

No.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on 14th December, 2016.

Present: Councillor Stuart Egan (Mayor); Councillors Julie Aviet, Antony Bennett, Richard Bertin, Janice Birch, Rhiannon Birch, Jonathan Bird, Bronwen Brooks, Lis Burnett, Geoff Cox, Claire Curtis, Pamela Drake, John Drysdale, Kate Edmunds, Christopher Franks, Eric Hacker, Howard Hamilton, Val Hartrey, Keith Hatton, Nic Hodges, Jeff James, Hunter Jarvie, Gwyn John, Fred Johnson, Dr. Ian Johnson, Maureen Kelly Owen, Peter King, Kevin Mahoney, Anne Moore, Neil Moore, Andrew Parker, Bob Penrose, Anthony Powell, Rhona Probert, Adam Riley, Gwyn Roberts, John Thomas, Ray Thomas, Rhodri Traherne, Steffan Wiliam, Clive Williams, Edward Williams and Mark Wilson.

619 ANNOUNCEMENT -

Prior to the commencement of business, the Chairman read the following statement:

“May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be broadcast live via the Internet and a record archived for future viewing.”

620 MINUTE SILENCE -

The Mayor offered his sincerest condolences, and those of the Council, to the family of Mike Hillberg, one of the Council's refuse vehicle drivers, who despite the best efforts of colleagues and paramedics, had sadly passed away while at work. Members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

621 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE -

These were received from Councillors Christopher Elmore, Audrey Preston, Margaret Wilkinson and Christopher Williams.

622 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -

No declarations were received.

623 MINUTES -

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th September, 2016 were approved as a correct record, subject to it being noted (as pointed out by Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson) that, on page 634, the figures he had quoted in respect of the estimated / anticipated amount of earmarked reserves shown at the end of March 2016 and the actual figure contained in the Statement of Accounts had been £48M and £68M respectively.

No.

624 ANNOUNCEMENTS -

The Mayor made the following announcements:

He had continued to attend civic functions, both inside and outside the Vale of Glamorgan, including charity events and concerts. He had also welcomed Her Majesty's new Lord Lieutenant for the Vale of Glamorgan, Morfudd Meredith. He had been pleased to accompany the Lord Lieutenant and His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex to Stanwell School as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Diamond Anniversary celebrations.

On the 50th anniversary of the Aberfan Disaster, which had cost the lives of 116 children and 28 adults, the Mayor, on behalf of Councillors and staff of the Authority and the people of the Vale of Glamorgan, had paid tribute to the "fortitude, dignity and indomitable spirit" of the people of Aberfan.

Fundraising for his charities had continued to gain momentum and he thanked everyone for their support to date.

The Mayor had had the pleasure to meet with Dr. Rhys Jones, who was now the Llandough Hospital Orchard Charity Project's Official Environmental Advisor and International Ambassador. Dr. Jones had also presented the Mayor's Christmas Card competition winners with their prizes. Over 500 entries had been received and the competition had been a great success.

The Mayor congratulated the new Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor, Daniel Marshall and David Chapman on their election. He considered them to both be excellent ambassadors for the youth of the Vale of Glamorgan.

On Christmas Day, he and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress would be undertaking visits to Vale nursing homes and Llandough Hospital.

Finally, the Mayor took the opportunity to wish all those present a peaceful and happy 2017.

The Leader welcomed Councillor Aviet to her first meeting of Full Council since being elected.

625 PETITIONS -

The following petitions were received:

- (i) Petition regarding calls for a Dinas Powys By-Pass (Submitted by Councillor Franks)
- (ii) Petition objecting to proposed Wake-Boarding at Cosmeston Lakes and Country Park (Submitted by Councillor Franks)

No.

(iii) Petition requesting traffic calming measures at Trem Echni, Rhoose
(Submitted by Councillor Riley).

626 NOTICE OF MOTION -

The following Notice of Motion (submitted by Councillors Mahoney and Christopher Williams) had been included on the agenda for discussion:

“To change the provision of 4.23.5 Recorded Vote in the Constitution to:-

“4.23.5 Recorded Vote

All Councillors votes in all council meetings to be automatically recorded.”

In introducing the Motion, Councillor Mahoney referred to a similar Motion which he and another Member had submitted previously. That Motion had been voted down and, as a result, the Motion now before Council had been submitted. He referred to his view that there was a lack of ‘transparency’ and ‘openness’ in relation to the way in which Elected Members on the Council voted on matters and that the process should be one which enabled the public to be aware in terms of future examination and explanation if need be.

Councillor Penrose formally seconded the Motion.

Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson referred to there being no mechanism to facilitate electronic voting within the Council and to most issues (many of which were non-controversial) being voted upon by means of a show of hands. He pointed out that, under Section 4.23.6 of the Council’s Constitution, individual Members could ask for their vote on a particular issue to be recorded. He believed the current method of recording proceedings as being an outdated system (referring to the provisions contained within Section 4.23 of the Council’s Constitution). He did allude to the fact that, should there be a system whereby there was a ‘roll-call’ process for voting, the situation could arise where every single item on agendas was voted upon. He considered that would increase the length of meetings and not be a good use of time.

Councillor Dr. Johnson did, however, agree that there should be a move to a more open and transparent voting system. He considered the Council should invest in the equipment to facilitate electronic voting and alluded to discussions which had taken place at the Democratic Services Committee.

Councillor Dr. Johnson moved an amendment to the effect that Section 4.23.3 to 4.23.6 of the Constitution be removed and be replaced with the following wording

“Record of Voting:

Voting on each item will be carried out electronically and the names for and against the Motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be entered into the minutes. The Chairman will announce the result of each vote immediately the result is known.”

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He suggested that the provision would only apply to Full Council (as Section 4 of the Constitution itself only applied to Full Council meetings). (With the consent of the meeting, it was subsequently clarified by the Monitoring Officer that the Section of the Constitution alluded to did, in fact, apply to Committees as well as Full Council).

Councillor Hodges formally seconded the amendment to the Motion and requested that a Recorded Vote take place. As provided for within the Constitution, the requisite number of six Members stood, which meant that a Recorded Vote would take place.

Asked by the Mayor whether he would accept the amendment to the original Motion, Councillor Mahoney confirmed that he would. The original Motion as amended duly became the Substantive Motion now before Council for consideration.

Councillor John Thomas indicated that he did not intend to support the Motion and referred to the Democratic Services Committee (of which he was a Member) as having already considered the matter. He alluded to the decision of the Democratic Services Committee (which had considered the existing arrangements to be appropriate) and confirmed he was happy for the existing process for voting to remain and allow the Democratic Services Committee to consider the cost implications of introducing electronic voting.

Councillor Franks referred to his understanding that the Democratic Services Committee had recommended the introduction of electronic voting. Councillor John Thomas was of the understanding that the Committee had done so in principle.

The Leader referred to page 640 of the Minutes of the last Council meeting which included the resolution of Council that 'No changes be made to the procedures governing the recording of votes as currently set out in the Council's Constitution'. He would be opposing the Motion, not because he had an issue about how people voted. However, the Motion as proposed would mean electronic voting in all meetings. He understood the existing equipment within the Council Chamber could be upgraded/updated to facilitate electronic voting, but he was unable to quantify what the costs of such would be. Referring to the earlier reference to the decision of the Democratic Services Committee, he confirmed that any such decision would, in effect, be an 'in principle' decision, given the Committee did not have the power to make a formal decision (which would be the responsibility of Cabinet). He referred to the long-standing practice of many issues being resolved by majority vote and/or affirmation.

Councillor King, whilst agreeing with a number of the points raised, pointed out that the introduction of webcasting was itself increasing transparency. He suggested that the public would be able to view proceedings and be able to see which Members spoke for or against matters. He would be amenable to the introduction of electronic voting, but was not keen on incurring expenditure on such at the present time.

Responding to a request from Councillor Bird as to whether a report on the implications of this matter could be submitted to a future meeting of Council, the Leader pointed out that the issue of costing any upgrade of equipment to facilitate

No.

the process of electronic voting would, in fact, be a matter for Cabinet to determine. Any implications for the Council's Constitution in terms of any future decision to formally introduce electronic voting would then be for Full Council to consider and determine.

In summing up, Councillor Mahoney felt that his repeated efforts to bring about a change in procedure were beginning to 'bear fruit'.

A Recorded Vote took place as follows:

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain
J. Aviet		X	
A.G. Bennett		X	
R.J. Bertin	X		
M.E.J. Birch		X	
R. Birch		X	
J.C. Bird		X	
B.E. Brooks		X	
L. Burnett		X	
G.A. Cox		X	
C.L. Curtis		X	
P. Drake		X	
J. Drysdale		X	
K.E. Edmunds		X	
S.C. Egan		X	
C.P. Franks	X		
E. Hacker		X	
H.C. Hamilton		X	
V.M. Hartrey	X		
K., Hatton	X		
N.P. Hodges	X		
H.J.W. James		X	
T.H. Jarvie		X	
G. John		X	
F.T. Johnson		X	
Dr. I.J. Johnson	X		
M. Kelly Owen		X	
P.G. King		X	
K.P. Mahoney	X		
A. Moore		X	
N. Moore		X	
A. Parker		X	
R.A. Penrose	X		
A.G. Powell		X	
R.F. Probert		X	
A.P. Riley		X	
G. Roberts		X	
J.W. Thomas		X	
R.P. Thomas		X	

No.

R.L. Traherne		X	
S.T. William	X		
A.C. Williams	X		
E. Williams		X	
M.R. Wilson		X	
TOTALS	10	33	NONE

RESOLVED - T H A T the amended Substantive Motion as set out below be not agreed.:

“Record of Voting:

Voting on each item will be carried out electronically and the names for and against the Motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be entered into the minutes. The Chairman will announce the result of each vote immediately the result is known.”

627 NOTICE OF MOTION -

The following Notice of Motion (submitted by Councillor Mahoney and Christopher Williams) had been included on the agenda for discussion:

“All councillors’ attendance records at full council and all other committees of which they are members be clearly displayed on their members page on the Vale of Glamorgan council website and updated monthly.”

Councillor Mahoney, in formally moving the Motion, indicated that its aim was to increase ‘openness’ and ‘transparency’ within the Council. He referred to many other Councils as publishing details of Members’ attendance at meetings. He did acknowledge that there were a variety of reasons why people, on occasions, were unable to be at meetings (quoting examples of such). However, he saw no reason why records should not be displayed and kept updated. If that was the case, patterns of continual absences/trends of absences could be picked up on by the public.

Councillor Penrose formally seconded the Motion.

Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson felt it was fairly normal within Councils for Members’ attendance records to be published. He considered there should be such a facility on each individual Member page on the Council’s website and that the information should be updated after every meeting. He also suggested that the broadcasting of all meetings would facilitate the public being able to clearly see Members’ contributions to the debate. He acknowledged that such a facility would not be ‘cheap’, but felt that democracy itself did not come ‘cheap’.

Councillor Bertin was sure that the electorate would like to know if their Ward Councillors were in attendance at meetings. He felt the process was in need of being more accessible and easy to understand and was also of the view that many Local Authorities published such information.

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Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was carried and it was

RESOLVED - T H A T all Councillors attendance records at Full Council and all other Committees of which they are Members be clearly displayed on their Members page on the Vale of Glamorgan Council website and updated monthly.

(N.B. Councillors Franks, Mrs. Hartrey, Hatton, James, Dr. Ian Johnson and William requested that it be recorded that, in accordance with Section 4.23.6 of the Council's Constitution, they had voted in favour of the Motion.

628 USE OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR'S EMERGENCY POWERS (MD) -

The following use of the Managing Director's Emergency Powers was reported:

(a) The replacement of Councillor John Drysdale with Councillor Mark Wilson on the Planning Committee with immediate effect and until further notice.

(Scrutiny - Corporate Performance and Resources)

(b) To give effect to the following with immediate effect and until further notice:

- Councillor Julie Aviet taking up a place (previously vacant) on the Community Liaison Committee
- Councillor Julie Aviet to replace Councillor Margaret Wilkinson on the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor John Drysdale to replace Councillor Mark Wilson on the Planning Committee

(Scrutiny - Corporate Performance and Resources).

RESOLVED - T H A T the report be noted.

Reason for decision

To inform Council.

629 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION / OFFICER DELEGATIONS (MO) -

Since the formal introduction of the Council's new Executive arrangements in May 2002, the Constitution had remained under review and would continue to be so on an ongoing basis. Under Section 2.4 of the Constitution, the Monitoring Officer had a duty to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that the aims and principles contained therein were given full effect.

The changes alluded to in the report related to:

- delegations in relation to Shared Regulatory Services
- Financial Procedure Rules and Contracts Procedure Rules

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- Section 2 - "Purpose, Definition, Interpretation and Amendment of the Constitution"
- the Guide to Public Speaking at Scrutiny Committees.

The current Constitution contained (from pages 284 to 287) the delegations resting with the Director of Environment and Housing and Head of Shared Regulatory Services, the latter of whom had undertaken a review of those delegations. Attached as Appendix A to the report was a track-changed version, designed to update where appropriate, but also to remove quite a lot of duplicated (and, consequently, unnecessary) wording which the Head of Shared Regulatory Services considered to currently exist. Members were asked to note that, if approved, the two delegations relating to the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 would instead rest solely with the Director of Environment and Housing.

In addition to the above, and in accordance with Audit recommendations, the Operational Manager (Exchequer), in agreement with the Head of Finance and Head of Legal Services, had reviewed the Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules to ensure their correctness. The changes were set out in Appendix B to the report and were minor amendments to guarantee accuracy of the wording of the documents rather than alterations to their meanings. The changes were part of a wider-ranging review to update all procurement documentation.

It was also proposed that Section 2 of the Constitution "Purpose, Definition, Interpretation and Amendment" be amended by the addition of the following: "2.6.3(b) Any reference in the Constitution to legislation or a statutory instrument shall be construed as a reference to any legislation or statutory instrument as amended, replaced, consolidated or re-enacted." The existing paragraph 2.6.3 would be renumbered 2.6.3(a).

Finally, Members were asked to approve page 1 of the Council's Guide to Public Speaking at Scrutiny Committees being amended to reflect the revised Scrutiny Committees and their terms of reference which were now in place. Reference was made to the change as the Guide was included within the Constitution.

RESOLVED -

(1) T H A T the changes to existing delegations resting with the Director of Environment and Housing and Head of Shared Regulatory Services, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved and the Constitution be amended accordingly.

(2) T H A T the changes to Section 2 of the Constitution and to the Financial Procedure Rules (Section 16) and Contract Procedure Rules (Section 17) as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved and the Constitution be amended accordingly.

(3) T H A T page 1 of the Guide to Public Speaking at Scrutiny Committees (Section 19.2) be amended to reflect the revised Scrutiny Committees and their terms of reference which are now in place.

No.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To update and remove duplication within the delegations as currently worded.
- (2) To ensure the Rules remain correct and up to date.
- (3) To reflect current Scrutiny arrangements.

630 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS DEALING WITH PLANNING MATTERS (MO) -

In introducing the report, the Leader informed Members that the reference in paragraph 5 to "25th April, 2015" should, in fact, read "29th April, 2015."

Council, on 17th December 2014, considered a report which included a proposed Code of Conduct for Members and Officers Dealing with Planning Matters. Council resolved:

- (1)
- (2) That the submission in due course to the Planning Committee of the Code of Conduct for Members and Officers Dealing with Planning Matters [("the Initial Draft Code")] which was attached as Appendix B to the Report (....) be noted.
- (3) That the Council Procedure Rules, insofar as they relate to Planning Committee, be amended to take effect from 1st February 2015:
 - (i)
 - (ii) Subject to the Planning Committee's approval of the [Initial Draft Code] to incorporate the additional procedural motion referred to at paragraph 7 of the report."

The matter was considered by the Planning Committee on 15th January 2015 and was deferred to enable Officers to provide further clarification to Members in respect of certain procedural matters.

Following the deferment above, further amendments were made to the Initial Draft Code and the Planning Committee on 12th March, 2015 resolved that the Code be approved for use at the future meetings of the Planning Committee. Accordingly, the Council Procedure Rules insofar as they relate to Planning Committee, needed to be amended to reflect the following revised Procedural Motion:

"Prior to a substantive motion being voted upon which is contrary to Officer recommendations the following procedural motion will be voted upon - that Committee defer the consideration of the planning application to the next available Committee. If the result of the procedural motion is that consideration of the application is not deferred, the Chair should consider temporarily adjourning the meeting to afford Members time to consider and draft reasons for refusal or necessary conditions for consent with advice from Officers in order that they can be considered by the Committee prior to a decision being made."

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Council, on 25th April, 2015 considered a report regarding these proposals and resolved:

(1) That the Code including the revised procedural motion (.....) be not approved.

There was an ongoing process being undertaken, at the request of Welsh Government, by the Welsh Local Government Association to agree a 'Voluntary Planning Committee Protocol' in an attempt to find a greater consistency in the operation of planning committees across Wales.

An initial draft Protocol was produced and a consultation process was run in respect of the draft Protocol, which included provisions for a "cooling off period" similar to that proposed by the revised Procedural Motion specified in paragraph 4 of the report to Council. The wording of the "cooling off period" in the WLGA draft required a mandatory deferment where Members were considering a substantive motion to be voted on which was contrary to Officer recommendations, as opposed to the wording proposed in paragraph 4 of the report, which provided for a procedural motion to allow Members to vote on whether to defer the decision or not.

The consultation process concluded in June 2016 and in respect of the "cooling off period" the majority of Welsh Councils approved its inclusion. However, there was a suggestion that the mandatory nature of the "cooling off period" as drafted was too restrictive and that greater flexibility should be allowed when deciding if to defer or not. The proposed Procedural Motion in paragraph 4 of the report provided for such flexibility.

Consideration would be given to the Voluntary Planning Committee Protocol following its conclusion; in the interim the Code was being recommended for adoption by Council to assist with clarifying the Planning Committee's role, processes and procedures.

The Leader and Deputy Leader respectively duly moved and seconded the Motion (as per the officer recommendations contained in the report).

Councillor James considered it to be a shame that the matter was before Council again, given that Council had made its views clear previously. He considered the Code to be an attempt to 'thwart' Members in terms of their role as far as Planning matters were concerned. He suggested that the Code was both restrictive and anti-democratic. He was aware that Welsh Government was seeking to see planning matters dealt with quickly. However, he alluded to the Council as already having an excellent record of dealing with planning matters in a timely manner. Members were already assiduous in terms of declaring any interests and he was of the opinion that the current system worked well. He moved that the Code be not accepted, this being seconded by Councillor Bird.

Councillor Hodges alluded to his concerns regarding the potential implication for Members of the wording contained in Section 1.3.5 (a) of the draft Code in terms of Members' interests relating to 'electoral division concerns'. He questioned what this

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provision was actually meant to represent and expressed the view that Members from a Ward (i.e. electoral division) who might be on the Planning Committee considering the matter could, in fact, be in a better position to consider the issue on the basis of their more detailed knowledge.

At this point in the meeting, the requisite number of Members stood in order to instigate a Recorded Vote on the matter at the end of the debate.

Whilst understanding some of the issues raised by Members, the Leader had asked that the Code be brought back to Council for a number of reasons. It had already been agreed by the Planning Committee and its introduction would bring the Council into line with most other Local Authorities. He asked Members to consider the suspending of Standing Orders in order to allow officers to speak on the matter. However, Councillor James commented, that whilst respecting officers' views, he did not agree with them.

Councillor Franks was also opposed to hearing further evidence which he considered would seek to basically encourage Members to agree to the introduction of the Code. If there was to be a further debate, he considered there should be "expert advice from both sides" available to Members. He was aware of what officers would say on the matter and suggested that, arguably, the Head of Regeneration and Planning could be placed in an unfair position in being asked to comment on the matter.

At this point during the discussion, Councillor John referred to having spoken in the capacity of a local Member at a meeting of the Planning Committee and to the fact that he had not been happy at being limited to three minutes to speak (this being the provision as set out in the Council's Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committee.)

Councillor Wilson indicated he would like to hear officers' views on the matter. Councillor Powell urged Members to support the suspending of Standing Orders, suggesting that decisions were usually arrived at when decision-makers were in an "informed position". He pointed out that not all Members present were on the Planning Committee and, therefore, would not have previously heard the officers' views.

Alluding to the comment made earlier regarding evidence being received from "both sides", Councillor Drysdale stated that officers were not employed to do that. Their role was to give professional advice. He indicated he would like to hear officers' views.

Upon being put to the vote, it was agreed that Standing Orders be suspended in order to allow officers to speak on this matter.

The Head of Regeneration and Planning considered there to be some confusion in what was being proposed. The provisions of the Code would not curtail local Members in any way. Referring to the Welsh Government recommendation that local Members who were members of Planning Committees and had a planning application in their Ward should declare whether they were voting on it or deciding to

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be a local Member and speaking against it or for it, he pointed out that the Code before Members did not require that. The Code sought to spell out roles, responsibilities and relationships. He referred to the reference to the introduction of a Procedural Motion as set out in 1.2.10 and 1.2.11 of the Code. He further pointed out that this did not represent requiring a deferral, but sought to allow for a process which would allow Members to have before them the full facts before making a decision. It suggested, but did not require, the potential for a referral to the next Planning Committee meeting.

Councillor Drysdale referred to the professional advice available to Members of the Planning Committee when they considered applications. He considered the mechanism proposed to allow (fairly openly) Members to either defer consideration of the matter to the subsequent meeting or, alternatively, construct reasoning at the same meeting for going against officer recommendations. In his view, the provisions contained within Section 1.2.10 and 1.2.11 of the draft Code were acceptable. Similarly, he saw no issues of concern regarding the provisions of Section 1.3.5 (a). Councillor Drysdale was of the view that, largely, the matter came down to one of whether a Member was of an open mind or had pre-determined a matter at the time decisions by Planning Committees were being made. He disagreed that the draft Code restricted Members in the ways suggested earlier in the debate.

The Leader asked the Head of Regeneration and Planning to expand for Members on what he considered 1.3.5. (a) to mean. The Leader's understanding was that it was meant to provide for a situation where, should Members be inclined to go against officer recommendations, they had to come up with valid reasons for doing so. He pointed out that Section 1.3.5 actually used the words "may" on a number of occasions. He also again reminded Members that the Planning Committee had already agreed the Code.

The Head of Regeneration and Planning considered Section 1.3.5 of the Code to allude to certain examples of potential Members' interests. His assumption was that 1.3.5 (a) referred to the need for Members to be seen to not have pre-determined the issue. The provision was not designed to prevent local Members being able to vote. As far as Section 1.4 - "The role of the local member" - was concerned, the Head of Regeneration and Planning indicated this was in relation to local Members being allowed to speak and vote on matters. He referred to the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 which allowed Members to express views to a certain extent without it resulting in them being unable to vote on the matter subsequently when it was before the Planning Committee.

Again referring to Section 1.3.5, Councillor Hodges pointed out that many Town and Community Councils had Planning Committees and that, consequently, Members would often have previously been involved in consideration of a planning application. He considered the draft Code to be a "fudge" and he was not happy with any document which suggested in any way restrictions being placed on a local Member. He considered the draft Code to be trying to be both prescriptive and open at the same time and that it did not provide him with guidance.

Councillor John Thomas requested clarification as to the provision set out in Section 1.2.10. The Head of Regeneration and Planning indicated that it covered the fact

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that Members could not go against officer recommendations (for example to refuse an application being recommended for approval) without having valid reasons for doing so. The Procedural Motion alluded to in Section 1.2.10 would be voted upon prior to the subsequent vote on the application itself.

In response to a query from Councillor Wilson regarding Section 1.8.4, the Head of Regeneration and Planning considered this to be more within the jurisdiction of the Monitoring officer, who duly pointed out that the provision was, in effect, putting Members on notice regarding the need to take care not to predetermine a matter. Councillor Wilson asked whether his understanding was correct in that what was looked for was some sort of evidence (for instance, maybe public statements someone had made or something that indicated that one had signed a petition). The Monitoring Officer replied that this was the case.

Councillor Roberts referred to two points. Firstly, he did not agree with the current time limit applying to local Members wishing to speak at the Planning Committee. Secondly, he was surprised that some Members were opposed to the provisions set out in Section 1.2.10 as he considered that they would assist the Council's position in the event of a subsequent appeal being lodged.

Councillor Franks did not understand why there was, in his view, such a determination to "fetter" the Planning Committee. He considered that the Planning Committee had a good record over time in how it conducted itself and considered matters. He considered the Code to represent another attempt to pass all decisions to planning officers and preclude elected representatives.

Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson pointed out that there was no reference in the draft Code to pre-applications, which had been included in the Planning Act. As such, he asked how the Council would respond to pre-applications (in terms of further contributions at Planning Committee). He suggested that, pre-applications would, by their nature, involve almost all of the controversial planning applications that came forward. He sought clarification as to how Members should respond to those pre-applications because if a Member responded to a pre-application in any form one way or another then they were not allowing themselves to speak properly on the discussions in future when the matter came before the Planning Committee. He queried how that would affect a Member's ability to be able to appear to still be open-minded.

The Head of Regeneration and Planning confirmed that the 2015 Planning Act did introduce various enactments, but that the Localism Act did allow Members to express views without it prohibiting them from taking part in subsequent decision making. The Planning Wales Act made it clear to Members and officers that there should be an interface within the procedure (including officer opinion) which should not bar them from future debate. Certain levels of statements by Members would be inappropriate, whilst others would be acceptable.

Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson commented that the draft Code (which had been in existence for some 18 months) contained no reference to relevant Welsh legislation which had arisen during that time. However, the Head of Regeneration and Planning alluded to the subject of pre-applications as only having recently been enacted and also as being likely to be subject to further change.

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Councillor James acknowledged the importance of obtaining officer advice in terms of any decision of the Planning Committee to go against officer recommendations with regard to deferring matters for officer advice. However, he alluded to the possibility of an issue being deferred to a meeting of a subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee and it then being considered by some Members who had not been party to the earlier discussion. In effect, there could be two decisions made on the same matter. He considered the Council and its Planning Committee to be an example of good governance and that the draft Code represented a prescriptive imposition on Members, which was why he was opposing its introduction.

Councillor Parker, referring to Section 1.2.10 of the draft Code, expressed concern for both the Planning Committee and for officers. He considered that asking officers to go against their original advice potentially put them in an invidious position. The Head of Regeneration and Planning pointed out that, in such circumstances, officers would be advising Members and not “changing their minds”.

Councillor Wiliam considered the draft Code to show a lack of understanding of the role of local Members in the planning process. He considered the document to be ill-informed, out of date and patronising.

At this point, Standing Orders were reinstated and a Recorded Vote took place on whether the Code should be noted and incorporated in the Council’s Constitution as follows:

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain
J. Aviet	X		
A.G. Bennett		X	
R.J. Bertin		X	
M.E.J. Birch	X		
R. Birch	X		
J.C. Bird		X	
B.E. Brooks	X		
L. Burnett	X		
G.A. Cox		X	
C.L. Curtis	X		
P. Drake	X		
J. Drysdale	X		
K.E. Edmunds	X		
S.C. Egan	X		
C.P. Franks		X	
E. Hacker	X		
H.C. Hamilton	X		
V.M. Hartrey		X	
K., Hatton		X	
N.P. Hodges		X	
H.J.W. James		X	
T.H. Jarvie		X	
G. John		X	

No.

F.T. Johnson	X		
Dr. I.J. Johnson		X	
M. Kelly Owen		X	
P.G. King	X		
K.P. Mahoney		X	
A. Moore	X		
N. Moore	X		
A. Parker		X	
R.A. Penrose		X	
A.G. Powell	X		
R.F. Probert	X		
A.P. Riley		X	
G. Roberts	X		
J.W. Thomas		X	
R.P. Thomas		X	
R.L. Traherne		X	
S.T. William		X	
A.C. Williams		X	
E. Williams	X		
M.R. Wilson	X		
TOTALS	21	22	NONE

RESOLVED - T H A T the Code of Conduct for Members and officers dealing with Planning matters (“the Code”), attached as Appendix A to the report, not be approved or incorporated in the Council’s Constitution.

Reason for decision

To reflect the outcome of the above discussions and Recorded Vote.

631 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (REF) -

RESOLVED - T H A T the proposals of the Cabinet, as set out in Cabinet Minute No. C3371, 28th November, 2016, be approved.

Reason for decision

To enable the Council Tax Reduction Scheme to be approved by Council by 31st January, 2017 and be in place for implementation from 1st April, 2017.

632 LEISURE CENTRE IMPROVEMENT WORKS (REF) -

RESOLVED - T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C3308, 26th September, 2016) as set out in Section 14.14 of the Council’s Constitution, be noted.

No.

Reason for decision

To meet the timescale for the Council meeting on 28th September, 2016, in order that the amendment to the Capital Programme could be considered in a timely manner.

633 LOCAL AVERAGE INTEREST RATES (REF) -

RESOLVED - T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C3369, 28th November, 2016) as set out in Section 14.14 of the Council's Constitution, in order to amend the rate within the timeframe as outlined in Resolution (1) of Cabinet, be noted.

Reason for decision

To ensure that the change in interest rates could be actioned to meet the deadlines alluded to in the report.

634 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 4.18 OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION –

Due notice had been given of the following questions:

(i) **Question From Councillor Kevin Mahoney**

Hundreds of 3G artificial sports pitches are being ripped up in Holland due to research highlighting fears that the soft rubber crumb used in the operation of these pitches are carcinogenic and causing certain cancers.

Given the increasing number of 3G pitches being installed in the Vale of Glamorgan area, are the Vale aware of the current controversy, taken advice on the subject, and considered using the claimed better option of coconut fibre infill pellets rather than the recycled tyre rubber crumb which appears to be at the heart of the cancer fears?

I enclose several media links to the concerns:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3426039/Artificial-football-pitches-cancer-warning-study-claims-hundreds-cases-linked.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/football/2016/10/15/why-3g-pitches-are-being-ripped-up-in-holland-over-health-fears/>

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/sport/football/1942153/cancer-warning-fears-over-artificial-pitches-sees-30-clubs-in-holland-suspended-or-closed/>

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Visible, Leisure and Regulatory Services

This Administration is justifiably proud of its record in promoting sport and developing all-weather sporting facilities and we take the health and safety of our customers

No.

very seriously. We are aware of these reports and our officers are in contact with officials of both Sport Wales and the Football Association for Wales (FAW).

At the present time I can confirm that there is no evidence of a proven link between the rubber crumb used for 3G pitches and cancer. Sport Wales has stated that the most up-to-date guidance issued by both FIFA and UEFA refutes any claims of a link and considers them to be false.

We will obviously continue to monitor the situation but at present no further action is being taken.

(ii) **Question from Councillor Mark Wilson**

Will the Cabinet Member for Transport give us an update on sustainable travel within Penarth?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

I can advise that officers are currently working on the next stage of the Active Travel work, which includes preparing Integrated Network Maps for the Vale of Glamorgan including the Penarth area. This will be subject to consultation in 2017 prior to being submitted to Welsh Government for approval by the deadline in November 2017. The work includes identifying potential new walking and cycling routes for the next 15 years, based on various existing data, demand, new sites identified within the LDP, and other Plans and Strategies. It will also identify improvements to existing routes that may not currently meet the Active Travel standard. The consultation period will last for three months and will be undertaken following a series of information gathering events and route audits.

There are numerous 'potential' sustainable transport schemes in various stages of development within the Penarth area, to include a transport interchange, Park & Ride, bus priority and walking and cycling infrastructure, and buses accessing via the Barrage is being actively considered in partnership with Cardiff Council.

In addition the Council continues to be proactive in seeking transport funding via a number of avenues, including Section 106 and transport grants.

Supplemental

Councillor Wilson asked whether the Cabinet Member would explore the renewal of municipally-owned bus shelters, especially those that lay in Stanwell Ward.

The Cabinet Member referred to the Council having accessed some Section 106 funding and indicated that two bus shelters (one near the Cefn Mably Pub and one in Elford Avenue) within Stanwell Ward were "high on the list".

No.

(iii) **Question from Councillor Mark Wilson**

Will the Cabinet Member for Parks and Open Spaces give us an update on our parks and open spaces within Penarth.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Visible, Leisure and Regulatory Services

We currently have two award winning sites in Penarth – Belle Vue Park and the Penarth Seafront Parks (Alexandra Park, Windsor Gardens, and the Italian Gardens are judged together as one site). All have been recognised as outstanding open spaces and have been awarded Green Flags for excellence by Keep Wales Tidy.

It is important to note that Belle Vue Park has been awarded every year for the last 12 years, mainly due to the hard work of a vibrant and motivated Friends group supported by the Vale Parks Department. In addition, Keep Wales Tidy used Belle Vue Pavilion as a base for their training course for Green Flag judges in February 2016.

Keep Wales Tidy has also asked us to consider entering Penarth Seafront Parks as a Green Heritage site in the near future. A Green Heritage award is the highest award for parks and open spaces in the UK. It takes into account the history of a site of local or national importance. As a part of Penarth's historic "Garden by the Sea" the seafront parks and gardens are well placed to be considered.

During this winter we started an "in house" project to renovate the park benches in all of our feature parks and open spaces. At present the Windsor Gardens is almost complete, with Cliff Walk and Alexandra Park well underway. During this coming Spring we will also be carrying out repair and restoration works to the three lower gates in Alexandra Park, and also carrying out some remedial works to the north and south entrances of the Windsor Gardens.

We had a successful summer for plants, with over 9,000 summer bedding plants and 140 hanging baskets put out in the parks and around the town and seafront in June. In 2016 we increased the amount of wildflower areas for pollinators in these parks by over 600 square metres (Park staff also assisted several community groups to sow wildflower areas - notably the Friends of Dingle Park and the Penarth Railway Path Project).

In addition play areas by the Cliff top, Crwt-y-Vil, Wordsworth Avenue, Plassey Square and Paget Road and the open spaces at the Dingle, Plassey Square and Paget Road are to be refurbished in the near future.

All in all I am happy with the quality of Parks and open spaces across the Vale and I am pleased that we have managed to continue with our planned improvements despite our many budget challenges.

(iv) **Question from Councillor Mark Wilson**

Will the Cabinet Member for Housing give us an update on the improvements to housing stock within the Vale of Glamorgan since May 2012.

No.

In particular, how many Council properties have had a new roof, new insulation, new bathrooms and as a proportion of Council housing stock in Penarth since May 2012.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health

A report was presented to Scrutiny (Homes and Safe Communities) on 7th December, 2016 which provided an update on the current contractor performance relating to the delivery of WHQS works. This report provides a significant amount of detail on the delivery of the project if any further information is required. There was a detailed discussion at that meeting.

With regard to the proportion of housing stock receiving the specific works the Council has a total Housing stock of 3,877 dwellings with a further 308 leasehold managed properties.

Within the Housing stock, 3,600 properties were identified at the beginning of the programme for bathroom replacements. Of the planned replacements, 3,073 bathroom have been replaced, which equates to 79% of the total housing stock receiving new bathrooms, of the remaining properties originally identified for new bathrooms, 513 properties have declined the work which counts as an acceptable fail and does not have a detrimental effect on WHQS achievement. There remain a small number of bathrooms requiring bathroom replacement, which are being progressed as part of a larger scheme to rebuild the complete property.

Within Penarth the Council own 646 properties with 600 of those homes planned for new bathrooms. Of the total stock in this area 452 properties have been completed with 148 properties declining the work.

With regard to the roof works the Council manages 3,877 properties and is also responsible for the external fabric to 308 leasehold properties. Of the total 4,185 properties managed by Housing and Building services 557 properties were identified to need new roofs. Of these planned replacements, 337 roofs have been completed. Within Penarth there were 199 properties identified for roof replacement and currently 172 have been delivered.

Roofing work is an essential factor in managing the building fabric; tenants are not allowed the option of declining this work.

The provision of External Wall Insulation (EWI) is a developing area of work, and is planned following individual property assessments, consequently the number of replacements changes following a survey of each property. Currently there are 428 properties identified to receive EWI with 368 properties completed at this stage. Within Penarth 199 properties were identified for this particular work and currently 147 properties have been completed.

(v) **Question from Councillor Christopher Williams**

It has been brought to my attention, by Dinas Powys residents, that we have assessed the single track road from the Westra in Dinas Powys to St. Richard Gwyn

No.

School as being an “available” walking route for our children. I agree with the parents that it would be wholly inappropriate to allow a child to walk along this road to school. I recall that Councillor Thomas raised a similar issue regarding children walking from Eglwys Brewis to Llantwit Major in July.

I would like to ask whether our officers are carrying out assessments fully in accordance with the “Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance” (Welsh Government 2014), or whether they have been unduly influenced by cost pressures to make recommendations that will minimise the financial impact of travel to school costs on the Council.

I would also like to question whether all school walking routes in rural areas should now be reassessed in accordance with the Welsh Government Guidance and risk assessments carried out, including quantitative data to support the assessment.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

I can advise that the Dinas Powys to St. Richard Gwyn School route was originally assessed on 14th July, 2005 and deemed available within the Local Road Safety Officers Association Guidance on Identification of Hazards on Walked Routes to School. It has been assessed on many occasions since 2005 against the relevant guidance and has continued to be assessed as available when a young person is accompanied as necessary by an appropriate adult.

The latest assessment on the route from Dinas Powys to St. Richard Gwyn School was undertaken both on the morning and afternoon of Thursday, 29th September, 2016 in accordance with the most up-to-date Learner Travel (Wales) Measure Operational Guidance (amended 2014).

Officers from the Council and representatives from the school undertook the walk from St. Andrews to St. Richard Gwyn and in the opposite direction (St. Richard Gwyn to St. Andrews), in the afternoon.

The morning walk took 28 minutes with 1.3 miles covered. 16 vehicles were counted travelling from St. Andrews to St. Richard Gwyn. 138 vehicles were counted travelling from St. Richard Gwyn to St. Andrews.

The walk in the afternoon took 26 minutes with the same distance covered. 49 vehicles were counted travelling from St. Andrews to St. Richard Gwyn. 27 vehicles were counted travelling from St. Richard Gwyn to St. Andrews – therefore within the guidance, the route was assessed against a low traffic flow (less than 400 vehicles per hour) both morning and afternoon.

The available route runs from St Andrews school, down the Westra and along Argae Lane, with the reverse on the walk from school to Dinas Powys. Assessors had to cross the road at varying points to ensure good line of sight but due to the low traffic flow, officers could clearly see and hear any vehicles and were able to stop in a safe location to allow vehicles to pass. Vehicles were able to see pedestrians in the road in order to adjust their speeds. The light and visibility was sufficient.

No.

Collision data shows one slight incident in the past five years which involved a car and no pedestrians.

Therefore in conclusion, in accordance with the current guidelines, this route would be deemed available.

In response to your comments regarding officers being 'unduly influenced by cost pressures to make recommendations that will minimise the financial impact of travel to school costs on the Council', I can assure you that officers use the legislative guidelines to assess all routes and treat them all in the same way to ensure equality and fairness for all school pupils.

I can also further advise you that a number of the assessments have been challenged via the Ombudsman, where the Ombudsman has agreed that the processes the Officers have gone through have been appropriate.

With regards to other rural roads, the Council does have a duty to re-assess routes where there has been a change in circumstances, e.g. infrastructure, increase in traffic due to more development etc, or when the Council is requested to do so by a member of the public. I can advise that a number of routes have been re-assessed since the new guidance has been issued.

(vi) **Question from Councillor Christopher Williams**

I attended a packed Parish Hall in Dinas Powys on Tuesday, 29th November and was encouraged by the words of Andrew RT Davies AM who has pledged his support for a Barry to Cardiff by-pass and to prevent the proposed St. Cyres School housing development.

Against the wishes of the local community, Dinas Powys Community Council, and submissions to the Local Development Plan against unwanted housing from our residents, the Vale of Glamorgan Council has forged ahead with the conversion of Ardwyn School, Bryneithin Residential Home, Caerleon Road greenfield site, and Cross Common Road greenfield site housing developments.

These developments will create more clogged roads, increase pollution, especially at the Infants School, and generally make life more miserable for our hard-working, high tax-paying residents.

The biggest crime of all will be the creation of 350 more homes at the wholly inappropriate St. Cyres School site, presently an unspoilt haven of 33 acres of fields and woodland. A perfectly useable school and sound building which was turned into a ruin by thieves whilst under the 'guard' of this Authority and was then demolished without proper consultation with the local elected Members.

Is this the legacy that this Labour-Llantwit Major First coalition administration, will leave to my Community and how do these actions comply with the Well-being of Future Generations [Wales] Act 2015?

No.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transport

I would remind the Member that a public consultation on the future of the site was carried out between 12th November, 2012 and 18th January, 2013. A total of 477 responses were received, as reported to Cabinet on 13th April, 2013 (Minute No. C1288) including an expression of interest in the former school buildings from a third party Community Group. Subsequent discussions with this Group at a meeting with officers confirmed that their proposals were not dependent upon using the existing buildings. It should also be noted that following contact with the Local Service Board no alternative use for the school buildings was identified.

I would also remind the Member that he, along with all the Dinas Powys Members, were formally consulted on the demolition of St. Cyres School on 19th July, 2013 (application 2013/00660/PND refers) and while there were some responses to this application for demolition from local residents and the Community Council, no response was received from any of the local Members.

With regard to the future development of the site, the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a requirement for the Council to exercise the statutory planning functions in accordance with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. As such the planning system is considered to be a key component in the delivery of sustainable development in Wales and in positively contribution to the well-being goals.

Accordingly, the Council has assessed the Deposit Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan against the seven well-being goals contained within the Act and it is considered that the objectives and policies contained within the LDP are compatible with, and positively contribute towards, the Well-being goals. This will also be considered as part of the ongoing hearings being conducted by the Welsh Government appointed inspector in the New Year.

Furthermore, this is a process that will continue in the assessment of any future planning application that may be submitted for the St. Cyres site, whenever that may be.

(vii) **Question from Councillor Rhona Probert**

The annual Small Business Saturday held this year on 3rd December brings in to sharp focus the importance of small business to the local economy. What support does the Vale of Glamorgan Council provide for local small businesses?"

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

It is difficult to do justice to the breadth of support the Council provides for small business here, but a taste would be –

No.

Business start up

- In Partnership with the Waterloo Foundation, the Council has financed 50 new start-up businesses for budding entrepreneurs via the Inspiring the Vale Bursary Scheme and provided ongoing support to those businesses.

Business Support

- Creative Rural Communities (CRC), the Council's Rural Regeneration Partnership, completes its Coastal Communities project in December, having supported businesses such as pubs, farms and cafes across the Glamorgan Heritage Coast to maximise the employment potential of the area with advice and investment in infrastructure.
- Most tourism businesses are small local independents, and the Council has a comprehensive tourism promotion and information service.

Regeneration projects have also, for instance, supported and funded many businesses across the Vale to test new tourism initiatives, such as new campsites and recently dog friendly tourism.

- A comprehensive events programme supports all businesses in our Town Centres and coastal locations. Of particular note was the recent Ice Central which drove footfall to Barry Town Centre in the lead up to Christmas.
- Much work is focused on improving business supply chains within the Vale and many businesses have participated in projects. Pubs in particular were a focus of a recent project which sought to identify community services and additional income streams from which the pub and surrounding communities could benefit.

And of course broader regeneration projects shouldn't be overlooked, such as the capital investments in Barry Island, supporting primarily small local businesses

In terms of accommodation for small business, the Council also offers business accommodation at a number of sites across Barry offering a range of premises to suit local business needs, including the BSC and the Vale Enterprise Centre. The Council is also proposing to open a new high quality business centre in Barry shortly that will complement the existing BSC in Hood Road, Barry providing 'move on' accommodation for small businesses that have grown and need to expand to support their growing business needs.

You may also have noticed the recent investment in Holton Road and Main Street, Barry where businesses have been able to benefit from commercial improvement grants complemented by the work to the public realm in the area.

We should not however ignore the human factor in supporting our small business. The Council has a dedicated development officer to support retailers in town centres across the Vale of Glamorgan and more recently the Council has advertised for three new Economic Development posts to help deliver support to both small businesses

No.

and community enterprises in the urban area of the Vale of Glamorgan, building on the excellent outcomes already achieved by the CRC team.

Supplemental

Councillor Probert asked whether there were plans to continue or increase support for small businesses.

The Cabinet Member referred to this being a difficult matter in that it had to be set in the context of the latest restrictions and cuts that the Council faced (within a “non-statutory” area). She would like to continue and actually do more (for instance, if resources allowed, to look more at supply chains). In terms of the Council’s capital projects (particularly the School Investment Strategy), the Council had far exceeded Welsh Government targets for the benefits to local communities with its programmes such as education, training and local procurement. She wished to look at ways in which procurement and the Council’s overall budget could support the local economy so that, if the various resources were available, that would be her next project.

(viii) Question from Councillor Fred Johnson

With winter now upon us and this week saw such freezing conditions with temperatures falling below zero, how well prepared are we as a Council to deal with bad weather conditions?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

The Council’s winter gritting operation is on stand-by ready to react when temperatures drop.

The Council’s winter maintenance service operates from October to April, with the aim of ensuring main routes across the Vale are kept clear of snow and ice. Salting normally takes place between 6.30 p.m. and 7.00 a.m., outside of peak traffic periods.

There are 644 miles or 1,030 kilometres of adopted highways in the Vale of Glamorgan and over 43 per cent of these are pre-salted when there is ice or snow forecast.

The Council’s Visible Services and Transport department is responsible for all of the adopted roads within the Vale of Glamorgan, with the exception of the M4 and the A4232. The decision to salt them with dry rock salt is based on the road surface temperature not the air temperature. There are eight ice stations strategically placed around the Vale to assist with providing real-time data. These are located on the road-side at points on the A4226 Five Mile Lane and A4231 Barry Docks Link Road as well as along the A48 at Colwinston, St Georges, Cowbridge Viaduct and on the B4265 at Wick and the B4270 at Llandow.

Each day at lunchtime the latest winter weather forecast is issued and analysed by experienced staff. Based upon evaluation of the latest forecast, existing road and

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weather conditions, the duty engineer will determine the pre-salting action required for the following 24 hours. The information is continuously updated to ensure any proposed action is timely and appropriate.

The Council employs drivers on standby, available 24 hours a day around the clock, to enable the mobilisation of a fleet of nine purpose-built salting vehicles.

A stock of 2,500 tonnes of salt is kept in a covered storage building with an additional 1,500 tonnes covered in sheeting outside.

The target is for all routes to be treated within two hours of mobilising the salting fleet. To assist further, over 320 salt containers have been placed on the highway so that localised areas can be treated in a 'self-help' manner.

The Council will routinely refill salt containers twice during the winter period, during adverse weather as often as possible or when reported by the public of the need to be refilled.

Despite all this provision, the weather can change quickly so residents need to take precautions when planning a journey during the winter months. Residents are advised to take warm clothes, a torch, blanket, shovel, flask of hot drink and food, a radio and a fully charged mobile phone. Extra care and time should be given to ensure it is possible to drive to a destination safely.

More information can be found on the Council's website.

(ix) **Question from Councillor John Drysdale**

Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on progress in the renewal area in Castleland, Barry.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

- The residential facelifting scheme that has been ongoing for the last five years will be completed this month with the final properties in Holton Road. Approximately £5million has been spent over this period on this scheme and has helped improve 1,225 homes across the area.
- Of those that received the help (98% take up from residents) 90% felt Castleland was a nicer place to live and 75% have stated they were going to continue improvements to their own homes using their own funding.
- The improvement to the top section of Holton Road is also nearing completion. 73% of the commercial properties have taken advantage of the grant funding available and either had a new shop front, or converted the shop front to residential accommodation.
- The Council has invested £500k into the street and the property owners have invested a further £45k in completing these works.

No.

- As a result of these works there are seven new businesses in that section of Holton Road and six vacant shops are now converted into residential accommodation. A number of these have been vacant for a long time and the visual and social impact in the street has been very positive as a direct result of the Council's intervention.
- Moving forward over the next few months the work in the Castleland Renewal Area will be completed with improvements to the Urban Realm (pavements and road surfaces, for example) in the top section of Holton Road, completion of repair works to the Holton Road Primary School external facade and improvements to Hill Street allotments, Cogine Terrace Park and Gladstone Gardens.

Supplemental

Councillor Drysdale asked whether the Council would be able to continue with this kind of initiative in the future.

The Cabinet Member indicated she would obviously like to continue with the work, given that Welsh Government funding had now come to an end. In the event that funding was provided for within the Capital Programme, she was sure the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health would be talking about future proposals.

(x) Question from Councillor Fred Johnson

As the cuts to Local Authority funding continue, what innovative ways of delivering public services is the Council currently using to avoid cutting or closing services?

Reply from the Leader

Regular Reshaping Services Updates that are reported to Cabinet and the next report is due in January following on from the Reshaping Services Project Board which last met Monday of this week.

Just for your information, a report was presented to Cabinet on 14th December, 2015 and since then the whole Reshaping Services programme was reported to Cabinet on 4th July and also on 3rd October, 2016. Both reports were subsequently referred to Scrutiny – Corporate Performance and Resources.

Perhaps I should also refer you to the regular updates from the Reshaping Services Project Board meetings, which are sent out to elected Members (and are available from MemberNet) following each meeting of the Programme Board. These provide further operational detail about each of the schemes.

But, just as examples:

The Council has successfully delivered a range of savings in the past (to continue services, as opposed to closing them) in response to ongoing reductions in funding

No.

the UK Government and which has been passported to Local Government from Welsh Government.

In 2014, the Council developed an overarching transformational change programme, or commonly referred to as 'Reshaping Services', to systematically review all Council services in response to the ongoing period of austerity, which was likely to continue.

Central to Reshaping Services is the consideration of alternative forms of service delivery and the Council is developing this approach across a range of services. As an example, and of particular note, is our development of community libraries, where supporting communities to operate facilities on a local level is safeguarding them from closure.

As you know in our approach to the development of community libraries has been by working with community groups to support the development of sustainable plans to manage these facilities. We have ensured that these important services can continue to operate throughout the county. This is in stark contrast to other areas of the Country where Councils have taken the decision to simply stop operating these services. I am pleased to see that the groups that have come forward are working up innovative approaches in libraries to enhance the existing service and deliver more localised services. Members will be aware that to date, four of our libraries are up and running in this way.

The Council is also recognised as leading the way on regional delivery of services, introducing the Shared Regulatory Service last year, which has embraced a new way of working across three Local Authority areas (the Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff and Bridgend) in order to reduce costs and maintain services.

A further example of the innovative work underway is at our Contact Centre where Local Authority and Health Board staff work side by side in the handling of referrals (something which has been exemplar).

The internal workings of the Council are also subject to the ongoing reductions in funding and, in order to reduce the impact of this and increases in pressure on officers' time, we are developing a range of innovative ways of working. We have brought together several officer groups, to form the Insight Board, which brings together all the groups into a single meeting, therefore saving officer time spent in meetings and ensuring that more work is carried out in terms of managing service delivery.

We clearly have to explore further innovative solutions to our continuing reduction in funding and the increasing demand and pressures and this is continuing through the Reshaping Services Programme. This includes the development of an "area working" model in Visible Services (which has changed the process for refuse collections, making it more effective and efficient). We are looking at new ways of operating the Catering Service and other areas to ensure we are equipped to continue to protect priority services into the future.

No.

Supplemental

Councillor Johnson asked whether it was possible that a letter could be sent to the officers and staff, who had worked tremendously hard in bringing in these new arrangements and innovative workings.

The Leader stated that he always made sure that staff were congratulated and thanked for the work they did. They were the ones who actually met the targets and undertook the day to day job. As such, whenever he could, he did so (in a press release or on the MemberNet or StaffNet) and he would continue to do so.

(xi) Question from Councillor Maureen Kelly Owen

It is now some time since I addressed the burden of this question to the Mayor, Councillor Egan in his role as Older Persons Champion for the Authority, but on his suggestion I now address it to you, Councillor Brooks, in your Cabinet position with responsibility for Community Safety.

We are very fortunate indeed to have been bequeathed by the Windsor family the land forming the Alexandra Park and Windsor Garden, but sadly, areas of Alexandra Gardens are “No Go” areas for the older or in any way disabled residents or visitors because of the chronic lack of safety rails to stepped walkways; in particular the steps linking the upper level of the Town with the Park and Esplanade below, which is a stepped route / walkway.

I had hoped that at least a comparatively small proportion of the S106 Money available for the area would have been designated to this desperately needed purpose but talks with the officer concerned indicate that is not so.

Residents living close to the walkway I refer to in particular can confirm how much this particular pedestrian route is made use of by residents and visitors to the Town. As a Ward Councillor I can confirm that.

At the start of the icy season will you please ensure that handrails are installed as a matter of urgency where they are desperately needed and before someone is injured or worse? As a Local Authority we must surely have a heavy duty of care in these circumstances.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health

I agree that Alexandra Park and Windsor Gardens are excellent facilities. This is evidenced in this Edwardian park being awarded the coveted national Green Flag Award, which is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the UK.

The whole area of the park is accessible by all members of the community, with good access afforded via the main gates on Rectory Road with stepped or ramped access enabling visitors to walk through to the Esplanade, although it is recognised that its hillside setting between the Town Centre and Esplanade can make certain parts of the park challenging to elderly visitors.

No.

I am aware that elderly residents along Park Road have been campaigning for a handrail to be installed and have even taken their concerns to the Local Government Ombudsman and the Council's Equalities Officer. The claim by residents that the Council's previous decision not to install a handrail at this location is somehow contrary to current legislation relating to equal opportunities and / or disabled access has therefore previously been investigated in some detail over the past 12 to 18 months and I would advise that I don't believe this to be the case. The steps in question were constructed many years ago and this route is not the only way for pedestrians to access the public amenities in the park.

The residents have been advised that there is no requirement for the Council to provide handrails. In this case I understand that the local residents have expressed a desire to fund the provision of a handrail along these steps themselves. I am further advised that officers have agreed to this course of action as well as assisting in this process by providing appropriate quotations for such work and agreeing to take on the maintenance of the handrail once installed.

Regrettably, the residents appear to be insistent upon the handrail being installed along the centre of the steps, when it is more appropriate to locate the handrail down the one side of the steps to maintain their full use avoiding any unnecessary obstruction that may be caused by a central handrail.

We remain committed to working with the residents to assist in finding a solution to their concerns and facilitating the residents in funding such a handrail provision if this is their wish. We must, however, insist on its position as we are left with all liabilities after its construction. If residents agree to fund the handrail in the position we require I can very quickly arrange for officers to contact them to progress the installation. Regrettably, if they insist with the central location for the handrail the work will not take place.

Supplemental

Referring to the serious need for a rail, Councillor Kelly Owen asked how quickly one could be provided.

The Cabinet Member reiterated the point made regarding the location of the hand rail and to the fact that, if residents agreed to the recommended location, the rail could be installed quickly. She indicated she would provide a written copy of her reply to Councillor Kelly Owen so that she could raise any queries with her should she have any.

(xii) Question from Councillor Richard Bertin

Overall, the general public has given excellent feedback about the Ice Central ice rink that was in Barry this year. The only real negative to come from it was that it was not on long enough.

Do you think this Council should consider put it on longer next year?

No.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

Ice Central was an innovative approach by the Council to Christmas in Barry Town Centre, building on the success of the light projection over the past two years by seeking to provide a longer attraction than a one-night lighting event. Indeed, feedback has been incredibly positive to date, not only from visitors to the attraction but also traders, with long queues at some shops.

As a new approach, a degree of caution was necessary. However, we are currently evaluating the event and will be meeting with local traders again in the New Year to hear their views and look at options for the future.

Sales of tickets far exceeded expectations, so it is possible that a future Ice Central could remain in place longer if the evaluation turns out to be as positive as first indications and if our budget allows

I would like to take the opportunity to publicly thank a few people for making it happen. Our Events Officer Sarah who was the driving force behind the event but also praise the amazing teamwork that was necessary so thanks to Nia, Hywel, John & John and local businesses in the Town Centre who were supportive and not forgetting Mack Events who shared our vision and took a huge risk in working in partnership with us.

Supplementary

Councillor Bertin asked whether Members would be kept informed and consulted regarding any future ice rink provision.

The Cabinet Member referred to there being an annual report on events in order that all Members were kept fully informed.

(xiii) Question from Councillor Richard Bertin

This Council has recently started works on improving the pavements on the Upper Holton Road area. Local businesses have since expressed concern, including Mr. John Lewis, owner of JPL Sound, who feels this could drive shoppers away during their busiest period.

Was any consideration given in the planning stage to the Christmas period before the commencement of these works and if not why not?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

The paving works form part of a comprehensive street scene improvement programme in the Castleland Renewal Area. Having improved most of the homes and businesses, this final phase of public realm works will finish the job of regenerating this important commercial area. Already we have seen considerable new private investment and the opening of numerous new businesses in upper Holton Road at a time when town centres are generally struggling.

No.

Whilst some disruption is essential to carry out major investments and improvements, the highway works were planned with a break at the lead in to Christmas to minimise disruption for local businesses, and in this respect works were suspended on 9th December for the Christmas period and will recommence on 3rd January, 2017.

(xiv) **Question from Councillor Rhodri Traherne**

The Children's Commissioner has written to the Managing Director in regard to improving support for 'care leavers'. It is clear from her letter that she is expecting the Council to do more as a result of her recent extensive consultation with children and young people across Wales. How can we improve support for 'care leavers' here in the Vale?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health

The Council takes very seriously its responsibilities to young people who have experienced Local Authority care. As Councillor Traherne will be aware, the letter from the Children's Commissioner has been discussed at Corporate Parenting Panel. It recommended that Cabinet should receive a report on the issue as soon as possible; this is being done.

The Leader, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health, the Managing Director and senior officers from across the Council have confirmed their commitment to meeting with the Children's Commissioner in March for further dialogue.

Success in offering good support to care leavers involves bringing together the help we and partners can provide in areas such as personal support, accommodation and education, training and employment. We are confident that this Council will be able to provide examples of excellent practice in these domains. For instance, young people who remain in education between the ages of 18 and 25 receive considerable help and do very well. However, we also know that care leavers continue to experience relatively poor outcomes, nationally and locally, in key areas of well-being.

An area which I know well is the very good range of accommodation options which the Council has for young people, especially those leaving care. However, there is a shortfall in our ability to meet, consistently, the accommodation needs of a small number of young people with especially complex needs. They can find it difficult to keep a tenancy and use the support available and so quickly exhaust the options we have. To meet this deficit, Social Services and Housing are working in partnership to develop a 24/7 supported accommodation option. The proposal will be the subject of a Cabinet report in January.

Social Services are also working with Corporate Training to look at the existing arrangements to support Foundation Modern Apprenticeships (FMA) placements. We hope that these can be broadened to encompass more effectively a targeted approach to care leavers. These arrangements have the potential to develop

No.

beyond the business support placements currently offered to include FMA opportunities in other areas of the Council's business/service delivery. This is part of the Council's strategy to increase youth employment opportunities - which also brings advantages to us as a Council, not least in succession planning.

Supplemental

Councillor Traherne referred to the percentage of care leavers who were in education, training or employment 24 months after leaving care as being 43.75% in Quarter 2. Referring to his view that the figures were disappointing and did not bode well for the future wellbeing of those young people, he asked whether the Cabinet Member considered there to be a clear case for serious positive discrimination in order to ensure that care leavers had the same opportunities and life chances as other young people.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the issue concerned her greatly and that she was of the view that if further education and housing were in place, these were key to a young care leaver's future life. As she had already stated, the Council was looking at working with corporate training officers to assess existing arrangements and how those could be progressed with a view to capturing young people before they actually fell into the sort of situations described and that when they left care, that appropriate training and support was in place.

(xv) Question from Councillor Rhodri Traherne

Now that the Corporate Parenting Panel, the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet have endorsed the Corporate Strategy for Children Who Need Care and Support, will you ensure that the 'Action Plan' is implemented in full and as soon as possible so that we can ensure that we do our very best for our 'Looked After Children'.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health

The Corporate Strategy is a key policy and action plan for the Council as a whole, demonstrating our commitment to improving as much as possible the life chances and outcomes for all children who need care and support. We want all children to be the best they can be. For my part, I acknowledge a personal responsibility for ensuring that the 'Action Plan' is implemented in full and as soon as possible, alongside my Cabinet colleagues and senior officers.

This is a Council-wide strategy which will require co-ordinated effort and purpose from all part of this organisation. A management group has been established to implement and monitor the impact of the Action Plan. It has officers representing all the relevant parts of the Council. This group will report progress to Cabinet via the Corporate Parenting Panel and onward to the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee and other committees as relevant. This is clearly an area where the Director of Social Services has statutory responsibilities and he will provide a public account of progress in this area of work within his Annual Report.

No.

Supplementary

Councillor Traherne referred to one of the actions in the Action Plan as being to explore the potential for Vale of Glamorgan foster carers to be exempt from Council Tax. He asked why, rather than wait for a lengthy reporting process, the Council did not implement this action.

The Cabinet Member felt sure that Councillor Traherne would be aware that this would form part of the overall work, which was quite detailed and complex and she pointed out that, obviously, some issues would be more urgent than others.

(xvi) Question from Councillor Rhodri Traherne

The latest figures for Wales show a 31% gap in GCSE performance between children on free school meals and their peers and I understand that the figures for the Vale show a similar picture. What are you doing to close this gap?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

In relation to the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A*-C grades including English and mathematics (L2+), the performance of Vale of Glamorgan pupils eligible for free school meals improved by 11.6 percentage points in 2016, resulting in the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are not eligible reducing to 25.5%. While this gap is still far too wide, it has narrowed significantly and is now lower than the Wales average and Central South Consortium (CSC) average. In 2015, the difference was 37.1%.

All schools receive the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) which is intended to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals. At Key Stage 4, many schools use this additional funding to provide additional targeted support in Mathematics and English. Schools are required to integrate their PDG spending plans into their school improvement plan (SIP). These plans are scrutinised by schools' Challenge Advisors.

To support schools, the Central South Consortium's Strategic Advisor for closing the gap has addressed all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors in the Vale of Glamorgan to share best practice and strategies, many of which have been evaluated as a result of international research.

Needless to say, closing the gap remains a priority for the Local Authority and schools.

Supplementary

Councillor Traherne understood that the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) funding was not always targeted at pupils receiving free school meals but, on occasions, was used to fund other activities and to support other expenditure. He asked whether the Cabinet Member would personally give clear directions to schools that the PDG funding must be utilised to support pupils on free school meals.

No.

The Cabinet Member referred to a recent meeting with the School Budget Forum which had been very productive and at which the topic had been raised and addressed.

(xvii) **Question from Councillor Rhodri Traherne**

The Welsh Government Communities Secretary, Carl Sargeant, said recently that he was not convinced that Communities First was, and I quote, “the most effective way to deliver for Wales”. Although the Welsh Government maintains that “no decision has yet been made”; it is clear that the Minister has decided to phase out Communities First. What are the ramifications of this decision on the excellent projects effected by our Communities First Team and has his announcement, quite understandably, led to our excellent staff looking elsewhere for employment?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

- Communities First has been enormously successful in Barry, helping many people into employment and training, supporting healthier lifestyles and working with young people to address poverty in targeted areas.
- Welsh Government is currently consulting widely on the future of Communities First and alternative approaches and the Council is engaged in that consultation. No decisions have been announced, but indications are that the programme will have at least a further year to run.
- Welsh Government needs to ensure any alternative approach continues to provide essential resources to ensure employment opportunities, including apprenticeships, are genuinely available to all communities.
- I cannot comment on the activities of staff but it is pleasing to note that none have left the team since the announcement and Communities First continues to deliver its services in full at this time.

Supplementary

Referring to the potential for Communities First and Family Support Services, such as Flying Start, to be funded through the Revenue Support Grant (given the importance of reducing poverty and the work such programmes covered), Councillor Traherne asked what representations the Cabinet Member had made to Welsh Government regarding this issue.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that officers had met with their counterparts in Welsh Government and that, more recently, the Leader had met with the Cabinet Secretary for Children and Communities in his role as Welsh Local Government Association Spokesperson on such matters. Welsh Government was fully aware of the Council’s views on this matter.

No.

(xviii) **Question from Councillor Rhodri Traherne**

I understand that Lovell Partnership Limited is carrying out much of the work in regard to the 'External Insulated Render' works on Council houses. There would appear to be some dissatisfaction with the performance of this contractor from both our Housing Officers and our Council tenants. Are you satisfied with the performance of this contractor and, if not, what are you doing to remedy matters?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health

Lovell Partnership is one of four framework contractors delivering External Wall Insulation (EWI) within the Vale and their work area is the Rural Vale. By proportion of EWI delivered the figures below illustrate there is less EWI required in their areas by comparison to others:

- Ian Williams - 12 planned, completed 9 – 75% completed
- Keepmoat - 212 planned, completed 163 – 77% completed.
- Lovell - 59 planned, completed 49 – 83% completed
- SMK - 199 planned, 147 completed – 73% completed.

Overall, Lovell Partnership is performing reasonably well, although there are individual issues which are being addressed by the client team as and when they arise. The company is responding to any of the enquiries referred to them. There have been some historic issues regarding work undertaken and in particular these relate to one of their sub-contractors used on external works. This resulted in the company changing the sub-contractor and in certain cases they have been required to return to some properties to remedy work previously undertaken.

A revised management approach from the client team has resulted in a greater level of challenge to contractor standards and I can reassure you that no work is processed for final payment until the client team is satisfied with the final standard of the work undertaken.

A report was presented to Scrutiny (Homes and Safe Communities) on 7th December 2016 providing an update on the current contractor performance relating to the delivery of WHQS works. This report provides a significant amount of detail on the delivery of the project should any further information on contractor performance be required. If you wish, I will send a copy of the report to you.

Supplementary

Councillor Traherne referred to a householder in Peterson-Super-Ely who had been told in January that the external works on their house would commence on 26th February (which they duly did) and that they would take six to eight weeks. However, towards the end of November, the works were still to be completed. He asked the Cabinet Member whether she could reassure Members the matter would be looked into and that Lovell Partnership Limited would be reminded of its duty of care to Council house tenants in the Vale and the requirement under its contract to carry out work in a satisfactory and efficient manner.

No.

The Cabinet Member referred to her earlier comments and to one of the sub-contractors having remedied a particular issue. She indicated that, should Councillor Traherne provide her with specific details of the householder alluded to, she would personally look into the matter.

(xix) **Question from Councillor Richard Bertin**

What does the Cabinet Member for Education think of the latest PISA results? Do you think as teachers say that we must do better?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

The PISA results are disappointing for Wales as a nation and, as the Education Secretary Kirsty Williams has said, “we are not where we want to be”.

Within the Vale, we do not know the results of those individual schools that took part in the PISA tests. We do know, however, that standards are rising in our schools. For example, in Key Stage 4, which is when pupils sit the PISA tests, performance in the L2+ threshold (5 A*-C including English and Mathematics) has increased year on year, from 55% in 2013 when the last PISA tests were undertaken, to 67% in 2016. During the same period, performance in science has increased from 77% to 91%. In addition to this, the gap in performance between boys and girls is narrowing, and (as stated earlier) the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals is improving at a faster rate than elsewhere in the region, and the gap as mentioned earlier is narrowing.

This improved performance is as a result of improved leadership in our schools, a great deal of focused work and targeted intervention, improvements in teaching and learning and effective spending of the Pupil Deprivation Grant.

There is always room for improvement, but, as an Authority, we are confident that our schools are well placed to continue the upward trajectory they have demonstrated over recent years. This is the case particularly now that we rank 2nd in Wales in terms of performance for Level 2+. We need, if we are going to continue to improve, to be looking outside Wales for our benchmarks so that we can become the best in the United Kingdom, not just in Wales.

Supplemental

Councillor Bertin referred to David Evans of NUT Trade Union Cymru claiming a previous poor quality approach, underfunding and failure to provide continual professional development to teachers. He asked what the Cabinet Member’s views were on that suggestion.

The Cabinet Member reiterated the fact that the Council was a high performing Education Authority (the second in Wales), which was benchmarking itself against the best in the United Kingdom. The School Budget Forum had recently been very complimentary regarding the current Administration, which had funded at or above IBA every year. A commitment to do so in this year’s budget had again been given.

No.

80% of school budgets were devolved to schools and discussions took place with them regarding its allocation (a process that the schools were happy with).

(xx) **Question from Councillor Kate Edmunds**

I am concerned about recent claims in the press that Council proposals to broaden activity at Cosmeston Lakes and Country Park will have a negative effect on its special environmental nature.

What reassurances can the Cabinet Member provide that any activities under consideration will be fully assessed for any possible impact on the park environment or wildlife?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

- Plans to broaden the range of activities on offer at our Country Parks with an aim to sustain them have been discussed openly and at length. Adopting the triple bottom line of sustainable development, namely achieving a balance between social, economic and environmental outcomes is fundamental to the way in which we as a Local Authority can continue to deliver effective public services for the future. The proposal to invite tenders was discussed fully at Cabinet in January of this year, again at Scrutiny in April of this year and was the subject of press releases at the time and again more recently. At no stage were any objections received to proposals which explicitly mentioned water-based activities and zip wires among others. Broadening the range of activities with third parties at Cosmeston will benefit local tourism and employment and bring income to the Council to sustain the highly valued country park into the future, allowing the Council to focus on maintaining the park and in its environmental education.
- The process for considering proposals is rigorous and the assessment weighted very much in favour of environmental aspects and suitability for the location.
- Only proposals on the eastern lake are being considered, the smaller lake being left completely untouched for environmental reasons.
- A number of proposals have already been declined and many potential activities ruled out. That would also include the suggestion from a local Member both as part of the consultation on the Cabinet report and also in discussion in the Scrutiny meeting that CenterParks should be contacted to explore their potential interest. This was not progressed as Members will be aware that their business model is one of intensive development including large scale built residential accommodation and retailing. Activities include quad bikes and other motorised sports. Their model would exclude local residents from the use of the lake, and despoil much of the park, turning it from a semi-natural environment to a man-made developed facility. In the case of the current wakeboarding proposal being considered, officers have engaged with Natural Resources Wales at an early stage to seek advice on

No.

the impact of the proposed activity, and only after receiving positive support has progress been made.

- The Council's Ranger Team is passionate about protecting the environment, holds extensive knowledge of the needs of wildlife, and has been fully involved in the process and support all the proposed uses. The Council's Ecologist is also consulted.
- It should also be noted that in these cases where planning permission is required the proposed uses will be subject to the usual rigorous process, including consultations with relevant parties.

(xxi) **Question from Councillor Rhiannon Birch**

Could the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the recent Estyn inspection of Ysgol y Deri.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

I am pleased to report that the recent Estyn inspection of Ysgol Y Deri was extremely positive with the school being rated as good or excellent in all areas.

The school's leadership was classed as "excellent" with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team drawing praise for having "established a clear vision for the newly created school that focuses on providing opportunities for all pupils to achieve their potential".

Partnership working arrangements are central to the school's operating model with both the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board staff working closely together. These arrangements were also classed as "excellent".

Estyn also singled out the school's learning environment for particular praise. The facility, which is part of the award winning Penarth Learning Community, features modern accessible sports facilities, hydrotherapy pools, physiotherapy suites and a respite centre that can be used by families and carers looking after those with complex needs. Inspectors considered these facilities to be "excellent" and "highly effective in developing pupils' social and life skills".

I cannot over-estimate the challenges faced in bringing three very different SEN schools together and I'm delighted their achievements have been recognised. Cabinet recently visited the school to experience their ground-breaking work at first hand, to congratulate them and express our thanks.

Supplemental

Councillor Birch asked whether the Cabinet Member could reassure Members regarding the challenges going forward and whether sufficient resources existed to deal with them.

No.

The Cabinet Member stated there were challenges ahead in terms of maintaining standards when the report received was as good as it had been. Challenges related to, for example, increasing numbers of young people who required Special Educational Needs support. She referred to a review of Additional Learning Needs as being underway and to the fact that the School Budget Forum was also looking at how Assisted Learning Needs budgets were apportioned for schools.

(xxii) **Question from Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson**

What discussions have you had with Welsh Government regarding the future of Communities First projects after the Labour Government funding for these clusters comes to an end?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

I refer to my answer to Question 17.

Senior Officers of the Council have met their counterparts in Welsh Government twice since the announcement. Our Communities First partners and stakeholders are also being actively encouraged to engage with the consultation process to seek that the highest priorities are safeguarded in future funding provision. The Leader has also discussed the issue with the Cabinet Secretary for Children and Communities as WLGA spokesperson

Supplemental

Councillor Dr. Johnson asked what sort of evaluation of Communities First projects was being carried out in order to persuade the Welsh Government of the success of the funding in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Cabinet Member confirmed a standard evaluation was undertaken and that the Council had always been praised as a high performance Communities First area. The Cabinet Secretary had actually visited some of the projects within the Vale and experienced them first hand.

(xxiii) **Question from Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson**

How many vulnerable migrants, including unaccompanied children, have been successfully resettled into the Vale of Glamorgan during 2016 using the Vulnerable People Resettlement Scheme or any other comparable scheme?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health

The Vale of Glamorgan Council made a commitment in 2015 to be part of the UK Government's scheme to resettle Syrian refugees. We have been working closely since then with a number of key partners, including the Home Office, the City of Cardiff Council, Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board, and South Wales Police, and have now begun our work to resettle and integrate refugee families into the Vale.

No.

The Vale to date has accommodated three families under the Syrian Resettlement Scheme. As a Region we would choose to assist as many vulnerable people as possible; our commitment is based on careful evaluation of local factors including the capacity of our key stakeholders and communities.

Funding for Councils participating in the programme is provided by central government to cover fully the cost of support and integration, including social care, education and health.

Supplemental

Referring to recent tragic events in Aleppo, Councillor Dr. Johnson asked what discussions had taken place with the Council's Member of Parliament, the Secretary of State for Wales, to ensure that the Government fully funded these humanitarian schemes and ensured that the Council was not left out of pocket as a result of it helping these vulnerable people.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that she had not had any personal conversations with the Member of Parliament, but that the issues were dealt with on a regional basis. Within that process, a number of presentations had been made by the regional group to the Home Office. The Board, of which she was a member, had met recently and had considered the particular issue relating to unaccompanied children. Another meeting would take place in January 2017, given the urgency of the issue and the need to establish clarification and guidance.

(xxiv) **Question from Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson**

What assessment have you made of the impact of business rate revaluations upon the Vale of Glamorgan, including how the number of businesses in (i) the Holton Road area, (ii) Barry and (iii) the Vale of Glamorgan who will see an (a) increase or (b) decrease in their rateable value?

Reply from the Leader

On 1st April, 2017 there will be a Non Domestic Rates general revaluation which is a statutory requirement of the Welsh Government and has been drafted by the Valuation Office Agency on their behalf.

This Council has received an advance copy of the draft 2017 local rating list to compare the overall data to the current rating list.

In response to your question I can confirm the following

i) Holton Road area	Total	270
Rateable Value Increase		171
Rateable Value Decrease		89
No change		10

No.

ii) Barry	Total	1,528
Rateable Value Increase		1,041
Rateable Value Decrease		391
No change		96
iii) Vale of Glamorgan	Total	3,573
Rateable Value Increase		2,205
Rateable Value Decrease		911
No change		457

Supplemental

Councillor Dr. Johnson referred to a substantial number of businesses that would be facing an increased non-domestic rate payment in the next financial year. He asked what action the Council was planning to take to help such businesses.

The Leader stated that the Council operated a Non Domestic Small Business Rate Relief Scheme, but that was carried out on behalf of the Welsh Government which supported businesses with occupied premises whose rateable value was below £12,000. Welsh Government had also announced the introduction of a transitional relief scheme to support those small businesses whose rateable values adversely changed as a result of the general revaluation in April 2017. Transitional arrangements would run for three years to assist local small businesses. He emphasised though that the Council had no direct input into the revaluation undertaken by the Valuation Office Agency or, indeed, the transitional arrangements prescribed by Welsh Government. The Council had a duty to administer the statute and associated regulations and to collect the non-domestic rate which then passed on. However, it was also interesting to look at other comparisons and that was the rateable value total for the 2010 Rating List, which was currently £93,345,531 for the Vale of Glamorgan, whereas the 2017 draft Rating List showed a total rateable value of £83,493,657. That was overall less than it was previously, so it had slightly gone down. There were winners and losers, but the value itself had actually decreased which was perverse, but it was a fact.

(xxv) Question from Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson

How many pupils were (a) referred and (b) accepted into the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) at Key Stage 3 and 4 during 2016 (until 30th November); what was the (i) average and (ii) longest amount of time between referral and a decision; and what was the (1) average and (2) longest amount of time between initial referral and starting with the PRU?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

There were 33 pupils referred to the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 between January and November 2016. 23 of these referrals were accepted.

No.

The PRU panel sits every fortnight during term time. Decisions are made by the end of each panel. Therefore, the time between referral and decision is no more than a fortnight. There was one exception during this period. A pupil was brought to panel in June and again in July so that further information from the primary school could inform the panel's decision about secondary school placement.

The average time between initial referral and starting at the PRU was approximately a month. The longest amount of time between initial referral and starting with the PRU was approximately 3½ months, allowing for school holidays. This pupil was brought to panel in May, provision was agreed but the PRU was full (so the pupil remained the responsibility of the school). When space became available in September, PRU staff arranged meetings with carers but they failed to attend until 16th October. The pupil started shortly after this meeting took place.

Supplemental

Councillor Dr. Johnson asked whether the Cabinet Member could clarify whether schools were responsible for the attendance records of pupils once they had been accepted at the Unit, but not actually started there, and whether that was held against them if those pupils failed to attend.

The Cabinet Member's understanding was that, until pupils moved into the Unit, they remained within the school's remit. She did, however, allude to a move towards a new Model/approach and to her personally preferring more of a shared care "revolving door" approach to PRU's, as they were shown to be more beneficial to those pupils.

(xxvi) **Question from Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson**

How many penalty notices have been successfully issued by the Vale of Glamorgan Council's new private environmental enforcement team since their employment began?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Visible, Leisure and Regulatory Services

The Council's contract with the Environmental Enforcement Company 3GS commenced on 10th October, 2016.

During October 2016 **50** Fixed Penalty Notices were issued.

During November 2016 **111** Fixed Penalty Notices were issued.

A total of **161** Fixed Penalty Notices have therefore been issued between 10th October, 2016 and 30th November, 2016.

A detailed report on 3GS' work to date will be presented to Cabinet in Spring, 2017.

Supplemental

Councillor Dr. Johnson asked what assessment had been made of whether streets

No.

had been cleaner as a result of the Environmental Enforcement Team as opposed to if additional members of staff in the Council's Cleansing Team had been employed.

The Cabinet Member had not spoken to officers regarding such detail as yet, but would be doing so shortly. As such, it was difficult to assess the position. However, he quoted figures for October, which were broken down as follows:

General litter - 5
Cigarette waste - 41
Unauthorised distribution of free matter - 1
Spitting - 3.

He would provide a full assessment of the position in due course.

(xxvii) **Question from Councillor Dr. Ian Johnson**

What is the value of Section 106 funding currently held by the Vale of Glamorgan Council relating to developments in (a) Barry and (b) across the Vale of Glamorgan, and what is the value of anticipated S106 agreements which have been signed but not yet been received by the Council?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

The Council keeps a database of all signed Section 106 agreements. The value of the financial contributions secured via Section 106 agreements attached to planning permissions in the last 6 years is fully set out and totals over £35 million. All the information is also available on our annual reports to Cabinet, freely available and on our web site. I have the data here, but it runs into several pages. I'm happy to forward a link rather than read out the detail now if you'd prefer.

Supplemental

Councillor Dr. Johnson indicated that the forwarding of a link would be acceptable and helpful, but asked the Cabinet Member to clarify whether the £35 million figure quoted was in addition to the figure of £68 million contained in the Council's earmarked reserves and what plans were in place to ensure that the money was spent, rather than just left in the account.

The Cabinet Member indicated that the information was contained within the report and that the Council had a very good record of spending Section 106 funding.

(xxviii) **Question from Councillor Adam Riley**

There has been no scheduled bus service in operation between Rhose and Cowbridge since 2013, when a number of routes serving the rural Vale were ended. Public transport in the rural Vale of Glamorgan is woeful, with residents who do not have access to their own car effectively cut-off from other parts of the Vale. What is the Council planning to do to improve public transport for all those who wish to travel around the rural Vale?

No.

Then there is Rhoose Point. A settlement of some 1,200 people, with approved plans for hundreds more homes. And yet no bus services at all serve Rhoose Point, except school transport. What action is the council prepared to take to persuade the operators of the existing X91 and 303/304 bus services to extend the service so that it includes Rhoose Point in future?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

I would disagree the Vale of Glamorgan has a poor public transport record in the rural areas.

The Greenlinks service undertakes the majority of its runs in the rural Vale and in November undertook 1,192 passenger journeys.

The 321 bus service links Llantwit Major to Cowbridge and further on to Talbot Green. Residents can catch the 303/304 bus service to get from Rhoose to Llantwit Major and then catch the 321 to Cowbridge. If residents wish they can also use the 321 to get to Talbot Green and then use the 320 service to get to Miskin, Hensol, Pendoylan, Peterston-Super-Ely, St Brides Super-Ely and Cardiff.

Officers within the passenger transport team will continue to work with operators to get as much coverage in the rural Vale of Glamorgan as possible. As it stands the commercial services that run through the rural Vale tend to be along strategic routes and the financially supported services, such as the 320 and 321, the 303 service between Bridgend and Llantwit as well as Greenlinks, cater for those residents not living on these strategic routes.

At present there have been very few requests for a bus service to run into Rhoose Point. Having said that, as the development grows and demand increases, officers will work with operators, such as New Adventure Travel and Cardiff Bus to look at the possibility of diverting commercial services. Rhoose also benefits from an hourly train service which can be used by residents.

Supplemental

Councillor Riley asked whether the Cabinet Member was prepared to consider whether the current G1 service (that served the rural Vale out of St. Athan) could, perhaps, be extended to also cover Rhoose.

The Cabinet Member indicated he would need to explore that possibility with officers and, perhaps, look at utilising Section 106 monies to assist in the funding, should it require some form of assistance at this point.

(xxix) Question from Councillor Christopher Franks

Will the Cabinet Member make a statement relating to proposed commercial schemes at Cosmeston and Porthkerry Country Park? I am especially interested in the plans for Wakeboarding at Cosmeston Park. Will this potentially involve the

No.

erection of large steel pylons across the lakes? However, all other relevant information would be welcome.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

I refer to my answer to the earlier question from Cllr Edmunds.

No pylons will be erected across the lake. The proposal, which will be consulted on and scrutinised closely as an application for planning consent, involves an easily removed slim A frame set on land in tall wooded areas on each of 2 sides at one end of the eastern lake. A small area of the lake would be set aside for safe and managed use.

- A quiet electric motor would pull users across the lake on a wire.
- Other proposals under consideration would allow even more enjoyment of the majority of the lake area by residents and visitors seeking less energetic activities, such as kayaking.

I am old enough to remember Cosmeston when it was a disused quarry and its transformation into a much loved Country Park. If just a small fraction of some of the tales of impending carnage and destruction in our much loved Country Park were true I'd probably be signing the wholly inaccurate petition launched and handed in by the recently announced Penarth Plaid Cymru candidate for next years local government elections. But it's not true and so I will not be signing.

Supplemental

Councillor Franks asked whether the Cabinet Member regretted having failed to "properly engage" with members of the public, who were very concerned regarding the proposals and he asked why the Cabinet Member was so "secretive" regarding future proposals.

The Cabinet Member referred Councillor Franks back to the earlier response. Far from being secretive, prior to going out to tender, reports on the matter had been to both Cabinet and the relevant Scrutiny Committee. Press releases had been issued and a considerable amount of conversations with people had taken place. She felt there to sometimes be a desire on the part of some to create a "shock/horror" type sensation. She hoped that, once the plans had been processed and were fully available within the planning process, people would be able to see that, far from having a damaging impact on Cosmeston, the proposals would actually help to offset some of the huge financial pressures that the Council's Country Parks were facing and would represent an investment in them for the future.

(xxx) Question from Councillor Christopher Franks

Members will be aware that a key target of the Council is to transfer services to the voluntary sector and Town and Communities. Will you detail the savings achieved

No.

this financial year relating to the Reshaping Services' strategy and state what services will be transferred in the immediate future?

Reply from the Leader

The 'Key' to the Reshaping Services Programme is not necessarily transferring services to the Voluntary Sector and Community Councils. It is an element of the work being carried out in the programme.

The key is actually seeking to mitigate the effects of the prolonged period of austerity as well as the considerable pressures on Council services, such as through demographic growth.

I refer you to the answer I gave to Councillor Fred Johnson and I would urge you to actually read those documents (which were produced for Cabinet and the Reshaping Services Board).

However, to emphasise, the fact, the strategy sets out how this Council will consider a range of approaches to the delivery of services in order to protect priority services wherever possible. This includes engaging with Town and Community Councils as well as the voluntary sector to explore the potential for their involvement in this regard.

A summary of the Reshaping Services savings forecast to be delivered this year were reported to Cabinet as part of the initial budget proposals for 2017/18 on 14th November and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 13th December. Each scheme is given a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status to indicate the progress towards achieving the saving.

The savings target for 2016/17 was £4.264m and the projected savings recently reported was £3.658M and, although some £606k short, a substantial achievement in itself.

In respect of Town and Community Councils, there are currently no plans for the immediate transfer of further services to these organisations. However, discussions are ongoing to identify areas of mutual interest and benefit and proposals will be brought to the Cabinet and/or Reshaping Services Board as appropriate.

Supplemental

Councillor Franks asked whether the Leader intended to pass control and responsibility for sports, pitches and parks to voluntary and Sports Groups and asked for an indication as to how the Leader expected local organisations to manage the control of parks and pitches.

The Leader reiterated the fact that the Council was still considering talking to Town and Community Councils and, indeed, sports groups or any other voluntary groups and that if there was a possibility and it was feasible and practical, then it would be considered (for example, bowling greens). There had been discussions regarding the possibility of some groups taking over some things. A Community Asset

No.

Transfer to Peterston-Super-Ely Community Council of the field close to their playing areas had been arranged, because it made sense, saved money and was something the Community Council wanted to do to give them the ability to do other things with it. He alluded to certain libraries as having been transferred. That gave the Community Councils involved the availability and the ability to do more than just have a library (as in the case of some of them only open, say, for 10 hours a week). Nothing would be ruled in or out until it had been well looked at, people came forward and a business plan and feasibility study were in place.

(xxxix) **Question from Councillor Christopher Franks**

You will be aware that there is considerable concern regarding the impact HGVs have on many areas of the Vale. I am especially concerned about Cardiff Road, Dinas Powys. You will be well aware of the excessive traffic levels along this road. The additional adverse effect of large lorries only add to the dangers to residents.

We have been repeatedly told that the Vale will not impose a weight restriction as such proposals will not have the support of the police, will be expensive to implement and difficult to enforce. However, residents are not satisfied with this attitude and I ask if you will re-examine the option of creating a weight restriction?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

The main road through Dinas Powys is an A class road and a primary route to many areas. As such, it is of an appropriate standard and design for use by heavy goods vehicles to provide necessary goods and services to local communities in order to maintain and encourage economic growth.

As you will be aware, the Police are responsible for enforcing weight limits and they would be unlikely to support imposing weight restrictions at this location. Whilst it is accepted that heavy vehicles can cause greater disturbance to those who live along the route than cars, the evidence of their use of Cardiff Road does not suggest any significant safety or environmental concerns. Heavy vehicles use this route, as opposed to others, as it represents to them a sensible economic option. I anticipate that any decision to restrict heavy goods vehicles would have a detrimental effect on the local economy, businesses and jobs; as previously advised it would also be costly to implement and challenging to enforce.

Supplemental

Councillor Franks asked how the Council intended to assist long-suffering residents who had to contend daily with the conditions created by these vehicles.

The Cabinet Member referred to his colleague having attended a Business Breakfast earlier in the day where the Infrastructure Minister had been speaking and had alluded to various transport-related matters. The Council would be asking for a transcript of the comments in order that they could be looked at in detail.

No.

(xxxii) **Question from Councillor Christopher Franks**

You will be aware of the great concern regarding the unacceptable levels of traffic that pour through Dinas Powys on a daily basis. Residents feel that this Council is not adequately pursuing the option of a by-pass. I am grateful for the advice and information provided by officers but feel that the Cabinet should be taking a more active role in helping to relieve the dreadful traffic conditions along Cardiff Road.

Not only is the volume of traffic excessive but on occasions vehicles are driven in an unacceptable and dangerous manner. These conditions also impact on surrounding communities and cannot assist in the development of the local economy. However, there appears to be little interest shown by this council or the Police in this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

What hope can you offer residents that matters will improve? What is your policy regarding these long standing problems?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

As we recently advised the local press, we are well aware of the issues being raised concerning the potential for a Dinas Powys by-pass. The position is, however, very clear and has been for many years, including the time when the Conservatives were in charge of the Vale of Glamorgan Council. It is disappointing that both Plaid Cymru and the Conservatives in Dinas Powys are continuing to press this issue when they know the situation very well.

The statements made by the First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, when asked a question in the Welsh Assembly, both implied that they would consider funding for such a route if the Vale of Glamorgan Council raised the issue. This is all well and good, provided there are two things, one the route and two the money from the Welsh Government to pay for the by-pass itself. Neither are currently available.

As we have advised it is also something of an irony that the Conservative Regional Assembly Member and his colleagues are making this play when their own Conservative-controlled Vale of Glamorgan Council did nothing to promote the by-pass. In fact, in their Draft Local Development Plan (LDP) they allocated the site referred to for the by-pass for a housing development. That remains the situation in the newly deposited LDP.

The route situation is complicated as the site in question has already been marketed and this Council is continuing with the longstanding legal discussions with developers regarding the sale of the land as a mixed use (residential and community uses) development opportunity. These legal discussions are at a very advanced stage and it is envisaged that negotiations will be determined before the end of the calendar year or soon thereafter. Although no planning application to develop the land has currently been received, local Councillors have been involved in the discussions of the development of the site and, in particular, the community use of that proposed development. It is also clear that if a planning application is received

No.

it will be subject to the usual rigorous scrutiny and public consultation, enabling residents to have their say on any proposed development.

It is clear to me that the potential for a Dinas Powys by-pass is being stirred up in the run up to the forthcoming elections, though I can confirm that as a result of the comments from both Welsh Government Ministers, representatives from the Vale of Glamorgan Council met with a Welsh Government transport official earlier this week, with the subject of the Dinas Powys transport network on the agenda. The Council's position remains that it is not pursuing a by-pass without Welsh Government funding and neither is the by-pass detailed within the Deposit LDP.

As far as a weight restriction on the road is concerned, I reiterate my previous comments, but I would also seek to encourage as much use as possible of public transport. In relation to this, the Council is currently working with the 10 Local Authorities in South East Wales and the Welsh Government to progress the METRO project, where the Vale of Glamorgan Council will be urging for more trains and more rolling stock on the railway to cater for the increase in passengers. At the same time we are promoting active travel in the Vale of Glamorgan wherever we can, as can be seen by the work that is currently being undertaken, again with the Welsh Government.

I don't know if you caught the press release, but the agreed statement between the representative from Welsh Government and our officers is "Transport officials from the Council and Welsh Government met on Monday 12th December, 2016 to discuss the Dinas Powys transport network. Authority officers explained they would like to undertake an investigation to establish the transport issues and opportunities at Dinas Powys and Welsh Government officials agreed to consider putting forward the funding request for their Cabinet Secretary's approval. The study will build upon the policies and proposals set out in the Council's emerging Local Development Plan. The timescale and precise funding for that study has yet to be agreed."

Supplemental

Councillor Franks asked whether the Cabinet Member fully understood that, supporting the development of 10,000 plus houses without providing the necessary road and public transport facilities would be a "disaster".

The Cabinet Member appreciated the need to "bring the whole thing together" which was why the Council was pursuing matters.

(xxxiii) **Question from Councillor Mrs. Maureen Kelly Owen**

Are you aware that Penarth Conservation Area is at serious and imminent risk of being lost utterly devalued and lost to present and future generations if this Authority does not accept its serious obligations to ensure that every planning approval granted enhances the architectural character and quality of this Area; this is particularly pertinent to the two outstanding houses in Bridgeman Road, Ashdean and Normandie, given their importance within the Penarth Esplanade scene (as can be seen from an iconic photograph taken from the end of Penarth Pier in 1896)

No.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

The Council as Local Planning Authority takes its duty extremely seriously in respect of Conservation Area issues. As a life-long Penarth resident I am fully aware of the importance of the conservation area to the town. It's why I was particularly pleased to play a part in kick-starting the renovation of the esplanade so that work commenced on both the Pier Pavilion and Beachcliff within eight months of taking control of the Council.

I echo your concerns over both Ashdene and Normandie. The answer to the question you ask is long and involved and involves an awful lot of planning policy. Therefore, I extend to you the same offer as I made to Councillor Johnson earlier. If you would you like me to forward the full details to you, I will do so (and also forward to other Members) so that you are completely apprised of the situation.

Supplemental

Referring to Ashdene having been provided with a grant of £25,000 by Cadw some years ago, Councillor Mrs. Kelly Owen asked what had happened to that, given her view that the property was an essentially important piece of architecture within the Conservation Area.

The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Mrs. Kelly Owen she would obtain an answer for her and also alluded to the photograph referred to which demonstrated the importance of the buildings.

635 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC -

The following question was submitted and replied to as shown, in accordance with the protocol agreed by Council on 5th May, 2010:

(i) **Question from Mr. Derek Jenkins**

With reference to the statement made Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee Document dated 15/06/2015 item 15. 'due to the ongoing commitments to make good the poor workmanship of Phase 5b of the Penarth Renewal Area at Queens Road, it is estimated that a budget of £100k will be needed to complete these works. Options are currently being explored to recover this money' Could you please identify how and who you are recovering this money from? Please also confirm if the residents will be liable for any further costs due to the poor workmanship being continually corrected for 9 years and still not finished?

Reply from the Leader

Defects previously identified in historic renewal works within the Penarth Renewal Area continue to be addressed by the Council, which having instigated further works at this location, has worked diligently to address any ongoing concerns of residents. I am pleased to be able to confirm that the final phase of the repair works is currently underway and progressing very well. The Council is at this stage funding and

No.

managing the contract to ensure a high quality scheme with minimal disruption. The Council is currently reviewing all of its options for the recovery of its costs. The matter is not finalised. No further details can be provided. This is to ensure that any future process is not prejudiced. Residents are not being requested to make any 'additional' contribution to the cost of these repairs. Residents were previously means tested and many have not contributed at all to the original cost of extensive improvements to their homes by the Council.

(ii) **Question from Ms. Nadine Ross**

With reference to Bronwyn Brooks' letter dated 30/06/2016, confirming that no building regulations for roof replacements were made in the Penarth Renewal Area, can you inform me how and when this oversight will be rectified to obtain the correct regulations for over 400 homes included in the scheme?

Reply Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Care and Health

As Ms. Ross has been made aware, Building Regulations change over time and almost all roof repairs at that time did not require approval. We are currently replacing, to current Building Regulations standards, a small number of roofs in the Penarth Renewal Area which were identified as defective. All works are warranted and any further defects identified will be addressed accordingly.

(iii) **Question from Mrs. Victoria Roberts**

Would the Council in principle lease the area of land at Westward Corner / Bull Cliff to a community group run by the residents of the area (Friends of the Garden Suburb) for a nominal sum to preserve the woodland amenity and close by SSI status? The Council already undertake this to the Birchgrove Woodland Conservation Group for Birchgrove wood nearby.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Visible, Leisure and Regulatory Services

The woodland is already managed in accordance with a detailed management plan by The Countryside Service and in accordance with Natural Resources Wales guidelines and protocols to ensure that the ecological value of the site is maintained. If local residents would like to volunteer and help with the future management of the woodland they would be more than welcome and would need to contact the Countryside Service on 01446 733589.