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## **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2022.

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

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

Present: Councillor M.R. Wilson (Chair), Councillor. P. Drake (Vice-Chair), Councillors G.D.D. Carroll, G.A. Cox, R. Crowley, V.P. Driscoll, G. John, Dr. I.J. Johnson, S. Sivagnanam and J.W. Thomas

Also present: Councillors L. Burnett (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration) and P.G. King (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport).

### 985 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer 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.”

### 986 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2022 and 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2022 be approved as a correct record.

### 987 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor G. John declared an interest on agenda item 10 (Vale of Glamorgan Council – Proposed Fees and Charges for 2022/23) in that he had a dispensation from the Standards Committee to speak only at meetings of the Vale of Glamorgan Council where any matters relating to football / sports fees and charges were discussed (Paragraphs (d) and (f)).

### 988 ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN MONITORING REPORT: QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE 2021/22 (CX) –

The purpose of the report, as presented by the Head of Policy & Business Transformation, was to outline quarter 3 performance results for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 in delivering the 2021/22 Annual Delivery Plan commitments as aligned to the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. The Head of Policy & Business Transformation set out to the Committee the key points of the

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report, with an emphasis on those areas that fell under the remit of this Committee:

- Positive progress had been made in delivering the in-year commitments in relation to the Annual Delivery Plan (2021/22). The performance had contributed to an overall GREEN status for the Plan at quarter 3 (Q3).
- The Head of Service summarised the achievements organised under the four Wellbeing Objectives.
- The majority of actions and measures relating to the Committee were showing a RAG rating of 'Green', with 14 actions and 7 measure had slipped to 'Red', with such slippage increasingly due to non-COVID-19 reasons, which reflected the stage of the pandemic the Vale now found itself in.
- Following on from the above, the report highlighted the areas for future focus and within the remit of the Committee, again under the four Wellbeing Objectives, which included progress on redeveloping and improving the accessibility and the user experience for those accessing the Council's website, the refurbishment of C1V, review of staff absences, and greater engagement with staff and key groups externally, i.e. with children, young people and families (including those with protected characteristics). As well as tackling decarbonisation in schools, improved platforms to deliver a new approach to supporting staffs development and their wellbeing, undertake stakeholder engagement to inform a review of the future models of service delivery within social care, looking to develop a strategy to promote the use and retrofit of sustainable drainage systems, revise the local flood risk management strategy and progress the next iteration of the Biodiversity Forward Work Plan, and that's in recognition of the declaration of the Nature Emergency.
- In terms of the Coronavirus Recovery Update, reference was made to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) restructure in order to reflect the lessons learned from the pandemic, the extension of the opening hours at the Civic Offices, Reception, the continued support from the Council to Cardiff & Vale Health Board (in terms of provision of our premises, support through communications channels for a range of different pandemic responses and through the Incident Management Team), as well as progressing the Reshaping Services program which has continued to pursue the Council's recovery strategy priorities and blended those with the ADP as well.

Following the presentation of the report, the subsequent comments and questions were raised by the Committee:

- Councillor Dr Johnson raised the following comments / queries:
  - That certain instances of investment were being framed as successes during quarter three, i.e. the works undertaken on a shop at Holton Road and the installation of a new boiler at the Colcot Sports Centre. Although counting as small-scale successes and positive results in their own right, were perhaps only partial improvements, not fully realised, and did not provide the full context and background to these measures, as in the case of shop on Holton Road, which although its external appearance had been improved,

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was still empty and regarding Colcot Sport Centre, there had been many years of underinvestment in the facility.

- On the current issues around recruitment for Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) and the rationale behind this, it was explained there were challenges around recruitment, such as shortages in applicants for specialist roles in areas like environmental health, which were also seen at a national level and beyond. However, measures were in place to mitigate these and improve recruitment opportunities, i.e. the drafting of an 'Attraction Strategy' in order to attract, retain and recruit individuals (including the greater use of apprenticeships) and the greater use of social media, i.e. LinkedIn, which had achieved some positive results in terms of advertising for recruitment. Further details would be provided to the Committee when available.
- On the progress being made by the new CLA (Children Looked After) Manager on opportunities to involve, engage and communicate with all children, young people and families that use the Council's service (including those with protected characteristics), further details would be requested from the Children and Young People Services.
- With regard to an update on the review of buildings, street names and monuments, some further work had been undertaken following the last meeting of the panel, with a meeting with Democratic Services to look at the work already undertaken and to subsequently convene a meeting of the review panel for this purpose.
- The Chair raised the issue of increased infection rates and hospitalisations across the UK due to COVID-19 and whether there was any evidence for the need for a fourth injection / round of vaccinations and if the Council and the Health Board were 'geared' up for such a roll out. It was explained that the Incident Management Team (IMT) met on a fortnightly basis and that Welsh Government had indicated that it was now a case of transition away from a pandemic and into an 'endemic' situation around COVID-19. The IMT would keep a watching brief on the pandemic and there had been significant improvements in partnership working with a strengthened focus around this. Further details would be provided to the Committee when available regarding any future vaccination program and how that would be rolled out.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the performance results and progress towards achieving the Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22 commitments as aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan Wellbeing Objectives within the remit of the Committee be noted.

(2) T H A T the remedial actions to be taken to address areas of underperformance and to tackle the key challenges identified within the remit of the Committee be noted and that the Committee's views and recommendations be referred thereafter to Cabinet for their consideration and approval, namely:

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- To review some of the performance measures and results provided within the Annual Delivery Plan, which, although counting as small-scale successes and positive results in their own right, were perhaps only partial improvements and did not provide the full context and background to these measures.
- That further information / updates be provided on the following areas:
  - Recruitment for Shared Regulatory Services (SRS). It was explained there were challenges around recruitment, but measures were in place to mitigate these and improve recruitment opportunities. Further details would be provided to the Committee when available.
  - On progress made by the new CLA (Children Looked After) Manager on opportunities to involve, engage and communicate with all children, young people and families that use the Council's service (including those with protected characteristics). Further details would be requested from Children and Young People Services.
  - The review of building / street names and monuments. A further update would be provided on the work undertaken for this, and to look at convening a meeting of the review panel for this purpose.
  - The potential need for a fourth round of vaccination due to rising levels of COVID-19. Further details would be provided to the Committee when available.

(3) T H A T the progress being made through the Council's recovery strategy and the Directorate recovery plans in response to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic be noted.

#### Reasons for recommendations.

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

(2) To ensure the Council is effectively assessing its performance in line with the requirement to meet our performance requirements as outlined in the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and reflecting the requirement of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that it maximises its contribution to achieving the well-being goals for Wales. Also, for Cabinet to consider the comments and views of the Scrutiny Committee.

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

#### 989 SERVICE PLANS AND TARGET SETTING TO DELIVER THE ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23 (CX) –

The report was presented by the Head of Policy & Business Transformation who explained this report set out the future service plans and targets within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee. These set out the specific areas of focus associated with the delivery of the Council's Annual Delivery Plan for 2022/2023 as aligned to the four Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. Each of the Council's Heads of

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Service, developed a Service Plan for how their individual service would contribute to delivering those corporate plan commitments, how that links to the forthcoming years ADP and sets out in their service plans how they would utilise their range of resources in order to be able to deliver that, as well as the basis for monitoring and reporting progress on a quarterly basis within the forthcoming financial year.

The commitments in the Annual Delivery Plan were reflected in the Service Plans attached at Appendix A to the report together with proposed service improvement targets attached at Appendix B to the report to show how individual service areas would contribute to their achievement and overall delivery of the four Well-being Objectives. Appendix C set out all planned activities as they related to the remit of this Committee. Work was also underway to develop a national set of self-assessment performance measures.

Following the presentation of the report, the subsequent comments and questions were raised by the Committee:

- Councillor Dr Johnson referred to the comments he had made previously in relation to this report last year, where he had suggested, in light of the substantial detail of information contained within the documents that the Scrutiny Committee had to consider and the challenges of setting targets due to the pandemic, that it would be more beneficial if Members of the Scrutiny Committee or Full Council could receive a presentation on the subject, as this could not be properly considered solely within a scrutiny committee setting. He cited the example of the Treasury Management presentations given to the Governance and Audit Committee prior to their meetings which helped them to fully understand matters so that they could discuss things in a more informed way. The above comments were also echoed by Councillors Sivagnanam, Carroll and the Chair, who felt that either a workshop, task and finish group or standalone meeting to scrutinise this report on its own would be better. It was conceded however, that there were limits to what could be done outside the set framework for scrutiny as set down in legislation.
- The Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services added that due to timelines, work pressures etc. these additional / alternative methods of scrutiny outlined by Members would not be feasible for this year but going forward any of these methods could be employed and 'weaved' into the work programme as an additional layer of scrutiny of this report in the coming years and for these to then come back to the Scrutiny Committee for a final view and consideration.
- Councillor Dr Johnson suggested that after the local elections, Democratic Services and the Head of Policy & Business Transformation considered asking the new cohort of Chairs and Vice Chairs (i.e., via the Scrutiny Committee Chair and Vice-Chair Group) to consider the best way of presenting this report to the various Scrutiny Committees, particularly the Corporate Performance and Resources Committee which looked at all areas of Council work and services, this being supported by the Chair and the Committee.
- The Head of Policy & Business Transformation added that the self-assessment provisions under the local Government Elections Act could well

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be the starting point for looking at these alternatives, as well as discussing the options to scrutinise the report in future with Scrutiny and Chairs and Vice Chairs and to get greater Elected Member involvement in the work around producing the report, so that when it was produced and presented there was an opportunity for Members to become involved in that process in further detail. Work on how the proposals made by Members could be implemented would be started after the local elections.

- The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport also agreed with the above comments and suggested to the Committee that the Cabinet administration following the local elections should also be asked to consider how to improve the scrutiny of such detailed and technical reports going forward.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Service Plans (attached at Appendix A to the report) and all planned activities as they relate to the remit of this Committee (as illustrated in Appendix C to the report) be endorsed for Cabinet consideration.
- (2) T H A T the proposed service improvement targets for 2022/2023 (attached at Appendix B to the report) relating to the remit of this Committee be endorsed for Cabinet consideration.
- (3) T H A T for future Service Plans and Target Setting to deliver the Annual Delivery Plan, Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee Chair and Vice-Chair Group, following the local elections, considers additional, complementary, means of scrutinising these more effectively, such as through a presentation, dedicated workshop or task and finish group prior to their final submission to Scrutiny.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To ensure that the Service Plans aligned to this Committee's remit are accurate, up to date and relevant and become the main document through which performance against the Corporate Plan's Annual Delivery Plan is monitored and measured during 2022/2023.
- (2) To ensure the Council's Corporate Plan Performance Measurement Framework identifies a relevant set of performance measures and targets against which the Annual Delivery Plan can be monitored and measured during 2022/2023.
- (3) To ensure that the Service Plans and Target Setting to deliver the Annual Delivery Plan can be considered fully and in a more detailed, effective manner.

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990 VALE OF GLAMORGAN ANNUAL AUDIT SUMMARY 2021 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2022 was presented by the Head of Policy & Business Transformation, who outlined the following:

- This report was produced every year by Audit Wales and it set out a position statement of their findings for their work at a Strategic level for the Council.
- The findings were generally positive, i.e that the Council met the remaining Local Government (Wales) Measure duties for the financial year of 2020/21, as well as confirming an unqualified true and fair opinion on the Council's financial statements, with no formal regulatory recommendations made for the Council during the period covered by their report.
- Five Proposals for Improvement (PFI) were made in relation to specific local reviews, as well as additional national pieces of work, such as Discretionary services and Regenerating town centres in Wales.
- Following adoption of these, the Council would monitor their progress via its Insight Board, as well as reporting via the Annual Delivery Plan, self-assessment reporting and interim six-monthly reports.

Following the presentation of the report, the subsequent comments and questions were raised by the Committee:

- On Councillor Dr Johnson's questions whether the planned work in relation to this report had been undertaken and if there was an update on the inspection work by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Estyn, Council officers were due to meet with Audit Wales to review the latest position in terms of work completed, which would be reported back to Committee via their Work Programme. An update against the various local studies and national pieces of work would also be shared with Members. Both CIW and Estyn would be undertaking inspection work on Council services i.e. Children's Services.
- The Chair stated that a key part of this work involved working with the Third Sector such as Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) and asked the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer to find out if they would be attending the next Committee in order to update it.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the contents of the Vale of Glamorgan Council Annual Audit Summary 2021 be noted.

Reason for recommendation

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

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## 991 PROJECT ZERO – UPDATE, RESOURCES, EVIDENCE AND REPORTING (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2022 was presented by Head of Policy & Business Transformation for the Committee's consideration, which set out the findings in the carbon data report submitted to Welsh Government, proposals for the approach to the use of financial resources associated with tackling climate change and for reporting progress in delivering Project Zero, which was the Council's response to the declaration of a climate emergency.

The key points raise included:

- In terms of the Council's carbon footprint, the Welsh Government (WG) undertook a measurement exercise across public sector bodies and used 2019/20 as the baseline, due to the potential impact of the pandemic on emissions in 2020/21 and the data was submitted to WG in the autumn of last year and was currently being interpreted by WG with the expectation that a draft report about public sector carbon emissions would be produced shortly.
- As part of this exercise, the Council looked at the three different scopes of carbon emissions, looking at both direct and indirect use of carbon emitting services. Within scope one and scope two these encompassed energy use within Council owned buildings, locations under the Council's direct control and then scope three, which involved carbon emissions within the supply chain. 80% of the Council's emissions were contained within scope three around the goods and services that it purchased. This information would help inform the future priorities for Project Zero and to help focus not just on the direct energy consumption by Council facilities but also indirectly through its supply chains.
- The Council would be looking with interest at the findings from all Wales information that the WG provided, and the Council would also be submitting a further response to the data request in June of this year.
- In terms of funding, the report set out a series of different funding arrangements and proposals for how those funding arrangements could be made such as the green infrastructure and climate change reserve, which stood at £650,000, and should be identified as a capital reserve as well as being ring fenced as match funding for grant funded infrastructure schemes that would help deliver a step change towards meeting the Council's 2030 zero target. There was also the Project Zero Reserve (£500k) to be used to fund revenue type costs such as procuring expert advice, analysis and to fund feasibility and due diligence costs that were required to leverage grant funding (subject to approval by the Project Zero Board and the Head of Finance). Also of note, was the Carbon Vehicles Reserve (£215k) to be used to achieve electrification of the Council's fleet of vehicles.
- The Housing Business Plan was setting out almost £75m over the next 30 years for the decarbonisation of the Council's existing and future housing stock.
- WG had also given indicative budgets for a three-year period, with additional funding in years two and three of £20m in each year ringfenced



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for decarbonisation across Wales and additional Schools' Asset Renewal Capital Funding awarded in 2021/22.

- In terms of reporting, it was proposed that progress be reported through Cabinet and Committees three times a year in June, October and February. Furthermore, the need had been identified for a new section to be inserted into committee reports around climate change and nature implications for Member's consideration and focus, to be implemented following the Annual Meeting of the Council this year.
- A Communications Plan would need to be implemented as part of Project Zero, i.e., the use of social media, the use of Project Zero insignia by schools and other public bodies as well as branding and information on the project on physical assets, i.e. within country parks.
- Key areas of progress for Project Zero were highlighted i.e. the consultation on the Local Development Plan and how supplementary planning guidance would be developed, the Green Infrastructure Plan to be consulted upon in Summer 2022, the 10 year Waste Management Business Plan would be going to Cabinet, as well as the development of a Local Area Energy Plan, the agreement of the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Cabinet for an energy strategy, and the outline proposals at Aberthaw i.e. for alternative power generation or digital infrastructure.
- The Council had also recently undertaken with consultants to look at the carbon emissions across the Vale of the Glamorgan as a county in order to understand the size and scale of the challenge to reach the 2050 goal for a net zero Wales.

Following the presentation of the report, the subsequent comments and questions were raised by the Committee:

- Councillor Carroll referred to global uncertainty at present around energy supply and prices (i.e. due to the conflict in Ukraine) and the need for the United Kingdom as a whole and Western Europe even more so to reduce reliance on oil and gas (such as from Russia). This would be a complicated and challenging process including supply chains, the cost of 'green' technologies and the impact of prices on related resources, i.e. metals on battery / electric technologies. He asked whether any impact assessment or analysis had been undertaken by the Council or others on the potential impact of the conflict in Ukraine and other factors on achieving net zero. It was explained that the current issues and conflict were discussed at the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) concerning refugee resettlement and the potential impacts on Council services and residents' cost of living. A follow up meeting with Council Officers on these issues would be happening in the near future, and the impact on the Council's decarbonisation programme would also be considered, with the possibility of a report to come on this in due course.
- Councillor Dr Johnson referred to the large percentage of carbon emissions in the Council's supply chain and the importance of the Council as an 'anchor' institution and the ability to influence practices both in terms of its procurement locally and the wider supply chain as well as setting best practice. This potentially could take time and therefore setting a baseline for the Project Zero data may not be achievable in the near future. He also

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was looking for assurance that the processes and plans for Project Zero would be adhered to by all parts of the Council.

- Councillor Sivagnanam echoed the comments on the Council's supply chain emissions and asked what the Council was doing differently in terms of its procurement of other services and to ensure that those services and those providers were in with this project.
- In response to the queries above on supply chain (scope 3) emissions, the Head of Policy & Business Transformation stated that a number of things were being undertaken in order to see significant pace on this work. The data return made it possible for the Council to identify the different areas of the Council's business which were procuring different supplies and services and to have notional emissions indications against each of those and the Project Board for Project Zero had requested that the Senior Responsible Officers who were there to deliver these commitments within the project undertake a procurement challenge over the next three months and to look at how to decarbonise these goods and services and to actively seek out alternatives. Also, to look at supporting service providers to help reduce their carbon emissions i.e. sharing the Council's electric vehicles with domiciliary carers and to further look at decarbonising schools.
- The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration told the Committee that although a complex area, Project Zero and the work around it was a case study of how if you felt passionately about things, you could actually affect change in the way that the Council operates, such as delivering a net zero carbon school, South Point Primary School in Rhoose. As with the process overall, this had involved learning and adapting green technologies and methods in order to allow for children going in and out of the buildings, etc, with the next big challenge to retrofit older schools in order to become net zero carbon. She commended the work done by Council officers in taking forward Project Zero. In terms of costs, these had already been increasing even before Ukraine and the council still had to deliver services, etc. and be ambitious despite this rise and there was the potential for further WG funding such as with retrofitting.
- The Chair felt there should be more emphasis on producing and sourcing food locally within the Vale of Glamorgan in order to reduce carbon emissions from importing food externally, on insulating public and other types of building in order to reduce carbon emissions and to help reduce fuel consumption / costs and for the Council to lobby Welsh Government and UK Government regarding procurement practices and policies, in order to work towards more carbon neutral solutions. It was explained that the Climate Change Challenge Plan already had commitments to locally produced food and a reduction in food miles. The point on insulation would be taken back to Property Services and on lobbying national and UK government, this was certainly important but also it was crucial to make decisions and take actions locally concerning procurement.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

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RECOMMENDED – T H A T Cabinet be informed of the comments made by Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on Project Zero – Update, Resources, Evidence and Reporting, namely:

- Greater emphasis on producing and sourcing food locally within the Vale of Glamorgan in order to reduce carbon emissions from importing food externally.
- Greater focus on insulating public and other types of building in order to reduce carbon emissions and to help reduce fuel consumption / costs.
- For the Council to lobby Welsh Government and UK Government regarding procurement practices and policies, in order to work towards more carbon neutral solutions.
- That the Council looks to influence practices both in terms of procurement locally and the wider supply chain, as well as setting best practice and that the Council ensures its policies and processes around Project Zero are sufficiently robust, durable and effective.

#### Reason for recommendation

In order for Cabinet to consider the comments and views of the Scrutiny Committee with reference to taking Project Zero forward.

#### 992 REVENUE MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL, 2021 TO 31ST JANUARY, 2022 (RFE) -

The reference from Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2022 was presented by the Interim Head of Finance/S151 Officer, the key points of which were as follows:

- On funding provided by Welsh Government (WG) via the Local Authority Emergency Hardship Grant, nearly £11m had been claimed by the Council in order to help cover additional expenditure incurred between April 2021 and January 2022.
- The funding for social care via the Local Authority Emergency Hardship Grant had started to taper off, including the uplift for residential care, void beds in care homes and supported accommodation.
- It was difficult to project the outturn for this year, due to additional grants being provided by WG, etc. The awarding of such grants meant that in addition to the £4m transfer into the Council Fund approved as part of the Initial Revenue Proposals, there were now a number of non HRA transfers to reserves totalling £3.838m as well.
- Environment and Housing continued to report a £1.5m overspend. However, instead of this being funded from the drawdown from reserve at year end, WG had provided an additional revenue support grant this year of £2 million and this will be used to fund this overspend. Also, the Council had recently been awarded over £200,000 in contributions towards waste from an additional grant from WG.
- Additional funding of £1.2 million had also been made available for the decrease in income received from Council tax due to reduced collection rates from COVID-19. It was proposed that as WG had advised that there

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would be no further Hardship or Loss of Income funding in 2022/23, this sum be transferred into a Covid Response reserve to mitigate the costs associated with the Council's ongoing Covid issues.

- In addition to the favourable variance of £4m previously reported, a further favourable variance of £200k was projected relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in 2021/22.
- Regarding the Council's efficiency target of £500k for the year, this would not be met due to a projected shortfall of £170k against the target.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the position with regard to the Authority's 2021/22 Revenue Budget be noted.

Reason for recommendation

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

993 CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL, 2021 TO 31ST JANUARY, 2022 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2022 was presented by the Interim Head of Finance/S151 Officer, the key points of which were as follows:

- The Council had received additional General Capital Grant funding of £2.7m. This funding was un-hypothecated in order to give Councils the maximum flexibility.
- Emergency Powers had been used to increase the Neighbourhood Services Highway Improvements Scheme by £500k in the 2021/22 Capital Programme, due to this being identified as an area of pressure and so that works can be carried out prior to the end of the financial year.
- Certain schemes had not been able to commence in 2021/22 or had been delayed with some slippage and expenditure to be carried forward; however, some schemes would now commence in March 2022 and be completed in the next financial year.
- The implications of the above were that there will no longer be a requirement to raise unsupported loans to fund capital expenditure this financial year and the level of revenue contributions to capital would reduce to £7.526m. This in turn meant there would not be a draw down from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reserve at the end of 2021/22, with this position having been taken into account when the revised Housing Business Plan was produced which was approved by Council on the 7th March 2022.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

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RECOMMENDED – T H AT the progress made on the 2021/22 Capital Programme be noted.

Reason for recommendation

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

994 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2022/23 (REF) -

The reference from Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2022 was presented by the Interim Head of Finance/S151 Officer, the key points of which were as follows:

- Cabinet previously approved the Income Generation Commercial Opportunity Strategy, which set out that as some public funding became increasingly constrained and there was more intense scrutiny, a greater emphasis needed to be placed upon self-income generation and developing and presenting products and services for the public. As a result, the report set out the fees and charges for a range of services for 2022/23, with any significant changes to these noted therein.
- The CPI rate in January 2022 was reported at 5.5% up from 5.4% in December 2021. However, having considered the main driver for the costs associated with fees and charges was staff time it was recommended that unless mentioned in this report an increase of 3% (reflecting the estimated staff pay awards for 2022/23 and whilst this rate was below CPI it reflects some of the inflationary pressures being experienced by services) had been applied and rounded to the nearest 10p.

Following the presentation of the report, the subsequent comments and questions were raised by the Committee:

- Councillor Dr Johnson queried the introduction of provisional crossover license regarding highway crossovers and that some residents undertook such works last year that may not had needed to be done now the policy had changed. The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport, with permission to speak, explained that the Provisional Crossover licence agreement, involved a low upstand kerb being present and the footway appearing to be of sound condition. This would provide a record that the Council was aware of it in that provisional state and therefore not impede any sale or purchase of a property as a result of due diligence. Also, the Council sought the most pragmatic way of resolving this and they had not been aware of any major crossover works being undertaken previously; if there had been then it was hoped these were all necessary.
- The Councillor also queried what the timescales were for the review of trading spaces, signs, chairs, etc. He also commented on the number of appendices and whether clubs that no longer paid fees needed to be included in them. On the timescales for the review, these would take a year before going back to Cabinet.

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- Councillor John commented on whether the Vale of Glamorgan League still collected the fees for football teams locally. He raised the issue of declining fees due to a decrease in the number of local football clubs and in those for cricket and the costs involved for them to pay fees and for a pitch, coupled with the steady decline of the number of such pitches due to building, etc. The Council needed to look at this as part of its aim at promoting healthy living and wellbeing. This was also echoed by the Chair.
- Councillor Carroll asked about the charges involved with the Provisional Crossover licence agreement, it being confirmed that these charges applied to the inspection and recording costs only.
- The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport stressed to the Committee that increased costs for fees and charges had been kept to a minimum and there had been a reduction in the cost for season tickets for the Vale's coastal resorts as well as the introduction of incremental charging at certain car parks, via a rising bollard and automatic number plate recognition system.
- The Chair emphasised the need for the Council to simplify fees and charges as well as undertake a price sensitivity analysis in order to assess the impact of increasing / decreasing charges and look at absorption costing which could be reported back to Scrutiny.
- The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration added that the season tickets for the Vale's coastal and country car parks were good value for money (virtually a pound a week to go to these locations). Although it would be good to simplify fees and charges for services within the Vale as much as possible this must not fall into a 'one size fits all' approach which could penalise certain people unfairly. Both Cabinet Members in attendance stressed that most fees and charges were an attempt for the Council to be 'cost neutral' or did not wholly cover the costs rather than make any surplus. After expenditure on statutory services such as schools and social care, the amount of money available for funding was considerably less. These types of issues and considerations around charges and fee's structure, etc. could be looked at by Scrutiny in future, i.e. via a task and finish group as well be considered by a future Cabinet post pandemic.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** the proposals for amendments to fees and charges and associated policy and process changes as set out in the report and the associated appendices be noted.

#### Reason for recommendation

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