

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 14th July, 2025.

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

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

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

171 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the 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”.

172 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors Gillian Bruce, Samantha Campbell, Charles Champion, Sally Hanks, Catherine Iannucci-Williams and Steffan Wiliam.

173 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interests were received.

174 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 28th April, 2025 and the Annual Meeting held on 7th May, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

175 ANNOUNCEMENTS –

The Mayor shared that they were sad to announce the passing of Councillor Howard Hamilton, a Member of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Barry Town Council, and reflected upon some of their work in the local community, such as his

involvement with Gibbonsdown Children's Centre. The Mayor shared Councillor Loveluck-Edwards words around how Councillor Hamilton welcomed and introduced her to the Vale of Glamorgan community, and how he treated people with compassion, solidarity and a caring nature at all times, even in deteriorating health. The Mayor passed condolences to the family and led a moment of commemoration.

The Mayor also shared some other activities that had been undertaken, such as attending an event with the Royal British Legion which commemorated Dunkirk Day, which was attended by both veterans and young people from a local school, participating in the fun run as part of the Race 4 Wales Barry 10k race, and also opening the new strength zone in the gym at Barry Leisure Centre.

176 PUBLIC QUESTIONS –

The following questions were submitted in accordance with the protocol agreed by Council on 5th May, 2010.

(i) **Question from Mr. D. Weston**

I have been inconvenienced by the Local Authority's recent initiative involving the removal of litter bins and black bag alterations in the Barry area. I have, on several occasions, undertaken a litter pick in my local area. The rubbish I collected was placed in a black bag and placed with my own rubbish for the weekly collection. I am now limited to three black refuse bags, once every three weeks; I do not have the capacity to include a bag of public refuse in my personal waste allowance. I have tried to collect rubbish in a smaller supermarket plastic bag (that I have very few of as I rarely request a bag from supermarkets etc) and then place this in a council litter bin. As many of the litter bins have been removed, those that remain are frequently overflowing. I have attempted to do a litter pick and place this directly in a black bag and deposit this adjacent to a litter bin for collection. I have been told that this is classed as fly-tipping for which I could be prosecuted. As I am left with no way that I can think of to dispose of public waste, in an easy and convenient manner, I have refrained from undertaking litter pick in the area. Could you please advise me on a way forward? Locations where I believe litter bins should be provided in my local community, 1. On the approach to the Barry Cemetery there are bins on each side of the road. These need to be supplemented with an extra bin on each side of the road as they are frequently full and overflowing with litter then being blown onto the recent landscaped area. 2. To the right of the entrance to Barry Cemetery a bin has been removed. This was well used; fly tipping has occurred since the bin has been removed. 3. Off Slade Road there is dead end road that leads to allotments and a footpath that links to the Cemetery and White Farm. This was well used and if I have dog waste I have nowhere to place it on my way home following the removal of this refuse bin. 4. In the green area adjacent to Kwik fit and adjacent to the zebra crossing. These were well used. 5. Adjacent to St Helens Church near to the bus stop (logical location). 6. On the corner of Dyfan Road / Barry Road near the family shopper. This has recently been removed. At the moment when walking my dog to town, I pass one bin only outside Jenner Park Primary School. Could you please advise if the Authority would return or place these assets to the local community?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

Could I firstly commend you on your litter clearing efforts, which are much appreciated. It is disappointing that there is a need for our residents to collect the litter dropped by others, and whilst a high density of litter bins could assist to reduce the amounts of material dropped, this is not always the case. It should not be forgotten that dropping litter is a crime and I am safe in the knowledge that most of our residents who use our litter bins would not engage in a criminal act if they were unable to find a public litter bin along their walking route.

As regards the current litter bin situation, at the start of the financial year we removed several litter bins to reduce duplication (there were often multiple bins in close proximity), to address their abuse by residents depositing their household waste in them, to assist with the transition to on-street recycling and to reduce our service operating costs. We have noted that this arrangement has been largely successful, with no marked increase in littering in most of the areas where the bins have been removed. Residents and visitors are either making use of the remaining bins or, in some cases, taking their litter home with them, should a bin not be available on their walking route.

The Council's Neighbourhood Services team has started reviewing areas where litter bins were removed where concerns have been raised, post removal, and this was always the intention. The team had to ensure there was sufficient time for habits to change as the public became aware that certain bins that they may have used in the past were no longer available.

I have raised all your litter bin concerns with the service area and requested that litter surveys be undertaken at these locations and where necessary, provision reassessed. Should any alterations be necessary, this will be implemented promptly on completion of the surveys.

Finally, I would thank you once again for your litter collection work. Should you wish to continue doing this, I will arrange for the Council's Neighbourhood Services team to contact you to ensure that you have a supply of bags and any other equipment necessary to do this work safely. I will also arrange a collection point for your litter picking waste, as necessary.

(ii) Question from Mr. M. Wallis

Duties of the Council under the Bathing Water Regulations with reference to the 2023 "poor" status of two beaches, the May-June 2024 declaration of "abnormal situation" at Ogmores-by-Sea and the prolonged discharge of sewage at Penarth beach due to faulty DCWW equipment. Ending discharges from Barry Knap SSO. Supplying prompt information to bathers on nearby discharges.

In allocating the overflow parking field by the Sully Brook for Aquapark buildings and activities, did the Council knowing water-voles are present in the brook forget to seek the required NRW licence and breach wildlife duties?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

The container units associated with the Aqua Park have been placed in an area used historically throughout the year as an overflow carpark for visitors, this area has been mown throughout the year to ensure that the space is suitable for vehicles to park. Hence the area is already heavily disturbed and there has been no adverse impact on the Water Vole population in situ during the current site use.

The area where the cars have been historically parked and areas mown have an adequate buffer zone to the ditch / stream, which is left unmanaged to protect the ditch / stream edge and Water Vole habitat.

This buffer zone will remain in place throughout the period of the trial to ensure that the habitat remains protected. As there is no impact on the area, there has been no requirement to instigate any further measures.

NRW are fully aware of the population distribution within the Country Parks environs and as part of the Council's forward work plan the Water Vole population will continue to be monitored, as it has since their introduction.

(iii) **Question from Ms. P. Graham**

On 11th March, 2024, a Vale of Glamorgan Council spokesperson told the Barry and District News that the East Quay Park would be opening by the summer. More than a year on, the park is not open and looks abandoned by developers. Why has there been a delay in opening the park, why is no work progressing, and when can residents expect to be able to use the developments promised public open space?

Reply from Cabinet Member from Neighbourhood and Building Services

The information provide at the time to the newspaper was given in good faith following confirmation of the opening timeframe by the Development Consortium. The latest information we have from the Consortium is that the open space on East Quay is subject to a standard safety audit before it can be opened to the public. The Consortium is very hopeful that the park will be open in August 2025, apart from some seeded areas, which may need to be reserved pending the grass developing more substantially. This is to ensure that those areas are not damaged by being accessible prematurely.

(iv) **Question from Mr. L. Mack**

Southern Water in England has within recent months introduced a 'Rivers and Sea Watch Service' to provide near real time access to water quality data in popular bathing areas. This service monitors every outflow pipe in the network and also utilises offshore floating buoys to provide such real time data to enable sea users to make informed choices as to when it is safe to enter the water. What would prevent Cyngor Bro Morgannwg in conjunction with Dwr Cymru from introducing modern effective monitoring systems such as 'Rivers and Sea Watch' for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike?

Reply from Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

Thank you, Mr. Mack, for your question. I am pleased to advise that the Council has been working in partnership with Natural Resources Wales, to develop a bespoke water quality model to enable us to provide bathing water quality information in real time to bathers for two designated bathing beaches in Barry: at Jackson's Bay and Whitmore Bay. To facilitate this, work has been progressing over the last two years to collect detailed water quality data from both beaches, along with meteorological data, such as rainfall, UV radiance and river level data, which has enabled research consultants to develop a robust statistical model to better understand what is affecting the water quality at these two locations. We are finalising this work over the course of 2025/26, and we are hopeful that display screens which will provide the predicative water quality data to beach users, will be installed at the beaches for the 2026 bathing season.

Introducing pollution risk forecasting in Barry will inform beach management decisions and provide timely water quality advice to the public to enable them to make an informed decision whether to swim. It will also offer resilience to the overall bathing water classifications through the discounting of samples in certain conditions when a warning of predicted poor water quality is given. It should however be noted that this Welsh Government funded project has cost more than £1m and has been in development for several years. Whilst this real-time water quality monitoring is extremely positive for future users of these two Barry beaches, similar arrangements at other designated bathing areas will not be easy to replicate both in terms of time but also due to the required capital investment. The Council is however very much open to this prospect should further Welsh Government funding become available for this purpose in the future.

(v) Question from Mrs. R. Robinson

In relation to the pilot of the aqua park due to start at Cosmeston, I'd like to ask who will be responsible for monitoring/supervising through the pilot period that all conditions of the various reports/licences are being met (i.e. recruitment of local people, security being on site, participants having no direct contact with the lake bed, etc.) and at the end of the pilot, what criteria will be being used to measure the impact/success of the pilot, who will be responsible for carrying this impact assessment out and how will they measure it?

Reply from Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

The Council's Countryside section that manages Cosmeston Country Park will continue to monitor and supervise the licence that has been granted to the Aqua Park Company for the summer months to ensure compliance with the relevant conditions imposed by NRW in its assent to use the eastern lake. The company has also produced a risk assessment which covers the safe use of equipment and issues such as prevention of injury, water testing and use of equipment etc. The Countryside Manager remains in constant contact with the Company, who are ensuring issues such as local employment and access for all are dealt with as part of their operation.

Finally, I can confirm that a report will be brought back to Cabinet and Place Scrutiny following the termination of the trial in the autumn which will include an assessment of the success or otherwise of the pilot. The assessment will be undertaken to consider environmental sustainability, community impact including any social behaviour, visitor enjoyment and financial viability and will include a recommendation for the future based on the assessment.

177 DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION CYMRU – VALE OF GLAMORGAN ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS REVIEW (REF) –

The Leader presented a report surrounding the recent community review in Vale of Glamorgan, as the recommendations had recently been accepted by Welsh Government Ministers. The review of electoral arrangements happened every 12 years and considered the number of members, Wards and their names. The review commenced on 5th June and represented the initial observations from the Commission and there would be opportunities to comment favourite subsequent stages. The Leader also reminded Members that individuals were entitled to submit their own representations directly to the Commission.

Councillor Ernest stated that Plymouth Ward had been short of Members for a number of years and under proposals would make the Ward larger, servicing potentially 6,000 people. He believed the Council should draw attention to under-representation in shaping the future arrangements.

Councillor Dr. Johnson said that the Commission had made several recommendations including adding seats to Council. He felt that the revising and revisiting of numbers was because of previous errors in reviews. He was worried about supporting as a Council as the Community Liaison Committee did not have much support for this change as it stood and felt that the Commission could potentially create seats unnecessarily.

Councillor Wilson emphasised the need to future proof Wards, as this only happened every 12 years and the next review would be in 2039.

Councillor Godfrey was perplexed at the recommendations and highlighted how the report indicated that multi-Member wards were less effective in rural areas, and was unsure around how this would service the community better in the future.

Councillor Perry shared that his ward, St Nicholas, was 10 miles in length, and that there was generally a difficulty in reaching all residents due to its rurality.

The Leader stated that this was not a formal proposal yet, but to approve the submission, and that she hoped there would be opportunity to have cross party dialogue surrounding the review in the future.

RESOLVED – T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council's observations to the Commission's initial consultation on the first stage of the review and comments on the same, as set out within the report, be noted and submitted to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru.

Reason for decision

To update Council and to respond to the initial consultation phase of the review.

178 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25 (REF) –

The Leader presented the report, which was presented to Full Council twice yearly, and was aligned to CIPFA's Code of Practice and various other forms of accounting legislation, demonstrating the Council's compliance in its approach to treasury management, and showing how it was prudent whilst ensuring affordability and sustainability. She noted around the borrowing on capital finance and how the Council maintained an under-borrowed position, and that the Council maintained a cautious approach to capital investment. She further shared that Members would receive a full training session surrounding these areas during the annual budget setting process.

RESOLVED – T H A T the Treasury Management Annual Report for the period 1st April to 31st March, 2025 be approved

Reason for decision

To update Council surrounding the Council's approach to Treasury Management.

179 UPDATE ON THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME – ST RICHARD GWYN (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C331, 1st May, 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.

180 RESHAPING SERVICES – ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONCESSIONS (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C9, 22nd May, 2025 (as set out in Section 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution) be noted.

181 FIVE MILE LANE – EXTENSION OF LAND AGENT CONTRACT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVISIONS (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute

No. C16, 5th June, 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.

182 FIVE MILE LANE – EXTENSION OF LAND AGENT CONTRACT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVISIONS (PART II) (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C18, 5th June, 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.

183 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION [SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS G. CARROLL AND R. THOMAS] –

The below Notice of Motion, moved by Councillor George Carroll and seconded by Councillor Rhys Thomas at the meeting, was debated.

“Cosmeston Aqua Park

The Vale of Glamorgan Council:

- Expresses strong concern at the decision of the Authority's Labour-Llantwit First Administration to open an aqua park at Cosmeston Lakes;
- Recognises that Cosmeston is a quiet, peaceful, country location that is threatened by a development of this nature;
- Condemns the Council Leader's unacceptable attacks on campaigners against the development and calls on her to apologise for suggesting they are guilty of spreading “malicious tripe”.

Councillor Carroll introduced the Motion, which they felt should not have been necessary, that the Conservative Group opposes the Aqua Park development and stated that the Motion did not call for the removal of the Aqua Park directly. They reflected how it was a peaceful, tranquil location and how the development had been with widespread opposition, in what residents' felt was the latest example of a decision imposed upon them. He stated that there was significant opposition of all ages in Llandough community, and that he felt the Leader chose to lecture members of the public instead of discussing concerns and shutting down the debate. He finally said that he felt plans had been botched and saw this as an attempt to begin correcting the error.

Councillor Franks shared that they were staggered at Cabinet's handling of the decision, and believed residents had been treated with contempt. He referred to recently released e-mails and felt them to be revealing of how the Council was handling the development.

The Leader emphasised that the Aqua Park was a trial, and that Cosmeston was a quiet, peaceful location which would they hoped to develop in the future. They also shared that the conversation had been ongoing for a number of years, starting in August 2023, when an initial meeting with the operator was agreed. She also shared how Councillor Thomas had met with them during this period and found the project to be extremely useful and contacted officers accordingly. The first proposals were refused as they sought a three-year lease, something the Council did not want to support at that moment in time. The Leader stated that this was a one-year pilot and that any proposals, present or in the future, needed to be evidence based but that the Council had gone through the appropriate due diligence before approving at Cabinet (which was later than expected) and also incorporated the views of Scrutiny before any final decision had been made. They finally shared that the quotes attributed towards them were a misrepresentation and subject to an ongoing complaint.

Councillor Earnest indicated that they were the local Member for the area, and felt it would be appropriate for Members to be forewarned and engaged with during this proposal, as Ward Members were dealing with a lot of noise from their local constituents. He felt that the way in which it had been dealt with by Scrutiny and Cabinet was back to front and badly handled.

Councillor Penn felt that several Councillors should apologise for the language being used surrounding this topic; and stated they were disappointed to see the Motion. He referenced how the item was considered at Scrutiny Committee, where there were no recommendations made. As a local Member for Penarth, he shared that people generally supported the trial and reflected that the level of debate on social media was disproportionate to public feeling and contained misinformation. He shared how during the Scrutiny Committee session he expressed concerns surrounding water quality and was assured nothing would happen without the appropriate testing, and welcomed the opportunity for young people to gain skills and employment at the site. He finally stated that this was an eight-week trial which would be evaluated, and to which the Council would hold its hands up if not a success, but it was disappointing to see that it had become personalised and politicised.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby shared that she had chaired the Scrutiny Committee meeting in March surrounding these proposals, and there were a number of queries and concerns raised, which were addressed, including upon the impact of wildlife and need of Natural Resources Wales to approve water quality, with the Committee's final comments contained within the reference to Cabinet. She reflected that during the meeting, the Conservative Group Members did not oppose the proposal, and there was no suggestion the pilot should not go ahead. She finally noted the Council's recent Motion surrounding civility in public life and expressed disappointment at seeing personalisation in the Motion.

The Deputy Leader shared that they had visited Cosmeston for many years, and there had been various activities undertaken on the Eastern Lake, with the Western Lake kept free for wildlife. She then reflected upon the purpose of the pilot and the need to learn around reports, which were shorter due to checks and balances, and wants of residents to further develop the Park, as many people during placemaking engagement sessions said they would like more opportunities locally. She further emphasised that it was positive to see both residents and visitors enjoying the site, with jobs created for local people and skills and training provided for the future.

Councillor Mahoney indicated that they were first notified of the proposal in March, and that whilst he welcomed the need for physical activities and job creation, he was against activities that would be of concern to the environment and wider park.

Councillor Haines shared how he felt the park was a sanctuary of biodiversity and was worried at the disregard for natural spaces. He shared how the Wildlife Trust had raised concerns, and that nature was irreplaceable and not for inflatables. He further referenced the online petition with approximately 7,000 signatories, highlighting the extent of public feeling. He closed with concerns surrounding the commercialisation of green spaces, which could cause risks and emphasised the need to protect what could not be replaced.

Councillor Sivagnanam noted that she recognised that the Aqua Park did not fit with the views of all residents, including some who may not like change, but the project was intended to benefit all communities within the Vale of Glamorgan. She shared how comments from young people and families had been positive, including a resident's letter in the Penarth Times, which she believed to summarise the situation, as "Cosmeston is an asset to everyone and beyond". She further shared how the "Let's Talk Life in the Vale" survey highlighted how young people wanted more leisure activities, and this was a positive opportunity to do this, through creating a conservation friendly revenue scheme in a well-managed environment.

Councillor Williams said that whilst a lot had been heard from those against the Aqua Park, supporters would not present in the same way. They also stated that there was extensive due diligence with the urgency of the decision-making being due to the need to clarify information ahead of approval. They finally stated the sentiment that Cosmeston belonged to all people in the Vale.

Councillor Dr. Johnson reflected that any development in Cosmeston was going to be controversial and recalled a similar proposal surrounding wakeboarding approximately 10 years ago. He referenced how it did not require planning permission, so Members had been limited in their ability to have a voice on the matter, as whilst it came to Scrutiny, it was late meaning there was limited time to consider. He finally referenced the final point of the Motion and stated that this should be removed as not relevant, as there was a process through Code of Conduct or the Ombudsmen to address this.

Councillor Payne shared that she was a regular user of Cosmeston and would contest it was a quiet place due to the range of people and activities and shared how she used to live next to a similar Water Park with activities in the Midlands, which used to use income from activities to support conservation work. She further noted

that through her work with young people, many were thrilled to have a new activity within the Vale of Glamorgan, which had received positive feedback from users, and emphasised the need to provide things to support people's well-being.

Councillor Charles queried if Cosmeston was chosen due to its proximity to Cardiff and felt that many local families would be unable to afford the cost of the Aqua Park.

Councillor Thomas shared that there were a large number of views in Penarth and a strong sense of feeling on both the location and how it has been carried out. He felt that the appropriate consultations had not been undertaken, and that the people of Penarth should have been involved as they have a right to be heard.

Councillor Perry felt that there has been poor communication and a lack of engagement surrounding this pilot, and that all should have been provided additional information from the offset. They also reflected upon the third point within the Motion around the need to lift the level of debate in the Chamber.

Councillor Carroll summarised and re-emphasised that they felt matters had been handled badly, and that the way Leaders engaged with the public was relevant, as things should be discussed and not consulted upon. They also countered surrounding the scrutiny process, which they felt to be rushed through as this was the first time many were discussing the issue. They further reflected upon the significant achievement of 7,000 petition signatories as evidence of the concern raised. He closed by stating the Motion was tabled in good faith, and that he did not feel any amendments were appropriate.

Following a request from a Member for a Recorded Vote the vote took place as follows:

Members	For	Against	Abstain
Anne Asbrey	√		
Julie Aviet		√	
Gareth Ball		√	
Rhiannon Birch		√	
Bronwen Brooks		√	
Ian Buckley		√	
Lis Burnett		√	
George Carroll	√		
Christine Cave	√		
Janice Charles	√		
Amelia Collins	√		
Marianne Cowpe	√		
Pamela Drake		√	
Vincent Driscoll	√		
Anthony Ernest	√		
Robert Fisher			
Chris Franks	√		
Wendy Gilligan		√	
Russell Godfrey	√		

Emma Goodjohn		√	
Ewan Goodjohn		√	
Stephen Haines	√		
William Hennessy	√		
Nic Hodges	√		
Mark Hooper	√		
Gwyn John		√	
Ian Johnson	√		
Susan Lloyd-Selby		√	
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards		√	
Julie Lynch-Wilson		√	
Kevin Mahoney			√
Naomia Marshallsea		√	
Michael Morgan		√	
Jayne Norman		√	
Helen Payne		√	
Elliot Penn		√	
Sandra Perkes		√	
Ian Perry	√		
Joanna Protheroe		√	
Ruba Sivagnanam		√	
Carys Stallard		√	
Neil Thomas		√	
Rhys Thomas	√		
Margaret Wilkinson		√	
Edward Williams		√	
Mark Wilson		√	
Nicholas Wood	√		
TOTAL	18	27	1

RESOLVED – T H A T the Motion was lost.

Reason for decision

Following discussions at the meeting and a recorded vote.

184 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.P. Franks

If the Cosmeston Aqua Park trial does go ahead this Summer, on what grounds will its success or otherwise be evaluated, particularly with regards to the Nature Emergency declared by this Council?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

I can confirm that a report will be brought back to Cabinet and Place Scrutiny following the conclusion of the trial in the Autumn which will include an assessment of the success or otherwise of the pilot. The assessment will be undertaken to consider environmental sustainability, community impact including any anti-social behaviour, visitor enjoyment and financial viability and will include a recommendation for the future based on the assessment.

Supplemental

Councillor Franks queried if there will there be a full evaluation including costs, to which the Deputy Leader confirmed there would a report brought back to Scrutiny, which would include financial viability.

(ii) Question from Councillor C.M. Cowpe

What evaluation has the Cabinet Member made of the impact of litter bin removals upon street cleanliness and fly-tipping upon the wider area, and not just upon the abuse of those specific litter bins?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

Council officers regularly undertake cleanliness inspections of our streets as part of our requirements under the Environment Protection Act 1990. Several streets are inspected each week and their cleanliness recorded against the criteria set out in the Act; which takes onto account areas of high footfall, requiring these areas to be cleansed more frequently, then those that are less heavily trafficked.

As assessment of these inspections, before and after, has not indicated any marked decrease in the standards of cleanliness in areas where litter bins have been removed. In some cases, there were instances of litter being left where the bins had been previously located but this soon stopped.

We do have a few hotspot areas where the remaining bins are filling more quickly than the emptying frequency can effectively address, and work is ongoing in these locations to establish the reasons for this; though it is clear that several of these bins are filling prematurely due to bags of domestic waste being deposited within them.

We will continue to assess the outcomes of these inspections over the next few months, but the early indications are that most of our residents and visitors are either finding other nearby litter bins to use or taking their litter home with them.

(iii) Question from Councillor A. Asbrey

What plans does the Council have for school holiday activities for children from deprived backgrounds, and in particular through Welsh in order to support their language skills during the holidays?

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

Food and Fun is a school-based education programme that provides food and nutrition education, physical activity, enrichment sessions and healthy meals to children during the school summer holidays with a community-focused ethos.

Starting as a pilot in 2015, Food and Fun has developed into a national, fully funded Welsh Government programme administered by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). In 2024, 205 schools delivered the programme and provided over 13,040 places for children each day that it ran.

The WLGA will continue to roll-out the programme by working closely with Local Authorities and partner agencies. Here in the Vale of Glamorgan, we have grown the scheme by 50% to 6 schools across the primary and secondary sectors, running the scheme this year in 2025. The Vale's Local Authority Trading Company, Big Fresh, are working closely with the schools as the lead co-ordinator to help implement the scheme for 12 days over the summer break.

The six schools participating include:

Cadoxton Primary
Colcot Primary
Holton Rd Primary
Oak Field Primary
Palmerston Primary
Pencoedtre High.

The Family Information Service also signpost to a range of activities including those through the medium of Welsh being held over the summer holidays by the Council and wider organisations within the Vale, with this information available on the Family Information Service webpage on the Council's website.

Supplemental

Councillor Asbrey asked if more could be done through Welsh medium, to which the Cabinet Member replied that this would depend upon resources, including finance and having staff who were able to deliver through the medium of Welsh.

(iv) Question from Councillor Dr. I. J. Johnson

What is the timetable for the completion of Ysgol Llyn Derw and what are the plans for the current satellite sites being utilised across the Vale?

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

The Llyn Derw programme is currently on track for completion by May 2026. Construction activities on site are progressing well, supported by the recent appointment of Morgan Sindall as the principal contractor. Their mobilisation has been effective, and early indications suggest a positive impact on programme delivery and site co-ordination. The project team continues to monitor progress

closely to ensure milestones are met and any emerging risks are addressed in a timely manner.

YYD currently operates several provisions across the Vale of Glamorgan and continues to expand at pace to meet a significant increase in need and complexity for our most vulnerable pupils in line with our statutory requirements. In terms of our specialist provision estate:

The Early Intervention Base at St Josephs has recently been reconfigured as a service to meet the needs of more pupils in mainstream.

The YYD Barry Campus (former site of St Baruc) continues to be at full capacity, successfully meeting the needs of learners with a variety of ALN.

The main YYD site in the Penarth Learning Community remains over capacity and while accommodation is operationalised, the school has repurposed the hall, common room, therapy room and breakout rooms to temporarily accommodate classes at the start of term.

The Derw Newydd site is also at full capacity, accommodating a significant increase in demand across the primary and secondary phases. This provision serves pupils with the most challenging Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).

Llyn Derw at Cosmeston will become the YYD's 6th form provision, meeting the needs of a range of ALN including pupils who are classified as EBSA (emotionally based school avoidance). There will be around 120 learners on this site.

YYD also supports several provisions based and operated in mainstream school settings via their outreach service, to ensure that where possible, children can remain in their mainstream setting.

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

Of the representations the Council received from members of the public regarding the Cosmeston Aqua Park, how many received expressed support for the scheme and how many were opposed?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

The Council has received and continues to receive correspondence from the public regarding the decision to trail the aquapark in Cosmeston and I can confirm that a report will be brought back to Cabinet and Place Scrutiny following the conclusion of the trial in the autumn which will include an assessment of the success or otherwise of the pilot. As part of this assessment the correspondence received will be considered and tabulated but given the ongoing nature of the trial. I would not be appropriate to provide numbers at this time. The assessment will also consider environmental sustainability, community impact including any anti-social behaviour, visitor enjoyment and financial viability and will include a recommendation for the future based on the assessment.

It is worth noting that that a balanced article in the Penarth Times this week showed that as well as the negative response to the trial there is a significant positive response. We have also been advised that over 550 visitors attended the aqua park over its first weekend with no issues being reported.

Supplemental

Councillor Carroll asked how residents were expected to trust that engagement be taken into account during the assessment, to which the Deputy Leader responded that all responses received were being tabulated and would be incorporated into any assessment.

(vi) Question from Councillor R.R. Thomas

Given there are dozens of more appropriate sites across the region with fewer environmental sensitivities, why was Cosmeston (a haven for wildlife, walkers, families and endangered species) chosen for the Aqua Park?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

The Council was originally approached by the aquapark operator with a request to use the Eastern Lake in Cosmeston in late 2023. At that time, they were looking for a permanent venue to host the aqua park and to move from Cardiff Bay.

The Council was unwilling to consider the type of long-term arrangement that the aqua park was looking for at that time without a trial to fully assess the possible impact of the park on the eastern lake. The operators went away to look at other possible sites but were unsuccessful due to a lack of suitable alternative sites in Southeast Wales.

Following ongoing issues with Cardiff Bay the company approached the Council again in late 2024 and advised that they were willing to operate on a pilot basis with no commitment to continue beyond the summer period of 2025, so that a full assessment could be made of the appropriateness of the use in the Eastern Lake.

The Cabinet decisions of 6th and 20th March, 2025 refer to this decision and if necessary a link can be provided to any Member who has not had the opportunity to read the report as yet.

(vii) Question from Councillor A.M. Ernest

Multiple sources confirm that the endangered Cetti's Warbler is nesting on the shore of Eastern Lake. The Acer report missed this as it was carried out during nesting season. As a result, a full season of chicks is now at risk – with serious consequences for the species. Why is the Council and/or Natural Resources Wales failing to act, given the legal implications?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

Contrary to this statement Acer Ecology has prepared two reports relating to both general ecological issues and focusing specifically on Cetti Warblers. These reports are available on the Councils web site. A link can be provided to all Members should they need one.

Acer ecology are also carrying out monitoring of the eastern lake over the duration of the siting of the water park and will be reporting back at the end of the trial.

The reports have been prepared in consultation with NRW and have reflected the advice received.

There is not considered to be any risk to nesting birds or any other ecological interests and the ongoing monitoring by Acer ecology will ensure this.

Supplemental

Councillor Ernest queried what other endangered species were there in the Eastern Lake, to which the Deputy Leader advised that this was contained within the ecological report.

(viii) Question from G.D.D. Carroll

What steps is the Leader taking to ensure the perception that her Administration avoids scrutiny and accountability is not allowed to hold?

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

As you will be aware, the Council's Constitution which is publicly available outlines a range of processes and functions in place to ensure that decisions are made democratically. The statutory Monitoring Officer is responsible for the Council's legal governance. Decision making processes are primarily through Cabinet, with some through Council. While there are times when decisions need to be made urgently, but these are reported to all Members appropriately, including reporting surrounding the usage of emergency powers.

When decisions are made, whether they be hyper-local or county wide, they are evidence based, and consider elements such as data, wider research and engagement findings from the people of the Vale of Glamorgan alongside how to most productively use our resources and assets as a Council for both now and in the future, in the most sustainable way, considering the principles of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

We all know we are operating in a challenging socioeconomic environment; where tough decisions are made, and not all residents will be satisfied with all decisions, but we must make decisions which are evidence based (which is why we use pilots) and improve longer outcomes for the Vale. We live in a democracy where people are more than entitled to express their opinions, particularly upon social media.

However, there is a fine line with this as Members will be aware, it is important to distinguish between what is genuine Scrutiny of decisions, which is welcomed and necessary in a democracy, and what is ill informed rhetoric founded upon misinformation and mischaracterisation of decisions being repeated publicly. This is where public perceptions are challenged and can have a negative impact upon democracy within the Vale. It is also where abuse and intimidation of elected members can occur.

We all have a part to play in accurately reflecting the business and decisions made in this place. Indeed, as Group Leaders we are also responsible for the conduct of our party members.

To read recent public comments by members that decisions had been rushed through using emergency power and avoided public scrutiny when both had been publicly considered by both Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee and both members had contributed to the debate. While all external regulators view this Council as a good Council perhaps you might like to look a little closer to home for the cause of any such inaccurate perceptions.

Supplemental

Councillor Carroll asked if the Leader accepted that reducing Scrutiny meetings and Committees undermined the notion of scrutiny and accountability, to which the Leader replied that there were five Committees at the time of the decision being made. They also reflected that the standard of debate in Scrutiny was limited with a small amount of recommendations, and the changes were looking to improve this, building on the recommendations of the Performance Panel Assessment.

(ix) 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 am a little surprised at your question Councillor Carroll, which we received on 3rd July 2025; as the Cabinet papers featuring three reports on car parking, including an updated 'Car Parking - Guiding Principles', document was published on the Council's website on Friday, 27th June, 2025. This information was therefore all available for you to view when you submitted your question. I would therefore refer you to these Cabinet papers and suggest, in particular, that you read the "Car Parking - Guiding Principles, June 2025", document.

Supplemental

Councillor Godfrey asked if there could be consideration of Marie Curie Hospice, Penarth and use of technology to alleviate concern and stress in difficult life situation, to which the Cabinet Member advised this was a matter for the Hospice.

(x) Question from Councillor S.J. Haines

There has been a recent announcement from the UK Labour Government regarding new train stations in Wales. St Athan was not included on the list, even though money was allocated to the project by the previous Conservative Government. It is therefore clear there are no plans for St Athan to receive a train station in the foreseeable future.

As the Revised Local Development Plan was based on providing housing in areas with good public transport to meet with this Council and the Welsh Government's Net Zero Plan and The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, which puts in place a "sustainable development principle", will this Council be revisiting the RLDP in respect of housing in the St Athan ward?

Reply from Cabinet Member for Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services

Further clarity will be sought from UK Government regarding funding opportunities for St. Athan. As the evidence base for the RLDP is developed further, the Council will continue to assess and consider the proposed allocations, and their relationship to transport options, employment opportunities and other infrastructure.

Supplemental

Councillor Haines asked around the latest tranche of housing being in deficit, how would the Council support people to get to work or other areas using public transport, to which the Cabinet Member responded that this would be considered as part of the RLDP process.

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

Will the Cabinet Member please explain the rationale for recent changes to the Council's Preferred Strategy for its Local Development Plan?

Reply from Cabinet Member for Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services

Through preparation of the Replacement LDP, the Council should only allocate land that will realistically come forward for development during the Plan period. Through discussions with the promoters of the site at North West Barry, it was established that there were deliverability issues due to a lack of formal agreement between several different landowners. As a consequence, it was necessary to look for alternative sites within Barry, as this is the most sustainable settlement in the Vale in terms of good public transport links, employment opportunities and a wide range of services and facilities; and it is also the area with the highest affordable housing need.

Following a detailed assessment of the available candidate sites, three sites in Barry were identified as being suitable for further consideration, subject to a public

consultation to establish the views of a range of stakeholders. Collectively these sites would deliver nearly 500 much needed homes, including affordable housing.

Supplemental

Councillor Carroll asked if there was a recognition of the impact of imposing an additional 400 houses on an area which may cause traffic difficulties and other challenges, to which the Cabinet Member responded that there was a need for affordable housing and that any developments would be subject to consultation, where all available options would be looked at.