of 36 months or more.
- (5) T H A T the policy to introduce a premium of 100% on second homes for the 2024-25 financial year agreed on 6th March, 2023 be reaffirmed.

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&4) The Council was required to determine its policy regarding premiums in respect of 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) Upon reviewing the implementation of the premium for long term empty properties introduced from the start of 1st April 2023, it was felt that a straight increase to the premium levels as previously proposed, may counteract the intention of the policy, which was to bring long term empty properties back into use, if the level of charges due hindered necessary works required to make a dwelling habitable. As such it was felt that a stepped approach would be more in keeping with the policy to ensure that persistent long term empty properties were targeted.
- (5) The Council was required to determine its policy regarding premiums in respect of second homes as defined in Sections 12A and 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as inserted by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

C185 DISPOSAL OF FORMER TOILET BLOCK AT LLANTWIT MAJOR BEACH (NBS) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek Cabinet approval to declare a non-operational former toilet block, together with associated land, located near the beach at Llantwit Major surplus to Council requirements and that subject to the toilet block being declared surplus the site be marketed with the option of a 25 year lease available to interested parties.

Councillor Williams agreed that it was time that the site be used for good reason and that it was important to be fair to any further expressions of interest.

Councillor John said the toilets had not been in use for 30 years, would need work carried out to access them and was supportive of bringing the site back into use.

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 unused former toilet block at Llantwit Major beach be declared surplus to the requirements of the Directorate of Environment and Housing .
- (2) T H A T the site be marketed with the opportunity of a lease up to a maximum of 25 years.
- (3) T H A T the criteria for evaluating any expressions of interest in the site be structured to reflect both price and community benefit.
- (4) T H A T any expressions of interest in the site be reported to Cabinet for a final decision on leasing the site.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To allow the site to be advertised for alternative uses and to eliminate any Council costs associated with maintaining the site.
- (2) To seek expressions of interest in using the site for alternative purposes.
- (3) To ensure any future use of the site benefits the community.
- (4) To ensure any decisions regarding the future of this site are taken appropriately.

**C186 SAFER VALE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2023-2028 (PSHTE)
(SCRUTINY – HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval of the Safer Vale Partnership Strategy 2023-2028 and to agree the funding that supported the delivery of the Safer Vale Partnership Strategy.

Several positive outcomes had been delivered in response to crime and disorder issues across the Vale of Glamorgan, including an upgrade to CCTV which had led to the identification of a number of perpetrators. The Delivery Plan for the year would include implementing new interventions that had been awarded through Safer Streets and Shared Prosperity Funding and ASB hot spot monies. All policies would be renewed and updated as well as information-sharing protocols that ensured tighter governance arrangements. The Strategy's 5-year approach reflected the nature of community safety and how priorities were expected to change over the timeframe of the Strategy, which were intentionally broad to allow space for a breadth of specific actions that would be intelligence-led, and needs based. The Strategy included the lessons learned through the last three years which included unforeseen change due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Councillor Sivagnanam stressed the importance of partnership working and that the Strategy not only looked to deal with issues as they arose but also looked at prevention which required working with other outside bodies to achieve results.

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 Safer Vale Partnership Strategy 2023-2028 attached at Appendix 1 to the report be adopted.

(2) T H A T further reports on the Council's actions in the delivery of the strategy be referred to Cabinet for consideration as appropriate, and that further information reports concerning the Council's actions in the delivery of the strategy be provided as information reports to elected Members in due course.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To ensure that the Council meets its Statutory Duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in order to demonstrate the Council's commitment to preventing, reducing and addressing crime and disorder in the Vale of Glamorgan and to enable the Council to continue contributing strategic and operational support to a programme of work that had already achieved successful outcomes.

(2) To request future decisions from Cabinet where required and to inform Members of progress made in meeting its requirements under the Act.

C187 SPORTS DEVELOPMENT REGIONALISATION (LSW) (SCRUTINY – HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the Vale of Glamorgan to become part of the Central South Sports Development initiative as a Strategic Partner. Sport Partnerships had already been set up in West and North Wales and it was hoped that the Central South Region would be next.

The Leader said that the Vale of Glamorgan Council had worked productively with Sport Wales in the past.

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 Director of Environment and Housing, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services, be authorised to agree the governance arrangements and enter the Vale of Glamorgan Council into the Central South Sports Partnership as a Strategic Partner.

(2) T H A T the report be referred to Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee for its consideration.

(3) T H A T the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee receive regular reports on the progress of the Central South Regional Sports Partnership.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To ensure that Sports Development continued to function efficiently and effectively for the benefit of the Council's communities.

(2) To keep the Scrutiny Committee informed of the development and to allow for any comments to be considered prior to entering into the partnership.

(3) To monitor the performance of the Central South Sports Partnership from the perspective of the Vale of Glamorgan and to have the ability to share any appropriate information with Cabinet.