

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 16 April 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Cabinet Quarterly Report - Reporting Minutes of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an Active Participant
Purpose of Report:	To provide a quarterly update for all elected Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Council concerning meetings of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant from January to March 2026.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Democratic Services
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In receiving the quarterly Cabinet report which is made available to all Members, minutes from various Committees over the period January to March 2026 are made available to Members as requested by Governance and Audit Committee for ease of reference and for information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Glamorgan Heritage Coast Advisory Group – 3rd October 2025 (attached as Appendix A). ○ Corporate Parenting Panel – 34th November 2025 (attached as Appendix B). ○ Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee – 17th December 2025 (attached as Appendix C). ○ Cardiff Bay Advisory Committee – 28th January 2026 (attached as Appendix D). ○ Joint Consultative Forum – 12th January 2026 (attached as Appendix E). 	

Recommendation

1. That the minutes concerning meetings of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant from January to March 2026 be noted.

Reason for Recommendation

1. To present to Cabinet a report on a quarterly basis which would provide an overview of all the Joint Committee Meetings of which the Vale of Glamorgan Council was a formal member and links to the respective minutes.

1. Background

- 1.1 Governance and Audit Committee as its meeting held on 15th September 2025 considered a report concerning '[Reporting Arrangements for Joint Committee Meetings](#)', following initial information provided to the Committee at its meeting held [24th March, 2025](#), which provided a summary for the following joint bodies of which the Vale of Glamorgan were formal members:
 - Central South Consortium - Joint Education Service Joint Committee;
 - South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (formally Cardiff Region City Deal);
 - Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee;
 - National Joint Committee for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales;
 - Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Committee;
 - Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee; and
 - Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee.
- 1.2 The matter related to a number of meetings not managed by the Council, but where the Council was one of a number of parties that had participated. Governance and Audit Committee had discussed a proposal for a new process that would involve a report being presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis which would provide an overview of all the Joint Committee Meetings of which the Vale of Glamorgan Council was a formal member and links to the respective minutes.
- 1.3 Cabinet considered the associated [reference](#) from Governance and Audit Committee at its meeting held on 16th October 2025 ([Minute No. C116](#) refers) and resolved that the proposed new process in which a quarterly report be presented to Cabinet providing an overview of meetings of Joint Committees be endorsed.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 Further to the resolution under Minute No. C116, Cabinet further considered as its meeting held on 6th November 2025 a report concerning '[Strategic Collaborative Working Initiatives Update](#)' which proposed that the quarterly report also include the minutes of other meetings that Cabinet considers on a regular basis as part of the same quarterly report, those being:

- Appointment of Local Authority Governors Advisory Panel
- Cardiff Bay Advisory Committee
- Corporate Parenting Panel
- Glamorgan Heritage Coast Advisory Group
- Joint Consultative Forum
- Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum

2.2 Cabinet is therefore asked to consider and note the minutes concerning meetings of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant from January to March 2026.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

3.1 **Involvement** – Members are sent copies of Cabinet papers associated with every public meeting, as well as being published on the Vale of Glamorgan Council website, and the report seeks to provide Members of the Council and residents of the Vale of Glamorgan with information on meetings where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant.

3.2 **Collaboration** – The report seeks to detail via minutes of a number of Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant the partnership working and collaboration between the Council and its partners.

3.3 **Long-term** – The quarterly report will seek to provide Members of the Council and residents of the Vale of Glamorgan information each quarter that relates to the activities of the Council.

3.4 **Integration** – Providing details of the minutes from meetings where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant in one place each quarter will make it easier for Members of the Council and residents of the Vale of Glamorgan to keep up to date with the activities of the Council and its partners.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

4.1 There are no direct implications as a result of the report.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

5.1 There are no direct implications as a result of the report.

Employment

5.2 There are no direct implications as a result of the report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.3 There are no direct implications as a result of the report.

6. Background Papers

None.

GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held on 3rd October, 2025.

Present: Councillor C. Stallard (Chair); Councillors R. Fisher and S.M. Hanks (Vale of Glamorgan Council); Miss. L. Hancocks (Natural Resources Wales), Councillor L. Loch (One Voice Wales) and Mr. R. Sheppard and Ms. J. Schup (Friends of Glamorgan Heritage Coast).

Also present: Councillor N. Farr (Bridgend County Borough Council), Miss. M. Sibley (Dunraven Estates, Mr. S. Pickering, Mrs. N. Sumner-Smith, Mr. D. Hunt and Mr. P. Lock (Officers – Vale of Glamorgan Council) and R. Frowen (Officer – Bridgend County Borough Council).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from Councillors A.M. Ernest, C.P. Franks, E. Goodjohn and J. Lynch-Wilson (Vale of Glamorgan Council), Councillor N. Farr (Bridgend County Borough Council).

(b) Minutes –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 4th April, 2024 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Update on Work Undertaken on the Heritage Coast by the Countryside Rangers – Paul Lock, Site Ranger, Glamorgan Heritage Coast –

Mr. Lock, Site Ranger, provided an update and advised the Group:

- The work carried out over the summer had gone very well in terms keeping paths and access routes open.
- People management had been a bit of an issue in terms of litter / bad behaviour. That had been challenging.
- New benches had been fitted by the beach front with funding provided by the Coastal Capacity fund and through money raised by the Friends of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast. The new benches had helped to improve that area.
- Things had gone well in terms of managing staff and the Rangers, although the amount of work undertaken by the Rangers was increasing year on year. Work on top of maintaining the included cutting inland paths and other rights of way work located across various areas of the Vale of Glamorgan.

- One of the key issues currently, was unauthorised overnight stays which was a particular problem at some of the coastal car parks. That affected the look of an area and was off putting to day visitors.
- The installation of gates at the car parks was something that needed to be progressed.
- An interesting project conducted over the summer months, was the ‘What three words’ location discs. The three words would be used in an emergency which would assist the Emergency Services to determine a person’s location to within a few meters. Every piece of furniture would eventually have a disc to pin point the location.
- Another piece of work was around the surveying or mapping of the mobile phone network to ascertain which areas had poor or no signal. In those instances, a person would not be able to phone the Emergency Service or call for help from a family member or a Charity such as the Samaritans, most of the Vale of Glamorgan had been surveyed so the evidence collated had been with the local Member of Parliament who had agreed to press the matter with OFCOM and network providers.

The Group discussed progress of the redevelopment of the former Aberthaw Power station site, with it being noted that demolition work was a few years off. The impact on the area of significant scientific interest would have to be carefully considered.

AGREED – T H A T installation of over night gates / barriers for the coastal car parks be followed up with the Operational Manager for Highways, in addition to following up with the Dunraven Estate around issues with the car park at Southerndown.

(d) Update on Welsh Government Coastal Access Improvement Grant 2024/25 – David Hunt, Countryside Access Manager –

D. Hunt, Countryside Access Manager, provided an update in relation to projects supported by the Coastal Access Improvement Grant.

He advised that resurfacing work had been completed at St. Donats and the path at Summerhouse Point had been rolled back due to cliff erosion and new fence installed.

The new restricted by-way at Boverton Mill was currently with PEDW for determination.

Councillor S. Stallard (Chair), mentioned the current work being undertaken by the Council’s task and finish review group into the accessibility to beaches, and it would be good for the group to hear the thoughts of views of anyone with a keen interest.

(e) Update on the Development the Heritage Coast Centre – Nicola Summer-Smith, Team Leader – Community Development –

N. Sumner-Smith (Team Leader – Community Development) was joined by Ben Freestone, architect for Castria Design, invited to provide an update on the plans to

develop the Heritage Coast Centre.

The Group noted that Dunraven Estates and the Vale of Glamorgan Council had been in discussion about the future of the building at the Heritage Coast Centre in Southerndown.

Current plans included a substantial re-development of the building with a front extension for a new café area with an open glass view towards the beach front with outside landscaping and seating areas as well improved access facilities. In addition, the area for the Rangers would be modernised and new kitchen and toilet facilities introduced. The car park in front of the building would be part of the landscaping.

Timescales for completion for the redevelopment included going through the statutory planning process and then through a formal building tendering exercise. Building/redevelopment work was envisioned to take 18 months to complete.

The Group was keen to ensure that the public information and the heritage/historical exhibits at the centre were maintained. N. Sumner-Smith advised that there was a will to ensure that heritage was a strong element of the re-development with opportunity to consider other activities that could be provided.

It was also noted that there were plans to improve the current toilet block to make it a more welcoming sight for visitors.

P. Lock (Ranger) stated that one of the big parts of the interpretation was the Ranger Team as they could reintroduce some activities that they had not been able to do for some time, such as guided walks.

The Chair commented on that she would be happy to write to the Dunraven Estate on behalf of Group to express enthusiasm for the redevelopment to take place.

(f) Matters to be Raised by Bridgend County Borough Council –

R. Frowen advised that the diversion order mentioned back in April had been confirmed for Candleston.

In terms of tackling anti-social behaviour, visibility was keen in terms of having members of the public regularly visit areas. For example, with changes being made to Coney Beach, there was opportunity to consider applying for Blue Flag status. Anti-social behaviour and overnight camping were not major problems for the beaches in Bridgend, but Bridgend Council was looking at increasing the number of camping areas in order to increase visitor numbers.

(g) Matters to be Raised by Natural Resources Wales –

L. Hancocks advised that there were four updates to be provided by Natural Resources Wales (NRW):

- NRW had been involved with the Climate Change Risk Assessment undertaken through the Vale's Public Services Board. The risk assessment was very much about gathering local and resident and business experiences as much as the evidence around climate change risks. From the consultation an action plan would be developed.
- NRW were in the process of recruiting an Ogmore Catchment Officer to look at the water quality of the Ogmore river catchment.
- With regards to protected species, it was encouraging to see landowners and land managers really coming through with managing the SSS protected sites along the coast. The Shoredock Project had been progressing, with new plants reintroduced some of which had taken, but it had been challenging as there had been a dry spring and a dry summer. The plants would be rechecked next summer.
- The final update related to the Sustainable Farm Scheme, which would come into effect from 1st January, 2026. Welsh Government were running roadshow events with one planned for Bridgend during November to highlight changes.

(h) Matters to be Raised by the Friends of Glamorgan Heritage Coast –

R. Sheppard advised that the Friends had revived and a fun day event to be held at the Centre on 30th November to raise awareness of how the public could get involved in supporting the Heritage Coast and to share their ideas.

(i) Any Other Business –

None.

(j) Date of Next Meeting –

To be determined.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL MEETING
MONDAY, 24TH NOVEMBER 2025 AT 5.00 P.M.
REMOTE MEETING

Present: Councillor E. Williams (Chair); J.E. Charles, W.A. Hennessy, Dr. I. Johnson, and N.C. Thomas.

L. Carver (Director of Social Services), M. Booker-Southard (Learning Links Manager Standards and Provision), Rachel Evans (Head of Children and Young People Services), M. Ingram (Head of Housing and Building Services), S. Redrup (Lead Officer for ALN and Complex Cases), Jo Rudge (Team Manager – CLA), S. Saif (Lead Learning Links), M. Thomas (Head of Standards and Provision, Learning and Skills) and M. Swindell (Cabinet and Committee Services Officer).

(1)	Apologies for Absence.
	Formally received from Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby (Vice-Chair); K. Conway (Operational Manager - CYPS).
(2)	Minutes and Matters Arising from 22nd September 2025.
	<p>Minutes agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p>Members noted that at the last meeting further information on the ‘Eliminating Profit from Children’s Care’ agenda was due to be provided to the Panel at the meeting but would now be on the draft agenda for the next meeting.</p>
(3)	Corporate Parenting Charter (<i>standing item</i>).
	<p>The Panel were advised that following the previous meeting, an additional column was added to the working document to include Service Area updates. Requests for updates were to be circulated in advance of Corporate Parenting Panel to Heads of Service but this did not take place.</p> <p>It was requested that the link to the Charter be re-circulated to Members and Officers as well as added to future meeting agendas, which was agreed. The shared working document could also be made available to any further Officers who would have updates to the detail for Panel to be aware of.</p> <p>The Chair asked that following re-circulation of the link to the document, that Officers provide updates to the shared document in plenty of time prior to the next Corporate Parenting Panel meeting and that the Charter be reviewed with relevant Officers at the next Agenda Conference meeting prior to papers being circulated. It was further agreed that a reminder be sent to relevant Officers two weeks before the Agenda Conference to ensure that updates were actioned.</p>

	<p>ACTIONS:</p> <p>(1) That the link to the Charter be re-circulated to Members and Officers as well as added to future meeting agendas.</p> <p>(2) That the online shared document be updated and reviewed by relevant Officers at the next Corporate Parenting Panel Agenda Conference, with a reminder to relevant staff two weeks before the Agenda Conference.</p>
(4)	Pupil Development Grant.
	<p>M. Thomas advised that following the previous meeting, a short briefing paper had been provided to Panel Members concerning the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) to provide assurances regarding the Children looked After (CLA) affected.</p> <p>M. Booker-Southard said the briefing paper explained the rationale for the change and brought the Vale of Glamorgan Council in line with other Local Authorities. The professional portal to monitor expenditure was an online mechanism but was not yet available due to programming issues. Officers were aware where children had been placed out of County and their progress but not as yet via the portal.</p> <p>S. Saif added that the portal was going through an upgrade to reflect young people's views of their Personal Education Plan (PEP) but there had been issues with the software that were being addressed. Also, many Local Authority services were being migrated to the Cloud which had to be considered and school systems changed from SIMS to a product called Arbor. As such, a number of contributing factors had caused a delay in the portal being available to monitor PDG CLA expenditure.</p> <p>Currently there were 257 CLA by the Vale of Glamorgan Council in Nursery to year 11 that related to PDG CLA spend. Of those, 146 were educated in the Vale of Glamorgan and 111 out of County, with 22 educated in Cardiff, 14 in Bridgend and 12 in Rhondda Cynon Taf. As a team, PEP reviews had been requested for those out of County placements and staff had conducted person-centred planning (PCP) meetings with the child, foster-carer, social worker, school, etc., to monitor both the child's progress and relevant school expenditure. That information was recorded and held by the Authority but was not visible to social workers as it would be via the portal. Staff also held triage meetings every Friday morning to ensure any concerns were being addressed and children's needs met in partnership with other Local Authorities.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Officers for the information and invited questions or comments from Panel Members.</p> <p>Councillor Johnson asked about the numbers of CLA concerned which seemed to be around 40% of the total children in education being educated out of County and affected by the change. He was pleased to see there were processes in place for tracking and monitoring those children but asked about the wider impact of PDG funding for individual pupils.</p>

M. Booker-Southard said that before April, money was attached to each CLA whether they were educated in the Vale of Glamorgan or any other Authority. Since then, money was allocated to the child but only to a child educated in the Vale of Glamorgan. Were a CLA from the Vale of Glamorgan to be educated in another Authority, that Authority would support that child as well as their own.

M. Thomas said that CLA were funded for their education, regardless of where they accessed their education. PDG CLA grant funding was an additional £1,050 per child for additional reading, support, etc., and it was expected that schools would provide additional support for those that needed it. The change was to bring the Vale of Glamorgan Council in line with all the other Welsh Authorities. Previously the Vale of Glamorgan Council had followed Welsh Government guidance where funding followed the child, wherever they were being educated, as it is in England and that reciprocal arrangement has not changed. Other Authorities in Wales were not working that way and left the Vale of Glamorgan finding children placed elsewhere but those Authorities were not funding their children receiving education in the Vale of Glamorgan. Unfortunately there had been mixed messaging from different departments in Welsh Government who were not aligned, so the decision was taken to ensure that the Vale of Glamorgan Council aligned with those other Welsh Authorities.

Councillor Johnson asked if the £1,050 per child was therefore retained by the Vale of Glamorgan Council unless placed in England where there remained a reciprocal arrangement in place, whereas previously that money would have followed the child through the system. That retained funding was then used to provide additional support for children from other Welsh Authorities being educated in the Vale of Glamorgan. M. Booker-Southard said that was correct, however funding was allocated to schools for their CLA population in April.

The Chair said it was important to understand that individual children were still receiving the support they needed, however it was important to understand if the Authority was paying more to support CLA than it was receiving potentially. Councillor Johnson asked if a further update on the portal and its operation could be given at the next meeting, which may answer that question, which was agreed.

Councillor Thomas asked about third sector provision that may be out of County and what arrangements were in place with those providers. He also asked what happened when children moved schools in September from Primary to Secondary education or if they move within a school year after April.

M. Booker-Southard said children in out of County Third Sector independent provision would not receive any additional funding, with the caveat that independent schools often looked after children with more complex needs that already had higher levels of funding and would not fall under this arrangement. For transitional of non-traditional school moves, funding was still allocated on 1st April rather than termly as was previously the case. The Chair said it was unfortunate given there could be movement in-year. Councillor Thomas agreed, as moves from Primary to September would see the Primary with a surplus and the Secondary with a deficit until the following April.

R. Evans said it was a difficult situation as other Welsh Authorities were not working in line with the Welsh Government guidance which had prompted the decision of the Learning and Skills Directorate to align with the majority, which meant the Vale of Glamorgan's CLA were not receiving a financial allocation that would improve their education and life chances which was a cause of concern. The new process relied heavily on cooperation which was not routinely in place. Officers working in that area were not in agreement about the decision and it remained an ongoing issue to address. The question was asked as to how confident Officers were that the arrangements put in place would ensure the educational needs of CLA placed out of area would be met. M. Booker-Southard said that in most cases those needs were being met in the way they would be expected to be. The matter had been discussed with the National Group as Welsh Government had updated their guidance and it was important to review what worked and did not work going forward.

R. Evans asked if the needs of the CLA from the Vale of Glamorgan were not being met as they were being placed at a location other than the Vale of Glamorgan, what was the role of Corporate Parenting Panel in relation to that. The Chair said there was monitoring in place and asked if it was possible to evidence if CLA were not receiving the provision they may need. M. Booker-Southard said that was possible.

L. Carver said that the decision to align with the other Authorities had opposing considerations. The grant should be for the benefit of individual CLA and agreeing to the change was a difficult operational decision to have taken, but operating alone amongst 21 other Authorities who were working in a different way mean less money spent in the Vale of Glamorgan. The question was asked whether the other Corporate Parenting Panels in the other Authorities were aware of the issues and whether they supported the arrangements being followed. As M. Booker-Southard had already started the conversation nationally, it was asked if it would be beneficial to speak to Welsh Government, Voices from Care or reply via the Corporate Parenting Charter to continue that conversation further and understand the national picture.

M. Thomas asked if there was a way to ascertain what other Corporate Parenting Panels in other Authorities thought, or whether that decision had been reported to those Panels. M. Thomas said she would feedback the views of Corporate Parenting Panel to the Director's Leadership Team, however it was not known for certain that CLA from the Vale of Glamorgan being educated elsewhere were not receiving the support that they needed, but it was important through the monitoring to ascertain that other Local Authorities were supporting CLA as the Vale of Glamorgan Council would.

Councillor Johnson said it was important to understand that level of support as the change affected around 40% of the total CLA in education being educated out of County. He felt that the Panel needed assurance about the delivery of support for CLA, assurance about the process on a national level and its impact on individual children.

	<p>S. Redrup said it was important to understand that the level of need being referred to was as part of mainstream education. The Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Team would negotiate with the partner Authority for any CLA pupils with an Individual Development Plan (IDP) around placement.</p> <p>The Chair said that Panel would want assurance that CLA were receiving the support they required and asked Panel how they wished to proceed.</p> <p>Councillor Thomas said the recommendation in the briefing paper was that the Corporate Parenting Panel acknowledges the decision to retain PDGLAC funding for all CLA, including those educated out of county, in line with national practice. It appeared that the Panel were united in concern over the issue and would want to ensure that CLA were fully funded and supported wherever they were being educated.</p> <p>Councillor Johnson said that Panel would need to agree a process to address the issue prior to the next meeting or the minutes of this meeting being referred to Cabinet. Officers would be reporting back to the next Corporate Parenting Panel meeting concerning the portal and Officers could determine in the meantime what the national picture was and report the Panel’s disquiet about the situation where relevant.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the portal would identify any CLA that did require more support. M. Booker-Southard said that information was already known.</p> <p>M. Thomas said she would work to ascertain if Corporate Parenting Panels across Wales were aware of the position.</p> <p>The Chair thanked M. Thomas for the information.</p> <p>ACTIONS:</p> <p>(1) That a further update regarding the Pupil Development Grant portal and its operation be added to the agenda for the next Corporate Parenting Panel meeting.</p> <p>(2) That M. Thomas would feedback the views of Corporate Parenting Panel to the Director’s Leadership Team regarding the Pupil Development Grant.</p> <p>(3) That M. Thomas would work to ascertain if Corporate Parenting Panels across Wales were aware of the position.</p>
<p>(5)</p>	<p>Children Looked After Breakdown.</p>
	<p>R. Evans thanked the Panel for the observations made at the previous meeting regarding the information being presented to the Panel. Those observations had been taken away and discussions were taking place with colleagues in Performance Management in relation to responding to those observations.</p>

	<p>The summary of the breakdown of Children Looked After (CLA) as at 18th November 2025 item was presented by R. Evans and the following details noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were currently 366 Children Looked After. • The numbers of CLA fluctuated over time influenced by the numbers of children becoming CLA and those exiting care. • It was important to note that in comparison from year to year since 2020, there was only a minor increase in the numbers of CLA from the number at the end of March 2025, largely due to the work done by individuals in Children and Young People Services and partners to safely reduce the population of CLA. • First and foremost, the needs of the child were the paramount consideration for the Vale of Glamorgan Council but all requests are scrutinised to ensure the need for a child to become looked after and then to identify the appropriate placement to meet their needs. An enormous amount of work also goes into preventing admissions into care. <p>The Chair thanked R. Evans for the information and invited questions or comments from Panel Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Thomas asked R. Evans to thank her team on behalf of the Panel for the work they do to avoid children being placed in care in the first place and prevent them being added to the figures presented, which was echoed by the Panel. <p>The Chair thanked R. Evans for the information.</p>
(6)	Any Other Business.
	<p>There were no items of Any Other Business.</p>

SHARED REGULATORY SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on 17th December, 2025.

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

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Representing Bridgend County Borough Council – Councillors M. Lewis and H. Williams (Vice-Chair).

Representing Cardiff City and County Council – Councillors N. Mackie and M. Michael.

Representing the Vale of Glamorgan Council – Councillors P. Drake and R. Sivagnanam (Chair).

(a) Announcement –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

(b) Minutes –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 24th September, 2025 and the Special meeting held on 3rd December, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Declarations of Interest –

No declarations of interest were received.

(d) Overview and Update on Shared Regulatory Services (CX) –

The report presented by the Head of the Shared Regulatory Services apprised Committee of the work of the service and progress toward completing the actions contained in the Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Business Plans.

The financial monitoring report for the period 1st July to 30th September, 2025 was attached at Appendix 1. It had been prepared from the consolidated figures gathered from each Authority for that period. The Service was forecasting an outturn position at year end of a £187k overspend against the 2025-26 gross revenue budget. That position included an historic Cardiff Authority Specific budget shortfall of circa £200k

relating to Taxi Licensing.

The report also contained information outlining how the service was working to achieve better outcomes for residents and businesses within the region through a series of different actions and work programmes. The report provided an overview of activities undertaken in the period July to October 2025, detailed under the following areas:

- Human resources including staff absences and recruitment;
- Smoke-free compliance;
- Public health funerals;
- SRS working with businesses;
- RSPCA awards 2025;
- Avian influenza (bird flu);
- National Safeguarding Week;
- Trading Standards Impacts and Outcomes framework;
- Enforcement activity at Appendix 5.

In addition, the document attached at Appendix 3 was the Port Health Plan for 2025-26. It set out how the Shared Service was fulfilling its role of protecting public health by carrying out a range of health controls.

The Plan explained how the Port Health Team prevented and controlled infectious disease coming into Cardiff, Barry and the surrounding areas via the ports and airport, to protect the health of the public. The Plan also detailed the delivery mechanisms for the statutory obligations in relation to food safety, imported food control, ship sanitation, disinsection, waste control and animal health.

The Joint Committee was asked to consider the draft Port Health Plan and approve its use in the SRS region.

The Committee was pleased to see the service growing its own staff and offered congratulations to those that had obtained their MSc in Environmental Health degrees from the University of the West of England.

With regards to public health funerals and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, the Committee noted that the service maintained data records to log how the service became involved, i.e. was the person in a hospice before they became deceased.

In relation to Avian influenza (bird flu), the Committee queried whether that was seasonal and did the service keep a record of the number of birds affected. In response the Operational Manager – Enterprise and Specialist Services clarified that bird flu was seasonal and would usually commence in December, but it had been a little earlier this year with cases reported in November. In terms of numbers, there were no large poultry establishments in the area so the impact was fairly low. The Committee also noted that bird flu could affect all species of birds with larger birds more vulnerable.

Subsequently it was

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of the report be noted and agreed.
- (2) T H A T the 2025-26 Port Health Plan attached at Appendix 3 to the report be approved.
- (3) T H A T the Head of Shared Regulatory Services be authorised to make administrative amendments to the Port Health Plan 2025-26, should the need arise.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2&3) To ensure that the Shared Regulatory Service had the necessary arrangements in place to deliver its obligations in respect of Port Health.

(e) Shared Regulatory Services Fees and Charges 2026-27 (CX) –

The report set out the proposed fees to be charged by Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) in the 2026-27 financial year, for a range of licensing and other services. The Joint Committee was asked to approve the recommendations made with respect to the setting of those fees for which it had responsibility.

For completeness, the accompanying schedule also set out fees which SRS would be required to charge during the 2026-27 financial year, but which were set by external bodies such as the Association of Port Health Authorities and the UK and Welsh Governments.

Having consider the report, the Committee

RESOLVED – T H A T the Shared Regulatory Services charging and fee proposals, as set out in Part One to the Annex of the report be agreed, with their implementation from 1st April, 2026 also agreed.

Reason for decision

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

(f) Shared Regulatory Services Budget Savings (CX) –

The report outlined the background and context to the funding of Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) by the three partner Authorities.

It was

RESOLVED – T H A T the content of the report be noted, with a view to decisions being made on the Shared Regulatory Services Budget Savings report under Part II of the agenda.

Reason for decision

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

(g) Exclusion of Press and Public –

RESOLVED – T H A T under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act, the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

(h) Matter Which the Chair had Decided was Urgent –

RESOLVED – T H A T the following matter which the Chair had decided was urgent for the reason given beneath the minute heading be considered.

(i) Shared Regulatory Services Budget Savings 2026-27 (CX) (Exempt Information – Paragraph 15) –

(Urgent by reason of the need for the Joint Committee to consider the budget proposals in a timely manner as part of the current budget setting process)

The report outlined the background and context to the funding of Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) by the three partner Authorities.

As requested by the partner Authorities, scenarios were outlined to explore the feasibility and impact of savings being achieved in the order of 3%, 5% and 8% (of the 2025-26 core services budget), ahead of the 2026-27 financial year.

Having considered the report, it was

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the content of the report in the context of agreeing the level of budget savings required of the Shared Service in 2026-27 be noted.

(2) T H A T the requirement to set a balanced budget by 31st December, 2025 as outlined in the Shared Regulatory Services Joint Working Agreement (JWA) be waived for this year, and an Extraordinary meeting be scheduled for late January 2026 (date to be confirmed) allowing feedback from the partner Authorities to ratify the Shared Regulatory Service budget for 2026-27.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To enable an informed decision to be made on the level of savings required by the partner Authorities, while balancing the tight lead time before the savings needed to take effect, and allowing for the implications of the Welsh Government's Settlement for Local Government to be fully understood for each of the partner Authorities.

CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 28th January, 2026.

Present: Councillor M.R. Wilson (Chair), Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chair), A. Coles (Western Marinas – representing British Marine Federation and Royal Yachting Association), M. Griffiths (Natural Resources Wales), S. Jones (Boatfolk Marinas Ltd.), C. Kingston (Waterfront Partners), C. Michael (RSPB Wales), C. Pooley (Natural Resources Wales) and M. Thomas (Clerk – Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, Vale of Glamorgan Council).

Also present: A.M. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association), D. Hall (Cardiff Harbour Authority), A. Michael (Penarth Headland Link Charity), and A. Vye-Parminter (Cardiff Harbour Authority).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from T. Rich (Cardiff Yacht Club).

(b) Minutes and matters arising from the Meeting held on 22nd October, 2025 –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd October, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

Regarding the matters arising from the meeting in October, the Clerk to the Committee referred to the request raised by A.M. Ernest on the body he represented, Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association, having full membership status on this Committee rather than an associate or observer one. This had since been considered by the Clerk through research of the Committee's terms of reference and the UK Parliament legislation that had established the Committee originally. Both were prescriptive on the bodies and individuals (and the natural successors to these) who could be full Members of the Committee, meaning that Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association could not be incorporated into the Committee as a full Member or Representative body at this time. A.M. Ernest however was very much welcome to continue participating as an observer, and his contributions were considered and valued by the Committee, as well as being included in the Committee's minutes.

A. Michael explained that the original legislation pertaining to this was carefully scrutinised and had, for various reasons, carefully prescribed the bodies that could be part of this Committee. On a positive note, this Committee bridged both the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Local Authorities and involved various bodies, both those assigned to the membership of the Committee and those observer bodies and individuals who could all contribute to its success in its advisory capacity and the future of its role ('getting the right voices into the room'), whilst staying within its statutory framework.

The Chair added that the Committee was governed by the legislation and terms of reference and advised A.M. Ernest that he would need to look at lobbying his local Member of Parliament to help revise the legislation concerned.

A.M. Ernest accepted the explanation given, and this would not negatively impact on the contributions that he and the body he represented, gave to the Committee; although full Committee Membership would convey some advantages such as voting rights and therefore give more impetus to his and the association's views.

(c) Navigational Safety and General Progress Report –

The Committee were informed by D. Hall (with A. Vye-Parminter), representing the Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA), of the following on navigational safety and general progress of the CHA activities:

Navigation – the outer harbour dredging was due to start next week but could possibly be delayed due to some issues around contract and licensing until later in February.

Barrage – Sluice 4 cylinders had been fully repaired and were due to be delivered back to site for installation and commissioning as soon as possible.

The Fish Pass annual maintenance campaign had commenced and stop beams were installed on Monday, 19th January. Cleaning and inspection would take place over the coming weeks. In addition, an eel rope would be installed to aid migration via the fishway gate.

There were issues recently with the operation of Pont y Werin, with a fault having been identified and temporary repairs carried out. It was suspected that this was caused by an act of vandalism.

Environment – the Committee was informed that, since its last meeting, over 200 primary school children had engaged with CHA staff for educational events. These were primarily in-school workshops looking at the importance of keeping local rivers and seas clean.

The Chair asked for an update regarding the current condition and anticipated lifespan of the Pont y Werin Bridge, noting that the structure had been in place for nearly twenty years, having been commissioned around 2007 and constructed circa 2010. He also queried whether additional CCTV coverage could be installed on or around the bridge considering the recent incidents of suspected vandalism.

In response, D. Hall informed the Committee that, as far as he was aware, the Pont y Werin Bridge was fully functional and in good condition, but he would need to back to the Barrage Manager if more information or detailed assessment were required. On CCTV for the bridge, this was already in place and was key to the operation to the bridge, and this covered as much of the bridge as possible, but it could not practically cover all spots. Additional CCTV coverage would not necessarily deter

further vandalism, but information on the CCTV there and the lifespan, etc., of the bridge could be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee.

A. Coles welcomed a further update on the bridge, due to it recently having broken down (but was fixed quickly) and any information on it would be useful for the Committee (such as the lifecycle, repairs required, etc. which the Chair referred to).

D. Hall replied that there was a full-time engineering team in place, as well as a full asset management plan for repair and replacement as necessary. All these would be timetabled years in advance prior to any repairs needed on the bridge. A timetable for the maintenance and repairs would be sought and shared with the Committee.

Following consideration by the Committee on this item, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T that this item be noted.

(d) Natural Resources Wales Update –

The Natural Resources Wales (NRW) update, presented by C. Pooley, highlighted the following areas of interest to the Committee:

Dissolved oxygen (DO) levels – as expected for this time of year there were no reports that DO levels within the Bay had dropped below the 5 mg/L threshold.

The aeration system was currently operating in winter mode and only operated between midnight and 06:00h. This would remain in place until the weather warmed up again in Spring.

Pollution incidents and investigations – Ferry Road Landfill Site. There were no further updates since the last meeting.

Pollution Incidents – there were no reports of any pollution incidents since the last meeting of the Committee.

The Barrage Fish Pass – the pass was closed for the winter maintenance period on 19th January. During this time, it would be cleaned, inspected and an eel rope would be added to the fishway gate to further help juvenile eels migrate into the Bay.

For 2025 the estimated total number of salmonids that entered the Bay through the fish pass was 124 fish, an increase from the previous year. This was approximately five times the number compared to 2024 and 2023. There was evidence to suggest that sea lamprey also entered the Bay through the pass.

Blackweir Docks Feeder Canal – Abstraction Licence requirements. Associated British Ports (ABP) have been working on various designs for a new screen across the Feeder canal intake. A meeting was held on 14th October to discuss the various options. This was very productive and a design was agreed between NRW and ABP.

Other updates – the Committee were informed that a fishing video had recently circulated on Facebook that generated significant attention within the carp-fishing community. The video featured several exceptionally large carp caught in Cardiff Bay over recent years, and its publication was expected to increase public interest in fishing activity in the area, including parts outside of the designated fishing areas. It was noted that while fishing currently was quiet due to the time of year, the CHA may see a rise in anglers during the spring and summer months as weather conditions improved. This update was provided to ensure the matter remained on the Committee's and CHA's radar.

The Chair asked if a link to this video could be shared with the Committee. He was also concerned about the reach of this video and that although the majority of anglers / people in the fishing community were responsible, a minority were not, and therefore there was a need for continued good management of waterways and rivers. He referred to the impact of global warming on the size of Carp, which would get larger, comparable to the sizes seen in France.

S. Jones commented that last year the number of youngsters fishing was much greater than had been seen before and they were having to be removed from the Marina as a result and taking over the pontoons at Mermaid Quay as well.

C. Pooley explained there had been an increase in the number of rod licence sales, and an increase in the number of young people taking up fishing as well (but who did not require a licence). This was a positive development but needed to be managed to ensure that people fishing did so in permitted areas.

A.M. Ernest asked about the seal sighting in the Bay; D. Hall explained that a Seal (or its descendants) had been sighted outside the Barrage on and off over the years, on a seasonal basis.

The Vice-Chair referred to the fact that salmonid numbers had increased over the previous year and explained that, as he understood it, the life cycle of salmon involved them being born in rivers, growing there for a period, then migrating to sea for several years before returning to their place of origin. He added that it would be useful to see a long-term graph to identify whether any particular years had been more prolific than others and whether that pattern had been reflected in the data.

C. Pooley explained that you could get natural peaks and troughs with the numbers of fish returning to rivers, influenced by various factors. The data from the fish counter on the fish pass had shown a decline in salmonid numbers over approximately the last twenty years. He explained that this decline had become more pronounced from around 2016, when the reduction in returning fish began to accelerate. He confirmed that he would share the relevant dataset with the Committee for their information.

Following consideration by the Committee on this item, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T that this item be noted.

(e) Any Other Business –

C. Kingston (Waterfront Partners (WFP)) provided an update to the Committee concerning the work, events, etc. in relation to Waterfront Partners.

Since the October report, the Partners had been focused on their Christmas events in the Bay area. Some Partners put on free family activities, etc., during December that were promoted on the WFP website and through social media channels.

The recent January meeting of the WFP held at County Hall provided an opportunity to hear about the development plans for Cardiff and in particular the Bay area and land connecting the city centre to the Bay.

The WFP also had a talk on the Visitor Levy that was going to be introduced within Cardiff for those businesses providing accommodation in the city.

Partners had commented on the problems for the public parking within the Bay area due to the loss of significant car parking facilities whilst building work was taking place.

An update from Transport for Wales would also be taking place at the WFP meeting on 18th February.

(f) Date of Next Meeting –

The next meeting would be on Wednesday, 29th April, 2026 at 5.00 p.m.

JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 12th January, 2026.

Present: Councillor S. Campbell (Chair); Councillors J.E. Charles, C.M. Cowpe, P. Drake, S.D. Perkes and N.C. Thomas.

Representatives of Trade Unions: A. Bryant-Evans (GMB), R. Craven (NEU), J. Davis (UNISON / Vice-Chair), J. Green (UNISON), I. R. Jones (UCAC), G. Pappas (UNISON) and G. Davies (UNISON).

Officers: T. Baker, J. Ballantine, L. Bonni, T. Dickinson, J. Forse, P. Gauci, E. Hannah, I. McMillan, H. Moses, M. Thomas, K. Waite, and S. Williams.

(a) Apology for Absence –

This was received from Councillor N.J. Wood.

(b) Minutes and Matters Arising –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Declarations of Interest –

No declarations were received.

(d) Trade Union Items –

None received at this time.

(e) Minutes of Directorate Consultative Groups (For Information) –

(i) **Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative Meeting – 2nd July, 2025**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative meeting held on 2nd July, 2025.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative meeting be noted.

(ii) **Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative Meeting – 1st October, 2025**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative meeting held on 1st October, 2025.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative meeting be noted.

(iii) **Social Services Consultative Forum Meeting – 3rd June, 2025**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Social Services Consultative Forum meeting held on 3rd June, 2025.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Social Services Consultative Forum meeting be noted.

(iv) **Social Services Consultative Forum Meeting – 17th July, 2025**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Social Services Consultative Forum meeting held on 17th July, 2025.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Social Services Consultative Forum meeting be noted.

(v) **Directorate of Learning and Skills – Learning and Skills JCF – 6th October, 2025**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Learning and Skills JCF meeting held on 6th October, 2025.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Learning and Skills JCF meeting be noted.

(f) Dates of Other Directorate Consultative Groups for Noting –

Following consideration by the Forum, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the following dates for the Directorate Consultative Groups as detailed below be noted:

- (i) Learning and Skills – 9th February, 2026;
- (ii) Social Services (TBC) – Meetings will now be held quarterly;
- (iii) Environment and Housing – 7th January and 4th February, 2026.

(g) Reports and Updates –

(i) **Staff network Updates (Verbal)**

J. Forse, the co-Chair of GLAM, the Council's LGBTQ+ staff network, provided an update to the Forum on the following recent activities, which had been positively received and well attended:

- As Chairs to the network, J. Forse and his co-Chair had been working towards supporting the GLAM membership and how the network could actively support colleagues across the Council to engage with it, both from a social and a support level;
- The collaborative work with Cardiff Council's LGBTQ+ employee network was outlined, including hosting various events and activities that support both Local Authorities, such as the Trans Day of Awareness event in December, which was highlighted as highly impactful and insightful for the networks, communities and allies involved; and
- Work was ongoing to build on the collaboration with Cardiff (such as establishing a calendar of events), as well as with the relevant health boards, Elected Members, Town and Community Councils and others, such as volunteers and affiliated organisations.

Councillor Thomas asked whether Elected Members and allies from the Vale of Glamorgan Council were attending meetings of the GLAM network. The GLAM representative did not have that information to hand but would ensure that invites continued to go out to Elected Members and other allies in order to attend and participate at the network meetings and events, as well as reaching out and engaging with the wider communities concerned in both Authorities.

The next update came from E. Hannah (with P. Gauci), who outlined the work being undertaken by Abl, the Council's disability staff network, which included:

- Holding an informal meeting at Barry Island – walk and talk;
- Disability Pride Month events including flag-raising with the Mayor and local community groups;
- Marking International Day for People with Disabilities with the Leader of the Council;
- Marking ADHD Awareness Month with an awareness day round-up and Rejection Sensitivity Disorder (RSDa) guide;
- Activities included Abl membership of the Local Government Disability Champions Network and Abl leaders attended free awareness sessions and training opportunities with Microlink and Local Government Disability Champions Network (LGDCN);

- Future focus and planned activities which included access to Work guidance / support pack, applying the LGDCN accessible meetings guidance, resourcing fidget packs for meetings and promoting the Orange Wallet scheme;
- Details were provided on the Abl members' survey, in order to share their experiences and to use the subsequent findings to help shape Abl's objectives. Some things had come out of the results already – staff had very different experiences and whether their experience was positive or negative largely depended on their manager. As such, training for managers was crucial – this was something that should be explored, with the help of Human Resources (HR) and any input from those present at the Forum today; and
- Abl wanted the relevant training to be as innovative and engaging as possible.

Subsequently, Councillor Thomas asked if Abl were engaging with Elected Members as allies, 'champions', etc., and vice-versa or whether the network was looking to improve on that. It was explained that there had been some engagement already with Elected Members (e.g. Councillors attending network meetings and other forms of engagement) and a new Elected Member 'champion' was being sought since the passing of the previous one. As with the GLAM network, Abl would be looking to send out information and invites to all Councillors in order to encourage their participation with the network.

Councillor Cowpe expressed concern about the long NHS waiting times for ADHD diagnosis in Wales and the impact on those, including staff at the Vale of Glamorgan Council, having to wait for treatment and support because of this, and the Council having to pick up on whatever they could do to help any staff affected. It was explained that Abl did support members impacted by this issue, including signposting them to any alternative forms of help that were available, and to try and ensure that any reasonable adjustments could be undertaken in their workplace if required. Abl also worked with the Council's HR Department to help staff within such circumstances. The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development added that a formal diagnosis was not needed for the Council to support its members of staff in these circumstances, and an appropriate risk assessment, well-being action plan or help via Occupational Health could be provided. The Council worked closely with Abl, other staff networks and trade union representatives in order to offer support to staff in situations such as this and, in light of the comments around the Abl survey, to explore options on offering support and training to managers to help staff in these circumstances. The Chair, Councillors Charles, Cowpe and Thomas cited examples of practices that were or could be undertaken for Council staff to help them in their work, such as the colour of computer screens or working from home, as well as the support of individual line managers and information on support provided via the Council's website and intranet (which would be part of the improved StaffNet currently being implemented).

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development provided an update on the Diverse Network, which included:

- The network continued to meet on a regular basis, and extended invites out to allies and others who wished to support its aims;
- The work of Diverse included anti-racist training and inclusive recruitment practice roll-out, which tied into the work with Association of Directors of

Social Services (ADSS) Cymru and their reports on workforce and service user experiences;

- The network sought to influence governing bodies' diversity with more representatives being included from groups with a Global South heritage; and
- The Diverse Network welcomed representatives from this Forum attending future meetings of the network and the relevant dates would be shared with the Forum.

Councillor Thomas commented that the Diverse Network and the other groups mentioned today would welcome greater or wider trade union and employee representative attendance and engagement with them and their meetings.

G. Pappas explained that there was work being done to establish an umbrella group at the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan branch level for trade unions (Unison) looking at all aspects of diversity, which would be known as the 'self-organising group'.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Staff Network(s) Updates be noted.

(ii) Draft Social Partnership Duty Annual Report 2024-25

This was presented to the Forum by the Operational Manager – Corporate Strategy and Insight. There was an update on the introduction of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act 2023. She explained that the duty established under the Act required public bodies, including Local Authorities, trade unions and staff networks, to work collaboratively when setting organisational objectives and in making decisions related to the delivery of those objectives.

She noted that this partnership approach aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan and highlighted that the new Corporate Plan, Vale 2030, published last year, reflected this way of working through a refreshed set of organisational objectives. The Act also required an annual report to be produced for Welsh Government and the Social Partnership Council setting out the work undertaken by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

The first Annual Report presented to the Forum highlighted compliance with the Social Partnership Duty between the period April 2024 – March 2025.

L. Campbell (GMB), G. Pappas (UNISON), H. Moses (Operational Manager – Corporate Strategy and Insight) and K. Waite (HR Business Partner) had been nominated and appointed as Social Partnership Champions, taking forward this report and meeting colleagues in Merthyr Tydfil Council 'paired' with the Vale of Glamorgan Council to take forward work around the social partnership.

The Operational Manager – Corporate Strategy and Insight explained that one of the key priorities moving forward was increasing awareness of the Social Partnership Duty, and that the preparation of the Annual Report provided an opportunity to support this. She noted that no set structure or template had been issued for the

annual reports, and therefore the first report has been shaped in a way considered most appropriate for the Council. Future reports may be adapted as learning was gathered. She advised that 2024–25 had been a slightly different year for producing the Report, as the Council was not only reporting on progress against the existing objectives but also consulting on the objectives for the new Corporate Plan. She outlined that the Report included an introductory context on the duty and how it had arisen, together with an overview of the structures in place within the Council for partnership working between the Council, trade unions and various groups, formally and informally.

The Report also set out how the new Corporate Well-Being Objectives were developed and consulted upon, highlighting the range of meetings held to inform and shape the new Corporate Plan and ensure a broad range of views were considered.

The Operational Manager – Corporate Strategy and Insight summarised the main content of the Annual Report, which focused on the four corporate objectives in place during 2024–25:

- Objective 1 – To work with and for our communities: the Report reflected activity relating to the development of staff networks and the work undertaken on the Culture Book.
- Objective 2 – To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth: the Report detailed work on recruitment, retention, staff benefits and associated developments during the year.
- Objective 3 – Supporting people at home and in their community: the Report covered activity in social services, including work undertaken with ADSS Cymru and contributions to the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan.
- Objective 4 – To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment: the Report highlighted work primarily within Environment and Housing, including links to Project Zero and ongoing partnership working with trade unions.

The Report captured wider staff engagement activities outside formal trade union structures, including the establishment of diverse networks and the work of the Learning Café. These areas may be explored further in future annual reports.

The Forum was asked subsequently for its endorsement of the Report so that it could be submitted as required. It was confirmed that work was already underway to consider the structure and content of the next Annual Report. There were also discussions between the Council's Social Partnership Champions and colleagues in Merthyr, with a particular focus on raising awareness of the duty and reflecting the partnership work already taking place.

G. Pappas confirmed that that he had contacted Amber Courtney (TUC Cymru), who previously led on Social Partnership for Welsh Government, and that she was keen to meet with both the Social Partnership Champions and Elected Members. He advised that wider Member engagement was essential for the successful implementation of Social Partnership within the Council. Amber's contact details had been shared with the Operational Manager – Corporate Strategy and Insight, and it was suggested that a seminar be arranged to provide further guidance and for

Members of the Forum to be included in this. Councillor Perkes asked that the Forum be updated about this when it was arranged.

The Operational Manager for Employee Services highlighted in the Report the Council's progress toward securing Real Living Wage accreditation. He informed the Forum that the Council successfully achieved Real Living Wage accreditation in October. He noted that although the Council paid the Real Living Wage to employees and agency workers for several years, formal accreditation represents an important milestone and positive recognition for the organisation. Work would now focus on maintaining accreditation by engaging with suppliers and strengthening communication regarding the Council's status as a Real Living Wage employer. He also advised that he would be presenting the Council's accreditation journey to a group of 44 public sector bodies to share learning and support others beginning the process.

G. Pappas welcomed the Council's Real Living Wage accreditation and congratulated the Operational Manager for Employee Services and the team for their work, noting that achieving accreditation was a significant milestone for a Council of this size. He also acknowledged the support of the current Council leadership in securing accreditation.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the Annual Report, following consideration by the Forum (including Trade Union and Employee Representatives) be endorsed, with any actions raised to be undertaken following the meeting of the Forum.

(iii) Presentation: Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The Operational Manager for Employee Services shared a presentation with the Forum on the LGPS, which the Vale of Glamorgan Council was a part of.

As part of this overview, it was noted that every three years the Pension Team went through an extensive review of how it was performing. This was done by an external body, who completed the review and assess how it was progressing and regarding decisions on investments as well.

An update was given on membership numbers, which were quite significant for the LGPS, with just over 18,000 active members (including corporate staff and schools-based support workers). There were currently 14,600 pensioners being paid through the scheme and a similar number of deferred members. In total, there were just over 47,000 members supported within the scheme across Cardiff and the Vale.

The Operational Manager also reported on national developments, including the creation of a new UK pensions dashboard, which combined information from all pension providers into one central dashboard. He noted that approximately £31 billion in lost pensions existed nationally and that the dashboard aimed to address this. It was anticipated to be publicly accessible in late 2026 or early 2027.

An update was provided on the new local pension system, Engage, which replaced the old pensions portal. The new system offered a dashboard, access to benefit statements, the ability to amend beneficiaries, and various retirement calculators. Around 1,200 staff had already registered, and wider communication would follow once Cardiff's team finalised the materials.

The three-year actuarial assessment was outlined, noting that the Cardiff and Vale pension fund was one of the best performing in Wales and the UK. The fund had improved significantly, moving from a £52 million deficit in 2022 to a £315 million surplus due to better investments and fund management. As a result, the employer's pension contribution rate would reduce from 19.3% to 15% from April.

The Operational Manager highlighted that the fund was now approximately 110% funded, with the pension pot increasing from £3 billion to £3.4 billion in the last 12 months. The structure of asset investments was outlined, including significant holdings in global equity, fixed income, and low-carbon equity. He also noted new investments, such as a UK forestry fund which included ownership of a forest north of Brecon, to help reduce the carbon footprint of investments.

Finally, reference was made to fund exclusions relating to areas such as controversial weapons, tobacco, and gambling, and noted ongoing work in pooling investments across the eight Welsh pension funds.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the presentation be noted.

(h) Date of Next Meeting –

To be confirmed. Possible dates would be considered for the period following the Easter holidays in April, to ensure availability, and the Forum would be updated accordingly.