

## **CABINET**

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 4th December, 2025.

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

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

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

Also Present: Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson.

### **C147 ANNOUNCEMENT –**

The Leader commenced by advising of some housekeeping issues and advised 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.

### **C148 MINUTES –**

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 20th November, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

### **C149 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **C150 BUDGET 2026/27 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 TO 2030/31 UPDATE (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE) –**

The Leader presented the report to provide an update on progress following the UK and Welsh Government Budget announcements in November 2025.

In terms of financial planning, it was important throughout the year to monitor the latest position as a result of different budget announcements and arrangements that had an impact on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's financial planning and it was important to ensure that all Members were kept apprised of the latest position.

The eight underlying principles of the Financial Strategy were laid out in paragraph 1.2 of the report, with paragraph 1.5 of the report describing the net spend and percentage of base budget spend per service, with the main spend allocated to Schools and Social Care.

Updated benchmarking concerning services against an all-Wales context was described in paragraph 1.9 of the report, with a low or very low expenditure across most categories, average for Highways and Transport and high for Education.

The Authority continued to lobby Welsh Government to fully allocate funding and colleagues in other Local Authorities were also lobbying to allocate increased funding to Local Government. Though not yet determined, it remained hopeful that further resources for Local Government would be made available when the Welsh Government approved its budget at the end of January 2026.

Paragraph 2.31 of the report detailed the Council Tax levels for Welsh Authorities, placing the Vale of Glamorgan as one of the lowest Council Tax rates for Band D properties across Wales, with only five other Authorities lower than the Vale of Glamorgan, which had implications on spend available for services.

The Council was not able to run a deficit budget and legally had to set a balanced budget each year. Officers continued to interrogate available data to assess costs and savings. Consultation would take place with Scrutiny, stakeholders and residents in January and February, and the Leader encouraged participation in those discussions, prior to final consideration by Full Council in March 2026 which was hoped would signify investment in communities.

Councillor Wilson referred to his Portfolio areas described in paragraphs 1.5 and 1.9 of the report, showing that spending was low across that area against an all-Wales context. Many of the Portfolio areas had a small percentage of the base budget compared to the total Council budget and the public had to appreciate that the majority of funding was allocated to Schools and Social Care. Recent data on population in the Vale of Glamorgan showed an increase in the ageing population which put pressure on the Social Care budget, and as such it was important to be as efficient as possible in other areas which was difficult for a low-spending Authority in an all-Wales context.

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 challenging financial position faced by the Council with a funding gap of £10.092m in 2026/27 and £29.902m across the medium term be noted.

(2) T H A T the ongoing work to bring forward savings and transformation proposals against the Reshaping Framework in the Budget for Consultation in January 2026 be noted.

(3) T H A T Cabinet would continue to lobby for multi-year settlements, a fair level of funding for the Vale of Glamorgan for Schools and Social Care and for timely notification of grants to schools.

### Reasons for decisions

- (1) There continue to be significant financial pressures impacting on the 2026/27 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 and it was essential to regularly inform Cabinet of the magnitude of the challenge.
- (2) Work to continue on establishing a balanced budget and sustainable financial position in the medium term.
- (3) Whilst recognising the barriers to change it was important to lobby for a fair settlement for the Vale of Glamorgan and for timely grant announcements to enable robust and sustainable financial planning

### **C151 DRAFT CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2026/27 AND INITIAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROPOSALS 2026/27 TO 2030/31 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE) –**

The Leader presented the report to gain approval for the Initial Capital Programme Proposals for 2026/27 to 2030/31 so that they may be submitted to Resources Scrutiny Committee for consultation and to set out the Draft Capital Investment Strategy for Cabinet Members to consider.

There was a slightly better forecast in the Provisional Settlement made in November 2025 and once confirmed, any differences to current modelling would be reflected in future budget reports.

Given the scarce capital financial resources available, the Council was using a similar approach to capital bids as last financial year, prioritising health and safety, legislative bids and preventative bids.

The Council's Vehicle Replacement Reserve projections had been updated to ensure the Council continued to have a serviceable and efficient fleet.

A draft Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31 inclusive of proposed successful bids will be taken to Cabinet in January 2026 and would be submitted to Resources Scrutiny Committee for consultation. After considering the results of the public consultation and recommendations from Scrutiny Committees and the Final Settlement from Welsh Government, Cabinet would make its final proposals during February, which would then be presented to Full Council for final approval in March 2026.

Councillor Wilson referred to the net and gross totals for the Neighbourhood Services and Transport section of Appendix 2 to the report which were just over £15m and £16m respectively. The Vehicle Replacement Programme would mean more Council vehicles being electric or hybrid and would reduce costs significantly. The Council would also continue to work with partners such as Natural Resources Wales. A report regarding the Penarth Marina Landslip - Slope Stabilisation Works would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2025. Councillor

Wilson also noted the ongoing commitment within the Tree Strategy for £100k a year for new tree planting projects in both urban and rural settings.

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 Draft Capital Strategy 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
- (2) T H A T the Initial Capital Programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31 be noted.
- (3) T H A T the report be referred to Resources Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- (4) T H A T the request to increase the budget and reprofile the Vehicle Replacement Programme Scheme budget as set out in paragraph 2.26 of the report be approved.

**Reasons for decisions**

- (1) To approve the Draft Capital Strategy for 2026/27.
- (2) To consult Members on the Capital Programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31.
- (3) To advise Resources Scrutiny Committee of the proposed five year Capital Programme.
- (4) To reflect the available budget for the Vehicle Replacement Programme.

**C152 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2027-2028 (EAWL)  
(SCRUTINY – START WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report to seek Cabinet approval to consult on the Local Authority's school admission arrangements as required by the Welsh Governments School Admission Code issued in July 2013.

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 consultation required to agree Local Authority admission arrangements (Appendix A) for all community schools in the Vale of Glamorgan be approved.

### Reason for decision

Para 2.3 (page 6) of the School Admissions Code (Wales) July 2013 stated that "Admission Arrangements must be consulted on for each maintained school between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> March and be set by 15<sup>th</sup> April of the school years beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply".

### **C153 VALE OF GLAMORGAN AND NATURAL RESOURCE WALES – BATHING WATER QUALITY PROJECT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (NBS) (SCRUTINY – PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report to seek approval to sign the Partnership Agreement between Vale of Glamorgan Council and Natural Resources Wales.

The report provided an overview of current water quality standards in the Vale of Glamorgan, the statutory responsibilities of key agencies and progress on a partnership project with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to develop real water quality prediction and public information system for Jacksons Bay and Whitmore Bay.

The Bathing Water Regulations 2013 underpinned the national framework for managing water quality and required stringent sampling, public transparency and multi-agency co-operation. Welsh Government held responsibility for ensuring that the public was informed about water quality and any potential risk to health.

The project was now due to progress into the second and final phase with a key objective to develop the statistical assessment models into fully automated water quality prediction system, with bilingual display boards to be installed on the beaches. Work was envisaged to be completed during the 2026 bathing water season, giving bathers facts that would provide information and enable them to make choices.

The project was part of a journey rather than a destination and it was hoped that every bathing beach within the Vale of Glamorgan would have real time bathing water information available in order for the public to make informed decisions and work to improve water quality along with external partners.

The Leader said it was important for the public to have access to accurate and timely information.

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 ongoing work between the Council and Natural Resources Wales and the current bathing water classifications for 2025, at the 8 designated bathing

water beaches, be noted.

(2) T H A T the proposed Partnership Agreement between the Council and Natural Resources Wales, that would improve public access to real-time bathing water quality information at Jacksons Bay and Whitmore Bay beaches, be approved.

(3) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Head of Neighbourhood Services in consultation with Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services to sign the Partnership Agreement between Vale of Glamorgan Council and Natural Resources Wales.

#### Reasons for decisions

(1) To update Cabinet on the ongoing partnership work between the Council and Natural Resources Wales and the outcome of the year's bathing water sampling.

(2) So the Council could progress with the project that would provide timely water quality advice to the public.

(3) So the partnership agreement could be signed and to secure funding via Welsh Government to take forward the final phase of the project work.

#### **C154 REVIEW OF WINTER CAR PARKING CHARGES AT PENARTH CLIFF WALK, COLD KNAP AND BRON-Y-MOR (BARRY) CAR PARKS (NBS) (SCRUTINY – PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report to consider immediate changes and the temporary, seasonal suspension of current charges at the Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap, Barry and Bron-y-Mor, Barry car parks that were introduced in early September 2025.

Councillor Wilson said that the public were aware of the report being considered today following discussion at Full Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December, press releases and social media concerning consideration of immediate changes and the temporary, seasonal suspension of current charges at the Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap, Barry and Bron-y-Mor, Barry car parks that were introduced in early September 2025.

The Council acknowledged that implementation of parking charges at the end of the summer season combined with poor weather, reduced visitor numbers, low car park usage and increased on-street parking had caused concern amongst residents and businesses.

While car parking charges remained part of the Council's long-term strategy to fund maintenance at many coastal destinations, it was recognised that there were challenges faced during the off-season and, as such, the Council were adopting a flexible approach. The Council therefore proposed a temporary suspension of charges at Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor, Barry until September 2026, allowing a further review to introduce future on-street car parking proposals and potential seasonal charging approaches.

The Leader said that a period of reflection would be useful, including matters such as a number of people thought they would be charged for on-street parking that was not currently in place and a number of the car park were being used as work place car parks rather than being used as visitor parking.

Councillor Wilson said that period of reflection would have to consider all the various demands for car parking in the Vale of Glamorgan, including on and off-street parking

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 current position relating to the recently introduced car parking charges at Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor, Barry be noted and the charges currently in place to be temporarily suspended with immediate effect up to and until Spring 2026.

(2) T H A T a further report be brought back to Cabinet to consider further the need or otherwise for a seasonal approach to the charging regime introduced at the Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor, Barry car parks.

(3) T H A T use of the Council's urgent decision procedure, as set out at section 15.14 of the Council's Constitution, be agreed in order for the recommendations of this report to be implemented with immediate effect.

#### Reasons for decisions

(1) To respond proportionately to the seasonal decline in visitor numbers and the concerns raised by local businesses and residents regarding the impact of charges during the autumn/winter period.

(2) To enable the Council to temporarily suspend parking charges already authorised within the existing Off-Street Parking Traffic Regulation Order at those locations.

(3) To enable charges to be suspended temporarily without delay so that seasonal impacts on businesses, residents and visitor activity were addressed promptly.