THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Hybrid Meeting held on 5th October 2026.

The meeting papers are available here.

The recording of the meeting is available in English or English and Welsh.

To view the presentation and subsequent discussion for any Part I agenda item, please click the hyperlink contained in its title below.

Present: Councillor Carys Stallard (Mayor), Councillors Anne Asbrey, Julie Aviet, Gareth Ball, Rhiannon Birch, Bronwen Brooks, Gillian Bruce, Ian Buckley, Lis Burnett, Samantha Campbell, George Carroll, Christine Cave, Janice Charles, Amelia Collins, Marianne Cowpe, Brandon Dodd, Pamela Drake, Vincent Driscoll, Anthony Ernest, Robert Fisher, Christopher Franks, Wendy Gilligan, Russell Godfrey, Emma Goodjohn, Ewan Goodjohn, Stephen Haines, Sally Hanks, William Hennessy, Nic Hodges, Shirley Hodges, 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, Neil Thomas, Steffan Wiliam, Margaret Wilkinson, Edward Williams and Mark Wilson.

270 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”.

271 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor N.J. Wood.

272 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

273 MINUTES –

Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson noted the omission of the presentation of the petition on behalf of Ysgol Gymraeg Sant Curig, which expressed concern regarding the safety of children crossing the road outside the school.

Councillor Haines indicated that they would like their comments around Agenda Item Item 9 – Use of Urgent Decision Procedure – Local Growth Fund in Wales – Vale of

Glamorgan – Cabinet: 16th April, 2026 to be included within the minutes, whereby they sought to address matters relating to the substantive Local Growth Fund decision previously determined by Cabinet and sought to establish how much of the fund was dedicated to improving transport links in St. Athan and whether any funding was earmarked for a new railway station to connect the area to the wider region, previously determined by Cabinet, rather than the agenda item before Council concerning the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure. During the contribution Councillor Dr I. J. Johnson sought a point of order regarding the nature of the item as a report submitted for noting and not a matter for debate. The Mayor explained that they had been permitted to address the meeting in order to establish the purpose of their contribution before ruling that as the item was before Councill for noting, and that any questions relating to the substantive matter should be directed to the relevant Cabinet Member in writing outside of the meeting or through the Member question process at the next Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2026 be approved as a correct record.

274 ANNOUNCEMENTS –

The Mayor shared that some of the events they had attended, including the Deputy Mayor being a guest at Vale Cricket Club in Corntown to watch the Cricket Wales T20 Women's Cricket Finals Day, and believed that the occasion was a good opportunity to see first-hand how women's cricket had progressed in the last decade and to discuss how the Club was becoming a hub for the local community. They also shared that they had the honour of attending Barry Bike Club's final session of the year at Iolo Park, a project that gave local children free access to bikes and cycling lessons – run by Pedal Power – in a safe environment and that they were very happy as Mayor to award every child with a certificate of achievement.

275 PUBLIC QUESTIONS –

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

(i) **Question from D. Hill**

Will the Cabinet Member for Education and the Director of Learning and Skills address the systemic disadvantage faced by rural families due to the lack of alignment between primary feeder school networks and secondary school catchment boundaries?

Currently, rural families who send their children to their designated local primary schools find themselves excluded from free secondary transport because the Council's rigid 'nearest school' policy does not match historical or educational catchments. This forces a situation where some pupils receive fully funded transport, while neighbouring rural families are refused even the option to purchase commercial spare seats – despite the Department for Transport extending the

PSVAR exemptions for home-to-school transport specifically to protect rural capacity.

What urgent steps is this Council taking to review its learner travel policy so that rural working families are not unfairly penalised by outdated, non-aligned catchment boundaries and restricted access to purchase passes?

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

The Council's Home to School Transport Policy is based on the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 and applies consistently to all learners. Eligibility for free transport is determined by a learner's home address and their catchment school, rather than the primary school they previously attended.

Parents may choose a school outside their designated catchment arrangements; however, this does not create an entitlement to free home to school transport.

The Council reviews school admissions arrangements on an annual basis.

The Council may offer spare seats on school transport services where capacity is available. The current cost of a spare seat is £470 per academic year. Pupils who purchase a spare seat are not eligible for free school transport because they either live within the statutory walking distance or attend a school other than their designated catchment school.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has long required school transport services to comply with the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR). Under these regulations, any vehicle with a capacity exceeding 22 passengers must provide:

- Wheelchair spaces
- Boarding lifts or ramps
- Handrails and step markings
- Accessible seating.

The majority of vehicles used for school transport services with a capacity of more than 22 passengers are coaches that do not meet PSVAR requirements.

An exemption previously granted by the DfT, which allowed operators to continue using non-compliant vehicles and enabled Councils to sell spare seats, expired on 31st July 2026. Prior to the end of the academic year, the Council wrote to all families who had previously purchased spare seat passes to advise them that, in the absence of a further exemption from the DfT, spare seat sales would no longer be possible.

However, in late July 2026, the Council was informed that the DfT had reversed its decision and would once again allow operators to apply for an exemption. This exemption would permit the continued sale of spare seats on eligible school transport services. The Council therefore asked all operators to submit applications and confirm when an exemption had been granted. It should be noted that

participation in this process was voluntary, as operators were under no obligation to apply.

The majority of operators have now successfully obtained the exemption and, as of 21st September 2026, the spare seat purchase system has reopened. However, where an operator has either not applied for, or has not been granted, an exemption, the Council is unable to sell spare seats on those services.

(ii) **Question from D. Weston**

The public footpath is covered in a large number of tension cracks. Probably, more per meter than there is without. There are also several areas where temporary heras fencing has been erected, presumably due to poor and unstable ground conditions.

Could the Cabinet please advise on the current plan to correct the defects and attend to the overgrowth? The situation has been ongoing for some time with little or no sign of the ground of works taking place that would provide a long term solution to the problem. Could the Cabinet advise on a timescale when physical works will commence and an anticipated completion date?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

Thank you for your question, Mr. Weston.

Firstly, it is important to distinguish between the pathways within the White Farm open space and the primary public pathway adjacent to the development, as responsibility for these areas differs.

The primary public pathway, where temporary Heras fencing has been erected, has not yet been adopted by the Council and remains the responsibility of the developer. The Council would not be prepared to adopt the pathway in its current condition given the extent of the defects, including tension cracking and evidence of ground instability. Officers continue to engage with the developer regarding the investigations and remedial works required before the pathway can be considered for adoption.

A number of tension cracks have also been identified on pathways within the adopted White Farm open space, which are maintained by the Council. Officers are currently assessing the most appropriate engineering solution to ensure that any works provide a durable, long-term remedy rather than simply addressing the visible defects.

The Council is also aware of concerns regarding overgrowth and will continue to undertake maintenance where required. Temporary safety measures will remain in place whilst investigations and assessments are completed.

Whilst I appreciate residents' frustration, it is important that any solution addresses the underlying causes rather than providing a short-term fix. Consequently, a definitive start and completion date cannot yet be provided. Works to the unadopted pathway remain a matter for the developer, whilst the Council is actively progressing

investigations into the adopted pathways and will provide a further update once the preferred remedial approach and programme of works have been established. In the meantime, the area will continue to be monitored to ensure public safety.

(iii) **Question from C. Hawkins**

How many employees are there directly employed by the Vale Council 2025/2026? And what is the wage bill?

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

The number of employees directly employed by the Council understandably fluctuates throughout the year.

As at 31st March 2026, the following number of staff were employed by the Council across various categories along with the following total costs (comprising pay and employer oncosts).

Category	Total (£)	Headcount as at 31/3/26
Delegated Schools	136,585,004	3,076
Non Schools Incl HRA and Corporate	85,742,722	1,758
Regional Internal Audit Service	1,120,700	15
Shared Regulatory Services	9,898,234	166
Regional Adoption Service	2,132,988	32
Member Salaries	1,719,223	67
Total	**237,198,872**	**5,114**

Shared Regulatory Services, Regional Adoption Services and the Regional Audit Service are shown as separate lines as the Vale of Glamorgan Council is the employer for these collaborative arrangements, however the staff work across multiple Local Authority areas. The totals above also include Elected Members. Please note this information excludes any bodies for which the Council provides payroll services (so therefore does not include Big Fresh Catering Company, for example).

(iv) **Question from B. Shaw**

At the Council Meeting held on 1st December 2025, a reply to a Question to Council from a Council Member came from the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources stating that a demolition application decision notice was issued on 7th November 2025, which includes a requirement for further approval of the method and means of demolition. in the form of a Demolition Environment Management Plan.

Was a Demolition Environment Management Plan ever approved, what was the method and means of demolition and what further progress can be made regarding

the future of this site?

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

The further details were approved on 28th November 2025 under reference 2025/01027/1CD. Officers understand that the demolition works (insofar as they relate to the scope of the notification) are substantively complete.

The Demolition Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) outlined a methodology of progressive dismantling/deconstruction using cranes, high-reach/mechanical plant and hot cutting, along with details of environmental mitigation including traffic management, waste management, noise and vibration control, lighting, drainage, ecological mitigation etc.

The Council is not in receipt of any formal proposals for the re-use of the site at this time.

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

The Leader presented the report which sought to obtain Council's approval for updates within the Council's Constitution as outlined within Section 4 of the report.

RESOLVED – T H A T the amendments to the Council's Constitution as detailed in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4 of the report be approved and that the Constitution be updated accordingly.

Reason for decision

To update the Constitution to reflect amendments as outlined within the report.

277 REVIEW OF SECTION 19 OF THE CONSTITUTION: STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FRAMEWORK (MO/HLDS) –

The Leader presented the report which advised Full Council of the work undertaken by the Standards Committee Procedures Working Group in reviewing Section 19 of the Council's Constitution relating to Member conduct and standards arrangements and reported on the outcome of the consultation undertaken with Political Group Leaders following consideration of the Working Group's recommendations by the Standards Committee.

The report presented the proposed amendments to Section 19 of the Constitution, including the Standards of Conduct Principles, the Protocol: Standards of Conduct Expected by Members and the Local Dispute Resolution Procedure and sought Full Council approval to adopt the amended Section 19 as part of the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Carroll noted the inclusion of 'misinformation' in the Code but expressed concern about its implementation. They questioned how the Council would manage legitimate engagement by Councillors who were trying to correct misinformation on social media without being unfairly penalised.

Councillor S. Hodges noted around online anonymous accounts, and how Members engaged with this in many ways, including often clarifying misinformation.

Councillor Perry argued that the process created an imbalance, particularly for Independent Members who lacked the institutional and legal support available to Members of larger political groups. They suggested that the Council should provide independent legal protection against Code of Conduct allegations.

Councillor Mahoney criticised the presence of Councillors on the Standards Committee, arguing it should be composed of neutral individuals to avoid political squabbles.

Councillor Haines expressed concern that replacing 'censure' with 'apology' weakened sanctions, argued against reduced independent representation on panels, and cautioned that informal mediation might undermine transparency.

A Recorded Vote was undertaken as below:

Member	**For**	**Against**	**Abstain**
A. Asbrey		√	
J. Aviet	√		
G. Ball	√		
R. Birch	√		
B. Brooks	√		
G. Bruce		√	
I. Buckley	√		
L. Burnett	√		
S. Campbell		√	
G. Carroll		√	
C. Cave		√	
J. Charles		√	
A. Collins		√	
M. Cowpe		√	
B. Dodd		√	
P. Drake	√		
V. Driscoll		√	

Member	For	Against	Abstain
A. Ernest		√	
R. Fisher		√	
C. Franks		√	
W. Gilligan	√		
R. Godfrey		√	
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
S. Haines		√	
S. Hanks	√		
W. Hennessy		√	
N. Hodges		√	
S. Hodges		√	
C. Iannucci-Williams	√		
G. John	√		
I. Johnson		√	
S. Lloyd-Selby	√		
B. Loveluck-Edwards	√		
J. Lynch-Wilson	√		
K. Mahoney		√	
N. Marshallsea	√		
M. Morgan	√		
J. Norman	√		
H. Payne	√		
E. Penn	√		
S. Perkes	√		
I. Perry		√	
J. Protheroe	√		
R. Sivagnanam	√		
C. Stallard	√		
N. Thomas	√		
S. Wiliam		√	
M. Wilkinson	√		
E. Williams	√		

Member	For	Against	Abstain
M. Wilson	√		
TOTAL	**29**	**22**	

RESOLVED –

(1) T HA T the work undertaken by the Standards Committee Procedures Working Group and the subsequent consultation undertaken with Political Group Leaders be noted.

(2) T H A T the amended Section 19 of the Constitution, including the Conduct of Members Principles, Protocol: Standards of Conduct Expected by Members and the Local Dispute Resolution Procedure, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

(3) T H A T the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any necessary administrative, typographical or consequential amendments.

Reasons for decisions

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

(2) To ensure the Council's Constitution reflected the outcomes of the review and continued to support high standards of conduct and effective governance arrangements.

(3) To facilitate implementation of the revised constitutional provisions.

278 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (MO/HLDS) –

The Standards Committee Annual Report for 2025/26, as approved by the Standards Committee, was presented by the Leader for consideration and endorsement by Full Council in accordance with legislative requirements.

The report fulfilled the requirements of Section 63 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which required Standards Committees to produce an Annual Report as soon as reasonably practicable following the end of each financial year.

Councillor Birch commended the report as a member of the Committee, describing it as thorough and detailed.

Councillor Franks asserted that the Committee operated in a free and unbiased manner. He did suggest, however, that the Independent Members might benefit from a broader representation of society beyond their current legal backgrounds.

Councillor Perry expressed strong opposition to the report, arguing it was incomplete and lacked transparency. They criticised the Committee for failing to report on past

criticisms and raised concerns regarding how hearings were conducted while the Committee was not quorate.

Following a Vote, it was subsequently

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the Standards Committee Annual Report for 2025/26, as approved by the Standards Committee on 30th July 2026 and attached at Appendix A to the report, be endorsed.

(2) T H A T a copy of the finalised report be forwarded to each Vale of Glamorgan Town and Community Council Clerk and the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To comply with the requirements of Section 63 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021..

(2) For information and dissemination of good governance practice.

279 SCRUTINY COMMITTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (DCR) –

Councillor Ianucci-Williams, past Chair of the Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group presented the Annual Report, which had been produced in accordance with Section 7.4.4 of the Council's Constitution which stated that "Scrutiny Committees must report annually to Full Council on their workings, with recommendations for their future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate".

The report detailed the role of Scrutiny, how Scrutiny was undertaken in the Vale of Glamorgan and highlighted key achievements from the work of each Scrutiny Committee, significant events during the Municipal years and future working, specifically in relation to the Council's agreement that the work of Scrutiny should be closely aligned to the Wellbeing Outcomes of the Council's Corporate Plan, Vale 2030.

The report reflected upon the first full Municipal year of the Council's changes to ways of working (entitled Reshaping Scrutiny) and the subsequent Audit Wales review of the Scrutiny function.

RESOLVED – T H A T Council received the Scrutiny Committees Annual Report for 2024/25.

Reason for decision

To receive the Scrutiny Committees Annual Report as required by the Council's Constitution.

280 WAYCOCK CROSS TO CARDIFF AIRPORT ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE (REF) –

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places presented the reference from Cabinet of 23rd July as contained within the agenda emphasising that the project filled a critical gap in local infrastructure and improved safety for residents, noting that the route was part of a regional transport plan.

Councillor Hennessy expressed concern over the priority of the scheme, questioning whether this project was the most appropriate use of Welsh Government funding at this time compared to other potential community needs.

Councillor Perry expressed scepticism regarding the project and the way the route was managed, questioning the effectiveness of the current plans

A Recorded Vote was undertaken as below:

Member	**For**	**Against**	**Abstain**
A. Asbrey	√		
J. Aviet	√		
G. Ball	√		
R. Birch	√		
B. Brooks	√		
G. Bruce		√	
I. Buckley	√		
L. Burnett	√		
S. Campbell	√		
G. Carroll		√	
C. Cave		√	
J. Charles		√	
A. Collins	√		
M. Cowpe	√		
B. Dodd	Did not Vote		
P. Drake	√		
V. Driscoll			√
A. Ernest	√		
R. Fisher		√	
C. Franks	√		
W. Gilligan	√		

Member	For	Against	Abstain
R. Godfrey		√	
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
S. Haines		√	
S. Hanks	√		
W. Hennessy		√	
N. Hodges	√		
S. Hodges	√		
C. Iannucci-Williams	√		
G. John	√		
I. Johnson	√		
S. Lloyd-Selby	√		
B. Loveluck-Edwards	√		
J. Lynch-Wilson	√		
K. Mahoney		√	
N. Marshallsea	√		
M. Morgan	√		
J. Norman	√		
H. Payne	√		
E. Penn	√		
S. Perkes	√		
I. Perry			√
J. Protheroe	√		
R. Sivagnanam	√		
C. Stallard	√		
N. Thomas	√		
S. Wiliam	√		
M. Wilkinson	√		
E. Williams	√		
M. Wilson	√		
TOTAL	**39**	**9**	**2**

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of delegated powers regarding the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders be approved.

Reason for decision

To comply with governance requirements by confirming that a further report would be presented to Full Council, as Cabinet did not hold delegated powers to authorise the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders which maintained legal and constitutional integrity.

281 BIGLIS TO DINAS POWYS ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER (REF) –

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places presented the reference from Cabinet of 24th September 2026 as contained within the agenda and clarified that this was about approving the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process as a last resort should voluntary land negotiations fail. They emphasised that negotiations had been ongoing for several years and would continue in parallel with the formal CPO procedure.

Councillor Penn noted support for the project, metaphorically suggesting the Council should "stick our bikes in higher gear and get moving" to expedite the delivery of the route.

Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson commended the report, highlighting that while compulsory purchase was a last resort, the project was essential. They noted the route was a long-awaited "well-being route" and shared that the plan had been previously supported by the Planning Committee.

Councillor Franks expressed strong support for the proposal, and criticised late opposition to the project, noting that extensive discussions had taken place over many years. They argued that rejecting the CPO scheme would likely result in the loss of funding for the Council.

Councillor Payne indicated strong support for the route, they emphasised the safety benefits, sharing personal anecdotes about how dangerous the current road was for cyclists and pedestrians, especially at night, and welcomed the move toward a well-lit, safe infrastructure.

Councillor Perry expressed that the report presented a difficult decision for him, referencing his general opposition to shared path projects as part of his specific stance on Council infrastructure.

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T further to the decision taken at Full Council on 9th March 2026 and having considered the matters set out in the report, a Compulsory Purchase Order entitled the Vale of Glamorgan Biglis to Dinas Powys Active Travel Route Compulsory Purchase Order 2026, pursuant to Sections 239, 240, 246, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981, for the acquisition of the land shown in Appendices A-E and for the creation and acquisition of new rights

over that land, insofar as necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Biglis to Dinas Powys Active Travel Route be made.

(2) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment and Housing and the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services to:

(a) Take all steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) including the publication and service of all notices and the promotion of the Council's case at any public inquiry, including but not limited to the steps in (b) to (h) below;

(b) To make any amendments, deletions or additions to the draft Order Maps and/or draft schedules to the Orders so as to include and describe all interests in land and rights required to facilitate the carrying out of the Scheme;

(c) To acquire interests and new rights in the Order Land either by agreement or compulsorily (including pursuant to any blight notices as appropriate) including conduct of negotiations, making provision for the payment of compensation and where appropriate, provision for temporary and/or permanent relocation of affected parties and/or for cases of exceptional hardship;

(d) To negotiate, agree terms and enter into agreements with interested parties including agreements for the withdrawal of blight notices and/or the withdrawal of objections to the Order and/or undertakings not to enforce the Order on specified terms, including where appropriate seeking the exclusion of land or rights from the Order, making provision for the payment of compensation and/or for relocation;

(e) In the event that the Order is confirmed by the Welsh Ministers, to advertise and give notice of confirmation and thereafter to take all steps to implement the Order including, to execute General Vesting Declarations and/or to serve Notices to Treat and Notices of Entry in respect of interests and rights in the Order Land;

(f) To take all steps in relation to any legal proceedings relating to the Order including defending or settling claims referred to the Lands Tribunal (Lands Chamber of the Upper Tribunal) and/or applications made to the Courts and any appeals; and

(g) To retain and/or appoint external professional advisers and consultants to assist in facilitating the promotion, confirmation and implementation of the Order, the settlement of compensation and any other claims or disputes; and

(h) To appoint external valuers to assist in dealing with the land acquisition process and land valuation issues relating to the Order and any resultant claims for compensation.

<u>Reasons for decisions</u>

(1) To provide authority for the Compulsory Purchase Order required to acquire

land for delivery of the Biglis to Dinas Powys active travel route.

(2) To delegate authority to Officers to take forward the processes involved in taking forward the Compulsory Purchase Order.

282 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2025/26 (REF) –

The Leader presented the reference from Governance and Audit Committee of 20th July 2026 as contained within the agenda, and shared that the Council maintained an under-borrowed status throughout the year, meaning it did not borrow to the maximum extent possible. They shared that the Council utilised £20.5m in total borrowing, consisting of £16m from the Public Works Loan Board, £3.5m from another Local Authority, and £1m advanced by the Welsh Government for town transformation.

They noted that of the borrowing undertaken, £10m was specifically allocated to support capital expenditure for the Housing Revenue Account, and that the total capital financing requirement stood at £213.634m as of 31st March 2026.

They further shared that the Council held £181.871m in gross external borrowing and other long-term debt liabilities, resulting in an under-borrowed position of just over £28m by the end of the financial year, and confirmed that all external borrowing remained well within the authorised limit and operational boundary set for the year.

Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson noted that as a member of the Governance and Audit Committee, they clarified that the lack of additional Council comments during the Full Council meeting was not a lack of scrutiny, but rather a reflection of the thorough discussions that had already taken place at the Committee level over the summer.

RESOLVED – T H A T the Annual Treasury Management Report 2025/26 be approved.

Reason for decision

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

283 GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26 (REF) –

The Leader presented the report, highlighting that it provided a comprehensive overview of the Committee's activities, including internal audits, thematic strands, and work with Audit Wales regarding self-assessments against CIPFA practical guidance. They noted that the report included Member attendance records and informative profiles of the Committee's Lay Members.

Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson commended the report and congratulated the Committee Members for their dedication during the previous year. They specifically acknowledged the contributions of Councillor Hooper, who had since moved to a role

in the Senedd, and praised the value provided by the Committee's Independent (Lay) Members, particularly in relation to risk and accounts audits.

RESOLVED – T H A T the Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2025-26 be approved and endorsed.

Reason for decision

To ensure effective monitoring of the Governance and Audit Committee in relation to its agreed terms of reference and in line with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

284 CASH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CONTRACT RENEWAL (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C23, 25th June 2026 (as set out in Section 15.14.2 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.

285 PRE-CONSULTATION DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT 2025/26 (REF) –

RESOLVED – T H A T the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure (Cabinet Minute No. C28, 9th July 2026 (as set out in Section 15.14.2 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.

286 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION [SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS C.M. COWPE AND C.P. FRANKS] –

The below Notice of Motion, moved by Councillor C.M. Cowpe and seconded by Councillor C.P. Franks at the meeting, was debated.

Brookside Crossing and Network Rail

On 26 June, Network Rail closed the widely used Brookside Crossing in Eastbrook, Dinas Powys, forcing many people into lengthy detours to go about their daily business.

Although local Councillors have met with Network Rail, there has so far been no compromise, and the crossing is closed until at least February 2027.

We request that the Vale of Glamorgan Council writes to Network Rail on the following matters:

1. To seek the reopening of Brookside Crossing as soon as safely possible.
2. To request the publication of the evidence and risk assessments supporting the closure and Network Rail's designation of the crossing as particularly dangerous.
3. To seek an independent review of the safety calculations, including the time required to cross and the needs of vulnerable users.
4. To request that the public right of way is properly considered, including whether the current diversion is reasonably convenient and accessible for all.
5. To call for full public consultation with residents and users of the crossing before any permanent decision is made, and
6. To explore practical safety improvements, such as enhanced warning systems, signage, lighting or other measures that could allow the crossing to reopen safely.

Councillor Cowpe proposed the Motion, arguing that decisions regarding community routes must be based on clear evidence and public consultation. They requested the Council work to reopen the crossing, publish risk assessment evidence, and explore practical safety enhancements like lighting and warning systems.

Councillor Franks Seconded the Motion, expressing disappointment in the Council's lack of support for the public campaign and criticising the minimal effort made to inform local communities about the closure.

The Leader opposed the Motion, stating that Network Rail was responsible for safety and had already engaged with the public through three meetings and a published FAQ document. They argued that the Motion was not entirely accurate and that the closure was temporary while options were explored.

Councillor Carroll supported the Motion, noting it served as a valuable opportunity for the Council to use its influence as a public body to advocate for residents. They clarified that supporting the Motion did not mean ignoring safety but rather ensuring transparent communication.

Councillor Asbrey expressed there had been minimal injuries or accidents in recent years, and that no modes of transport were safe, whilst suggesting potential safety improvements.

Councillor Godfrey suggested a compromise by initiating a site meeting between Network Rail representatives, the Council's experienced highways and footpaths team, and local Councillors to address concerns directly.

Councillor John shared an example of a similar footpath in Llantwit Major where trains sounded horns as a safety measure, questioning why similar solutions could not be applied to Brookside Crossing.

Councillor Morgan supported the Motion, drawing parallels to a similar pedestrian crossing closure in Peterston-Super-Ely where residents felt Network Rail failed to consult properly or listen to community alternatives.

Councillor Perry criticised Network Rail for their lack of accountability and failure to prioritise accessibility for people with mobility impairments, suggesting the Council needed to take a stronger stance.

Councillor Payne expressed caution, highlighting that 56% of rail fatalities involve pedestrian crossings and emphasised the need to work co-operatively with experts to ensure safety.

Councillor Buckley noted that the impact of safety incidents was not only to the individual involved, but the passengers, wider families and communities, alongside emergency service responders.

A Recorded Vote was undertaken as below:

Member	**For**	**Against**	**Abstain**
A. Asbrey	√		
J. Aviet		√	
G. Ball			√
R. Birch		√	
B. Brooks		√	
G. Bruce	√		
I. Buckley		√	
L. Burnett		√	
S. Campbell	√		
G. Carroll	√		
C. Cave	√		
J. Charles	√		
A. Collins	√		
M. Cowpe	√		
B. Dodd			√
P. Drake			√
V. Driscoll	√		
A. Ernest	√		
R. Fisher	√		
C. Franks	√		
W. Gilligan		√	

Member	For	Against	Abstain
R. Godfrey	√		
Emma Goodjohn			√
Ewan Goodjohn			√
S. Haines	√		
S. Hanks	√		
W. Hennessy	√		
N. Hodges	√		
S. Hodges	√		
C. Iannucci-Williams			√
G. John			√
I. Johnson	√		
S. Lloyd-Selby			√
B. Loveluck-Edwards			√
J. Lynch-Wilson			√
K. Mahoney	√		
N. Marshallsea			√
M. Morgan	√		
J. Norman		√	
H. Payne		√	
E. Penn		√	
S. Perkes		√	
I. Perry	√		
J. Protheroe			√
R. Sivagnanam		√	
C. Stallard		√	
N. Thomas		√	
S. Wiliam	√		
M. Wilkinson		√	
E. Williams		√	
M. Wilson		√	
TOTAL	**23**	**16**	**12**

RESOLVED – T H A T the Council write to Network Rail on the following matters:

1. To seek the reopening of Brookside Crossing as soon as safely possible.

2. **To request the publication of the evidence and risk assessments** supporting the closure and Network Rail's designation of the crossing as particularly dangerous.

3. **To seek an independent review** of the safety calculations, including the time required to cross and the needs of vulnerable users.

4. **To request that the public right of way is properly considered**, including whether the current diversion is reasonably convenient and accessible for all.

5. **To call for full public consultation** with residents and users of the crossing before any permanent decision is made, and

6. **To explore practical safety improvements**, such as enhanced warning systems, signage, lighting or other measures that could allow the crossing to reopen safely.

Reason for decision

Having regard to discussions at the meeting.

287 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 J. Aviet**

Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the progress of the Pencoedtre Park regeneration?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

I'm pleased to update you that all three parts of the project including the splash pad, skatepark and toilet block have been tendered and evaluated. The splash pad contractor, Ustigate, has been appointed to undertake the splashpad refurbishment and has an anticipated start date of 2nd November on site.

The preferred contractor for the skatepark and master planning exercise has been issued with an award letter, and the standstill period for contract award ends on 5th October. A public consultation on the concept skatepark plan will be undertaken as soon as it can be arranged.

A preferred contractor for the construction of the toilet block has been determined, and this is in the final stages of formal appointment.

A site meeting has been set up for early October to discuss coordination of the contracts on site and agree detailed programmes.

Needless to say I am really excited and pleased that we have been able to invest considerable resources into Pencoedtre Park, where we know the investment will make a real difference to families and young people, a core objective in our long-term plan.

Supplemental

Councillor Aviet asked about the potential for residents to be involved in the process, to which the Deputy Leader responded that they would advertise consultation dates through official channels to encourage participation, including potential online formats, to ensure as many people as possible could take part.

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

What action is the Council taking to reduce the flood and ice risks posed by blocked drains across the Vale of Glamorgan?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

The Council recognises the importance of keeping our highway drainage network working effectively, particularly in reducing the risks of flooding, standing water and ice.

We have a programme of gully cleansing and drainage maintenance across the Vale, alongside targeted inspections and additional work at locations with a known history of flooding or drainage problems.

We also investigate reports from residents, Elected Members and our officers. These are prioritised according to risk, so that locations presenting the greatest potential danger to highway users receive the appropriate attention.

Severe and prolonged weather inevitably places additional pressure on the drainage network. That is why we combine planned preventative maintenance with a risk-based response to emerging problems.

Our priority is straightforward: to use the resources available as effectively as possible, tackle the locations presenting the greatest risk, and help keep the Vale's roads safe and resilient.

The Council recognises the importance of maintaining the highway drainage network to minimise the risk of flooding and ice across the Vale of Glamorgan.

As with many highway authorities, the Council must balance planned maintenance with increasing demands arising from severe weather events. Consequently, a risk-based approach is adopted, prioritising blocked gullies, flooding incidents and other safety-critical issues to ensure available resources deliver the greatest benefit to residents and highway users.

As with many Councils, maintaining an extensive drainage network presents ongoing challenges, particularly given the increasing frequency of severe weather events. However, the Council continues to prioritise locations that present the highest flood or safety risk and responds to reports of blocked gullies and drainage defects as they are received. Our focus is on ensuring that available resources are directed where they will have the greatest impact on public safety and network resilience.

Supplemental

Councillor Carroll highlighted blocked drains on Leckwith Road had been a persistent issue in his ward of Llandough, and noted that the Authority only possessed two gully tanker teams to manage approximately 25,000 drains on the highway network. Consequently, they asked if the Council would consider increasing investment to expand this capacity and further reduce the risk of flooding and ice hazards. The Cabinet Member explained that the Council had hired additional gully tankers during the previous year when they were required, specifically to manage the impacts caused by inclement weather

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

What steps are being taken by the Local Authority to end industrial action at High Street Primary School?

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

The industrial action has now concluded, and the Council is not currently on notice of any further industrial action at the school.

Throughout this period, the Council has remained actively engaged with the school, Governing Body, staff representatives and recognised trade unions. Our focus has been on supporting the school to address concerns raised by staff, maintaining constructive dialogue between all parties, and assisting the school in identifying practical measures to support staff wellbeing and the safe operation of the school.

The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the school and its stakeholders and will provide further support and advice as required should any new issues arise.

Supplemental

Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson asked a supplementary question regarding how local Councillors could be notified of industrial action in the future to avoid finding out via the press. In response, Councillor Burch confirmed that the Council itself was not informed of the action beforehand.

(iv) **Question from Councillor Ewan Goodjohn**

What impact on provision has been seen as a result of the £535k additional funding for Youth Services?

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

The Youth service has established the STRIVE Programme to support pre-16 young people at risk of becoming NEET, with staff delivering targeted interventions across all Vale secondary schools for learners identified as at risk, including *EmpowerHER*, *Bike Maintenance*, *Boys and Misogyny*, *Gloves in the Gym*, and bespoke mentoring programmes.

Throughout the summer, staff-maintained contact with at-risk learners, providing training and skills development opportunities, including Barista training. Staff also attended all secondary schools on GCSE results day to support learners, collect destination data, and identify those requiring further intervention. Young people recorded as "unknown" destinations are now being actively followed up, including home visits where appropriate.

Two new staff members have been recruited to deliver the Pre-16 Pathways Programme, which aims to secure up to 100 work experience and placement opportunities across the Council for learners in year10 and year11 in our schools. Engagement events have already taken place, with further activity planned alongside schools to identify learners requiring this intervention and support whilst further mapping of ‘pathways’ is undertaken to identify opportunities for apprenticeship within the council for those leaving statutory schooling.

The service has recruited an additional 10 staff and expanded provision across the Vale, including a new youth club in St Athan and strengthened rural delivery in communities such as Colwinston and Wick. In response to feedback from young people, Welsh-language provision has also been relocated from Llantwit Major to Cowbridge.

A dedicated post-16 worker has been appointed to support learners at risk of disengaging from education, providing targeted wellbeing and retention support within sixth forms due to an increase of learners disengaging within sixth forms.

Work is progressing with GlastonBarry to develop a large-scale youth event in March 2027. In addition, draft approval has been received for the proposed Youth Village at Pencoedtre High School, with development now moving forward.

Significant investment has also been made in refurbishing the YMCA youth club, ensuring the facility remains modern, sustainable, and well-equipped for young people and community users.

Since the appointment of a new Outdoor and International Lead, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award offer is increased by over 200% across the Vale, and funding has been secured for an international youth exchange to Malaysia in July 2027.

Additional staffing hours have supported the development of new initiatives, including an Elective Home Education (EHE) project offer, an LGBTQ+ project joint funded through Welsh Government, and expanded outdoor learning opportunities. A notable example was the Year 7 transition programme at Pencoedtre High School,

where all new pupils completed a section of the Vale Coastal Path as part of their transition and team-building activities with youth work staff and the school.

These developments demonstrate the service's continued commitment to expanding opportunities, responding to emerging needs, and improving outcomes for young people across the Vale.

In addition, working with partners and the voice of young people's needs, the service will submit its DRAFT 5yr Strategy for Youth Work in the Vale to Welsh Government.

Collectively, this investment has enabled the Youth Service to maintain and enhance a broad range of universal, targeted, preventative and specialist provision across the Vale. Young people now have increased access to youth clubs, outreach and rural provision, wellbeing support, educational engagement programmes, employability initiatives, outdoor learning opportunities, Welsh-medium provision, participation activities and international experiences. The additional resource has strengthened the service's ability to respond to emerging needs whilst ensuring a diverse and accessible offer remains available to young people from all communities across the Vale.

The Youth Service delivers provision across the Central, Eastern and Western Vale through a combination of universal open-access, targeted and specialist interventions. Following the introduction of additional provision in Colwinston, Wick and St Athan, the service continues to operate its established youth clubs in Penarth (The Nest), Barry (Youthy and Youthy 17+), Rhoose (Roost) and Llantwit Major (Lounge), ensuring young people have access to safe spaces, trusted relationships and informal learning opportunities within their local communities.

A range of wellbeing-focused lunchtime and after-school provision continues to operate across schools, including clubs at Llantwit Major School, St Cyres School, Stanwell School and Whitmore High School. In addition, a full-time youth worker funded through the Urdd supports the delivery of lunchtime projects within Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg, further strengthening Welsh-medium and school-based youth work provision.

Community-based and outreach provision continues to engage young people in their local areas through activities including multi-sports sessions in Central Park, mobile youth provision in Sully and community cricket sessions at Colcot Sports Centre. Welsh-medium opportunities have also expanded, with open-access provision now operating from both Barry YMCA and PADSAC in Penarth. Following a review of participation levels, Welsh-medium provision is being relocated from Llantwit Major to Cowbridge to maximise accessibility and engagement.

Alongside universal provision, the service delivers a wide range of targeted projects, including Gloves in the Gym, Penarth Youth Action Group, the Link Hub employability project delivered in partnership with DWP and other employability partners, Emojis Children's Wellbeing Project, Young Carers and Wellbeing provision in Rhoose, Hub Club for young people with additional learning needs, the Hunaniaeth Welsh Culture Project, Hive Guys intergenerational work and the Bro Radio Academy Project.

This provision is further enhanced through a range of one-to-one and group-based interventions focused on homelessness prevention, post-16 NEET prevention, Families First wellbeing support and bespoke mentoring programmes. The wider service offer also includes residential opportunities, Duke of Edinburgh's Award activities, expeditions, international exchanges, respite opportunities for young carers and participation programmes, providing young people with opportunities to develop confidence, resilience, skills and aspirations.

Supplemental

Councillor Goodjohn asked for assurances that the youth service would engage with new development opportunities, specifically mentioning the former Wilko site and Holm View, to ensure services were delivered to the most disadvantaged communities. The Cabinet Member provided an absolute assurance that youth services would prioritise consultation with all aspects of development.

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

How many contractors does the Council currently engage to carry out highway and footway repairs across its network?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

The Council currently engages a single principal contractor, Centregreat Ltd, to undertake highway and footway repair works across the Vale of Glamorgan. This arrangement provides the Council with an established delivery mechanism for undertaking planned and responsive maintenance across the highway network, including carriageway and footway repairs.

Centregreat Ltd was appointed through the South East Wales Highway Framework. The framework provides participating local authorities with a structured and compliant procurement route through which suitably qualified contractors can be appointed to undertake highway-related works.

The use of the framework enables the Council to secure competitive and demonstrable value for money while also ensuring that contractors have already demonstrated the necessary technical competence, experience, financial capacity and ability to meet the relevant health and safety and industry requirements.

The framework approach also assists the Council by reducing the time and administrative costs that would otherwise be associated with undertaking separate procurement exercises for individual programmes of highway works.

However, appointment through the framework does not remove the need for the Council to scrutinise performance or ensure that individual schemes represent value for money. The Council retains responsibility for monitoring the delivery, quality and cost of the works commissioned.

The Council operates contract management, inspection and quality assurance procedures to ensure that highway and footway works are delivered in accordance with the required standards and specifications.

Contractor performance is regularly monitored by Council officers. This includes consideration of the quality and timeliness of work, compliance with specifications and the overall performance of the contractor.

Completed works are subject to inspection and appropriate quality checks. Where work does not meet the required specification or standard, the Council is able to require the contractor to address deficiencies in accordance with the relevant contractual arrangements.

This process is important because value for money cannot simply be measured by the initial cost of undertaking a repair. The durability and expected lifespan of the completed work must also be considered. A repair that has to be revisited prematurely can create additional expenditure, further disruption for residents and road users, and additional pressure on highway maintenance budgets. The Council therefore seeks to achieve an appropriate balance between cost, quality, durability and timely delivery when commissioning highway works.

For context, expenditure on highway repairs during the previous financial year and during the first six months of the current financial year is set out below:

Financial Year	Highway Repair Expenditure
2025/26	£2,204,707.39
2026/27 – to 30 September 2026	£1,264,005.00

The expenditure of approximately £1.264 million during the first six months of 2026/27 represents around 57% of the total expenditure recorded during the whole of 2025/26.

It is important, however, not to assume that expenditure will necessarily continue at the same rate throughout the remainder of the financial year. Highway expenditure can vary considerably during the year according to the timing and scale of individual schemes, weather conditions, emergency repairs, the availability of resources and the scheduling of planned maintenance programmes.

Nevertheless, the level of expenditure demonstrates the significant resources being directed towards maintaining and improving the Vale of Glamorgan's highway infrastructure.

The Council recognises that maintaining the highway network represents a significant financial commitment and that residents rightly expect expenditure to result in good-quality and durable improvements.

Value for money is therefore considered through a combination of competitive procurement, contract management, inspection and monitoring of contractor performance. Officers also seek to ensure that resources are directed towards works

where intervention is required and where expenditure can provide an effective and lasting improvement to the network.

Where appropriate, consideration is also given to coordinating highway works with other planned activity. Effective programming can help minimise unnecessary disruption, reduce the risk of recently completed surfaces subsequently being disturbed and maximise the benefit obtained from available resources.

The Council will continue to monitor the performance of its highway contractor and the effectiveness of its maintenance programme. This includes considering the quality and durability of completed works alongside their cost, rather than assessing value solely on the basis of the initial price.

Maintaining the highway and footway network remains a continuing challenge because of factors including traffic volumes, ageing infrastructure, adverse weather and increasing costs within the construction and maintenance sectors. It is therefore important that the resources available to the Council are used efficiently and that maintenance interventions provide the greatest practical benefit.

The Council's objective is ultimately to maintain a safe, serviceable and resilient highway network while securing value for money for residents. The combination of framework procurement, professional contract management, inspection and quality assurance provides an important mechanism for achieving this and for holding contractors to account for the standard of work delivered across the Vale of Glamorgan.

Supplemental

Councillor Carroll raised a concern regarding recent work carried out on Uplands Crescent in Llandough. They noted that while residents were pleased to see repairs being made, the quality was poor, specifically citing loose tarmac and debris that had been swept into a nearby drain. The Cabinet Member reiterated that the Council operated contract management, inspection, and quality assurance procedures to hold the contractor accountable and ensure work met required standards

(vi) **Question from Councillor A. Asbrey**

You will be aware of the major traffic issues involving the transport of pupils to Ysgol y Deri since the start of term. Many of these vulnerable children have experienced delays in getting to classes and returning home in a timely manner. Will the Cabinet member indicate what measures are being taken to address the traffic congestion along Sully Road and the entrance to Ysgol y Deri following the implementation of new school transport rules?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

Whilst the Council has reviewed ALN transport arrangements for pupils who live within the applicable distance criteria, a number of school transport vehicles have transferred from the Ysgol Y Deri site to the new provision at Cosmeston. When this reduction in transport vehicles is considered alongside the number of parents who

may now be transporting their child(ren), the overall impact of the transport review on the number of vehicles expected to access the site has been minimal.

The first week or two of a new school term often see higher levels of parental drop-off activity, even where school transport arrangements are already in place. Many parents understandably prefer to transport their children personally whilst they settle into new routines. In addition, the start of term coincides with the arrival of new Year 7 pupils, many of whom are also becoming familiar with their transport arrangements. These factors, together with the shared use of the site with St Cyres School, contribute to increased traffic volumes during the first week of the autumn term.

The beginning of the academic year can also result in transport operations taking longer than usual on site. Pupils often require additional support when disembarking vehicles, particularly those who are wheelchair users or have other mobility needs. Furthermore, many pupils will have changed vehicles over the summer period and staff may require a short period of time to become familiar with which pupils are travelling on which vehicles. Whilst this can increase the time vehicles spend on site during the first few days of term, experience shows that these processes become more efficient as pupils, drivers, passenger assistants and school staff establish their routines.

Generally, traffic levels reduce after the first couple of weeks as pupils and families become accustomed to established routines and greater use is made of available transport provision.

Indeed, following a survey that was carried out on Thursday 24th September I can confirm that Sully Road was free of queueing traffic between 08:40 and 09:15, except for a 3-minute queue where vehicles entering the Penarth Learning Community site were leaving large gaps between each other. The internal car park of the site was also clear by 09:15.

Supplemental

Councillor Asbrey followed up by asking about the impact of refusing transport to some pupils and whether this decision was a mistake, to which the Deputy Leader responded that this was a separate issue from the original question asked.

(vii) **Question from Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby**

Following three successful pop-up events at the former Wilko store, could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the progress of the Wilko store renovation?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

The three successful pop-up events held within the former Wilko store have been extremely encouraging and have demonstrated both the level of local interest in the building and its potential to support a much broader range of activity within Holton Road.

They have provided a valuable opportunity to bring a prominent vacant unit back into temporary use, attract additional footfall and begin testing how the space could contribute to the future vitality of the town centre.

Alongside these interim uses, the Council is progressing the work necessary to develop the longer-term proposals for the building. This includes:

- detailed design and technical work,
- consideration of the most appropriate mix and configuration of uses,
- and the development of the operational and business planning required to ensure that the future scheme is both deliverable and sustainable.

The intention is not simply to refurbish the former Wilko store and return it to its previous use, but to take the opportunity to create a flexible, adaptable and active town-centre space that responds to local demand, changing high-street trends and the wider needs of Barry town centre.

The experience gained through the pop-up events is also useful in informing that work. They demonstrate the value of flexible space capable of accommodating different activities, businesses and events, and allow the Council to learn from how people engage with and use the building before its longer-term configuration is finalised.

The Council is therefore taking a considered, evidence-led approach to the renovation, ensuring that investment in the property supports a sustainable long-term future rather than delivering a short-term solution. Further information on the proposed scheme, programme and future uses will be provided as the design and business planning work progresses.

Overall, the success of the pop-ups is a very positive indication of what can be achieved. The aim now is to build on that momentum and transform a major former retail unit into a flexible and productive asset that contributes to increased footfall, activity and the continued regeneration of Holton Road. For reference, a programme outline is highlighted in the Cabinet report from June 2026: Wilko Redevelopment Project.

Supplemental

Councillor Lloyd-Selby noted that the Council had applied for planning permission for a change of use to an event space for 12 months, and asked if an indoor market – a feature strongly requested by residents in recent consultations – was still included in the plans. The Deputy Leader confirmed that an indoor market remained the overarching premise for the site, and that this goal was consistent with the feedback received from the surveys conducted by the Council.

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

Will the Leader please provide an update on any discussions held between the Council and the Home Office and other relevant authorities regarding the implications illegal migration has on communities in the Vale of Glamorgan?

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

The Council has not had any recent specific discussions with the Home Office regarding the impact of illegal migration on communities within the Vale of Glamorgan.

Supplemental

Councillor Carroll noted that an Iranian national residing in Barry was recently jailed for assisting unlawful migration. He argued that this case highlighted risks to local communities and asked if the Council would commit to dropping its "County of Sanctuary" policy. The Leader rejected the premise, noting that the individual in question was brought to justice and dealt with appropriately. She emphasised the long history of people contributing positively to the Vale of Glamorgan.

(ix) **Question from Councillor C.P. Franks**

The Cosmeston Medieval Village has been closed to the public for a significant time. However film companies continue to use the village. It is very sad to see the continued decline of the buildings. The maintenance budget for the village has dramatically declined in recent years. What is the long term future of the village and will you indicate when will proposals concerning the maintenance and promotion of Cosmeston Medieval Village be made public?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

I am surprised at this question as I know you have recently had the benefit of a discussion and site visit with officers on this very issue.

That said, and at the risk of repeating what you already know, I can advise that the Council acknowledges concerns regarding the condition and future of Cosmeston Medieval Village, but the current position reflects the significant financial challenges facing local government over many years. The Medieval Village requires substantial ongoing investment to maintain, repair and safely operate the buildings for public access. Unfortunately, the level of funding required now exceeds the resources available within existing budgets.

I would not want you to however confuse this with our approach to the Country Park in general, and I trust you agree that the recent investment in toilet facilities, the new cafe and external spaces, footpaths and access arrangements are to be welcomed and demonstrate this Council’s commitment to our much-valued open spaces.

On the medieval village itself, a strategic decision was taken to close the buildings to public access. This decision was made on the grounds of asset condition, operational costs and the Council's ability to safely maintain and operate the site. However, the wider Medieval Village area remains accessible free of charge and visitors are still able to experience and enjoy the site.

The Council does not accept that the site has been neglected through a lack of effort to secure its future. Considerable sums have been spent in the past to repair buildings and roofs, but the ongoing costs are substantial. Furthermore, over several years, attempts have been made to identify sustainable operating models and increase visitor numbers. This has included promoting the attraction through tourism channels and social media, working with commercial operators, seeking partnership opportunities, and facilitating a range of trial events, including seasonal attractions such as Halloween and Christmas experiences.

These initiatives were intended to test the commercial viability of the site and encourage ongoing private sector involvement. Whilst some events were successful in attracting visitors, none generated sufficient long-term commercial return to justify continued private investment or provide a sustainable operating model for the Medieval Village.

Supplemental

Councillor Franks followed up, describing the site's structural decline – specifically roof damage – "heartbreaking." He asked when a formal proposal would be presented to the Council regarding the village's future and whether the buildings would simply be demolished. The Deputy Leader reaffirmed that the Council would continue to explore opportunities for external partnerships and alternative management arrangements. They emphasised that the suggestion that the Council was intentionally letting the site fall into disrepair was "simply untrue" and that work to secure a future for the site remained ongoing.

(x) **Question from Councillor Emma Goodjohn**

The public consultation regarding the future of the Colcot Sports Centre and Buttrills playing fields concluded in August 2026. Could the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the key findings?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Well-being

Thank you for your question. The consultation generated a very strong response, with more than 700 submissions alongside feedback from residents, sports clubs, community groups and other stakeholders. The overwhelming message was that both sites are highly valued community assets that play an important role in supporting health, wellbeing, community cohesion and participation in sport. While football remains the primary use, there was clear interest in expanding opportunities for a wider range of sports and community activities.

The key themes emerging from the consultation were the need for significant investment in ageing facilities, including changing rooms, toilets, accessibility, provision for women and girls, drainage and parking. There was particularly strong support for bringing the disused artificial pitch back into use through the development of a modern floodlit 3G/4G facility and for increasing all-weather sports provision in Barry. Respondents also expressed strong support for retaining and investing in valued community assets such as Colcot Boxing Club and the Welsh-medium Cylch Meithrin. A consistent and clear message throughout the consultation was opposition

to any future housing development on either site, supporting Cabinet's previous decision to remove this element from the previous proposals.

A report will come to cabinet in October which will provide more detail in relation to the consultation and next steps.

Supplemental

Councillor Goodjohn noted recent issues with toilet facilities at the site and requested that she and fellow Councillor Belinda Loveluck-Edwards be kept updated on the long-term master plan and the timeline for design proposals and funding applications, to which the Cabinet Member explained that a briefing for local Members was being arranged regarding the consultation details. A formal report would be presented to the Cabinet on 22nd October 2026, which would outline the findings and recommended next steps.

(xi) **Question from Councillor R.E. Godfrey**

Given that no national, regional of local retailer was willing to take on the retail units the Wilko store occupied on Holton Road, what expertise/justification does the current Administration have for purchasing both retail units and do they have a business plan for both retail units?

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

We are not a retailer. We have not bought the site as a retailer, and have not purchased the site to 'expand into retailing' so in essence you have answered your own question. The Council's acquisition of the former Wilko units is a strategic regeneration investment aimed at safeguarding the long-term vitality of Holton Road and Barry town centre, rather than simply filling vacant retail space. Council ownership allows a proactive and flexible approach to bringing these prominent properties back into productive use and preventing the negative impacts associated with prolonged vacancy. It is for this reason that we have got involved – because we value the role played by Holton road and want to support it for the benefit of our local communities and residents.

The Council already has experience managing commercial property and delivering complex regeneration projects, supported where necessary by specialist professional advice. This provides a strong basis for developing a commercially informed and sustainable future use for the premises.

Ownership enables the Council to respond to changing market conditions and evolving town-centre needs by considering a wider range of uses beyond traditional retail. Future options can be shaped by customer behaviour, economic trends, local demand, footfall data and community needs, ensuring the building contributes positively to the wider regeneration of Barry.

Supplemental

Councillor Godfrey asked a supplementary question referencing the Lido in Pontypridd and recent funding secured by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council for a Lido in Pontypridd, arguing that as a major resort area, Barry Island should also have a lido facility, to which the Deputy Leader responded this was not relevant to the original question.

(xii) **Question from Councillor S.A. Hodges**

The Barry Island adiZone was opened to great fanfare 15 years ago. What plans does the Cabinet have for its future, including refurbishment or replacement, to provide a good-quality facility for residents and visitors?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

The Barry Island adiZone was opened as part of the legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, providing a free outdoor fitness facility for residents and visitors.

Following many years of use, the facility reached the end of its operational life. The specialist equipment had deteriorated significantly through age, exposure to the coastal environment and repeated vandalism. In addition, replacement parts are no longer available from the original manufacturer, making ongoing maintenance and repair increasingly difficult and uneconomic.

As a result, the Council is progressing arrangements to remove the remaining equipment and associated infrastructure. Once the site has been cleared, officers will assess future options for the area, taking account of local needs, the site's prominent location at Barry Island, maintenance requirements and any available funding opportunities.

Supplemental

Councillor Hodges requested that local Members be included in any consultation regarding what would replace the site, the Deputy Leader confirmed that local Members would indeed be involved in the consultation process once the site had been cleared and options for the future were assessed.

(xiii) **Question from Councillor E. Penn**

What is the potential boost to the local economy from a tidal lagoon being located off the Vale of Glamorgan Coast?

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

Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), has committed to explore the opportunities for a tidal lagoon within the region. And Initial estimates suggest a lagoon on the chosen site

off Aberthaw could provide around 600MW of predictable renewable electricity or enough for around half a million homes.

Were a project to be developed it could generate around £3.5bn in economic value, supporting thousands of jobs and creating significant opportunities for businesses across the supply chain.

Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) has approved exploratory development studies and has committed up to £6.4m over the next three years, utilising City Deal funds, to support the first phase of the project.

This will include an extensive exploratory study which will include feasibility, environmental considerations, engineering design, modelling and commercial assessments.

Supplemental

Councillor Penn noted the significant tidal range in the Bristol Channel and requested that the Council keep all Members updated on new information and the construction timeline for the proposal, to which the Leader responded that the project was in very early stages. They confirmed that the investment in feasibility studies was justified by initial assessments and promised to ensure that Members were kept informed as the project progresses.

Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson noted that the duration for questions was driven by what they felt were some excessively long responses from Cabinet Members and suggested that the Council consider defining what an effective, detailed response should look like to avoid this scenario in the future. The Mayor acknowledged that this was a point to consider and also suggested that supplementary questions might not always be necessary or could perhaps be integrated directly into the initial question. Councillor Carroll defended the role of supplementary questions, calling them an essential part of the democratic process. They argued that Cabinet Members should be prepared to answer without notice and that if opposition Members were limited by the length of Cabinet responses, their ability to scrutinise the Executive was inhibited, whilst acknowledging the need for a fair balance. Members were advised they would receive responses to outstanding questions via e-mail, which would be appended to the minutes.

(xiv) **Question from Councillor S.J. Haines**

Residents of Scott Close in St Athan have now been without functioning street lighting for an unacceptably long period, following damage to the underground cables serving the lights.

The issue appears to have been known since at least January 2024. Although officers advised in March 2025 that an arrangement had been reached for the Council to fund National Grid to undertake repairs, the matter still appears

unresolved, with the various parties continuing to dispute ownership of the underground cable network.

Can the Cabinet Member therefore explain to Council why, after more than two years, residents of Scott Close are still being left without adequate street lighting because of an unresolved dispute over who owns the cables, and confirm:

i. What is the Council's current understanding of who is responsible for the cable network;
ii. What action has been taken since the proposed repair arrangement in March 2025; and
iii. Most importantly, what is the firm timetable for restoring the street lighting permanently, and what will the Council do to ensure that residents are not left waiting any longer while the ownership dispute is resolved?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

The Council fully recognises the frustration experienced by residents of Scott Close and appreciates the length of time this issue has remained unresolved.

The Council's position remains that responsibility for the disputed electricity network and associated cables rests with National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED). This position is supported by historical records, technical evidence and specialist legal advice obtained by the Council. Since March 2025, officers have continued to work with Legal Services and external advisers to review evidence, establish responsibility for the assets and identify the most appropriate route to securing a permanent resolution.

Whilst the Council remains committed to resolving this matter, the dispute regarding ownership of the infrastructure means that the Council cannot currently provide a definitive timetable for the permanent restoration of the lighting. Undertaking works to assets that may be owned and operated by a third party raises both legal and safety considerations. It is also not an appropriate use of public money.

I appreciate that residents will be disappointed that a firm completion date cannot yet be provided. However, this is not a situation where the Council has chosen not to act. Significant work has been undertaken to gather evidence, obtain specialist legal advice and progress the matter with the relevant parties. The Council will continue to pursue all appropriate avenues available to secure a lawful, safe and permanent solution and will provide further updates as matters progress

(xv) **Question from Councillor Emma Goodjohn**

Given the UK’s roadmap for new cars to be zero-emission or hybrid by 2030 many residents who wish to transition to electric vehicles face significant infrastructure barriers. This is particularly challenging for terraced properties, flats, and renters who do not have private driveways, and whose landlords may refuse permission for home charger installations.

What specific initiatives, funding bids or trials are planned for the Vale and more

specifically for the Dyfan and North Barry areas to ensure these residents are not left behind in the transition to EV ownership?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services

The Council recognises that access to convenient and affordable charging infrastructure is essential if all residents are to benefit from the transition to electric vehicles, particularly those living in terraced properties, flats and other homes without access to off-street parking.

To help address this challenge, I will shortly be presenting a report to Cabinet seeking approval to undertake a 12-month trial of on-street residential EV charging solutions**.** The trial will assess demand, usage, accessibility, safety, costs and any impacts on the highway network and local communities, helping to inform and shape a future Council policy for on-street EV charging provision.

The Council is keen to ensure that residents without private driveways are not disadvantaged as vehicle technology continues to evolve. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, the proposed trial will help identify the most effective solutions for residents and provide an evidence base to support future decisions on the wider rollout of on-street EV charging infrastructure across the Vale.

In relation to Dyfan and North Barry, any site proposed for inclusion within the trial will need to be assessed on its individual merits, taking account of factors such as highway safety, footway widths, existing infrastructure, tree roots, paving materials, conservation area considerations and, where necessary, planning requirements.

Subject to Cabinet approval, further details regarding the trial, including proposed locations and delivery arrangements, will be announced later this autumn.

Supplemental

Councillor Goodjohn asked if it would be possible for residents to submit specific sites or streets for consideration in the upcoming EV charging trial, to which the Cabinet Member responded it would be subject to a household basis with further information in the upcoming Cabinet report.

(xvi) **Question from Councillor S.J. Haines**

The Council's own Replacement Local Development Plan identifies St Athan as a key location for employment growth, alongside the continued development of Bro Tathan and the proposed Aberthaw Green Energy Park. It also records that a feasibility study for a new railway station at St Athan has been completed and that the Council is working with stakeholders to secure a commitment for the station.

The Council now has an indicative £3.63 million Local Growth Fund allocation for 2026/27, with strategic infrastructure and investment aligned with Regional Transport Plans identified as a principal priority.

I recognise that the Council may not have decided which individual projects will receive funding. But that cannot be the end of the answer.

What specific work is the Council undertaking now to ensure that improved public transport connectivity to St Athan — including the proposed railway station — is developed into a fundable project and put forward for consideration?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places

The Council's Local Growth Fund allocation was allocated as part of a transition year focused on the completion of projects and schemes started under the previous Shared Prosperity Fund.

Looking forward, the local growth fund for years 27/8 and 28/9 will be allocated regionally through the CCR/CJC and as such the Council has no guarantee over what finding it will receive. Details of the funding itself and how this will be accessed are currently under discussion with Welsh Government who will be taking an active role in its delivery.

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

Will the Cabinet Member please update the Council on work her administration is undertaking to follow the Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance that single sex spaces open to the public should be organised based on biological sex?

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

The Council has always sought to act, and will continue to act, in accordance with the law as interpreted by the Supreme Court and reflected in the EHRC guidance. This includes protecting lawful single-sex spaces where appropriate, while also ensuring that the needs of those with protected characteristics are properly considered. Given the complexity of applying the legal framework across different services, the Council is undertaking a review to ensure its arrangements remain lawful, proportionate, evidence-based and compliant with the relevant guidance.