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

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2025.

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

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

Present: Councillor J. Protheroe (Chair); Councillor E. Goodjohn (Vice-Chair); Councillors G.D.D. Carroll, P. Drake, R. Fisher, C.P. Franks, S.M. Hanks, Dr. I.J Johnson and N.J. Wood.

Also present: Councillor G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing).

### **ANNOUNCEMENT –**

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

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –**

These were received from Councillors H.C Hamilton and B. Loveluck-Edwards.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **CORPORATE RESOURCES DIRECTORATE PLAN 2025/26 (INCLUDING ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ASSOCIATED PERFORMANCE TARGETS) TO DELIVER VALE 2030, THE COUNCIL’S CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (DCR) –**

The Director of Corporate Resources and Operational Manager – Corporate Strategy & Insight provided the Committee with an overview of the report via a PowerPoint presentation commencing by advising that the new plan Vale 2030 had been approved by Council on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 and set out the Council’s commitments for the next five years. The new Plan also provided an opportunity to review and reassess the way in which the Plan and associated plans would be monitored and scrutinised going forward. As part of the development of Vale 2030 and in response to feedback on the Annual Delivery Plan (ADP), Annual Self-Assessment, Service Plans, Scrutiny processes and through the Panel Performance Assessment, work had been undertaken to consider how the current approach could be improved and evolved further, ensuring that arrangements remained robust with support needed to be open transparent and accountable.

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All feedback to date from Elected Members had been considered and included in the Plans with the Chair recognising the hard work undertaken to produce the Plans which had also included significant engagement and consultation on Vale 2030 with the public.

During the discussion Councillor Franks drew attention to three aspects within the Corporate Resources Directorate Plan e.g. how the Council could engage people in relation to the food strategy action, how it could address the many poverty issues people faced and how it could encourage and increase volunteering throughout the Vale. The Director commented that the Public Service Board (PSB) had established a project on tackling the cost of living crisis and which the Council would work with as well as the Council supporting its residents with advice. In particular he referred to the work being undertaken with the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide assistance for people. The Council was also working with the third sector and community groups in promoting volunteering particularly with Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS). The Chair also commented that within her community they were growing organic food and promoting its production with a suggestion that targets be considered to be added to the Plan to increase the volume of locally produced food. Councillor John (Cabinet Member) also drew attention to a similar project in Llantwit encouraging Members to visit the project if required.

The Head of Finance took the opportunity to inform Committee of the support the Benefits team had provided to residents following the announcement at the end of the last year by the UK Government regarding the removal of the winter fuel allowance. Following a query from Councillor Carroll as to further detail in respect of the comment under action CP41 to embed cultural change, the Director said that the Council's Reshaping Programme had a variety of different themes incorporating in particular how services were going to be operating, the decision making processes used, procurement, the use of digital technology to assist and economic resilience actions, etc. Although acknowledging that changing how the Council worked was a significant exercise, it was important to support all colleagues through this process. Councillor Carroll further commented that although aware that other Committees would be considering specific matters within their remit, it would be helpful that as Corporate Performance and Resources was the lead Scrutiny Committee, that the role of the Corporate Resources Directorate in leading on the process to allocate resources to services be reflected within the Plan at CP41 to ensure appropriate oversight by this Committee. The Director said that a reference to the Reshaping Programme to support a balanced budget could be included and the action made more explicit.

Although noting that it was important not to duplicate elements from other Service Plans, Councillor Goodjohn commented that the Plan referenced actions to prevent poverty with the suggestion that it could also include how the Council was measuring the reduction in child poverty and how it was contributing towards this. In referring to the third sector he also considered the Council could do more to encourage further engagement and do more with other networks. The Director said that he regularly met with the Chief Executive of GVS to consider such matters and the Council was also looking to do more things in a more proactive way. The Director also confirmed that measures relating to the work to tackle poverty could be further strengthened

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within the framework, noting that these accompanied reports on the topic to the Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Dr. Johnson, in noting that most of the actions in the Directorate Plan were part of other Plans, asked if the links to the other Plans referred to could be included in the document to assist Members and the public when considering the document. He also acknowledged that some baselines needed to be determined before targets could be included within the document.

Following the discussion, in conclusion the Chair drew attention to the recommendations that had been received from the Scrutiny Committees Homes and Safe Communities, Learning and Culture, the references from which had been circulated and uploaded to the website prior to the meeting, and the recommendations from the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee which had been circulated in an email to all Members that afternoon as the reference was not yet available.

It was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the recommendations as below (including the comments contained within the references) from the Homes and Safe Communities, Learning and Culture and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committees be endorsed and referred to Cabinet for consideration –

- “Homes and Safe Communities – T H A T the Environment and Housing Directorate Plan (Appendix A to the report) and associated measures and performance targets for 2025/26 contained within it be endorsed, subject to the removal of reference to the closure of community centres in the Directorate Plan, and that this endorsement be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, in order for a composite response to be developed and referred back to Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2025;
- Learning and Culture – T H A T
  - Additional detail be added to the plan in relation to the Active Travel programmes for schools;
  - The need for more resources in the area of Additional Learning Needs;
  - More resources were required in relation to healthy eating, in order to combat obesity within young people;
  - The inclusion of an additional performance indicators in relation to healthy eating for young people and in relation to the Council's apprenticeship scheme;
  - Was there scope for the Council to be more ambitious in relation to the actions around the Council's Youth Service and in terms of how the Council engaged and heard the views of young people;
  - Could the Council do more to tackle child poverty;
  - Was there more that the Council could do to enable better access to examinations for those young people who were home-educated;

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- Could the Council provide more opportunities for young people to access leisure, sport, cultural and heritage activities;
  - Queried whether the Council could do more to encourage more people engage with arts and culture;
  - Did the Directorate Plan contain sufficient long-term focus on the risks and impact following cuts to the benefit system; and
  - The need for targets to be set for those new performance indicators where a measure had not been included.
- Environment and Regeneration – T H A T
- It would be helpful that the percentages referred to within the report were quantified or translated into monetary values or other relevant numbers or quantities where that was relevant in order for the report to be as clear as possible in terms of what the Council was trying to achieve;
  - The plans around the support and use of volunteers were welcomed. As part of this, the Council should consider encouraging, supporting, and incentivising local residents to become volunteers in order to help with delivering the Council’s vision;
  - The Committee noted the challenges around resources and the potential impact that these could have on the Environment & Housing and Place Directorate Plans, and, as part of this, Council officers were requested to continue to inform and update Elected Members on progress and delays regarding these through the Scrutiny process.”

(2) T H A T Cabinet be recommended to consider the following within the Corporate Resources Directorate Plan that –

- Action CP41 be strengthened having regard to the specific remit of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the role of the Corporate Resources Directorate in supporting the allocation of resources;
- Performance measurements relating to child poverty be identified and included within the Plan;
- A milestone for Third Sector engagement be included within the Plan;
- The specific links to other plans as referred to in the Directorate Plan be included;
- Targets be included for food strategy actions relating to the increase of growers and producers within the County and the percentage of locally grown / produced food in respect of school dinners.

#### Reasons for recommendations

(1) Having considered the comments and recommendations from the Scrutiny Committees.

(2) Following discussion and consideration of the Directorate Plan.