

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>Thursday, 09 July 2026</b>
<b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee:</b>	<b>No Relevant Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Item which the Chair has decided is urgent (Part I)</b> (If yes, why)	Not applicable
<b>Urgent Decision Procedure Used (15.14 of the Constitution)</b> (If yes, why)	Not applicable
<b>Item Type</b>	Part I
<b>Report Title:</b>	Cabinet Quarterly Report - Reporting Minutes of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an Active Participant
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
<b>Strategic Leadership Team:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Chief Executive

## 1.0 What is this report about?

1.1 In receiving the quarterly Cabinet report, which is made available to all Members, minutes from various Committees over the period March to June 2026 are made available to Members as requested by Governance and Audit Committee for ease of reference and for information.

- Corporate Parenting Panel – 23rd March 2026 (attached as Appendix A).
- Joint Consultative Forum – 20th April 2026 (attached as Appendix B).
- Cardiff Bay Advisory Committee – 29th April 2026 (attached as Appendix C).

## 2.0 What are the Recommendations?

	<b>Recommendation – What and How?</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation – Why?</b>
2.1	That the minutes concerning meetings of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active	To present to Cabinet a report on a quarterly basis which would provide an overview of all the Joint Committee Meetings of which the

	<b>Recommendation – What and How?</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation – Why?</b>
	participant from March to June 2026 be noted.	Vale of Glamorgan Council was a formal member and links to the respective minutes.

### **3.0 What is the background to this report?**

3.1 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 (formerly 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 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.

### **4.0 What issues are there to be considered?**

4.1 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

## **5.0 How has evidence been used to inform the report, including the views of others?**

5.1 Officers from Democratic Services in support of the meetings of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant have provided the agreed minutes of those minutes for Members' ease of reference and for information.

## **6.0 What are the next steps if the recommendations are approved?**

6.1 Cabinet is 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 March to June 2026.

## **7.0 How does this report support Vale 2030 and Reshaping?**

7.1 Working with Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant is a key requirement of the Council in supporting the delivery of Vale 2030's five Well-being Objectives and supports the principles of partnership working.

## **8.0 How does this demonstrate the Five Ways of Working?**

8.1 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.

8.2 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

8.3 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.

8.4 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.

## **Resources**

### **9.0 Finance**

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

## 10.0 Workforce

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

## 11.0 Legal and Equalities

11.1 **Does an Equalities Impact Assessment need to be completed? If not, why?**

11.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed as the noting of meetings of Joint Committees and Committees where the Vale of Glamorgan Council is an active participant is an Executive function.

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

## 12.0 Key Contacts

12.1 **Who are the primary officers to contact with any comments and/or queries on the report?**

Lead Officer: Rob Thomas, Chief Executive	Democratic Services Officer: Matthew Swindell, Cabinet and Committee Services Officer, <a href="mailto:m1swindell@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk">m1swindell@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk</a>
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## Appendices

Appendix A – Corporate Parenting Panel – 23rd March 2026.

Appendix B – Joint Consultative Forum, 20th April 2026.

Appendix C – Cardiff Bay Advisory Committee – 29th April 2026.

## Background Documents

None.

## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL MEETING

**MONDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2026 AT 5.00 P.M.  
REMOTE MEETING**

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

L. Carver (Director of Social Services), M. Booker-Southard (Learning Links Manager Standards and Provision), K. Conway (Operational Manager, Eliminate and Radical Reform), R. Evans (Head of Children and Young People Services), M. Ingram (Head of Housing and Building Services), G. Nicholas (Team Manager, 14+ Team), C. O'Dare (Operational Manager, Children Looked After), S. Saif (Lead Learning Links), M. Thomas (Head of Standards and Provision), and M. Swindell (Cabinet and Committee Services Officer).

<b>(1)</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence.</b>
	Formally received from Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby (Vice-Chair); Jo Rudge (Team Manager – CLA) and K. Williams (Head of Additional Learning Needs and Wellbeing).
<b>(2)</b>	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising from 19th January 2026.</b>
	<p>Minutes agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p>With regards to Matters Arising, it was noted that the Corporate Parenting Charter had been a standing agenda item but was deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p>Members noted that the latest position regarding the Pupil Development Grant would be considered under the item on the meeting agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas asked for an update about the further 2-bed residential children's home in St Athan and whether it had been opened. K. Conway confirmed that the new site was opened in March and welcomed its first child. The second supported accommodation for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) was now expected to open in May 2026.</p>
<b>(3)</b>	<b>Pupil Development Grant – Outcome of Review.</b>
	<p>Further to the discussion that took place at the previous meeting, a further update was provided by M. Booker-Southard. On 20th March, the Learning and Skills Directorate Leadership Team agreed a proposal to share with Corporate Parenting Panel, and an on-screen presentation was shared with Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The latest figures as of March 2026 concerning the number of Children Looked After (CLA) who were educated in Vale of Glamorgan schools, out of County schools (for both Wales and England) and out of County CLA educated in Vale of Glamorgan schools were provided.</li><li>• The Directorate Leadership Team had proposed that the PGC CLA would be funded for 2026/27 termly to schools, but in supporting Vale of</li></ul>

Glamorgan CLA in other parts of Wales and other Authority's CLA being educated in the Vale of Glamorgan, there would be a bursary so those children would still receive support as and when needed.

- It was also important for Authorities to also consider children who were previously Looked After or had been adopted.
- Proceeding in that manner would provide an opportunity to be more proactive and support children more effectively with timely PDG CLA financial support for their school.
- It was important that the Corporate Parenting Charter was front and centre when considering PDG CLA funding for the CLA population.
- Vale schools would have to submit a claim for out of County CLA as would schools out of County supporting Vale of Glamorgan CLA, with the Professional Portal ensuring clear governance and accountability.
- In terms of review, consultation has taken place with colleagues in Education along with in and out County schools, including exploration on the effect on CLA educated out of County who would have benefited from PDG CLA support. Consultation can now be extended to other stakeholders.

The Chair thanked M. Booker-Southard for the information and invited questions or comments from Panel Members.

- K. Conway asked whether if funding was not ringfenced for CLA pupils within in-County schools, how CLA children would receive the financial support. M. Booker-Southard said that CLA leads within schools would record any expenditure aligned with the child's targets. Schools had been asked to look at the overall needs for all of their CLA and put in appropriate interventions. It was hoped the new system would reduce some of the bureaucracy in schools.
- R. Evans asked to clarify that the position for Learning and Skills was that the withdrawal of funding for CLA placed out of County had been reversed and replaced with a bursary application, which was agreed as correct.
- R. Evans also asked to clarify if it was the Vale of Glamorgan Council acting in this way rather than it being the national picture or were discussions still taking place with other Welsh Government and other Authorities. M. Booker-Southard clarified that this would be the actions of the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Welsh Government and other Authorities were still working on there being reciprocal arrangements, but it was felt that those arrangements were not fully in place for the benefit of the children. Conversations were still ongoing with Welsh Government and other Authority leads, but it was important to act in the meantime. More guidance was expected at the end of March but there was no guarantee it would be in place on time so Learning and Skills had acted to ensure that children would receive the right support at the right time. R. Evans thanked all concerned for taking part in those ongoing discussions and acting in the interests of children in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Cllr Thomas said it the Authority's duty to prioritise its children. It had been discussed previously that the Vale of Glamorgan was out of step

with the rest of Wales and needed to make change to the new system. M. Booker Southard said that discussions with Welsh Government and other Authorities were ongoing on that issue.

- Cllr Thomas asked if money was not ringfenced for CLA children, whether it going to the school's general budget. M. Booker-Southard confirmed that any related funding did not go to the general fund and was CLA funding but not funding for a specific child. However, there was an ongoing need to review how that money was being spent for those individual CLA. PDG CLA funding would be coded separately in school budgets so that School Business Managers would be aware what that funding was to be used for. Funding being termly also offered greater opportunities to scrutinise how that finding was being used.
- M. Thomas clarified that the Vale of Glamorgan Council were going against the practice and not against the Policy in Wales. The Vale Council had always sought equity for its CLA pupils wherever they were educated. It was not known but suspected that other CPPs across Wales were not aware of the issues as only two other Authorities had replied to the request for information.
- Cllr Johnson said the approach sounded positive and asked where the process moved on to from this point as decisions had only recently been taken on the approach. He asked if the approach would now be shared with other Council Departments. M. Booker-Southard said t was important to summarise the decision for CPP today and that next steps would be to work with Directorates going forward.
- Cllr Johnson asked whether the 1st April date was still of relevance to the funding as the start of the new financial year. M. Booker-Southard said that following Friday's decision, Officers would now meet with Finance colleagues to put the various mechanisms in place which would probably not be complete by 1st April, but going forward it was intended for schools to receive funding termly and the position would be scrutinised going forward.
- Cllr Charles thanked all staff concerned with taking the matter forward.
- The Chair said it was now a very different position to that discussed initially which had caused a certain amount of concern amongst the Panel. It was good that the various required Departments would be working together going forward and he liked that funding to schools would be coded for CLA rather than in the general budget and that consideration had also been given to those educated out of County. The Chair said it would be interesting over the coming year to assess how well it works, that it was odd that the other Authorities seemed not to be working together on the issue and how important it was that the Vale Council was doing what was right for its CLA.
- M. Booker-Southard described another level of accountability via the Professional Portal so all staff concerned could see the various children and what funding was being used for to support them, allowing complete transparency across Directorates. Training had been rolled out the 14+ and CLA Teams accordingly.

The Chair thanked all concerned for the information provided.

<b>(4)</b>	<b>Breakdown of Current Figures Concerning Children Looked After.</b>
	<p>The breakdown of current figures concerning CLA as of 17th March 2026 item was presented by C. O'Dare and the following details noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were currently 358 CLA which was a reduction from the number reported at the previous meeting.</li> <li>• From November 2025 to March 2026 there had been a gradual reduction in the numbers of CLA.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked C. O'Dare for the information and invited questions or comments from Panel Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R. Evans said that the recent reduction in the number of CLA was significant following previous increases in CLA. It was important to acknowledge the significance of work undertaken to safely and appropriately reduce the numbers of CLA by Children and Young People Services and by partners.</li> <li>• M. Booker-Southard said there was an External Placements Audit which looked to provide the right placements for CLA as well as provide value for money, which was often a challenge for Housing, Education and Childrens Services.</li> <li>• K. Conway said the last audit took place in February 2026 which examined every external placement for those CLA concerned and whether that placement continued to meet that child's needs, were there other / better options available and what was most appropriate for that child. The audit was robust and was done annually to fully analyse those placements.</li> <li>• The Chair said it was appropriate to not simply accept the most recent position and to review and look for the best forms of support for CLA.</li> <li>• Cllr Thomas agreed the recent reductions in numbers were to be celebrated.</li> </ul> <p>No further questions or points were forthcoming, and the Chair thanked C. O'Dare for the information.</p>
<b>(5)</b>	<b>Any Other Business.</b>
	<p>There were no items of Any Other Business for the Panel.</p>
<b>(6)</b>	<b>Proposed Corporate Parenting Panel Meeting Dates 2026/27.</b>
	<p>The proposed dates for Corporate Parenting Panel meetings in 2026/2027 were considered as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11th May 2026</li> <li>• 13th July 2026</li> <li>• 7th September 2026</li> <li>• 23rd November 2026</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 25th January 2027</li><li>• 5th April 2027.</li></ul> |
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Cllr Johnson advised that the 11th May 2026 date would have a clash with a meeting of Barry Town Council.

## JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2026.

Present: Councillor S. Campbell (Chair); Councillors P. Drake, W.A. Hennessy, 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, N. Duddridge, M. Gelder, E. Hannah, I. McMillan, M. Thomas, K. Waite, and S. Williams.

(a) Apologies for Absence –

This was received from Councillors J.E. Charles, C.M. Cowpe and L. Campbell (GMB) and D. Roberts (UCAC).

(b) Minutes and Matters Arising –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2026 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Declarations of Interest –

No declarations were received.

(d) Trade Union Items –

**(i) HMRC Mileage Claims**

G. Pappas (UNISON) updated the Forum on this matter. The issue was raised at a recent Joint Council for Wales meeting attended by G. Pappas and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, where there was extensive discussion about rising fuel costs. The focus was on Council staff generally, but particularly on low-paid workers such as domiciliary care staff and those in equivalent Vale Community Resource Service (VCRS) roles across Wales, who were increasingly disadvantaged as fuel costs meant it was now costing them to come to work. Attendees discussed what Local Authorities could realistically do to address this. Similar debates had taken place in the past, but across the 22 Authorities there had been little progress, largely because proposed solutions relied on self-assessment for low-paid workers, which was challenging and unpopular for those staff members affected.

At a national level, G. Pappas had raised this with the new UNISON General Secretary, Andrea Egan, and participated in a meeting with the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, earlier this month. The Chancellor was looking to bring this issue forward for discussion, with the possibility of His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) increasing the mileage allowance rate from 45p to potentially 55p or 65p per mile. While it was still early days and any change was likely to take several months, and with uncertainties such as the situation in the Middle East affecting fuel prices, it was important to highlight that once again rising fuel costs were disproportionately affecting vital frontline and public services.

Councillor Hennessy asked what the financial cost would be to the Council if it were to fund an increase in mileage allowance locally. G. Pappas responded that he did not have the figures available and suggested that the Operational Manager - Employee Services may be better placed to advise. He also explained that increasing the mileage rate above the HMRC limit would result in additional cost to the Authority and, critically, require employees to complete self-assessment tax returns. He stated that this was a key reason why the Council had not pursued an increase previously, particularly given the additional burden this would place on care workers already working long hours. The Operational Manager - Employee Services advised that he did not have immediate figures on the annual volume of mileage claims. He explained that mileage was currently paid at the HMRC rate of 45p per mile, which was a non-taxable allowance and therefore processed through the Council's creditor system rather than payroll. He confirmed that if the Council were to pay more than 45p per mile, the excess would become a taxable benefit, as tax codes varied between individuals. The Council would not be able to deduct tax at source, resulting in staff being required to complete annual self-assessment tax returns. He stated that this was an outcome the Council would want to avoid and noted that many other Welsh Local Authorities took the same approach. He further advised that if HMRC were to increase the national rate, the Council would consider implementing this through its standard claims process. He confirmed that the 45p rate had been in place since 2011, when it increased from 40p, and that decisions on any increase would sit nationally, with trade unions lobbying for change.

Councillor Hennessy expressed concern that ongoing conflict in the Gulf could drive further increases in petrol and diesel prices. He highlighted the disproportionate impact on lower-paid staff and the risk of staff leaving if mileage costs became unaffordable. The Chair agreed that this was a reasonable concern and noted that consideration also needed to be given to the Council's pool car system, including future funding and capacity. She acknowledged uncertainty around how the system may be impacted in the longer term, despite the growing use of electric vehicles.

Councillor Thomas echoed concerns regarding the impact on low-paid workers, particularly within social care. He acknowledged the availability of pool cars and electric bikes but stated that current provision was insufficient to meet demand. He referenced global events affecting fuel and energy prices and asked whether it was within the remit of the Forum to recommend that the Council write to Rachel Reeves and HMRC to support an increase in the national mileage allowance. He noted that an increase from 45p to 55p per mile would represent a significant cost increase of around 20%, but that responsibility for setting rates ultimately lay with HMRC. The Chair confirmed that recommendations from the Forum could be submitted to

Cabinet, who would then determine whether to pursue them. She indicated no barrier to the Forum recommending that the Council formally supports a national increase.

In response to questions about specifying a new rate, Councillor Thomas confirmed that the intention was not to suggest a specific figure, but rather to support the principle of HMRC reviewing and revising the allowance nationally.

G. Pappas welcomed the proposal and thanked Members for their support. He highlighted that the National Health Service (NHS) in Wales were able to adjust arrangements internally, but that Local Authorities operated independently across 22 Councils, which could create difficulties. He noted that some Authorities, including those in Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Wrexham and Flintshire, had explored mileage rates of up to 55p, though he acknowledged the drawbacks of self-assessment. He emphasised the benefit of a collective approach across all Welsh Authorities and confirmed his support for writing to Rachel Reeves.

Councillor Thomas reiterated concerns that local increases led to tax complications for staff and suggested involving the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to help co-ordinate a national response.

The Director of Environment and Housing provided service context, advising that diesel costs had risen by approximately 25%, equating to an additional £4,000 per 10,000 litres, with similar increases in AdBlue costs. He stated that further rises of 5–7% were anticipated over the next six months. He advised that services were actively promoting the use of the Council's electric vehicle (EV) fleet, though availability remained limited.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development confirmed that the issue had been discussed at the Joint Council for Wales. She advised that fuel costs were rising rapidly and that, as in previous years, the Council had decided against a local uplift due to the impact on staff, particularly lower-paid employees facing self-assessment requirements. She confirmed that other Welsh Authorities were similarly aligned and supportive of requesting a national review, but not of implementing unilateral local increases. She advised that making such a recommendation to Cabinet would be appropriate.

Councillor Perkes emphasised that Cabinet could not independently increase rates without causing tax implications for staff and reiterated that the matter must be addressed at a national level.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development further explained that the NHS applied a taxable payroll supplement model. However, this had received mixed feedback and could impact benefits such as Universal Credit. She confirmed that the Joint Council for Wales position was to seek an HMRC review, rather than local pay adjustments.

Councillor Thomas suggested that any recommendation should highlight the urgency of the issue and the fact that the rate had not been reviewed for 15 years.

Following the above discussions, the Forum subsequently

**RECOMMENDED –**

- 1) T H A T Cabinet be asked to consider that the Council write to the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, and HMRC, to support a review and increase of the national HMRC base mileage allowance rate, as a matter of urgency, noting that the rate had not changed for approximately 15 years and that rising fuel costs were impacting lower-paid staff.
- 2) T H A T Cabinet be asked to consider that the Council engage with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to encourage a co-ordinated approach across all 22 Welsh Local Authorities in making representations to HMRC and national government on supporting a review and increase of the national HMRC base mileage allowance rate.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) Having regard to the discussions at the Forum and the concerns raised on this matter by its Members and for Cabinet to consider the recommendations based on the points raised by the Forum.

**(ii) NJC Pay Award**

G. Pappas (UNISON) updated the Forum on this matter. He advised that the employer side had made a final offer of a 3.3% pay increase under the NJC negotiations. He confirmed that all three relevant trade unions had rejected the offer. He reported that UNISON and Unite were undertaking a targeted ballot for potential industrial action, limited to workplaces that had achieved a minimum 35% turnout at the previous ballot.

In relation to the Vale of Glamorgan, G. Pappas stated that in general Vale Council staff would not be included in the ballot as the turnout threshold had not been reached. However, Stanwell School would be balloted, having met the required turnout. UNISON would therefore ballot staff at Stanwell School with a recommendation for strike action. He advised that there had been no formal confirmation at this stage regarding the position of GMB but confirmed that UNISON and Unite were proceeding. He noted that this was the first time targeted ballots had been used in this way.

The Chair asked whether a timeline had been provided. G. Pappas stated that further information was expected following discussions later that day and reiterated that the impact within the Vale would be limited to a single site.

Councillor Hennessy queried what level of increase had been sought, given rejection of the 3.3% offer. G. Pappas responded that the original claim had been significantly higher and included proposals for:

- A reduction in the working week from 37 hours to 35 hours,
- Additional paid leave and enhanced annual leave, and

- A minimum wage hourly rate of £15.

He noted that these elements had been rejected by the employer and stated that, in the context of inflation and the rising cost of living, the 3.3% offer was below expectations and unacceptable from a trade union perspective.

A. Bryant-Evans (GMB) outlined the GMB position, confirming that the union had adopted a neutral stance, allowing members to determine whether the offer was acceptable. He reiterated what the rejected joint union claim had included (such as one additional day of annual leave for all staff, a two hour reduction in the working week with no loss of pay, the ability for school staff to take at least one day of annual leave during term time without loss of pay, and the abolition of the Level 1 Teaching Assistant role, with progression of staff to Level 2). He confirmed that GMB would focus engagement on workplaces with higher membership density.

The Vice-Chair clarified that the headline pay claim had been for either a 10% increase or a flat-rate uplift of £3,000 across all pay scales.

The Operational Manager - Employee Services provided clarification that the NJC pay award was a national matter and would progress independently. He advised that the Council was now an accredited Real Living Wage employer, and that from April the hourly rate for the lowest-paid staff had increased to £13.45 per hour. He explained that this ensured those staff benefited from an uplift ahead of any national pay award settlement and reminded members that full accreditation had been achieved in November.

Councillor Thomas queried whether the 3.3% offer was based on earlier inflation and cost-of-living data. G. Pappas explained that NJC decisions were taken by committees comprising employer representatives, elected lay members and staff-side trade unions. He confirmed he was not a member of that committee but reiterated that the significantly higher claim submitted by the unions had been rejected outright and that the 3.3% offer had been immediately rejected by all trade unions.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the NJC Pay Award update be noted.

- (e) Minutes of Directorate Consultative Groups (For Information) –
- (i) **Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative Meeting –  
7<sup>th</sup> January, 2026**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2026.

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 – 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2026**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Environment and Housing Trade Union Consultative meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2026.

It was subsequently

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

**(iii) Social Services Health and Safety Forum Meeting – 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2026**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Social Services Health and Safety Forum meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2026.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Social Services Health and Safety Forum meeting be noted.

**(iv) Directorate of Learning and Skills – Learning and Skills JCF – 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2026**

The Forum considered the minutes relating to the Learning and Skills JCF meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2026.

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) Environment & Housing – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026;
- (ii) Social Services Health and Safety Meeting – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026;
- (iii) Learning and Skills – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

(g) Reports and Updates –(i) **Diverse Staff Network Update**

N. Duddridge, the co-Vice Chair of the Diverse Network, provided an update to the Forum on the following:

- **Anti-racist professional learning:**  
She advised that, following a previous “safe space” meeting, the Network had identified the need for anti-racist training for staff, to be given similar importance to mandatory training such as safeguarding and health and safety. She reported that the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development had recently delivered anti-racist professional learning sessions for Social Services, focused on promoting equality and inclusion. Feedback had been very positive, and discussions were ongoing about extending this training across other Directorates and wider staff groups.
- **Resource bank:**  
The Network had developed a resource bank, building on existing content on StaffNet. This would include blogs, podcasts, documentaries (e.g. BBC iPlayer content), and book recommendations tailored to different sectors of the Council, including schools and individual staff. The Network was aiming for the expanded resource bank to go live, accompanied by communications, in May 2026.
- **Refugee Week:**  
The Network would be marking Refugee Week by co-ordinating a collection of toiletries for adults and children. She confirmed that this was being arranged with support from the Communications Team and that efforts would be made to ensure information reached school staff, who may not routinely access StaffNet. Donations would be collected at the Alps and the Civic Offices and distributed to local refugee charities to support individuals and families in the community. Collections would be accepted up to 22<sup>nd</sup> May.
- **Next meeting:**  
The next meeting of the Diverse Network would take place on 11<sup>th</sup> June, both in person at the Civic Offices and via Microsoft Teams. All staff and others with an interest were welcome to attend.

Councillor Thomas asked whether trade unions and Directors could assist in publicising the resource bank and Refugee Week collection, to ensure wider dissemination among staff and union members. This was welcomed by N. Duddridge and the Chair could not see any issues with undertaking such an approach. G. Pappas confirmed that the trade unions would support the promotion of these initiatives.

It was subsequently

**AGREED – T H A T** the Diverse Staff Network Update be noted.

## **(ii) Abl Staff Network Update**

This was presented to the Forum by E. Hannah, the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language Officer, who was supporting the Abl Network in the early stages of its development. She outlined the following areas of work undertaken by the Abl Network over recent months:

- Councillor Cowpe, a Member of the Forum, had joined the network as a Champion. Abl greatly appreciated Councillor Cowpe's passion, knowledge, and constructive suggestions, which had supported the Network's development.
- The Abl leadership also met monthly to review objectives and other aligned aims.
- The Network had begun to consider how it could support and contribute to wider equality and disabilities work, including the Disability Rights Plan and participation in the Disability Confident Scheme, aligning the Network's activity with the Council's broader inclusion frameworks.
- Following a suggestion from Councillor Cowpe, the Network would introduce monthly drop-in sessions rather than formal meetings. These sessions were intended to provide a relaxed and flexible opportunity for staff across the authority to engage without a set agenda, within various accessible venues across the County.
- Alternative engagement activities had attracted limited interest, while the strongest attendance had been at a traditional informal office-based meeting, which the Network therefore intended to use again. It was confirmed that efforts would continue to test different approaches and reduce barriers to participation through clear information and reassurance about events.
- The Abl Network maintained Microsoft Teams channels to share events, learning opportunities, training, and resources, and continued to encourage members to engage with and contribute to these channels.
- The Network was also developing a resource bank, with the intention of launching this later in the year.
- The Network had recently circulated information in relation to Autism Acceptance Month, including links to relevant resources, training sessions, and videos. This had also been promoted through the Equalities Newsletter in February. It was explained that multiple communication channels were being used to raise awareness of the Network and encourage wider participation.

Abl contact details were also shared with the Forum.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the Abl Staff Network Update be noted.

## **(iii) GLAM Staff Network Update**

M. Gelder, the Joint Chair of Glam, presented the update to the Forum:

- He advised that the Network continued to experience challenges with engagement and attendance at events, reflecting similar issues reported by other networks. In response, GLAM had taken steps to widen its reach and increase visibility.
- Members were informed that GLAM had recently moved into shared spaces with the Cardiff Council LGBTQ+ network, and that early work had commenced with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council (RCT) to explore joint approaches and collaborative working. It was noted that this would involve joint attendance at events as Proud Employers / Proud Councils, rather than solely as individuals, in order to strengthen organisational presence.
- Recent activity was also highlighted, including a Transgender Visibility Day event held on 31<sup>st</sup> March, delivered jointly with the Cardiff LGBTQ+ network. The event featured three speakers who shared their lived experiences of being transgender. Attendance was reported to be good, with balanced participation from both the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff. It was also highlighted that communications had been strengthened through a combination of StaffNet postings and direct email circulation to improve awareness and engagement.
- The Joint Chair had attended a Stonewall event involving Stonewall CEO Simon Blake, which provided updates on policy and legal considerations affecting Proud Employers. The event also enabled discussion with other organisations on communications approaches and practical guidance, including facilities such as toilets. He noted that there remained widespread uncertainty and nervousness, particularly in light of it being a year since the court case concerning gender versus sex, and the continued absence of clear government guidance.
- In terms of future activity, M. Gelder advised that discussions had taken place regarding involvement in the Irish Film Festival, including potential film screenings at the pier. He confirmed that Lesbian Visibility Week would be marked with an event scheduled for Friday, and that GLAM had also been invited to participate in joint events with RCT and activities linked to the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) in mid-May.

Councillor Thomas addressed comments to both the Abl and GLAM representatives, stating that it had taken time for the staff networks to reach their current position and encouraging them not to become disheartened. He requested that future communications and invitations be circulated to all Elected Members, as many would be supportive of, and interested in, Abl and GLAM (as well as Diverse) but were unaware of meetings or events due to clashes or lack of notice. He emphasised that more direct and targeted invitations would be welcomed and reaffirmed his support for the staff support groups.

The Vice-Chair referred to Transgender Visibility Day and noted that, while Council policy encouraged the optional use of pronouns in email signatures, this appeared to have been lost following the recent automation of corporate email signatures. He sought clarification as to whether this was an oversight. E. Hannah responded in her capacity within the Equalities Team, advising that concerns had been raised with the team responsible for the email signatures. She confirmed that several equality-related elements were missing from the new format, including pronouns, the “My

Name Is” phonetic tool, and the Speak Welsh logo. It was noted that the rollout was described as a “soft launch” to achieve consistency, with the intention to reintroduce these elements. She also expressed disappointment that an Equality Impact Assessment had not been undertaken prior to implementation.

R. Craven (NEU) highlighted that school-based staff did not generally access or use StaffNet and therefore may not receive updates from or about networks such as Abl, Diverse or GLAM. He suggested that communications be sent via Headteachers for onward distribution and noted that events held during school hours would limit attendance, recommending consideration of after-school timing. The Chair explained that this reinforced the rationale for requesting communications in PowerPoint format, to enable wide dissemination to Elected Members, trade unions, Headteachers and school staff. She emphasised the importance of raising awareness of staff networks, meetings, and available resources through accessible, bite-sized materials. E. Hannah advised that she had previously delivered a short presentation outlining the three staff networks at a few school INSET days and confirmed that, although it required updating, she would be willing to refresh and share a short summary presentation with links to join the networks.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the GLAM Staff Network Update be noted.

(h) Date of Next Meeting –

To be confirmed. Possible dates would be considered for the period prior to the end of term for schools / summer holidays in July, to ensure availability, and the Forum would be updated accordingly.

## CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2026.

Present: Councillor M.R. Wilson (Chair), Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chair), M. Griffiths (Natural Resources Wales), S. Jones (Boatfolk Marinas Ltd.), 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) and A. Vye-Parminter (Cardiff Harbour Authority).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from A. Coles (Western Marinas – representing British Marine Federation and Royal Yachting Association), C. Dimond (Cardiff Flood Action Committee), C. Kingston (Waterfront Partners), A. Michael (Penarth Headland Link Charity) and C. Michael (RSPB Wales).

(b) Minutes and matters arising from the Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2026 –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2026 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Navigational Safety and General Progress Report –

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

- **Navigation –**

Due to issues relating to the Marine Licence, the normal planned dredging operation was not taking place this period. Instead UKD was undertaking some water injection dredging to improve access prior to the next main campaign at the start of August.

- **Barrage –**

Sluice 4 cylinders had been fully repaired and installed; the scheduled annual maintenance of the gates and rollers would now be completed before putting the Sluice back into service.

The Fish Pass annual maintenance campaign had been completed, and the main pass was put back online during the last week of March. The auxiliary

pass would be going back online in May once the smolt migration had been completed.

CHA were currently working through the replacement of the lights and sounders (warning of bridge lifts) on the bridges.

A new dual lighting system had been delivered for the sails, which would be installed shortly and provide additional colour options. A clean of the sails using jet washing and extendable brushes was being programmed in.

- **Community Liaison, Engagement and the Environment –**

For 2026, the water safety programme had been focused on clear, practical messages for children and young people. Local schools were sent a video of Theatr na nÓg's "Just Jump" theatre production to show to pupils, which helped to increase the numbers of pupils engaging with this and helping them to understand water safety in a straightforward and engaging way. After watching the video, pupils were invited to design a water safety banner as part of a competition. The winning banners were then displayed along the Barrage walkway, in order to help share important safety messages with the public while involving schools directly in the programme.

The 25th anniversary activities were a huge success, including the "Behind the Bay" photography exhibition, a schools banner competition, social media stories, and the production of an anniversary book documenting Cardiff Harbour Authority's 25-year journey. The book brought together photography, reflections and key milestones to capture the vision, challenges and successes that have shaped the Barrage and Cardiff Bay. To mark the end of the 25th anniversary, a striking new sculpture was installed on the Barrage. Crafted as a Welsh slate monolith with stained glass inserts, the choice of slate reflected Wales's industrial heritage and natural landscape, while the stained-glass elements told the story of the Barrage's transformation.

A. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association) asked how Members and attendees of the Committee could obtain the anniversary book documenting Cardiff Harbour Authority's 25-year journey. It was explained that the book would only have a very short run, but CHA would ensure that at least one copy would be available for the Committee, and there may be the possibility of an online version also being available as well.

S. Jones (Boatfolk Marinas Ltd.), asked for more details about the dredging situation outlined in the update. It was explained that that the main contractor was unavailable, so the opportunity was taken to carry out water injection dredging instead. This was a temporary measure, with one final operation scheduled for the following evening tide, followed by a survey next week to assess its effectiveness. While the exact depth was not confirmed, it was expected to significantly improve access. The results would be known by the end of next week, and this method may have potential future benefits. However, the harbour would revert to traditional cutter suction dredging in August.

S. Jones subsequently queried whether a licence was required for water injection dredging. D. Hall clarified that the existing marine licence covered disposal, which could not currently be used due to unmet licence conditions. As material was not being removed or disposed of offshore, the water injection dredging was carried out under Harbour and Barrage Act powers, not the disposal licence. He added that this approach was agreed following discussions with fisheries technical officers, to avoid impacts on fish movements and to maintain safe navigation while full dredging could not take place.

Councillor Thomas asked two questions: first, whether water injection dredging simply moved silt away from navigable areas and left a build-up that would still need to be addressed later in the summer (around August); and second, what arrangements were being made regarding the eel rope, which he understood would now not be put in place, given the need to maintain access while recognising the existing eel population. A. Vye-Parminter responded on dredging, explaining that water injection dredging was used regularly by Associated British Ports (ABP) which put sediment into suspension so it would then be carried away on the ebb tide, rather than removed. He emphasised that dredging was inherently cyclical: channels naturally re-silted, so the position in August would be no different from a typical summer build-up. It was explained that the eel rope would be addressed as part of the Natural Resources Wales update.

On C. Pooley's (Natural Resources Wales) question on when the dredging started, it was explained that this had started from the two tides yesterday and tomorrow evening's tides. This approach was agreed following discussions with fisheries technical officers and that because of the fish movements in April being as they were, CHA would take the window of opportunity to do it before May.

The Chair asked for an update on water taxis. A. Vye-Parminter stated that there were no formal water taxi services operating in the bay. All licensed passenger vessels within the harbour were tourism and leisure boats, not commuter transport. Currently, eight vessels were licensed, offering a range of leisure trips, including:

- Fast Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIB)s providing short (around 20-minute) trips around the bay or into the estuary;
- Two operators running trips between Mermaid Quay and the Castle;
- One larger boat offering more leisurely harbour cruises;
- Two smaller boats also running 20-minute circular trips.

The idea of a timetabled commuter water taxi service was explored several years ago but ruled out as not viable. Reasons included:

- Environmental constraints (river flows and debris);
- Difficulty maintaining a reliable, regular timetable;
- Travel times and high operating costs;
- Lack of integration with the wider commuter transport network.

In addition, the development of the South Wales Metro was expected to further improve land-based commuter links between Penarth and Cardiff, reducing the case for water-based commuter services.

Overall, commercial passenger operations in the bay remained tourism-focused rather than transport-focused.

The Chair acknowledged the issues raised around water taxis, but the idea remained attractive in principle whilst acknowledging that it must be practically and financially viable. He referred to similar schemes elsewhere which had experienced mixed success, often relying on significant public subsidy to operate.

Finally, the Chair asked that Members and other attendees of the Committee were given the opportunity to get involved in the events for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Barrage and that any communications on events for the anniversary be shared with them.

Following consideration by the Committee on this item, and there being no further questions or comments, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T that the Navigational Safety and General Progress Report 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 – there had been no reports that DO levels within the Bay have dropped below the 5 mg/L threshold.

The aeration system was currently still operating in winter mode and only operated between midnight and 06:00 hours. This would be changed to summer mode soon as water temperatures increased.

Ferry Road Landfill site – the operators provided an update in February explaining that progress had been made at the site. They had potentially found some solutions to Station D underperforming for leachate collection. As expected, the leachate level within the landfill showed seasonal variation, however, over time the leachate level did appear to show a downward trend.

Pollution incidents – there had been no reports of any pollution incidents since the last meeting.

The Barrage Fish Pass – the fish pass was opened on 24<sup>th</sup> March, and it had already recorded early success, with a salmon of around 70 cm having passed through. This was encouraging given the early point in the season, and higher numbers of fish were hoped for in May and June.

An eel rope was proposed but ultimately not installed for health and safety reasons. The rope, commonly used in mussel cultivation and known to be an effective substrate for young eels, was donated by the Rivers Trust and originated from a mussel rearing facility in Swansea Docks. After being stored at the barrage for about a year, the rope produced a significant amount of dust when removed for installation. Due to concerns about health and safety, a decision was made not to proceed, and the rope was discarded. If eel rope was used in future, it would need to be checked in advance and dampened if dusty to ensure safe handling.

In terms of eel migration, existing bristle boards within the fish pass already provided a route into the bay. The eel rope was intended only as an enhancement, not a necessity.

As the fish pass was now operational, it was too late to make changes this year. The issue would be reconsidered for the next winter maintenance period, with options including continued use of bristle boards or safe use of eel rope.

Smith's Waste Management – a local company reported that the attraction of opportunistic gulls to the waste site at Leckwith had resulted in an accumulation of droppings and regurgitated plastic from the gulls that was damaging their property and affecting their business. NRW's waste regulation team was currently investigating this report and would be conducting a routine inspection of the site to ensure that it met the requirements of the permit.

Subsequently, D. Hall (Cardiff Harbour Authority) asked if the NRW officer could outline the "Eels in the Classroom" project. C. Pooley explained that he recently contacted D. Hall to seek support linked to work with the Southeast Wales Rivers Trust on a long-running project called "Eels in the Classroom." The project involved collecting glass eels and elvers as they entered rivers, supplying schools with tanks, equipment, food, and eels, and allowing pupils to care for and observe them for a few weeks. This helped children learn about glass eels and elvers life cycle, migration, and river ecology, and historically had been a successful and a well-received initiative. Previously, the Trust sourced glass eels and elvers relatively easily from North Somerset, mainly the River Parrett, where commercial fishing activity was taking place. After the classroom period, the glass eels and elvers would typically be released into local rivers such as the Taff or Ely. However, routine health checks later detected a notifiable disease (eel herpesvirus) in one sample. As a result, glass eels and elvers sourced from the Parrett could no longer be released into the Taff or Ely and instead had to be returned to North Somerset. This significantly reduced the educational value of the project, as children could no longer watch the eels being released into their local river but instead had to see them packed up and transported away. Because of this, the Rivers Trust asked whether local glass eels and elvers could be sourced from the Taff, Ely, or the Bay. This was the second year that attempts had been made to collect local glass eels and elvers, but none have been found in significant numbers, despite extensive searching on both sides of the barrage, in the lower Ely, and near the wetlands. While eels of all other ages and sizes were present, glass eels and elvers from the current year had not been detected. C. Pooley stated that the glass eels and elvers were believed to be entering the system but were likely moving through deeper water channels, possibly following subtle flows from the Taff and Ely after passing through the locks

or fish pass, making them difficult to locate in a timely manner for the project (this latter point having been raised following the Vice-Chair's comments on the presence and availability of glass eels and elvers at locations such as Pontcanna Park). This had been disappointing and frustrating, but efforts were ongoing to find alternative ways to collect them, with continued hope that a solution would be found.

On A. Ernest's concerns / comments on the discarding of the eel rope, C. Pooley explained that the rope would have been discarded anyway by the mussel cultivation company at the docks, so reusing it through the Rivers Trust helped reduce waste. The Trust normally used this type of rope in locations where eels struggled to pass barriers such as weirs. While it was unfortunate that the rope could not be used in this case and was ultimately thrown away, without the arrangement with the Rivers Trust it would have been disposed of regardless.

On the Chair's query about the presence of newts and salamanders locally, it was confirmed that newts did inhabit areas such as the local wetlands.

Following the above comments and queries, and after consideration by the Committee on this item, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T that the Natural Resources Wales Update be noted.

(e) Waterfront Partners April 2026 Update –

C. Kingston (Waterfront Partners (WFP)) provided an update for the Committee concerning the work, events, etc. in relation to Waterfront Partners. She was unable to attend the meeting in person, but had shared a written version of the update, which included the following:

The Partners met monthly to update on events, work together on marketing the Bay and planning for specific projects such as the WFP Christmas Trails. Guest speakers at the monthly meetings, representing businesses / charities / initiatives were welcomed and provided opportunities for Partners to engage with and support.

Partners updated their events to <https://www.visitcardiffbay.info/>

Chair of WFP: Charlotte Kingston (Makers Guild Wales)

Vice-Chair of WFP: Tom Lewis (Norwegian Church)

Recent presentations at its monthly meetings this year included:

- Ffeibr regarding potential for improved connections in the Bay area. A number of businesses / organisations would be needed to sign up in order for it to be a viable option.
- Transport for Wales – update.
- Gwaith – a festival taking place in 2028.

Partners update everyone on forthcoming events. WFP add events for the public on its website.

At its last meeting updates included:

- Easter footfall was good for Partners such as the Red Dragon Centre, Techniquet, Wales Millennium Centre (WMC), Princess Katherine / Cardiff Boat;
- Techniquet were celebrating their 40th anniversary this year. Their Create & Shape Zone recently opened and they had a craft area in the new extension to the building. They now had an annual pass available for customers;
- Wales Millennium Centre – celebrating 80 years of the Welsh National Opera (WNO), Queen Elizabeth memorial would soon be on display and beekeeping courses taking place this summer;
- Senedd Cymru – busy with pre-election activity. Exhibitions include Pwytho Llais, Jack Sullivan – local artist retrospective. Carnival events over August bank holiday;
- Cardiff Harbour Authority – a new sculpture that was commissioned for the barrage was on site and included a sensory garden. New member of team working on archive material about Flatholm island and would be stored on the People's Collection Wales.
- Norwegian Church – current exhibition about Viking heritage. 17<sup>th</sup> May Norwegian Constitution Day – a day of celebratory events, parade;
- Craft in the Bay / Makers Guild Wales – current exhibition MAKE Southwest group show of contemporary craft. Ruth Thomas printmaker – Maker in Focus. Forthcoming events would include makers that had been awarded a Creative Industries grant for professional development over the past three years, followed by an exhibition of work by this year's BA graduates from Cardiff School of Art, Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Following consideration by the Committee, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T that the Waterfront Partners April 2026 Update be noted.

(f) Any Other Business –

The Chair invited Members to raise any matters under Any Other Business.

A. Ernest queried whether there was any available data on recent footfall across the Cardiff Bay Barrage, particularly in light of the current economic climate and significant ongoing developments in Cardiff Bay, including construction of the new concert hall and tram line works connecting to Cardiff Central. It was suggested that these factors might be affecting visitor numbers. He stated that he did not visit the area regularly but felt those involved operationally may have insight into the relevant trends, figures, etc.

In response, D. Hall advised that detailed figures were not immediately to hand. It was suggested and subsequently agreed that Barrage footfall figures could be reported to the Committee on a regular basis as a standing agenda item.

The importance of consistent footfall data was emphasised by A. Ernest as an indicator of the overall health of the Barrage project. It was also highlighted that headline figures were of limited value unless reviewed over time to identify trends. Officers advised that the recorded footfall for the Barrage in March was 82,441 visitors. The Vice-Chair felt that given the poor weather conditions experienced during March, this was still a high, positive, figure in terms of footfall. It was confirmed that historic comparative data was not immediately available but could be collated and included in future reports.

It was explained that Mermaid Quay car park was expected to reopen in early summer, potentially June, with an anticipated increase in capacity compared to its previous provision. It was agreed that this would likely have a positive impact on visitor numbers in the area. Progress on the construction of the Cardiff Bay arena was also noted, and that the expected opening was around 2028.

A further query was raised by A. Ernest regarding whether any information was available on average spend per visitor, acknowledging that while many visitors may not spend money, average spend per head was still a useful indicator of economic benefit and community value. D. Hall advised that spend analysis had previously been undertaken and that he would explore whether such data could be obtained, although no figures were available at the meeting.

(g) Date of Next Meeting –

The Clerk advised that a possible date for the next meeting would probably be in July sometime, which would be the Annual Meeting of the Committee. It was suggested that this could be held in person, with a possible visit to the Barrage as part of this. Further details would be shared with the Committee on this in due course.