

## VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2025.

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

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

Present: Councillor Elliot Penn (Mayor); Councillors Anne Asbrey, Julie Aviet, Gareth Ball, Rhiannon Birch, Bronwen Brooks, Gillian Bruce, Ian Buckley, Lis Burnett, Samantha Campbell, George Carroll, Christine Cave, Charles Champion, Janice Charles, Millie Collins, Pamela Drake, Anthony Ernest, Christopher Franks, Wendy Gilligan, Russell Godfrey, Emma Goodjohn, Ewan Goodjohn, Stephen Haines, Howard Hamilton, Sally Hanks, William Hennessy, Nic Hodges, Mark Hooper, Catherine Iannucci-Williams, Gwyn John, Dr. Ian Johnson, Susan Lloyd-Selby, Belinda Loveluck-Edwards, Julie Lynch-Wilson, Kevin Mahoney, Michael Morgan, Naomi Marshallsea, Jayne Norman, Helen Payne, Sandra Perkes, Ian Perry, Joanna Protheroe, Ruba Sivagnanam, Carys Stallard, Neil Thomas, Rhys Thomas, Steffan Wiliam, Margaret Wilkinson, Edward Williams, Mark Wilson and Nicholas Wood.

### 1055 ANNOUNCEMENT –

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

### 1056 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors C.M. Cowpe, V.P. Driscoll and R. Fisher.

### 1057 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

The following declarations of interest were received:

Councillor J. Aviet	Agenda Item No. 9 (c) – Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30. Councillor Aviet declared a personal interest in the matter as she was a Council tenant, she did not have a prejudicial interest having regard to paragraph 19.3.3 (ii) (A) of the Council’s Code of Conduct.
---------------------	---

Councillor R.M. Birch	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Birch declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor I.R. Buckley	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Buckley declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor L. Burnett	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Burnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor S.J. Haines	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Haines declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor W.A. Hennessy	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Hennessy declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor N.P. Hodges	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in that his wife worked

	for the Department for Work and Pensions and that he would remain in the meeting and vote.
Councillor K.P. Mahoney	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Mahoney declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor H.M. Payne	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Payne declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor J. Protheroe	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Protheroe declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor S. Sivagnanam	Agenda Item No. 9(f) – Belle Vue Community Centre – Temporary Continuation of Management Arrangements. Councillor Sivagnanam declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item as the Chair of Belle Vue Pavilion, however she had been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee to speak and vote.
Councillor S. Sivagnanam	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Sivagnanam declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.

Councillor M.R. Wilkinson	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Wilkinson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.
Councillor M.R. Wilson	Agenda Item No. 10 – Motion: Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Councillor Wilson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that a close personal associate could be affected by the outcome of the green paper.

## 1058 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

## 1059 ANNOUNCEMENTS –

(i) The Mayor made the following announcement:

The Mayor shared around a range of activities they had undertaken since their last update, including:

- Attending a Concert and mini pantomime at All-Saints Church
- Supporting a Holocaust Memorial event at Temple of Peace, where it was inspiring to hear survivor's testimonies
- Attending an opening of an exhibition at Art Central Gallery
- Contributing to a panel organised by Barry Pride hearing about the experiences of LGBTQ+ people
- Supporting science week at Colcot Primary School
- Attending an event organised by Prostate Cymru at Llandaff Cathedral, whereby the Mayor encourage all men to ensure they are checked
- Judging an Easter Bonnet competition at Pioneer Hall Friends and Neighbours

(ii) The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services made the following announcement:

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services passed on his thanks

to the residents of the Eastern Vale, as the recently launched soft plastic collection resulted in 2.4 tonnes being collected in its first week, exceeding any targets set.

(ii) The Chief Executive made the following announcement:

The Chief Executive shared that this was the last Council meeting of the Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer, Karen Bowen, who was retiring after 44 years in public services, starting at Vale of Glamorgan Council in April 2003 as a Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer before becoming Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer, and undertaking a stint as Head of Democratic Services.

## 1060 PUBLIC QUESTIONS –

The following question was submitted in accordance with the protocol agreed by Council on 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2010.

### (i) **Question from Mr. M. Gill**

What is being done to improve the traffic at Culverhouse Cross Roundabout? Lots of residents in the areas are affected in the area and concerns of more housing being built with no plan to improve transportation in this area.

### **Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services**

The Council recognises that there are highway capacity issues at Culverhouse Cross roundabout, particularly during peak periods. The network at Culverhouse Cross is managed by Cardiff City Council, given its location on the boundary between Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan.

There is a proposal to review the network in this area, in recognition of its capacity issues and Cardiff Council is working in collaboration with Transport for Wales on a proposed transport intervention that aims to deliver local benefits to those who travel in and around the area.

The scheme is in its infancy and remains subject to further design work, a value for money assessment (in accordance with the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance, WeITAG), appropriate funding and overall deliverability.

I would also advice that over the years there have been many studies undertaken by consultants with Welsh Government funding to assess the capacity of the network in this location and to consider potential options to ease congestion, although none of this work has resulted in any physical measures to the junction itself.

Finally, any proposals for new development would need to assess the implications of that development on the highway network, this forming an important material consideration when determining any applications for planning permission.

# 1061 AUDIT WALES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE OF THE PLANNING SERVICE – PLANNING PROTOCOL, PLANNING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, AND AMENDED SCHEME OF DELEGATION (REF) –

The Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services introduced the item, which had been referred to Council, as updated documentation following the Audit Wales review of the Planning Services in August 2023. They noted that the review was largely positive, but there had been recommendations surrounding governance, including updating the Planning Protocol, Committee Term of Reference and Scheme of Delegation, as these are important documents which provide clarity and assurance to a range of stakeholders involved in the planning process.

They shared that there had been significant consultation, including with Planning Committee, Governance and Audit Committee, Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and the Equalities Consultative Forum ahead of endorsement by Cabinet. Following this consultation, there were minor changes to the documents including language updates, and that other considerations such as speaking time would need to be further considered in the future in the context of the Council's Constitution.

## RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T following consideration by Governance and Audit Committee, and Cabinet the revised versions of the Planning Protocol, Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference as contained within the agenda be approved and included within the Council's Constitution.

(2) T H A T the protocol be updated should there be changes to the Vale of Glamorgan Constitution, such as those related to public speaking, site visits or mandatory training where required.

## Reason for decisions

(1&2) Having regard to the contents of the references, discussions at the meeting and to update the Council's Constitution.

# 1062 RESHAPING SCRUTINY (REF) –

The Leader presented the report to look at implementing a series of changes to reform the Council's existing Scrutiny arrangements to support the monitoring of the outcomes of the Corporate Plan. They shared that these changes had been in development since October and had consulted with a significant number of Members through various Committees such as Democratic Services Committee, Governance and Audit Committee and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee. The Leader stated it was their hope that all 54 Members should be able to contribute effectively to the decisions being made by the Council. They also

shared reasons for changing in that there needed to be increased opportunities for the public to participate, as 60% did not feel able to contribute in the Council's decision making, and that the Council needed to respond to recommendations from Audit Wales and the Performance Panel Assessment.

The Leader stated that Cabinet was delayed allowing extra time for the final iteration to be presented, and that they wanted to change from 5 to 4 Scrutiny Committees to allow for a focus upon outcomes and not service areas. They also shared around the history of Task and Finish within the Council, including positive work on period poverty and school places.

They finally shared that point 22.1 of the report needed further clarity, as the Committee sizes would be 12 Members on the Start Well Scrutiny Committee and Live Well Scrutiny Committee, with 13 Members on the Place Scrutiny Committee and Resources Scrutiny Committee, due to their potentially increased workload, and that political balance calculations would be circulated to Group Leaders.

Councillor Dr. Johnson stated that considerable consultation had taken place around the topic, and they had been involved through Group Leaders Meetings and the Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group, but that there was no point in consulting if not listening in reducing from 5 to 4 Scrutiny Committees, as there was no evidence merging Committees would help address problems. They shared that they felt there were too many changes at the same time, which would leave limited space to evaluate the impact of any changes, and expressed a concern Members may be unable to see the big picture. They concluded that this was not an attractive proposition to opposition Members, despite recognising this was a response to the Panel Performance Assessment.

Councillor Carroll shared that they felt the Cabinet record was unacceptable, and the Council had an Executive Cabinet system which required opposition and backbench Members to hold them to account through full and proper scrutiny. He felt that proposals would lead to a reduction in Scrutiny and increase the workload of Committees and that he felt the role of Scrutiny drilled into issues in depth, and the new arrangements would reduce this. Councillor Carroll indicated that his Group would be unable to support these changes, as he felt they avoid accountability, would not work, lead to less Scrutiny and performance would deteriorate as a result, whilst accepting that there were failings in the existing arrangements, such as the long presentations. He warned the Administration that they would be accountable at the ballot box in 2 years' time.

Councillor Godfrey agreed around the need to re-evaluate and improve Scrutiny but did not see the justification to change from 5 Scrutiny Committees to 4 Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Goodjohn noted that the role of presentations was to be undertaken during Member briefings as part of the future arrangements, and there would be an opportunity to dig deep into external topics through Task and Finish Scrutiny, which also presented the opportunity to involve external partners and members of the public. They indicated that they were satisfied surrounding Committee workloads,

and felt the new arrangements would allow backbench Members to do their job and shape the Council's direction, and felt the approach could be increasingly effective as it encouraged an integrated approach to more meaningful work, with the opportunity for more people to get involved.

Councillor Hodges shared their experience of Task and Finish Group on school places, which took a huge amount of time and resources to complete and delivered a series of recommendations, which the Cabinet at the time refused to look at, so they were cynical of Cabinet listening to Task and Finish recommendations. However, nearly all recommendations had been acted upon since. They indicated that this Task and Finish required a huge amount of input from staff, schools and wider stakeholders, with a lot depending upon officer time and availability. Councillor Hodges further stated that he felt Task and Finish should be in person, and that debate would be better this way rather than virtually. They concluded that they welcomed the emphasis upon Task and Finish, could provide a potential list of topics, but did not agree with the reduction in Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Wilson shared that he had previously chaired 2 Task and Finish groups, including surrounding the impact of the bedroom tax (2012), which met on multiple occasions, had significant outside influence and led to changes in the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy. They recognised that Task and Finish would be an opportunity to take politics out of situation and focus upon residents. Councillor Wilson also welcomed the move to introduce pre-Cabinet Scrutiny and believed the move to 4 Committees supported the Council's new Corporate Plan.

Councillor Birch expressed that they felt opposition Members would oppose any changes, and that Task and Finish work could be very useful, sharing examples of how Schools' Governing Bodies still use resources from a previous piece of work. They reflected Members' preparedness for meetings, and felt it was evident people had not read papers, meaning presentations were useful in allowing space to gain further understanding. They also recognised the value in hybrid arrangements and stated that policy needed a range of Members to contribute, and that the changes were trying to adjust ways of working to be increasingly effective and efficient, whilst involving as many people as possible.

Councillor John shared that they were elected during the changes from a Committee to Executive system and shared around how Members used to take part in Scrutiny previously. He stated that he felt the "Call-In" process was there to be used by Members and was currently underutilised. He concluded that all Members should give the changes a go, that everyone needed to get involved, there had previously been 4 instead of 5 Scrutiny Committees, and that there should be consideration if in person or virtually.

Councillor Haines proposed that all Scrutiny Chairs should be from opposition groups, to which they were advised that this was not possible due to the statutory requirements as part of the Local Government Measure.

Councillor Ernest shared that they were a Member during the Committee system and reflected that Task and Finish could be equivalent to Parliamentary Select



Committees, where it could question people deeply and encourage changes. However, they expressed concern around the capacity for Democratic Services Officers to support this work.

Councillor Burnett concluded and asked Members to focus upon what was possible, rather than focusing upon why it would not work and shared that the changes were being made as only 20% of items were currently leading to robust scrutiny, presentation / information items should be considered using the briefing process, and that noting items needed to stop, recognising that Cabinet should not be doing this as both Cabinet and Scrutiny were being unnecessarily clogged. They finally shared that co-option was being explored as it was necessary to understanding lived experiences and the Council needed residents to feel they had an impact.

A Recorded Vote took place as follows:

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey		√	
Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch	√		
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Gillian Bruce		√	
Ian Buckley	√		
Lis Burnett	√		
Samantha Campbell	√		
George Carroll		√	
Christine Cave		√	
Charles Champion		√	
Janice Charles		√	
Millie Collins		√	
Pamela Drake	√		
Anthony Ernest		√	

Russell Godfrey		√	
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
Stephen Haines		√	
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy		√	
Nic Hodges		√	
Mark Hooper		√	
Catherine Iannucci-Williams	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Dr. Ian Johnson		√	
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		
Kevin Mahoney		√	
Michael Morgan	√		
Naomi Marshallsea	√		
Helen Payne	√		
Elliot Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		
Ian Perry			√
Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam	√		

Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		
Rhys Thomas		√	
Steffan Wiliam		√	
Margaret Wilkinson	√		
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson	√		
Nicholas Wood		√	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>

Following the Recorded Vote it was subsequently

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the proposed changes to Scrutiny arrangements be approved
- (2) T H A T the policies identified (Appendix D to the report) be agreed and updated to reflect any changes in Scrutiny arrangements which complied with legislation and statutory guidance.
- (3) T H A T the calendar of meetings (Appendix E) be updated to give effect to changes in Scrutiny arrangements.
- (4) T H A T a commitment to review the implementation of any proposed arrangements after approximately 12 months of implementation to ensure the desired outcomes of Reshaping Scrutiny were being achieved and to consider any amendments which may be required be endorsed.

#### Reason for decisions

- (1-4) Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

#### 1063 AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION (MO/ HLDS) –

The Leader presented the report, which presented the Constitutional changes required to enable the Scrutiny changes to take place. Alongside this, they shared around the need to remove roll call as this was no longer needed moving forward as this was custom and practice and could be captured via the Council's digital meeting solution.

Councillor Dr. Johnson accepted the Constitutional changes needed to support the Scrutiny arrangements, but was worried around changes to roll call as this was the only way Councillors and the public knew who was present, and this transparency was important, despite recognising that there were frustrations within the process. They also shared that it was clearer when all were in a room. They concluded that they agreed around the need to look at roll call at Special meetings and asked for this to be re-considered.

Councillor Carroll indicated that they shared Councillor Johnson's concerns and recognised that whilst he was the first Member to call for efficiency, roll call was important in an age when not all participate, and that transparency was important.

Councillor Haines shared a reminder to all Councillors that clicking a link did not prove attendance and believed roll call would be good for members of the public to know Members were there.

Councillor Goodjohn said that Members still needed to declare interests, and that attendances could still be seen through the minutes and voting system, and that antique methods should be removed.

Councillor Hodges shared that it was not possible to see when people were online when they turned off camera and sound, and queried what members of the public saw, and believed there could possibly be an IT solution.

Councillor Wilson reflected that Council was the only meeting where roll call was taken, that attendance could be seen via minutes and Members could say something in a meeting if they were concerned about being visible.

Councillor Dr. Johnson suggested an Amendment that the changes to the Constitution be approved, minus the changes to roll call.

A Recorded Vote took place on the Amended Motion as follows:

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey	√		
Julie Aviet		√	
Gareth Ball		√	
Rhiannon Birch		√	
Bronwen Brooks		√	
Gillian Bruce	√		

Ian Buckley		√	
Lis Burnett		√	
Samantha Campbell	√		
George Carroll	√		
Christine Cave	√		
Charles Champion	√		
Janice Charles	√		
Millie Collins	√		
Pamela Drake		√	
Anthony Ernest	√		
Russell Godfrey			√
Emma Goodjohn		√	
Ewan Goodjohn		√	
Stephen Haines	√		
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks		√	
William Hennessy	√		
Nic Hodges	√		
Mark Hooper	√		
Catherine Iannucci-Williams		√	
Gwyn John		√	
Dr. Ian Johnson	√		
Susan Lloyd-Selby		√	
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards		√	

Julie Lynch-Wilson		√	
Kevin Mahoney		√	
Michael Morgan		√	
Naomi Marshallsea		√	
Jayne Norman			√
Helen Payne		√	
Elliot Penn		√	
Sandra Perkes		√	
Ian Perry	√		
Joanna Protheroe		√	
Ruba Sivagnanam		√	
Carys Stallard		√	
Neil Thomas		√	
Rhys Thomas	√		
Steffan Wiliam	√		
Margaret Wilkinson		√	
Eddie Williams		√	
Mark Wilson		√	
Nicholas Wood	√		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>2</b>

Councillor Morgan indicated that they felt the idea of Councillors “pretending” to be at a meeting to be preposterous.

Councillor Carroll queried the Multi-Location Meeting policy, and what members of the public were able to see to confirm people were present.

The Leader expressed concern around the messaging that Members were not committed or ethical.

Councillor Cave expressed that members of the public needed to know who was there without waiting for minutes, and that it was difficult to consistently see who was present in a meeting.

A Recorded Vote took place on the Substantive Motion as follows:

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey		√	
Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch	√		
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Gillian Bruce		√	
Ian Buckley	√		
Lis Burnett	√		
Samantha Campbell	√		
George Carroll		√	
Christine Cave		√	
Charles Champion		√	
Janice Charles		√	
Millie Collins		√	
Pamela Drake	√		
Anthony Ernest		√	
Russell Godfrey			√
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		

Stephen Haines		√	
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy		√	
Nic Hodges		√	
Mark Hooper		√	
Catherine Iannucci-Williams	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Dr. Ian Johnson		√	
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		
Kevin Mahoney		√	
Michael Morgan	√		
Naomi Marshallsea	√		
Jayne Norman	√		
Helen Payne	√		
Elliot Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		
Ian Perry			√
Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam	√		
Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		



Rhys Thomas		√	
Steffan Wiliam		√	
Margaret Wilkinson	√		
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson	√		
Nicholas Wood		√	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>

Following the Recorded Vote it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the amendments to the Council's Constitution as detailed in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.8 of the report be agreed and the Council's Constitution amended accordingly.

#### Reason for decision

To update the Constitution to reflect the Council's changes in approach to Scrutiny and to ensure the Council is undertaking a robust approach to good governance.

#### 1064 NOMINATION OF MAYOR ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/26 –

The report sought a nomination by Council for the positions of Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect for the Municipal year 2024/25.

Councillor Marshallsea was nominated by Councillor Loveluck-Edwards, and Councillor Godfrey was nominated by Councillor Carroll for the position of Mayor Elect.

Councillor Stallard was nominated by Councillor Stallard for the position of Deputy Mayor Elect.

A Recorded Vote took place on the Nominations as follows:

#### **Vote for Councillor Marshallsea**

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey	√		

Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch	√		
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Gillian Bruce		√	
Ian Buckley	√		
Lis Burnett	√		
Samantha Campbell	√		
George Carroll		√	
Christine Cave		√	
Charles Champion		√	
Janice Charles		√	
Millie Collins	√		
Pamela Drake	√		
Anthony Ernest			√
Russell Godfrey		√	
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
Stephen Haines		√	
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy		√	
Nic Hodges	√		
Mark Hooper	√		

Catherine Iannucci-Williams	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Dr. Ian Johnson	√		
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		
Kevin Mahoney		√	
Naomi Marshallsea	√		
Michael Morgan	√		
Jayne Norman	√		
Helen Payne	√		
Elliot Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		
Ian Perry	√		
Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam	√		
Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		
Rhys Thomas		√	
Steffan Wiliam	√		
Margaret Wilkinson	√		
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson	√		
Nicholas Wood		√	

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>
--------------	-----------	-----------	----------

### Vote for Councillor Godfrey

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey		√	
Julie Aviet		√	
Gareth Ball		√	
Rhiannon Birch		√	
Bronwen Brooks		√	
Gillian Bruce	√		
Ian Buckley		√	
Lis Burnett		√	
Samantha Campbell		√	
George Carroll	√		
Christine Cave	√		
Charles Champion	√		
Janice Charles	√		
Millie Collins		√	
Pamela Drake		√	
Anthony Ernest	√		
Russell Godfrey	√		
Emma Goodjohn		√	
Ewan Goodjohn		√	
Stephen Haines	√		
Howard Hamilton		√	

Sally Hanks		√	
William Hennessy	√		
Nic Hodges		√	
Mark Hooper		√	
Catherine Iannucci-Williams		√	
Gwyn John		√	
Dr. Ian Johnson		√	
Susan Lloyd-Selby		√	
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards		√	
Julie Lynch-Wilson		√	
Kevin Mahoney		√	
Michael Morgan		√	
Naomi Marshallsea		√	
Jayne Norman		√	
Helen Payne		√	
Elliott Penn			√
Sandra Perkes		√	
Ian Perry			√
Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam		√	
Carys Stallard		√	
Neil Thomas		√	
Rhys Thomas	√		
Steffan Wiliam		√	

Margaret Wilkinson		√	
Eddie Williams		√	
Mark Wilson		√	
Nicholas Wood	√		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>

### Vote for Councillor Stallard

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey	√		
Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch	√		
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Gillian Bruce		√	
Ian Buckley	√		
Lis Burnett	√		
Samantha Campbell	√		
George Carroll	√		
Christine Cave			√
Charles Champion		√	
Janice Charles	√		
Millie Collins	√		
Pamela Drake	√		
Anthony Ernest	√		
Russell Godfrey			√

Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
Stephen Haines	√		
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy	√		
Nic Hodges	√		
Mark Hooper	√		
Catherine Iannucci-Williams	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Dr. Ian Johnson	√		
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		
Kevin Mahoney		√	
Naomi Marshallsea	√		
Michael Morgan	√		
Jayne Norman	√		
Helen Payne	√		
Elliott Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		
Ian Perry	√		
Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam	√		

Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		
Steffan Wiliam	√		
Margaret Wilkinson	√		
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson	√		
Nicholas Wood		√	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T Councillor Naomi Marshallsea be nominated for election as Mayor at the Annual Meeting to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2025 and that the Chair use the style of Mayor or Maer.

(2) T H A T Councillor Carys Stallard be nominated for election as Deputy Mayor at the Annual Meeting.

Reason for decisions

(1&2) To appoint to the positions as outlined within the Council's Constitution.

1065 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2025/26 TO 2029/30 (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C281, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1066 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2025/26 AND UPDATE FOR 2024/25 (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C282, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the



Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1067 DRAFT BUDGET 2025/26 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26 TO 2029/30 (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C283, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1068 VALE 2030 – DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C284, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1069 RENEWAL OF THE FLYING START COMMISSIONED CHILDCARE CONTRACTS (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C301, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1070 BELLE VUE COMMUNITY CENTRE – TEMPORARY CONTINUATION OF MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C303, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1071 RESHAPING SCRUTINY (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C314, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1072 FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR DISABILITY ADAPTATION CONTRACTORS (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C319, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

Reason for decision

The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

1073 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION [SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS DR I.J. JOHNSON AND M.J. HOOPER] -

The below Notice of Motion, moved by Councillor Dr. Johnson and seconded by Councillor Hooper at the meeting, was debated.

***“Opposition to UK Government Proposed Cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP)***

*This Council notes the proposed UK Government cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP).*

*Council recognises that PIP is a benefit paid to meet the increased needs related to disability, that proposed eligibility changes will mean that many current (and potential future) recipients will lose out, that disabled people are more likely to be in poverty than non-disabled people and that Wales has the highest proportion of PIP claimants.*

*Council further recognises the importance of tackling poverty as a core part of the Vale 2030 Corporate Plan and that these UK Government proposals undermine our work to reduce poverty in our communities.*

*Council therefore opposes these cuts and will write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and the First Minister to make clear our opposition to these proposals.”*

Councillor Dr. Johnson presented that there had been no assessment of the proposed change in Wales, and it would likely have a severe impact within 4 of 10 of the areas worst affected being in Wales. They also reflected that Vale 2030 focused upon supporting vulnerable people. They said that PIP was an additional support, and changes to the threshold would affect a significant number of people in Wales across all ages, particularly residents in his ward, where a LSOA was amongst the 10% most deprived, and any changes would drive this in the wrong direction.

Councillor Hooper stated that the green paper was targeting people who had higher needs, and shared that PIP was a points-based system, based upon a combination of physical and mental health conditions, and that the four-point rule disproportionately impacted those with increasingly complex needs, with claims to the other being misleading.

Councillor Loveluck-Edwards expressed support to the Motion and proposed an Amendment to remove the final paragraph; “Council therefore opposes these cuts and will write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and the First Minister to make clear our opposition to these proposals”, and replace with “Council therefore will submit a response to the Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working Green Paper consultation opposing the proposed cuts, arguing that the support outlined should be clearly defined, co-produced and implemented in advance of any changes to benefit payments and that none of these proposed changes involve cuts to the benefits of those most vulnerable”. They shared that they felt the Amendment sought to strengthen position and share a formal response, and that most in the Council appreciated distinction between supporting people into work versus those who could not work.

Councillor Goodjohn stated that the reduction in payments to the most vulnerable, and the need to make their voice heard as part of the consultation was necessary and felt that the benefit system needed reform to treat people with dignity, meaning the consultation response needed to be as strong as possible.

Councillor Collins shared that it was going to affect everyone in the room, including constituents who claimed this benefit. They also reflected unpaid carers may end up with more issues, affecting the carer and cared for.

Councillor John said that people were waiting a long time for PIP, and that delays could be for months, ending up in a lump sum which could be difficult to manage.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby hoped tonight would be an example of how the Council could work cross-party to support the most vulnerable and ensure collective concerns were raised.

Councillor Carroll expressed that they shared several of the sentiments raised, but was concerned they were establishing precedent of issues of which they had no control versus those in which they could impact, such as litter bins and issues impacting community.

Councillor Hodges reminded Members that a lot of PIP claimants were in work, and the payment enabled them to be in work. They also reflected upon the potential impact to the wider economy, which could be significant.

Councillor Perry believed all needed to be focused upon supporting the most vulnerable, and that there needed to be a change in narrative surrounding the stigma associated with benefits. They also mentioned unpaid carers, students and volunteers who were relied upon to undertake work, and it was clear that wealth inequality was increasing.

Councillor Dr. Johnson accepted the Amendment and emphasised the impact of the changes on the people of Vale of Glamorgan, impacting families and wider society, ensuring that residents had a fair voice. They shared that this would impact the Council directly, such as increased social care costs, and organisations such as Citizen Advice, who were very busy supporting people with debt help. They also felt this Motion gave the Council a means of responding to the Green paper.

A Recorded Vote took place on the Amended Motion as follows:

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey	√		
Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch *			
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Ian Buckley *			

Lis Burnett *			
Samantha Campbell	√		
George Carroll			√
Christine Cave			√
Charles Champion			√
Janice Charles			√
Millie Collins	√		
Pamela Drake	√		
Anthony Ernest			√
Russell Godfrey			√
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
Stephen Haines *			
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy *			
Nic Hodges	√		
Mark Hooper	√		
Catherine Iannucci-Williams	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Dr. Ian Johnson	√		
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		

Kevin Mahoney *			
Naomi Marshallsea	√		
Michael Morgan	√		
Jayne Norman	√		
Helen Payne *			
Elliot Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		
Ian Perry	√		
Joanna Protheroe *			
Ruba Sivagnanam *			
Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		
Rhys Thomas			√
Steffan Wiliam	√		
Margaret Wilkinson *			
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson *			
Nicholas Wood			√
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>		<b>8</b>

The Vote being carried, it was

RESOLVED – T H A T Council therefore will submit a response to the Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working Green Paper consultation opposing the proposed cuts, arguing that the support outlined should be clearly defined, co-produced and implemented in advance of any changes to benefit payments and that none of these proposed changes involve cuts to the benefits of those most vulnerable.

Reason for decision

Having regards to the discussion and debate at the meeting.

**N.B. \* Having declared an interest in this item, Councillors Birch, Buckley, Burnett, Haines, Hennessy, Mahoney, Payne, Protheroe, Sivagnanam, Wilkinson and Wilson were not present when this item was considered.**

1074 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION [SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS C. STALLARD AND E.J. GOODJOHN] –

The below Notice of Motion, moved by Councillor Stallard and seconded by Councillor Goodjohn at the meeting, was debated.

***“A Voluntary Ban on the Sale and Use of “Flying Rings” Throughout the Vale of Glamorgan***

*This Council recognises that plastic toy “Flying Rings” sold for recreational use mainly on beaches are causing unnecessary harm to marine mammals, specifically seals, when discarded.*

*This Council notes that traditional “solid” frisbees do not pose the same threat as they can’t get stuck around the animals’ necks; some shops in the Vale of Glamorgan as well as some chain stores have already decided to stop selling “Flying Rings”.*

*This Council applauds other Local Authorities for adopting a similar Voluntary Ban.*

*This Council further notes that plastic pollution is a global issue and any steps to reduce plastic pollution are positive: plastic in our seas does not disappear.*

*This Council therefore resolves to:*

1. *Promote a Voluntary Ban on the sale of “Flying Rings”, encouraging shops to sell alternatives instead and discouraging the use of “Flying Rings”.*
2. *Write to both the Welsh and the UK Governments in support of the ban.*
3. *Promote the campaign through its media channels so that the public and visitors to our coastline also support the action.”*

Councillor Stallard indicated this campaign, to campaign against the sale of flying rings which were deemed disposable and were often lost at sea, was shared with the Vale Coastal Forum. They reflected that this could lead to injuries and lead to increased rehabilitative costs and sought to encourage visitors to refrain from buying disposable products and choose traditional frisbees instead. They shared that they had already spoken to businesses in Barry and Ogmore, and that had stopped already, others were looking into, alongside using promotional materials in their

shops, and that other Councils had taken similar steps and would like the Vale of Glamorgan to do so.

Councillor William agreed that this was an important proposal, but the Council had no powers to enforce the ban, and that a voluntary ban may not achieve much. They welcomed the engagement with businesses, as there had been lost goodwill following proposals to amend car parking charges and that there needed to be meaningful dialogue. They also reflected that whilst this was a positive starting point in tackling waste on beaches, there was a need to consider glass and other discarded materials, and investigate the feasibility of waste collection bags. They finally suggested that there were byelaws in place to further support this work, and that this could be a piece of Task and Finish work for a Scrutiny Committee to consider.

Councillor Morgan stated these devices were a terrible threat to wildlife, and that they did not float in the sea, and whilst the Council was unable to enforce action, it could draw public attention to the matter.

Councillor Marshallsea expressed supported as there was a biodiversity crisis and a need to support wildlife. They also reflected upon a similar approach they had seen in Cardigan, where the impact was visible.

Councillor Perry expressed surprised these rings were not banned, and that there were many products which were impacting littering, fly-tipping and biodiversity, and that the Council needed to get the message across around the biodiversity crisis, whilst also considering larger planetary impacts such as Active Travel.

Councillor Goodjohn shared that she and Councillor Stallard walked the Heritage Coast last year for charity and recognised the need to protect the coastline and change public consciousness, whilst hoping businesses beyond Barry and Ogmore would follow their example.

Councillor Wilson agreed around the need to reduce the amount of plastic in society in general and that the Council had declared a Nature Emergency, and there was a need to support enhancing biodiversity.

Councillor Dr. Johnson agreed that biodiversity and important to all and was part of what was good about the local area. They proposed an Amendment "That the Council establishes a Task and Finish Group to look into powers we have as a Council to influence the use of plastics around beaches".

The Leader queried this as Scrutiny Committees should be self-determining, and the Amendment was reconsidered by the Mayor to "Council recommends establishing a Task and Finish Group to look at the powers we have as a Council to promote the byelaws in relation to the issue of "flying rings".

Councillor Carroll stated a belief in conservation, and recognised that limiting of waste was important, whilst also sharing concerns around the role of traders, who the Council needed to engage with properly and listen to. They felt that Task and



Finish work could consult and engage with traders, as it was important to bring them on the journey.

Councillor Payne shared that Town and Community Councils were already doing a lot of work to support the reduction in plastic waste and pollution.

Councillor Collins mentioned that it seemed all were happy to support and that it needed promotion and public awareness, as a range of online petitions had received low responses from public, meaning the Council had a role in bringing the matter to the public's attention.

Councillor Thomas recognised that rings were a danger to marine animals, but there were concerns surrounding Task and Finish proposal, and this should not be directed by Council.

Councillor Stallard agreed this was a small first step and that it hopefully encouraged all to think about plastics and encourage people to think differently moving forward.

A Recorded Vote took place on the Amended Motion as follows:

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey	√		
Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch	√		
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Ian Buckley	√		
Lis Burnett	√		
Samantha Campbell	√		
George Carroll	√		
Christine Cave	√		
Charles Champion	√		
Janice Charles	√		
Millie Collins	√		

Pamela Drake	√		
Anthony Ernest	√		
Russell Godfrey	√		
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
Stephen Haines	√		
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy	√		
Nic Hodges	√		
Mark Hooper	√		
Catherine Iannucci-Williams	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Dr. Ian Johnson	√		
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		
Kevin Mahoney	√		
Naomi Marshallsea	√		
Michael Morgan	√		
Jayne Norman	√		
Helen Payne	√		
Elliot Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		

Ian Perry	√		
Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam	√		
Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		
Rhys Thomas	√		
Steffan Wiliam	√		
Margaret Wilkinson	√		
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson	√		
Nicholas Wood	√		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>		

The Vote being carried, it was subsequently

#### RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T Council promote a Voluntary Ban on the sale of “Flying Rings”, encouraging shops to sell alternatives instead and discouraging the use of “Flying Rings”.
- (2) T H A T Council write to both the Welsh and UK Governments in support of the ban
- (3) T H A T Council promote the campaign through its media challenges so that the public and visits to our coastline also support the action
- (4) T H A T Council recommends establishing a Task and Finish Group to look powers we have as a Council to promote the byelaws in relation to the issue of “flying rings”.

#### Reason for decisions

- (1-4) Having regard to the discussion and debate at the meeting.

## 1075 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 4.19 OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION –

The following responses to Member questions as contained within the agenda were presented:

### (i) **Question from Councillor C. Iannucci-Williams**

What are the implications of the recent UK Supreme Court ruling on the case of *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers*, for this Council?

### **Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services**

The Council is reviewing the Supreme Court ruling on the case of *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers*, which relates to the interpretation of the Equality Act (2010) the Council will adjust its policies as needed to comply with the Equality Act and maintain its commitment to equality and non-discrimination. The Council will be considering the practical implications of this decision, including the interim Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance, some of which was issued last week. Members will be provided with updates as actions are taken in response to the ruling.

### **Supplemental**

Councillor Iannucci-Williams asked what the Vale Council was doing to ensure that transgender friends, family and constituents feel safe and welcome in the Vale?, to which the Cabinet Member emphasised her earlier answer, that the Council would ensure it was treating all residents and people it come into contact with the respect, kindness and fairness that they were entitled too, and that the Council would ensure the Equality Act, which also protected transgender people, would be enforced.

### (ii) **Question from Councillor R.E. Godfrey**

Will the Cabinet Member please update the Council on the Administration's policy regarding car parking charges in the Vale of Glamorgan?

### **Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services**

I would refer Councillor Godfrey to the consideration of the matter by Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> January and the subsequent consideration by the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee at a special meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January. The comments of Scrutiny Committee were considered by Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> March. The reports and minutes are a matter of public record so I shall not repeat them here, other than to say that if Councillor Godfrey has not had time or the opportunity to apprise himself of the up-to-date position, I can easily forward him the links to all those reports.

### **Supplemental**

Councillor Godfrey asked for clarification around concerns surrounding the parking situation at Marie Curie Hospice in Penarth, to which the Cabinet Member responded that car parking was still at its consultation stage, and no further additional information could be provided at this point.

#### **(iii) Question from Councillor A.M. Collins**

What is the current situation regarding the Barry Docks Incinerator?

### **Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services**

Members will be aware that Barry Biomass went into administration and liquidation in late January of 2025. As part of this process the lease from Associated British Ports (ABP) was handed back along with all equipment and buildings placed upon it. This means that the site and plant is now in the ownership of ABP. ABP has maintained the arrangement with the contractor PCML to manage the site and to ensure it remains safe and secure and are working closely with the Council to understand viable options for the site and what costs will fall to ABP.

The Council will be seeking a timely resolution in respect of the sites future and ABP are aware of this and keen to resolve matters as quickly as possible, having regard to the legal issues around the liquidation of the previous company.

### **Supplemental Question**

Councillor Collins asked if the chance arose, would the Council consider an arrangement to buy or lease the site to use as a community facility, to which the Cabinet Member responded they were unable to answer the question at this stage.

#### **(iv) Question from Councillor E.J. Goodjohn**

Could the Cabinet Member give an update to the timeline for when the Buttrills Estate Playground Refurbishment will start and be completed?

### **Reply from the Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement**

The Council is currently progressing through the procurement process towards a contract award for the replacement play area. It is anticipated that subject to contracts being finalised works will commence in July with an anticipated completion date in September.

#### **(v) Question from Councillor G.D.D. Carroll**

Is the Council reviewing its Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit following the recent Supreme Court judgment that the legal definition of a woman is based on biological

sex?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language**

We remain committed to learning from schools, different communities, new research, new case law, and best practices. This ongoing review process ensures that our practices remain relevant and up to date.

**Supplemental**

Councillor Carroll stated that at present the Toolkit stated that the use of changing rooms should be assessed on a case by case basis, and asked if the policy would be changed to make clear that designated single sex spaces must only be used by people of the biological sex in question and women's toilets should only be accessed by biological women and men's toilets should only be accessed by biological men? The Cabinet Member responded that, as already stated, these policies were under review, and new case law would form part of this review and emphasised that the Toolkit was only designed to be a guidance tool requested by schools to use as and when they saw fit, and when situations arose. They further stated that the Council remained committed to the best help and advice to support any young person, and that all Councillors should support that wish and intention.

(vi) **Question from Councillor C.M. Cowpe**

What actions are the Vale of Glamorgan Council taking to reduce fly-tipping and ensure that those responsible are caught and dealt with in a timely manner?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services**

The Council has a dedicated team of Enforcement Officers for waste related offences, such as fly tipping. These Officers are experienced and trained with investigative techniques and have the use of technology to aid them determine land ownership details, so waste incidents are cleaned up as soon as practically possible.

Data relating to fly tipping incidents is regularly monitored to identify specific areas, and the team has the use of CCTV cameras that can be deployed to known hot spots to help capture incidents of crime, for appropriate action.

The Enforcement Officers work closely with the Council's Cleansing Team as well as other partner agencies such as the Police, South Wales Fire Service, and the waste regulator, Natural Resources Wales. The team also assist the Police with the stop and search of vehicles suspected of illegally carrying waste through the Vale and suspected of being involved in major fly-tipping incidents.

Since 2022, the Enforcement Team has issued 263 fixed penalty notices for fly tipping offences and has undertaken 24 successful prosecutions in Court.

**(vii) Question from Councillor H.M. Payne**

Does the Leader welcome the £0.77 increase in the National Living Wage from 1<sup>st</sup> April?

**Reply from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources**

The increase in the National Living Wage (NLW) to £12.21 from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025, which represents a £0.77 rise, has been welcomed by the Council.

The Council has always considered the importance of supporting workers' living standards while balancing economic factors and that the increase secures a real-terms pay rise for the lowest-paid workers and reflects extensive consultation with employers, workers, and expert bodies.

As you will be aware the Council also supports the Real Living Wage and currently pays its staff a minimum rate of £12.60 per hour, which supports our lowest paid staff.

**(viii) Question from Councillor A.M. Ernest**

Has the Leader undertaken any consultation to find out how many people have asked for the provision of an Aqua Park at Cosmeston, and how many are opposed to this misguided idea?

**Reply from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources**

The decision to consider and offer a pilot leisure opportunity was considered by both Cabinet and Scrutiny and followed numerous placemaking consultation events held in Penarth in 2024 and into February 2025. At these events, widening the offer at the park and securing its sustainable future were key issues raised.

The proposed operator remains in discussions with Natural Resources Wales over necessary safeguards to ensure the use does not harm the lakes' designated status and until this authorisation is approved, no licence will be agreed. If it is agreed, the Aqua Park will run through the summer months to test its appropriateness for the park. The Council continues to respond to any enquiries submitted regarding the proposed leisure offer.

**Supplemental**

Councillor Ernest asked for the Leader to indicate how much correspondence surrounding these proposals is positive, to which the Leader responded that they had received a number of communications where people had been misinformed around the proposals, leading to very few valid communications, and that communication with Natural Resources Wales was ongoing and that all due diligence would need to be in place before any lease was signed.

(viii) **Question from Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson**

For almost a decade, the Vale of Glamorgan Council has been a signatory for the Time to Change Wales mental health campaign, which recently ended because of cuts in Welsh Government funding.

How does the Council plan to continue supporting employee mental health in future?

**Reply from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources**

We remain committed to supporting our employees in relation to mental wellbeing and will continue to take a multi-faceted approach.

Our Learning Café, led by our dedicated OD and Learning team has a workstream which meets to discuss wellbeing with a committed team of employees from across the Council. This has seen the recent launch of a targeted campaign supported by our communications team for Stress Awareness month in April. The campaign looks to highlight learning modules available on our iDev learning platform, specifically for this campaign, this being the Stress Awareness module. The module is designed to give staff an overview of stress awareness at work, explains what stress is and how it is expressed physically and psychologically, how we can reflect and approach this and tools to support staff management.

In addition, we are running further financial wellbeing sessions during this month, building on sessions offered prior and co-ordinated by finance educational specialists.

The above all supplements our existing offer through our wellbeing hub, established as part of our Reward and Benefits review in 2024 and regularly updated, this provides a range of resources and links to dedicated support groups from mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

We also have a 24-hour Employee Assistance Provision and a committed and highly skilled occupational health team who provide regular health checks and awareness campaigns for employees across the Council, including our schools. All practices are supported by a range of policies aimed at providing a healthy working environment where our staff can thrive and provide the best possible service to our citizens.

(ix) **Question from Councillor E.J. Goodjohn**

Could the Cabinet Member please give an update on the Olive Lodge development and its future use?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement**

The conversion of Olive Lodge will provide 10 units of high quality self-contained



managed temporary accommodation to help in addressing the significant homelessness pressures the Council is currently facing. This fantastic development coincides with the Council reducing its reliance on expensive, unsuitable hotel accommodation and will assist us in providing a range of temporary accommodation options whilst residents are assisted to find a long-term permanent home. The accommodation should be available from July this year. Members are invited to view the property upon completion.

(xi) **Question from Councillor G.D.D. Carroll**

What action is the Council taking to improve urban tree cover in our communities?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services**

I am a little surprised at your question Councillor Carroll, as in November 2024, following a period of extensive public consultation, including consideration of the draft strategy documents by the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, this Council agreed a comprehensive tree strategy for the period 2024 to 2039, the Council's first in living memory. Please refer to those documents which provide all the information you need. This includes a commitment to increase the urban tree canopy and additional funding which I am sure that you are aware of.

**Supplemental**

Councillor Carroll stated the draft strategy outlined that many of the Council's trees had suffered due to lack of maintenance, leading to structural weaknesses, tree health issues, and that trees were inspected on a regular basis and sought to understand if this meant that issues identified during inspections were left unresolved, leading to trees being felled unnecessarily? The Cabinet Member responded that the Council had spent a considerable amount of money on ash dieback, a tree illness, and Council needed to ensure resources were managed properly so that people did not have accidents under highly diseased trees, and that the Council took its responsibilities seriously. They also drew attention to seven drop-in events across the County surrounding the Tree Strategy, and shared that an additional £100,000 funding had been agreed to support tree planning, with a further £75,000 to support maintenance.

(xii) **Question from Councillor H.M. Payne**

Will the Council stop "zero hours" contracts if the Employments Rights bill is passed into legislation?

**Reply from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources**

The Council does not use zero contracts as a way of employing staff. Technically the term "zero hours" means that workers are offered contracts on zero hours, but have to make themselves available for work as necessary.

The Council does offer Casual/Relief contracts, whereby workers can accept or decline work as necessary, and they are able to work for more than one employer. This has been a regular feature of Council contracts, and used alongside other temporary and permanent contracts as a way to manage short term peaks in workload.

The Council will be reviewing its various contracts of employment to ensure they meet the requirements of the Employments Rights Bill, which is likely to come into effect no earlier than 2026, which will give time for the Council to prepare for any changes that are agreed under the new bill.

### **Supplemental**

Councillor Payne asked for feedback to Council surrounding monitoring results, which the Leader was happy to support.

#### **(xiii) Question from Councillor G.D.D. Carroll**

How many Vale of Glamorgan schools have been declared “Schools of Sanctuary”?

### **Reply from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources**

There are 28 schools in the Vale Schools of Sanctuary Network that have signed the pledge to become a School of Sanctuary.

4 Schools have been awarded Schools of Sanctuary Status.

1 School will be submitting for re-accreditation to renew their status in the Summer term 2025.

4 schools will be submitting applications for appraisal in the Summer term 2025.

20 schools are working towards the Schools of Sanctuary award for appraisals in academic year 2025/2026.

The majority of schools have also taken part in the Anti-Racism Action Research Professional Learning for Schools. This professional learning has been recognised by Estyn in the LA Inspection.

### **Supplemental**

Councillor Carroll stated that to become a School of Sanctuary, schools had to meet a minimum criteria, including signing the City of Sanctuary UK pledge, which includes an endorsement of the City of Sanctuary Charter, a document which states they should support all people no matter how they arrived in the UK, including those who they felt had come to Britain illegally, and asked if the Leader would apologise for encouraging Vale schools to align themselves with this contentious and highly political project? The Leader responded that no matter how people arrive in the

country, they should be dealt with fairly. They emphasised that School of Sanctuary supported the citizenship element of the curriculum, encouraged them to learn about civility and safety, and that we have more in common with others. They said there was no need to apologise for this, and that if Members visited schools undertaking this work, they would be able to see how constructive it is.

(xiv) **Question from Councillor G.D.D. Carroll**

Will the Leader please explain the rationale behind the Authority's decision to cease communicating on X when it continues to engage on other social media platforms?

**Reply from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources**

I am surprised at this question given that Councillor Carroll had the benefit of a very recent briefing on the matter which he attended alongside all other Group Leaders – I refer Councillor Carroll to that briefing.

**Supplemental**

Councillor Carroll stated that he had been in this briefing and it was a news release, the Leader stated that the reason to cease communicating on X was about values, and that the platform had become synonymous with abuse, and believed this was also the case on other platforms such as Facebook. They asked if this was a case of virtue signalling when the Council should be focusing upon delivering services?

The Leader responded that this was a decision about values, the Performance Panel Assessment identified this was a values-based Council, and that decision was not made on dogma but guiding principles driven by the needs of locals, support for Vale residents and working to their priorities. They referred to the previous answer around being a County of Sanctuary and trying to support all who faced difficulties, and that shortly after leaving X, there were misinformed posts about homes provided for Ukrainians and homeless families, which put those people at risk, and emphasised that they would no longer be using this platform to support any forms of communication.

(xv) **Question from Councillor W.A. Hennessy**

How many hours and days is the Council Tax and Benefits counter open each day in reception at the Civic Offices?

**Reply from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources**

The counter is open 10:00 to 14:00 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Phone lines 09:00 to 16:30 on a Monday, and 09:00 to 14:00 Tuesday to Friday.

People can also book appointments (14 days in advance) between 10:00 and 14:00 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

### **Supplemental**

Councillor Hennessey stated that accessing these services was important for residents to make payments or seek clarification on things such as Council Tax and benefits, the current availability of services due to working arrangements / telephone waiting times or for those who may live outside Barry, and asked what was being to ensure improve access to these services?

The Leader responded that people could book appointments at a time convenient to them, whilst recognising that these services were busy following Council Tax bills, and there were currently delays as this work required experts to undertake. They stated that counter opening times were due to officers undertaking the work needed to help reduce the current wait times.