

Meeting of:	Council
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 05 October 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Item which the Chair has decided is urgent (Part I) (If yes, why)	Not applicable
Urgent Decision Procedure Used (15.14 of the Constitution) (If yes, why)	Not applicable
Item Type	Part I
Report Title:	Scrutiny Committees' Annual Report 2025/26
Portfolio Holder:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Strategic Leadership Team:	Chief Executive
Lead Officer:	Chief Executive

1.0 What is this report about?

- 1.1 The Annual Report has been produced in accordance with Section 7.4.4 of the Council's Constitution which states 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'.
- 1.2 The report details the role of Scrutiny, how Scrutiny is undertaken in the Vale of Glamorgan and highlights 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.
- 1.3 The report reflects 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.

2.0 What are the Recommendations?

	Recommendations – What and How?	Reason for Recommendation – Why?
2.1	T H A T Council receives the Scrutiny Annual Report 2025/26.	To receive the Scrutiny Committees' Annual Report as outlined within the Council's Constitution.

3.0 What is the background to this report?

- 3.1 The Annual Report has been produced in accordance with Section 7.4.4 of the Council's Constitution which states 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'.
- 3.2 At Full Council in April 2025, the Council agreed to revise the Scrutiny framework, including Committee meetings frequency and structure (including Terms of Reference), whilst exploring alternative ways of working including different modes of Scrutiny.
- 3.3 These changes were implemented upon the findings of a range of drivers, including the Panel Performance Assessment undertaken by WLGA, which recommended "Enhancing the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny arrangements, specifically meetings, by assessing current practices to identify opportunities for improvement to make them more effective".
- 3.4 The 2025/26 Municipal year represented the first year of these changes, and required engagement from all stakeholders involved in the Scrutiny process to deliver the work identified within the annual report.

4.0 What issues are there to be considered?

- 4.1 The Annual report attached at Appendix A to this report details the role of Scrutiny, how Scrutiny is undertaken in the Vale of Glamorgan and highlights 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 objectives outlined in Vale 2030.
- 4.2 Examples of what future work programmes items the Scrutiny Committees will be considering going forward can be found in the Looking Forward section of the report.
- 4.3 For information, Members are advised that the Annual Report is only "reported to Council" to be received by Full Council as required under the Constitution as opposed to it requiring actual approval.
- 4.4 The report considers a range of areas including:
- 4.4.1 What is Scrutiny and how it works in the Vale of Glamorgan;
 - 4.4.2 How is it supported?
 - 4.4.3 Scrutiny in numbers;

- 4.4.4 A Committee-by-Committee overview of membership, areas covered, key facts, reflections from the Chair, work undertaken and priorities for the upcoming year;
- 4.4.5 Joint Scrutiny and Task and Finish;
- 4.4.6 Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group;
- 4.4.7 Raising awareness of Scrutiny;
- 4.4.8 Reflections on 2025/26;
- 4.4.9 Audit Wales review of Scrutiny;
- 4.4.10 Priorities for 2026/27;
- 4.4.11 Five Ways of Working.

4.5 Audit Wales undertook a review of Scrutiny arrangements in May 2026, and following a review of evidence including interviews, identified the sole recommendation that –

4.6 The Council should ensure that the role and purpose of scrutiny is clearly understood by councillors and officers and is reflected in scrutiny practice. This should include:

- *ensuring that there is a clear and shared understanding of the role of cabinet members in relation to scrutiny committees and scrutiny activity more generally;

- *ensuring that the specific role and purpose of scrutiny activity are clearly set out for each scrutiny topic, including the intended outcomes;

- *ensuring that scrutiny committees' recommendations to Cabinet are clear on the action they would like the Cabinet to take; and;

- *ensuring that as the Council continues to develop its arrangements for evaluating scrutiny, these arrangements enable it to understand the impact of scrutiny activity.

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

5.1 A range of evidence has been used to inform this report, including local evidence from operational processes, Member, officer and resident feedback, alongside recommendations from external regulators.

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

6.1 The report will be published to the Council's website.

7.0 How does this report support Vale 2030 and Reshaping?

7.1 The Annual Report contributes to the long term future by ensuring that Scrutiny Committees support the delivery of the Well-being Objectives as outlined within Vale 2030.

8.0 How does this demonstrate the Five Ways of Working?

8.1 Page 24 of the report articulates the various ways in which Scrutiny works in a way that is prevention based, long-term, collaborative, involved and integrated.

Resources

9.0 Finance

9.1 There are no specific implications arising from the report.

10.0 Workforce

10.1 There are no direct employment impacts arising from this report.

11.0 Legal and Equalities

11.1 **Does an Equalities Impact Assessment need to be completed? If not, why?** An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed as this is reporting for information and subsequently does not relate to a decision.

12.0 Key Contacts

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

Lead Officer: James Langridge-Thomas, Head of Democratic Services jlangridgethomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk	Democratic Services Officer James Langridge-Thomas, Head of Democratic Services jlangridgethomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
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Background Documents

[Vale of Glamorgan Council Performance Panel Assessment](#), Council, Monday 10th March 2025

[Reshaping Scrutiny](#), Council, Monday 10th March 2025

[Draft Annual Self-Assessment 2025-26](#), Joint Performance Scrutiny, Wednesday 22nd July 2026

[Audit Wales: Review of Scrutiny Arrangements](#), Governance and Audit Committee, Monday 20th July 2026



ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2025/26 - VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg



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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF SCRUTINY CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIR GROUP

Welcome to the Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26, which aims to provide an overview of Scrutiny activity during the year.

This represents the first report under the Council's revised arrangements and reflects upon progress made during the year in embracing the new ways of working whilst identifying opportunities for future improvement as the Council is at the start of its journey in enhancing how Scrutiny is undertaken. Throughout the year, we have been supported by officers from across the Council and introduced areas of new practice to support how we undertake Scrutiny, including the development of MemberNet, improving public webpages and the implementation of a Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker. I also welcome Audit Wales reviewing of the effectiveness of these new Scrutiny arrangements and look forward to seeing how we improve based upon the findings.

I would like to pass thanks to Members of the public and wider partners who have contributed to Scrutiny throughout the year; whether it be suggesting topics, speaking at meetings, writing to let us know their views or getting involved in Task and Finish work. Your views have helped informed our work significantly. In addition, I would also like to pass thanks to all Members who have been involved in Scrutiny throughout the year, as the changes to ways of working have been significant and would not have been possible to take forward without your positive engagement.

As we enter a Local Government Election year and the last year of this electoral term, the role of Scrutiny as a critical friend is more important than ever as we stand back and provide objective viewpoints to decisions which will impact upon residents of the Vale of Glamorgan and support the Council in meeting the aspiration of "Building Strong Communities with a Bright Future".

Cllr Catherine Iannucci-Williams
Chair of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chair Group



INTRODUCTION

At the Local Government Elections in May 2022, the Council saw the membership of the Council increase from 47 to 54 Elected Members, with a significant number of new Councillors being elected to office.

Following the election, a comprehensive Member Induction Programme commenced. This included, for example, training on Ethics and Standards, Financial Matters, Equalities, Data Protection, Rules of Debate and Chairing Skills. Member development is also an ongoing process within the Council and continues as required throughout the Elected Members' term of office.

The membership of each of the Council's Committees, including the membership of Scrutiny Committees, is agreed on an annual basis at the Annual Meeting of the Council, which usually takes place in May of each year and in 2025 took place on 8th May.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has now implemented a combination of remote and hybrid Scrutiny meetings with these being broadcast live and also recorded for archive purposes and uploaded to the Council's website for future viewing, having regard to the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, and in line with the Multi-location Meetings Policy.

Information relating to the management of such meetings can be found on the Council's website and in the Council's Constitution. Agendas for the meetings are published on the Council's website, along with the procedure and access for public speaking at meetings.

Following the Performance Panel Assessment undertaken in November 2024, a recommendation identified that the Council needed to consider "Enhancing the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny arrangements, specifically meetings, by assessing current practices to identify opportunities for improvement to make them more effective", which developed into a local change programme entitled Reshaping Scrutiny. It is important to note that this is not the first update surrounding Scrutiny changes, and that this was considered in July and December's joint Scrutiny sessions



WHAT IS SCRUTINY?

Scrutiny is a way of achieving open and democratic accountability for the provision of public services. Local Authorities operating an Executive Leader and Cabinet model, have an overview and scrutiny function which is carried out by non-Cabinet members, who act as a critical friend to the Cabinet, and hold them to account.

Scrutiny Committees are not decision-making committees but do monitor and influence those that are – the Council's Cabinet. Scrutiny Committees report their work back to the Cabinet, who then decide whether recommendations that arise from the Committee's work will be accepted, and explain their reasons for their decisions.

Scrutiny Committees scrutinise the budget and performance management information of the Council and its partners and examine areas of concern. They can also hold key decision-makers to account by way of 'calling in' decisions taken by Cabinet within 5 days of the decisions being made, for this decision to be scrutinised at the Scrutiny Committee overseeing the particular area of work. The Cabinet, in turn, consults with Scrutiny Committees on various issues, and responds to Scrutiny Committee recommendations.

Please note that decisions regarding certain other functions of the Council are determined by its 'regulatory' committees, such as the Planning Committee; Licensing Committees and Full Council. Such decisions do not fall under the remit of Scrutiny.



HOW DOES SCRUTINY WORK IN THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN?

The Council has four Scrutiny Committees, aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan, Vale 2030.

Each Committee meets once every two months to scrutinise a range of topics. Outside of Committee meetings, they also undertake Task and Finish Investigative Scrutiny, allowing members to work with residents, partners outside of Committees to shape recommendations for improvement.

All Committees also come together throughout the year to undertake joint Scrutiny sessions, such as reviewing the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan.



Start Well Scrutiny Committee

Corporate Plan: Giving Everyone a Good Start in Life

Areas Covered: Schools, Schools Improvement, Post 16 Education and Training, Skills, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Youth Services, Flying Start/Families First, Play and Welsh (external policy).



Live Well Scrutiny Committee

Corporate Plan: Supporting and Protecting Those Who Need Us and Creating Great Places to Live, Work and Visit

Areas Covered: Adult Services, Children and Young People's Services, Libraries, Arts, Culture, Leisure, Sports, Community Learning, Homelessness, Public Protection and Equalities (external policy).



Place Scrutiny Committee

Corporate Plan: Respecting and Celebrating the Environment and Creating Great Places to Live, Work and Visit

Areas Covered: Economic Development and Regeneration, Tourism, Countryside and Parks, Waste management and cleansing, Highways and Engineering, Planning, Transportation, Climate and Nature Emergency, Placemaking and Public and Private Sector Housing.



Resources Scrutiny Committee

Corporate Plan: Being the Best Council We Can Be

Areas Covered: Corporate Policies and Performance, Communication and Participation, Customer Relations, Finance, Procurement, Digital, Property, Human Resources, Equalities (internal policy) and Welsh (internal policy).



HOW IS SCRUTINY SUPPORTED?

Scrutiny is supported by officers from Democratic Services, who are tasked with looking after the democratic process within the Vale. The support includes:

- Providing support and constitution advice to the Council's Scrutiny Committees and to Members of those Committees as well as producing minutes of their meetings and ensuring items arising from those meetings are actions;
- Managing Scrutiny meetings in line with the Council's Multi-Location Meeting Policy
- Giving support and advice in relation to the functions of the Council's Scrutiny Committees to Executive and Non-Executive Members of the Council and its Officers.
- Managing the strategic development of scrutiny in the Vale through engaging with national and regional Scrutiny networks and initiatives, supporting the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group;
- Advising and supporting the implementation of the requirements of legislation, in particular the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Government Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance published in June 2023;
- Supporting learning and development for Members to support them in undertaking their role;
- Raising awareness of the Scrutiny function and how to participate to the wider Vale of Glamorgan community;
- Advising Officers and Members about the implementation of the revised Reshaping Scrutiny arrangements
- Managing the co-ordination and development of the Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes in conjunction with Scrutiny Members;
- Managing and co-ordinating Scrutiny review work, including the operation of Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups, authorising reports in conjunction with the Groups and assisting in the implementation and monitoring of completed reviews;
- Developing tools and resources to support Members in enhancing their Scrutiny practice;
- Working alongside Communications to raise public awareness of how to participate in the Council's decision making processes and supporting those who take part in Scrutiny;
- Managing the Council's Scrutiny and meeting related webpages, alongside YouTube channels;
- Despatching agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings a minimum of five clear days (including weekends) prior to a meeting.



SCRUTINY IN NUMBERS IN 2025/26

29

Public Scrutiny
Meetings Held

216

Recommendations
Made

35

Members of the
Public who
spoke/wrote to
Scrutiny Committee

27

Public Requests for
Consideration
received

5

Task and Finish
Reviews Completed

37%

Cabinet items
receiving Scrutiny
input

8

Scrutiny items that
involved members
of the public

3416

Scrutiny Meeting
YouTube views

25%

Public who
contributed to
Scrutiny felt listened
to by Scrutiny

39%

Members agreed
that Scrutiny had a
positive impact on
decision making

28%

Items were noted
with no
recommendations
made.

39.5%

Survey respondents
who have attempted
to influence a
decision made by
the Council (LTUV)





START WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP



CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Co-opted Members include representatives of Roman Catholic Church, Church in Wales, Parent Governor - Secondary Sector and Parent Governor - Primary Sector.

A number of people are also invited to attend as non-voting observers including representatives from Primary, Welsh Medium Education, Secondary, Vale Youth Council, Headteachers, Free Churches and Special Schools.

AREAS COVERED INCLUDE:

Schools, Schools Improvement, Post 16 Education and Training, Skills, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Youth Services, Flying Start/Families First, Play and Welsh (external policy).

KEY FACTS:

6 Meetings Held

31 Recommendations made

100% Recommendations partially or fully accepted by Cabinet

711 Meeting views

CHAIR'S REFLECTIONS

During 2026/27, given the severity of challenges, the Start Well Scrutiny Committee has had a strong focus on issues facing some schools in achieving a balanced budget. This led to three updates over the year on progress as well as scrutiny of the Council's support strategy provided to schools. To explore that further, the Scrutiny Committee has appointed a Task and Finish Review Group to have a deeper investigation into the impact upon schools from having to make difficult decisions to balance their budgets. The outcome of that review is expected by November 2027.

In addition, the Start Well Scrutiny has monitored the outcomes of Estyn termly inspections carried out at schools and it has recognised those schools that have received positive inspections whilst also having oversight of those schools requiring Estyn follow up work. It should also be highlighted that the Scrutiny Committee also considered and endorsed for publication the Annual Report for SACRE/SAC 2024-2025 (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) / SAC (Standing Advisory Council) as well as the Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2024-2025.

Cllr Rhys Thomas, Chair of Start Well Scrutiny Committee





START WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WHAT WORK HAS THE COMMITTEE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE YEAR?

The Committee has considered a range of items throughout the year, through both normal committee items and Task and Finish Scrutiny.

Examples of areas considered during the year include:

- Pupil attainment data
- ESTYN inspection outcomes
- Specialist provision
- School budget recovery plans
- School balances
- SACRE

Task and Finish Review - Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases

This report considered staffing, funding, quality, access, and value for money across the Vale of Glamorgan's 10 ALN Resource Bases, plus outreach and sensory services.

During the year, the Committee has made 31 recommendations, of which 2 (6%) were made to Cabinet. Of those referred to Cabinet, 2 (100%) were partially or fully accepted. To view details related to individual recommendations made by the Committee and their latest status, please click [here](#).

During the year, the Committee received 3 public requests for consideration, which all related to items on Committee's Forward Work Programme, with this information considered at the most relevant future meeting as appropriate.

WHAT ARE THE COMMITTEE'S PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR?

Whilst not an exhaustive or definitive list due to the fluid nature of local government decision making and potential emerging priorities, the Committee are looking to consider a number of areas in the upcoming year, including but not limited to:

- Impact upon schools from budget decisions (Task and Finish)
- ESTYN outcomes
- School budget recovery plans updates
- School Admissions arrangements
- Welsh Language Standards monitoring.

To view the Committee's Forward Work Programme, please click [here](#).





LIVE WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP



AREAS COVERED

Adult Services, Children and Young People's Services, Libraries, Arts, Culture, Leisure, Sports, Community Learning, Homelessness, Public Protection and Equalities (external policy).

KEY FACTS

6 Meetings Held

35 Recommendations made

80% Recommendations agreed by Cabinet

567 Meeting views

CHAIR'S REFLECTIONS

Over the past year, I have been proud to lead the work of the Live Well Scrutiny Committee as we have focused on ensuring that the services people rely on to stay healthy, safe and supported are effective, responsive and delivering positive outcomes for residents across the Vale of Glamorgan.

As a Committee, we have concentrated on the issues that matter most in people's everyday lives—health and social care, housing, leisure, and wider community wellbeing. Through constructive challenge and regular review, I believe we have made a positive difference by supporting improvements, strengthening accountability, and helping to shape policies and plans at an early stage.

A key priority for me as Chair has been ensuring that we maintain a strong focus on performance and outcomes. Throughout the year, we have worked to influence important decisions and to make sure that services—particularly those supporting vulnerable people—are providing the right support, at the right time.

I would like to thank all Members for their commitment and thoughtful contributions, as well as officers and staff for their invaluable support. While I am proud of what we have achieved, I remain committed to building on this work and ensuring that everyone in the Vale of Glamorgan has the opportunity to live well.

Cllr Amelia Collins, Chair of Live Well Scrutiny Committee





LIVE WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WHAT WORK HAS THE COMMITTEE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE YEAR?

The Committee has considered a range of items throughout the year, through both normal committee items and Task and Finish Scrutiny.

Examples of areas considered during the year include:

- Social Care records system
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) updates
- Work to tackle poverty and cost of living crisis
- Libraries
- Equalities monitoring
- Leisure services
- Commissioned services for those in receipt of care and support
- Children and young peoples placements
- Housing Support Grant
- Director of Social Services Annual Report

Task and Finish Review - Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases

This report considered barriers to participation for Women in physical activity, especially within the 18 – 50 age category, to help mitigate inactivity, sedentary lifestyles, and poor health.

During the year, the Committee has made 35 recommendations, of which 5 (14%) were made to Cabinet. Of those referred to Cabinet, 4 (80%) were partially or fully accepted. To view details related to individual recommendations made by the Committee and their latest status, please click [here](#).

During the year, the Committee received 1 public request for consideration, which is being considered in the upcoming municipal year.

WHAT ARE THE COMMITTEE'S PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR?

Whilst not an exhaustive or definitive list due to the fluid nature of local government decision making and potential emerging priorities, the Committee are looking to consider a number of areas in the upcoming year, including but not limited to:

- Violence Against Women, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
- Arts and Cultural Services
- Social Care Records System
- Leisure Management Contract
- Care Home Provision Review

To view the Committee's Forward Work Programme, please click [here](#).





PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP



CO-OPTED MEMBERS

1 representative in a non-voting observer capacity of Citizens Advice Cardiff and Vale and 4 Representatives from the Tenant Working Group.



AREAS COVERED

Economic Development and Regeneration, Tourism, Countryside and Parks, Waste management and cleansing, Highways and Engineering, Planning, Transportation, Climate and Nature Emergency, Placemaking and Public and Private Sector Housing.

KEY FACTS:

8 Meetings Held

68 Recommendations made

90% Recommendations partially or fully accepted by Cabinet

1273 Meeting views





PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CHAIR'S REFLECTIONS

It has been a privilege to Chair the Council's Place committee in what has been yet another busy year. Our role is to consider and question proposals to make sure they are fit for purpose and meet the needs of residents as well as reviewing the Council's performance against agreed targets and outcomes. The Place committee scrutinises some of the things that are of great interest to residents in the Vale and among other things, this year we've looked at highways, waste and recycling services and the plans set out in the Replacement Local Development Plan, making recommendations where we believe improvements or changes are needed. We also oversee the Council's response to the climate and nature emergency through its Project Zero policy and one of this year's highlights has been hearing about the progress being made with the Council's Tree Strategy with approximately 26,000 trees having been planted since the launch of the strategy.

As well as making sure every Member has the opportunity to speak on issues, I've also been pleased to invite external stakeholders to attend committee so we can engage with them on key issues that matter to residents – notably in relation to local water quality, when we were joined by Natural Resources Wales and Dwr Cymru. This year, we have welcomed members of the public who have addressed the committee on a range of issues, including car parking, the Local Development Deposit Plan and water quality. The Committee has also received a petition calling on the Council to designate the Old Harbour as a Local Nature Reserve – something which received unanimous, cross party support.

Finally, the Committee undertook its first Task and Finish work: a cross party group of elected members, together with officers, a tenant representative and external experts spent a few months looking at access for people with a disability or other accessibility issues or needs at some of the Vale's main beaches.

I extend my thanks to all committee members, cabinet members, officers and members of the public for all contributions to this year's work programme.

Cllr Susan Lloyd-Selby, Chair of Place Scrutiny Committee





PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WHAT WORK HAS THE COMMITTEE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE YEAR?

The Committee has considered a range of items throughout the year, through both normal committee items and Task and Finish Scrutiny.

Examples of areas considered during the year include:

- Placemaking Plans
- Project Zero
- No Flying Rings Campaign
- Replacement Local Development Plan
- Housing Revenue Account
- Declare a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) at Barry's Old Harbour (Petition)
- Tree Strategy
- Coastal Monitoring
- Leisure activity at Cosmeston Country Park
- Highways maintenance
- Bathing Water Quality

Task and Finish Review - Providing Greater Accessibility to Beaches in the Vale of Glamorgan.

This report considered accessibility of beaches in the area, and following a series of visits and speaking to experts, identified a number of opportunities for improvement, including on a beach by beach basis.

During the year, the Committee has made 68 recommendations, of which 20 (29%) were made to Cabinet. Of those referred to Cabinet, 3 (15%) were partially or fully accepted. To view details related to individual recommendations made by the Committee and their latest status, please click [here](#).

During the year, the Committee received 18 public requests for consideration, which all related to items on Committee's Forward Work Programme, with this information considered at the most relevant future meeting as appropriate.

WHAT ARE THE COMMITTEE'S PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR?

Whilst not an exhaustive or definitive list due to the fluid nature of local government decision making and potential emerging priorities, the Committee are looking to consider a number of areas in the upcoming year, including but not limited to:

- Local beaches and resorts (Task and Finish)
- Bus service provision
- Plan for Neighbourhoods
- Waste
- Local Area Energy Plan
- Shared Prosperity and Local Growth funds
- Car Parking

To view the Committee's Forward Work Programme, please click [here](#).





RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP



AREAS COVERED

Corporate Policies and Performance, Communication and Participation, Customer Relations, Finance, Procurement, Digital, Property, Human Resources, Equalities (internal policy) and Welsh (internal policy).

KEY FACTS:

6 Meetings held

52 Recommendations made

80% Recommendations to Cabinet partially or fully agreed

567 Meeting views

CHAIRS REFLECTIONS

The Resources Scrutiny Committee has successfully completed its first municipal year under the Council's modernised Re-shaping Scrutiny arrangements. The 2025-2026 term was defined by rigorous oversight of the Medium Term Financial Plan, scrutiny of the corporate digital transformation plan and an emphasis on enhancing cross-party collaboration and transparency. The committee critically examined the Council's updated financial position- focusing on our statutory obligations, capital spending and the ongoing review of Council reserves. Members requested specific time to monitor the management of social care demands and school budgets to ensure sustainable long-term finances and continued to track performance of our customer contact centre. The Re-shaping of Scrutiny has intentionally reduced the number of general updating reports for noting to allow for deeper dive investigations and focused time spent on Task and Finish Working Groups which has resulted in the more meaningful and outcome focused scrutiny of the high priority topics of Procurement and Misinformation and Dis-Information. I found both of these Groups to be highly effective and believe that by bringing together elected committee members from different political backgrounds for Task and Finish Work we are able to create an environment where evidence and collaboration take priority over party lines. My thanks to all of the committee members for their participation and contributions, and to our officers for supporting our efforts this year.

Cllr Joanna Protheroe, Chair of Resources Scrutiny Committee





RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WHAT WORK HAS THE COMMITTEE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE YEAR?

The Committee has considered a range of items throughout the year, through both normal committee items and Task and Finish Scrutiny.

Examples of areas considered during the year include:

- Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report
- School Finances
- Sickness Absence (received throughout the year)
- Capital Monitoring (received throughout the year)
- Revenue Monitoring (received throughout the year)
- Pay Policy
- Procurement Policy and Strategy
- Public Service Board Annual Report
- Corporate Resources Directorate Plan

Task and Finish

- Review of Procurement Policy, Function and Strategy - led to a number of recommendations which have informed the Council's revised Procurement Policy and strategy
- Countering Misinformation - identified the challenge for Council and residents in managing misinformation, identifying a number of recommendations to respond to these narratives.

During the year, the Committee has made 52 recommendations, of which 25 (48%) were made to Cabinet. Of those referred to Cabinet, 20 (80%) were partially or fully accepted. To view details related to individual recommendations made by the Committee and their latest status, please click [here](#).

During the year, the Committee received 3 public requests for consideration, which all related to items on Committee's Forward Work Programme, with this information considered at the most relevant future meeting as appropriate.

WHAT ARE THE COMMITTEE'S PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR?

Whilst not an exhaustive or definitive list due to the fluid nature of local government decision making and potential emerging priorities, the Committee are looking to consider a number of areas in the upcoming year, including but not limited to:

- Resident contact/customer relations (Task and Finish)
- People Strategy
- Closure of accounts (Revenue and Capital)
- Corporate Asset Management Plan
- Let's Talk about Life in the Vale survey
- Capital and Revenue Finance Monitoring

To view the Committee's Forward Work Programme, please click [here](#).





JOINT SCRUTINY

PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE CORPORATE PLAN

In July and December 2025, the four Scrutiny Committees came together in an integrated means to look at how the Council performed in meeting the aims and objectives of its Corporate Plan.

Both sessions were framed around the performance requirements as part of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 which seeks to understand:

How well is this Council performing?

How well is this Council using its resources?

How effective is the Council's governance?

The session in July 2025 focused upon the Council's Annual Self-Assessment Report 2024/ 2025, and providing scrutiny to identified levels of performance against actions and measures, alongside reflections upon wider corporate enabling activity. This was ahead of the Annual Self-Assessment report being approved by Governance and Audit Committee and Full Council.

In December 2025, a similar session was held to understand the Council's mid year performance against its new Corporate Plan, Vale 2030, and introduce a new performance dashboard alongside a suite of measures and indicators.

During both meetings, Members had opportunities to challenge performance, with the appropriate Cabinet Member and Senior Leadership Team Officer able to respond, and covered a range of areas to support improvement including customer contact via C1V and Procurement.

BUDGET SETTING

In February 2026, the four Scrutiny Committees came together again in an integrated manner to provide Scrutiny of the Council's budget during the annual budget setting process, including capital and revenue budget streams. Areas considered included schools delegated budget, highways maintenance funding and the deliverability of the Capital programme. This enabled Members to consider inter dependencies between various budget lines and to understand the impact of budgetary decisions in a cumulative manner ahead of approval at Full Council.



TASK AND FINISH

A fundamental part of the Council's Reshaping Scrutiny changes was the introduction of Task and Finish Scrutiny to be undertaken by all Committees. Task and Finish involves a selection of Members working on a cross party basis outside of formal Committee, seeking expert advice, undertaking visits (where appropriate) and speaking to residents and interested stakeholders to understand a topic and make suggestions for improvement to Cabinet.

During the year, the Council has completed the below Task and Finish:

Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Resource Bases

The group examined staffing, funding, quality, access, and value for money across the Vale of Glamorgan's 10 ALN Resource Bases, plus outreach and sensory services. Members also conducted multiple site visits and met with gathered parents, pupils and officers. The overall impression was high quality, nurturing provision, but with systemic pressure points and calculated risks, particularly around funding and staffing. The group made 8 overarching recommendations to help inform the future provision of this service.

Leisure Services

The group explored barriers to participation for Women in physical activity, especially within the 18 – 50 age category, to help mitigate inactivity, sedentary lifestyles, and poor health. alongside looking at informal organised physical activity, to increase social participation to reduce feelings of anxiety and loneliness. The group made 5 recommendations for improvement, which are being considered by the appropriate Service areas, with progress being updated in the forthcoming year.



TASK AND FINISH

Accessibility of Beaches in Vale of Glamorgan

The group undertook a review on providing greater accessibility to beaches in the Vale of Glamorgan for people with limited accessibility and related issues to these (such as wheelchair users, people with physical disabilities, sight impairment and learning/intellectual disabilities and needs, older people with mobility issues) and for all residents of, and visitors to, the Vale of Glamorgan. They visited a range of beaches within the Vale of Glamorgan, which were also under Council control and management, and identified both a number of overarching actions alongside specific actions for each individual beach.

Countering Misinformation

A group of Members were increasingly concerned by misinformation circulating about Council projects, which often overshadowed positive work, fuelled division, and in some cases posed risks to the wellbeing and safety of both residents and Councillors. Through a series of training and expert witnesses, the group identified 14 recommendations across a range of themes to be considered to support residents and Members.

Procurement Policy, Function, and Strategy

This group explored the Council's approach to procurement, drawing upon a range of internal and external expertise, reflecting upon a changing legislative context and increased emphasis upon social value and the circular economy for example, alongside a range of practical considerations. The group identified a series of recommendations which were considered and used to inform the Council's revised Procurement Policy and Strategy.

To view the full Task and Finish reports please click below:

[Additional
Learning Needs
Resource Bases](#)

[Leisure Services](#)

[Accessibility of
beaches](#)

[Countering
Misinformation](#)

[Procurement
Policy, Function,
and Strategy](#)

The above represents an overview of the Task and Finish activity undertaken within the year, with future iterations of the Scrutiny Annual Report reflecting upon the progress of these recommendations.

SCRUTINY CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS GROUP

Throughout the year, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs also come together every few months to reflect upon a range of areas and consider how these could interact with local arrangements, including:

- Peer learning from other Local Authorities audit reports
- Good practice guidance (such as publications from Centre for Public Scrutiny)
- Implementation of Reshaping Scrutiny - reflections on progress to date, lessons learned and areas for improvement on a regular basis

Alongside this, the group have considered a range of areas throughout the year such as:

- How to increase public participation in the Scrutiny and raise awareness of Scrutiny to residents, including the promotion of the digitised Request for Consideration form
- The Council's approach to monitoring recommendations made by Scrutiny Committees through PowerBI tracking
- Methods to encourage reflection and learning within Scrutiny Committees
- Producing and endorsing the Council's Annual Scrutiny Report.

Alongside this, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs were also involved in the first Regional Scrutiny Chair meeting, led by Vale of Glamorgan, and attended by representatives from Cardiff and Bridgend Councils. This group, which will meet three times a year, was established to share learning, including good practice and areas for improvement, between neighbouring Councils.



RAISING AWARENESS OF SCRUTINY

Throughout the year, there have been a number of enhancements to encourage public participation in Scrutiny. These include:

- Supporting members of the Public to register to speak and speak during Committee meetings throughout the year
- Receiving and co-ordinating a range of written representations received by Scrutiny Committees
- Changes to the Scrutiny Committee webpages to improve visibility of how to register to speak, send written representations or suggest topics to be considered
- Digitisation of the Request for Consideration form, followed by a communications campaign to raise awareness to residents
- Working with communications to share regular social media posts surrounding key meetings, how to watch and deadlines to register to speak
- Encouraging the public and partners to participate and provide their views and experiences during Task and Finish Scrutiny.

Alongside the above, we have also met with a range of groups to raise awareness of Democracy and Scrutiny, and how individuals can get involved in all aspects of the Scrutiny function. Groups include:

- Vale Youth Council and how to get involved beyond Start Well Scrutiny Committee
- Vale Tenants Group and how to get involved beyond Place Scrutiny Committee
- Vale 50+ Forum
- Vale Stepping Stones Groups
- Glamorgan Voluntary Services Volunteers.



REFLECTIONS ON SCRUTINY 2025/26



WHAT HAS WORKED WELL?

- All Scrutiny Committees under their new remits have met regularly throughout the year and considered a range of topics including multiple modes of Scrutiny
- There have been five pieces of Task and Finish completed during the year, covering a range of topics including Procurement, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Resources Bases, Access to Beaches and Communications Strategy.
- Several Member briefings have been held across the year to complement Scrutiny, delivered through a range of organisations and speakers around a wide range of topics.
- The Council held its first joint Scrutiny meetings throughout the year, looking at areas in an integrated manner, including performance against the Corporate Plan and the Council's Budget.
- A range of information only items which previously would have been noted have been shared with Members of Committees via different mediums. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of noting recommendations at Committee meetings.
- Committee have made a positive number of recommendations across the year. These are available in the revised recommendation tracker, now available on the Council's public website, has been developed to more robustly and openly monitor the impact of recommendations.
- The Council has been actively working with community groups such as Youth Forum, Tenants Representatives, 50+ Forum, Scouts and Vale Stepping Stones to raise awareness of how democracy works in Wales, including how residents can use their voices to get involved in the Scrutiny process.
- There have been social media campaigns to promote the Council's Scrutiny meetings, including details as to how to participate, alongside improving communications surrounding Scrutiny including updating public webpages and the Council's YouTube channels.



REFLECTIONS ON SCRUTINY 2025/26

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL? (CONTINUED)

- A Scrutiny Hub resource has been developed for Members to have a one stop solution to support them with a range of tools in undertaking their role.
- Public participation has increased during the year, with several requests for consideration received, alongside written representations, public speakers at Committee meetings and involvement within Task and Finish.
- Scrutiny Committees have considered a range of topics and provided coverage against areas on the Council's Corporate Risk Register.
- Members and Officers have demonstrated positive engagement with the new ways of working progressed through Scrutiny and provided positive feedback for how they are experiencing it in comparison to previous arrangements.

WHAT HAS NOT GONE SO WELL?

- Whilst there have been significant efforts made to engage Members in the Scrutiny process and identify opportunities for involvement, there is an inconsistent level of involvement from the public during the process.
- During the proposal stage, the Council wished to complete 2 Task and Finish reviews per Committee across the year. However, due to the depth of work required and several external factors, this has not been feasible. While the aspiration remains to deliver two Task and Finish reviews within a single municipal year, the Council continues to prioritise the quality and robustness of outcomes over the quantity of work undertaken.
- The Council has been unable to consistently embed reflective practice into its Scrutiny meeting arrangements.



AUDIT WALES REVIEW OF SCRUTINY

In March 2026, Audit Wales undertook a review of the effectiveness of Scrutiny, considering a range of documentary evidence alongside interviews with Members and Officers. The report formally recommended that:

R1 - The Council should ensure that the role and purpose of scrutiny is clearly understood by councillors and officers and is reflected in scrutiny practice. This should include:

- ensuring that there is a clear and shared understanding of the role of cabinet members in relation to scrutiny committees and scrutiny activity more generally;
- ensuring that the specific role and purpose of scrutiny activity is clearly set out for each scrutiny topic, including the intended outcomes;
- ensuring that scrutiny committees' recommendations to Cabinet are clear on the action they would like the Cabinet to take; and
- ensuring that as the Council continues to develop its arrangements for evaluating scrutiny, these arrangements enable it to understand the impact of scrutiny activity.

The report was considered by Governance and Audit Committee alongside Joint Performance Scrutiny Committee in July 2026. In responding to the audit's findings, the Council will be undertaking a series of improvement actions, drawing upon external expertise from Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, with a more comprehensive update to be provided in the next iteration of the Annual Report.

SCRUTINY IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES 2026/27

In order to improve Scrutiny during the year, a number of strategic improvement priorities have been identified during the year including:

- Responding to the findings of the Audit Wales review of Scrutiny arrangements
- Exploring opportunities to further develop the Council's outreach offer in encouraging participation and engagement in democracy, including working with young people
- Further developing relationships with academic bodies to support with research capacity to enable broader investigative Task and Finish Scrutiny
- Further embedding a culture of continuous improvement and reflection with Scrutiny, including self-reflection amongst Committee Members, and peer learning from other Committees and Councils.
- Undertaking preparation for the 2027 Local Government election, including Member induction, exploring how to maximise development for all Members surrounding the role of Scrutiny and practical skills in securing effective Scrutiny.

FIVE WAYS OF WORKING

A key requirement of Scrutiny is to demonstrate the Five Ways of Working outlined within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

	Long Term - The importance of balancing short-term needs with the needs to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs	Task and Finish Scrutiny allows for Committees to undertake a deeper dive into a subject matter and identify recommendations that are often long term and related to the wider system, as opposed to recommendations which are actionable in the immediacy.
	Integration - Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.	The Council considers performance against its Corporate Plan in an integrated way, bringing together all Committees to understand how all Well-being Objectives impact upon their areas of interest.
	Involvement - The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.	A number of Stakeholders are involved alongside Elected Members during the Scrutiny process including Co-Opted Members representing particular groups. Alongside this, people can share their views by speaking at Committees, writing to Committees, submitting petitions or requesting things be considered.
	Collaboration - Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.	To be effective in meeting its aims and objectives, Scrutiny requires collaboration between Scrutiny Members, Cabinet Members, Officers and Partner Organisations. This enables views provided to be based upon expertise and shared with those able to influence change.
	Prevention - How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.	Recommendations are provided by Scrutiny before decisions are made, meaning that they offer alternative viewpoints and suggestions, which aim to prevent future challenges arising when a decision is made.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Should you wish to know more about Scrutiny, you can do so by visiting the below webpage:

https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/scrutiny/scrutiny.aspx

To see the details of our meetings, including dates, times, reports, decisions made and how to get involved, please visit:

https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/minutes_agendas_and_reports/minutes_agendas_and_reports.aspx

Scrutiny Committee meetings are also currently recorded and available to view on the Council's YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@vogcmeetingrecording1014>

Alternatively, you can contact Democratic Services using the contact details at the bottom of the report pages throughout.

