

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 1ST MAY, 2025

REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 9TH APRIL, 2025

“ CORPORATE RESOURCES DIRECTORATE PLAN 2025/26 (INCLUDING ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ASSOCIATED PERFORMANCE TARGETS) TO DELIVER VALE 2030, THE COUNCIL’S CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (DCR) –

The Director of Corporate Resources and Operational Manager – Corporate Strategy & Insight provided the Committee with an overview of the report via a PowerPoint presentation commencing by advising that the new plan Vale 2030 had been approved by Council on 10th March, 2025 and set out the Council’s commitments for the next five years. The new Plan also provided an opportunity to review and reassess the way in which the Plan and associated plans would be monitored and scrutinised going forward. As part of the development of Vale 2030 and in response to feedback on the Annual Delivery Plan (ADP), Annual Self-Assessment, Service Plans, Scrutiny processes and through the Panel Performance Assessment, work had been undertaken to consider how the current approach could be improved and evolved further, ensuring that arrangements remained robust with support needed to be open transparent and accountable.

All feedback to date from Elected Members had been considered and included in the Plans with the Chair recognising the hard work undertaken to produce the Plans which had also included significant engagement and consultation on Vale 2030 with the public.

During the discussion Councillor Franks drew attention to three aspects within the Corporate Resources Directorate Plan e.g. how the Council could engage people in relation to the food strategy action, how it could address the many poverty issues people faced and how it could encourage and increase volunteering throughout the Vale. The Director commented that the Public Service Board (PSB) had established a project on tackling the cost of living crisis and which the Council would work with as well as the Council supporting its residents with advice. In particular he referred to the work being undertaken with the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide assistance for people. The Council was also working with the third sector and community groups in promoting volunteering particularly with Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS). The Chair also commented that within her community they were growing organic food and promoting its production with a suggestion that targets be considered to be added to the Plan to increase the volume of locally produced food. Councillor John (Cabinet Member) also drew attention to a similar project in Llantwit encouraging Members to visit the project if required.

The Head of Finance took the opportunity to inform Committee of the support the Benefits team had provided to residents following the announcement at the end of

the last year by the UK Government regarding the removal of the winter fuel allowance. Following a query from Councillor Carroll as to further detail in respect of the comment under action CP41 to embed cultural change, the Director said that the Council's Reshaping Programme had a variety of different themes incorporating in particular how services were going to be operating, the decision making processes used, procurement, the use of digital technology to assist and economic resilience actions, etc. Although acknowledging that changing how the Council worked was a significant exercise, it was important to support all colleagues through this process. Councillor Carroll further commented that although aware that other Committees would be considering specific matters within their remit, it would be helpful that as Corporate Performance and Resources was the lead Scrutiny Committee, that the role of the Corporate Resources Directorate in leading on the process to allocate resources to services be reflected within the Plan at CP41 to ensure appropriate oversight by this Committee. The Director said that a reference to the Reshaping Programme to support a balanced budget could be included and the action made more explicit.

Although noting that it was important not to duplicate elements from other Service Plans, Councillor Goodjohn commented that the Plan referenced actions to prevent poverty with the suggestion that it could also include how the Council was measuring the reduction in child poverty and how it was contributing towards this. In referring to the third sector he also considered the Council could do more to encourage further engagement and do more with other networks. The Director said that he regularly met with the Chief Executive of GVS to consider such matters and the Council was also looking to do more things in a more proactive way. The Director also confirmed that measures relating to the work to tackle poverty could be further strengthened within the framework, noting that these accompanied reports on the topic to the Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Dr. Johnson, in noting that most of the actions in the Directorate Plan were part of other Plans, asked if the links to the other Plans referred to could be included in the document to assist Members and the public when considering the document. He also acknowledged that some baselines needed to be determined before targets could be included within the document.

Following the discussion, in conclusion the Chair drew attention to the recommendations that had been received from the Scrutiny Committees Homes and Safe Communities, Learning and Culture, the references from which had been circulated and uploaded to the website prior to the meeting, and the recommendations from the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee which had been circulated in an email to all Members that afternoon as the reference was not yet available.

It was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the recommendations as below (including the comments contained within the references) from the Homes and Safe Communities, Learning and Culture

and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committees be endorsed and referred to Cabinet for consideration –

- “Homes and Safe Communities – T H A T the Environment and Housing Directorate Plan (Appendix A to the report) and associated measures and performance targets for 2025/26 contained within it be endorsed, subject to the removal of reference to the closure of community centres in the Directorate Plan, and that this endorsement be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, in order for a composite response to be developed and referred back to Cabinet on 1st May, 2025;

- Learning and Culture – T H A T
 - Additional detail be added to the plan in relation to the Active Travel programmes for schools;
 - The need for more resources in the area of Additional Learning Needs;
 - More resources were required in relation to healthy eating, in order to combat obesity within young people;
 - The inclusion of an additional performance indicators in relation to healthy eating for young people and in relation to the Council's apprenticeship scheme;
 - Was there scope for the Council to be more ambitious in relation to the actions around the Council's Youth Service and in terms of how the Council engaged and heard the views of young people;
 - Could the Council do more to tackle child poverty;
 - Was there more that the Council could do to enable better access to examinations for those young people who were home-educated;
 - Could the Council provide more opportunities for young people to access leisure, sport, cultural and heritage activities;
 - Queried whether the Council could do more to encourage more people engage with arts and culture;
 - Did the Directorate Plan contain sufficient long-term focus on the risks and impact following cuts to the benefit system; and
 - The need for targets to be set for those new performance indicators where a measure had not been included.

- Environment and Regeneration – T H A T
 - it would be helpful that the percentages referred to within the report were quantified or translated into monetary values or other relevant numbers or quantities where that was relevant in order for the report to be as clear as possible in terms of what the Council was trying to achieve;
 - The plans around the support and use of volunteers were welcomed. As part of this, the Council should consider encouraging, supporting, and incentivising local residents to become volunteers in order to help with delivering the Council's vision;
 - The Committee noted the challenges around resources and the potential impact that these could have on the Environment & Housing and Place Directorate Plans, and, as part of this, Council officers were

requested to continue to inform and update Elected Members on progress and delays regarding these through the Scrutiny process.”

(2) T H A T Cabinet be recommended to consider the following within the Corporate Resources Directorate Plan that –

- action CP41 be strengthened having regard to the specific remit of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the role of the Corporate Resources Directorate in supporting the allocation of resources;
- Performance measurements relating to child poverty be identified and included within the Plan;
- A milestone for Third Sector engagement be included within the Plan;
- The specific links to other plans as referred to in the Directorate Plan be included;
- Targets be included for food strategy actions relating to the increase of growers and producers within the County and the percentage of locally grown / produced food in respect of school dinners.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) Having considered the comments and recommendations from the Scrutiny Committees.

(2) Following discussion and consideration of the Directorate Plan.”

Attached as Appendix: References from Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee: 31st March and Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee: 2nd April, 2025.
2025

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
9TH APRIL, 2025

REFERENCE FROM LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
31ST MARCH, 2025

“ LEARNING AND SKILLS DIRECTORATE PLAN 2025/26 (INCLUDING ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ASSOCIATED PERFORMANCE TARGETS) TO DELIVER VALE 2030, THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (DLS) –

The report presented for Members' consideration the planned activities, performance measures and associated performance targets in the Learning and Skills Directorate Plan 2025-26 (attached at Appendix A). This Directorate Plan aligned primarily to the remit of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee. The other Directorate Plans were being considered by relevant Scrutiny Committees and their comments and recommendations were to be considered by the Corporate Performance and Resources Committee to form a composite reference to Cabinet on the five Directorate Plans for 2025-26. This approach broadly followed that taken in scrutinising the Council's Revenue and Capital Budget proposals.

The Directorate Plans had been informed by the Council's commitments in Vale 2030, the Council's approved Corporate Plan (Full Council, 10th March, 2025) for the period 2025-30.

All Scrutiny Committees had considered the draft Corporate Plan (December 2024) and their views alongside that of a wide range of key stakeholders had informed the five new well-being objectives and 50 commitments detailed in Vale 2030 which was a five-year plan.

Progressing the activities and associated performance targets outlined in Directorate Plans would help to meet the Council's statutory obligations under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG). Both pieces of legislation placed specific duties on the Council in relation to reviewing and setting objectives, keeping performance under review and reporting on performance, with a focus on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Vale of Glamorgan citizens.

Scrutiny Committee Members were asked to review the Learning and Skills Directorate Plan 2025-26 (planned activities and proposed performance measures and associated targets) and how it would support delivery of the commitments and outcomes in Vale 2030.

Members were asked to refer any comments and recommendations with regards to the Learning and Skills Directorate Plan 2025-26 to the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee to form a composite reference to Cabinet on the five Directorate Plans for 2025-26.

Councillor N. Marshallsea queried the 5% budget reductions for resources bases. In reply, the Learning & Skills Strategy & Performance Manager advised that it should be taken in context of the wider factors affecting schools. The reduction would be carefully managed in terms of mitigating any negative impacts.

Councillor Marshallsea asked how the use of Welsh language would be promoted to school staff. The Senior Corporate Performance Partner advised that there was opportunity for school staff to develop their Welsh language skills outside of normal working hours. Information on take up of training would be sought and shared with Members of the Committee. In addition, the Principal Improvement Partner stated the Central South Consortium had a planned programme of professional learning available to staff on a termly basis in terms of their Welsh. That was based on an annual survey undertaken around the competency of people's Welsh language skills. There was also a specific support available for Learning Support Assistants that could be provided on both a school and cluster level. Opportunities for professional development were available to English medium speakers and also to Welsh speakers that wanted to brush up on their skills.

It was noted that the Directorate Plan did not contain specific references to active travel plans for schools. In response, the Learning & Skills Strategy & Performance Manager advised that activities relating to active travel was a key focus particularly when it came to areas such as Project Zero. In addition, active travel is potentially picked up under another Directorate Plan as well as it being a day-to-day activity. Agreed information be collated on schools that participate in Active Travel to be shared with the Committee.

Councillor E. Goodjohn referred to actions relating to the risks associated to Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and queried what were the mitigating factors planned to reduce risk. He also added that the Council needed to allocate additional resources to the area of ALN. In reply, the Director of Learning and Skills stated that there was a focus on preventative measures to reduce demand on specialist resource bases. Therefore, the Council would work closely with schools to ensure that teachers had the abilities and competencies to support the majority of needs of pupils. To do that there was an intention to work with Headteachers to formulate a plan of action that would enable close working with lead officers for teaching and learning in schools.

Councillor E. Goodjohn queried whether there had been consideration of health outcomes relating to tackling obesity and teaching basic life skills relating to cooking and healthy eating. The Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources replied that the Council undertook lots work in the area of healthy eating within schools which was a key priority for the Big Fresh Catering Company to meet new legislation set by Welsh Government. There were lots of initiatives, such as the School Holiday Enrichment Program, which were focused on supporting schools as well as those deprived communities. The Council also worked with schools and

community groups around active travel, and it was a key component of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Program. Healthy eating therefore represented day to day activity which was why it did not appear in the Directorate Plan. Councillor E. Goodjohn added it would be good if additional performance indicators in relation to healthy eating for young people could be considered.

In response to Councillor E. Goodjohn's query regarding work within the Council to promote apprenticeship schemes and could the Council do more to demonstrate success, the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources advised that there were lots work around that in a couple of different streams. Within the Sustainable Communities for Learning Program and the benefits realisation reports that were part of the Council's tendering process, readers would be able to see the work expected from some suppliers in terms of creating opportunities for apprenticeships. There were also other schemes including the Communities for Work Scheme and the Council's internal program, the Quick Start scheme. It was hoped for a report around that work to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in the future.

Councillor E. Goodjohn queried whether there was any scope for the Council to be more ambitious in relation to the actions around the Council's Youth Service and in terms of how the Council engaged and heard the views of young people. In response the Director stated that within the Council's new Corporate Plan there was an objective to be more systematic when it came to harnessing and utilising the Youth Service and the Youth Council. That meant that there was an aim for the Youth Service to have a greater reach to all Directorates within the Council to share and understand the views and perspectives of young people.

Councillor E.J. Goodjohn asked whether the Council could do more to tackle child poverty, and could more be done to provide young people affordable access to be able to participate and access leisure, sport, cultural and heritage activities. Councillor E.J. Goodjohn also asked whether more could be done to enable better access to examinations for those young people home educated. In response to child poverty and access to leisure and culture, the Learning & Skills Strategy & Performance Manager advised that the Learning and Skills Directorate Plan needed to be read in context with all the other Directorate Plans that formed a joined up and cross cutting picture around poverty. The Directorate Plan was holistic that reflected multiple elements of the Vale 2030 Corporate Pan. Therefore, contribution towards poverty agenda from the Learning and Skills Directorate would be around work undertaken through community focussed schools and also by some of the other initiatives and day-to-day activities previously raised by the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources such as the Enrichment Program. With regards to access to examinations for young people home educated, it was agreed for information to be sent via email.

Councillor J. Lynch-Wilson stated that it was important to recognise how important the local communities were to the safe and successful running of schools and praised the good work around inclusivity being undertaken.

Councillor H. Payne referred to the Arts Central gallery and the feasibility study of building of a cultural community network, and queried how would the Council

encourage those people that would not normally engage with the arts and cultural activities. In reply, the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources commented that there were lots of work to encourage visitors to the arts and culture spaces. The feasibility study related to the courtyard area between the arts centre and the library and bringing in a more diverse range of art exhibitions to attract new audiences. There was similar work planned for Old Hall in Cowbridge and was on the back of a growth in visitors to the Penarth centre. A report on those initiatives would be presented to Committee.

Information regarding the Sanctuary Nature Neighbours project would be sent via email.

Councillor N. Hodges asked whether the Directorate Plan contained sufficient long-term focus on the risks and impact following cuts to the benefit system. In response, the Learning & Skills Strategy & Performance Manager clarified that the Vale 2030 was the new Corporate Plan which covered the next 5 years. The Directorate Plan was an in-year service plan focussing on the specific strategic actions and activities for the Learning and Skills Directorate. During the year the Council would undertake an annual self-assessment which was linked to Directorate Plans, and which would factor in new legislation, changing landscapes and new policies. That provided opportunity to potentially changing priorities should the need arise. It was important to recognise that the Vale 2030 Plan did have significant focus around poverty across all Directorates, with the Learning and Skills Directorate Plan having a emphasis on schemes such as community focused schools which had an aspect of tackling poverty.

The Chair, Councillor R. Thomas, stated that some new performance indicators did not contain targets, and he asked whether there was scope for targets to be set; for example, the percentage of secondary school children who reported that they felt engaged and that they had a voice about services and decisions that mattered to them. The Learning & Skills Strategy & Performance Manager, in response, advised that for some new indicators it was not possible to set targets, so for those it was important to set a baseline following during year 1 that could be used as a benchmark to set targets for future years.

Subsequently it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the comments of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Learning and Skills Directorate Plan and performance targets for 205/26 be referred to the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee for its consideration in order for a composite response to be developed and referred back to Cabinet on 1st May, 2025. The comments relating to the following:

- Additional detail being added in relation to the Active Travel programmes for schools;
- The need for more resources in the area of Additional Learning Needs;
- More resources were required in relation to healthy eating, in order to combat obesity within young people;

- The inclusion of an additional performance indicators in relation to healthy eating for young people and in relation to the Council's apprenticeship scheme;
- Was there scope for the Council to be more ambitious in relation to the actions around the Council's Youth Service and in terms of how the Council engaged and heard the views of young people;
- Could the Council do more to tackle child poverty;
- Was there more that the Council could do to enable better access to examinations for those young people who are home-educated;
- Could the Council provide more opportunities for young people to access leisure, sport, cultural and heritage activities;
- Queried whether the Council could do more to encourage more people engage with arts and culture;
- Did the Directorate Plan contain sufficient long-term focus on the risks and impact following cuts to the benefit system; and
- The need for targets to be set for those new performance indicators where a measure had not been included.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting and to advise the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee of the views of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee.”

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
9TH APRIL, 2025

REFERENCE FROM HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 2ND APRIL, 2025

“ ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING DIRECTORATE PLAN 2025/26
(INCLUDING ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ASSOCIATED
PERFORMANCE TARGETS) TO DELIVER VALE 2030, THE COUNCIL’S
CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (DEH) –

The report presentation was given by the Director of Environment and Housing and presented for Members’ consideration the planned activities, performance measures and associated performance targets in the Environment and Housing Directorate Plan 2025/26 attached at Appendix A to the report. This Directorate Plan aligned primarily to the remit of the Homes and Safe Community Scrutiny Committee. The other Directorate Plans were being considered by relevant Scrutiny Committees and their comments and recommendations were to be considered by the Corporate Performance and Resources Committee to form a composite reference to Cabinet on the five Directorate Plans for 2025-26. This approach broadly followed that taken in scrutinising the Council’s Revenue and Capital Budget proposals.

The Directorate Plans had been informed by the Council’s commitments in Vale 2030, the Council’s approved Corporate Plan (Full Council, 10th March, 2025) for the period 2025-30.

All Scrutiny Committees had considered the draft Corporate Plan (December 2024) and their views alongside that of a wide range of key stakeholders had informed the five new well-being objectives and 50 commitments detailed in Vale 2030 which was a five year plan.

Progressing the activities and associated performance targets outlined in Directorate Plans would help to meet the Council’s statutory obligations under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG). Both pieces of legislation placed specific duties on the Council in relation to reviewing and setting objectives, keeping performance under review and reporting on performance, with a focus on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Vale of Glamorgan citizens.

Scrutiny Committee Members were asked to review the Environment and Housing Directorate Plan 2025-26 (planned activities and proposed performance measures and associated targets) and how it would support delivery of the commitments and outcomes in Vale 2030.

Members were asked to refer any comments and recommendations with regard to the Environment and Housing Directorate Plan 2025-26 to the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee to form a composite reference to Cabinet on the five Directorate Plans for 2025-26.

Following their presentation, the Director provided the following advice in response to questions and comments from the Committee.

Councillor Haines advised that he found it difficult to align some of the efficiency savings outlined in the report, with the concept of improving communities and their environments, highlighting the removal of litter bins, the closure of car parks and the potential closure of community centres as examples of actions that the Councillor felt would have a negative impact on the respective communities.

In response, the Director advised that no decisions on savings were easy and that considerable thought had been put into the decisions in the Plan, with a large amount of savings being asked of the Directorate. The Director further advised that it was not the Council's intention to try to close Community Centres, and that officers wanted them to remain open for the benefit of communities, however, alternative ways of operating these was being looked at, with the possibility of community groups, volunteer groups or Town and Community Councils taking over their management in an improved way in order to keep them open. Regarding the removal of litter bins, the Director advised that there was an issue regarding them being used for household waste, and that they had not seen an increase of litter left at sites where bins had been removed and that enforcement action would be implemented around this if it did arise. Furthermore, a review of street cleaning in the areas where bins were removed would be undertaken.

In relation to 'camera car' parking enforcement, the Director advise that a new additional electric camera car was being implemented, with the aim of keeping traffic moving, keeping areas around schools safe, and dealing with parking infringements. The car would at least pay for itself and it was hoped that it would also generate income. How much income it would generate would depend on the number of days it was operational and in which areas it operated.

With regard to play opportunities the Director advised that the free swimming initiative had been a success, but that it was fair to say that it did not have the maximum amount of flexibility in the system to allow children to spontaneously choose to use the pools, as booking was required. The Director added that the leisure centres being run by a commercial business had allowed all of the Vale of Glamorgan's leisure centres to remain open. The Director advised that the Council did have a Play Team who would continue to aim to provide quality play opportunities, but that their activities were reliant upon what could be achieved through grant funding.

Councillor Payne subsequently highlighted the positive work of the Directorate in relation to building homes and addressing temporary accommodation needs. In response, officers highlighted achievements such as ending the accommodation contract with the Holiday Inn hotel, which now meant that all temporary

accommodation, bar a small number in a Barry Hotel, was either council-owned or within shared housing in the community. New home building had contributed to this success, along with the work of Registered Social Landlord partners and with the help of Section 106 funding, and the Council aimed to build upwards of 500 new homes over the coming years.

With no further queries or comments, Committee subsequently:

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Environment and Housing Directorate Plan (Appendix A to the report) and associated measures and performance targets for 2025/26 contained within it be endorsed, subject to the removal of reference to the closure of community centres in the Directorate Plan, and that this endorsement be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, in order for a composite response to be developed and referred back to Cabinet on 1st May, 2025.

Reason for recommendation

To ensure that Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, and in turn Cabinet, were aware of the view of this Committee that community centres added value to the local communities of the Vale of Glamorgan and should be protected from closure where possible.”