

No.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2023.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#)

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

Present: Councillor S.D. Perkes (Chair); Councillor J. Aviet (Vice-Chair); Councillors C.E.A. Champion, P. Drake, A.M. Ernest, M.J. Hooper, E. Penn, I.A.N. Perry and S. Wiliam.

Also present: Councillor A. Asbrey, R.M. Birch (Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language), G. Bruce, I. Buckley, L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), S. Campbell, M. Cowpe, C. Franks, E. Goodjohn, S. Haines, W.A. Hennessy, G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Well-being), Dr. I.J. Johnson, B. Loveluck-Edwards, C. Stallard, M.R. Wilson (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services) and N. Wood.

### 717 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.”

### 718 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 be approved as a correct record.

### 719 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

### 720 RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICE CHANGES 2023/24 (REF) -

The reference from Cabinet of 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 was presented by the Operational Manager - Neighbourhood Services.

It was reported that there were many severe financial challenges ahead for the Neighbourhood Services and Transport department just as there were for other services, Council wide. As a result, the Service was having to make difficult

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decisions with regards to the services it provided as well as ensuring that the provision of any non-statutory services such as green waste collections, contributed to the cost of their delivery. In addition, behavioural change was required and greater participation by all households to meet ambitious waste targets out to 2050.

Therefore, it had been deemed necessary to streamline kerbside collections to ensure the Recycling and Waste Management Service remained within the revised budget set for 2023/24 and achieve the £650,000 savings target.

It had been proposed to make several changes to waste collections, which included:

- The introduction of a subscription charge from 1<sup>st</sup> July for the collection of green waste.
- The subscription fee for green waste would include a charge of £36 per annum for up to 4 bags per fortnightly and £54 for 8 bags (within 72-hours).
- There was also a provision for one off collections at 50p per bag for the green waste subscribers and a half year charge would be available from August 2024.
- Householders would still have the chance to take green waste to the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC).
- Change to the frequency of black bag collections to 3 bags collected every 3 weeks.

Councillor S. Campbell, not a member of the Committee but with permission to speak, commented around how the subscription service for the green waste collections would work because it could be a time-consuming process. She also queried staffing and the redistribution of agency staff. Her final point was that there was a real concern among residents around fly tipping and she queried whether the HWRCs would remain free to use.

Councillor M. Cowpe, not a member of the Committee but with permission to speak now is about the cost, queried the increased cost of hygiene caddies by 400%. She stated most people would use the hygiene caddies for sanitary, incontinence and nappy waste, and due to the foul odors, most people would not want to keep the containers in their homes. Councillor Cowpe stated that for three weeks they may need 3 caddies and that was a cost of £30. As a lot of the families would be the most vulnerable, she stated that she would like the Council to reconsider that charge because it was excessive that would affect the most vulnerable families. With regard to purple bags, it was important to be clear that these were not just for the collection hygiene waste but could be used an extra black bag. The purple bag was an extra allowance and indicated where families required additional support. Councillor Cowpe urged for action to be taken against those who abused the system and who did not recycle at all.

In reply to comments raised by Councillor Campbell and Councillor Cowpe, the Operational Manager advised:

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- The Council would be using route planning software, which would calculate the fastest collection routes.
- There were no employee implications because of the service changes.
- Fly-tipping had always been and would always be an ongoing challenge. The main approach that the Council could do, was to remind the public that fly-tipping was a criminal offence.
- The HRWCs would remain free to use as there was a statutory duty for Council's to provide a free service.
- There was an element of personal choice with how waste was stored, but there were a number of solutions available including black boxes in place of purple bags.
- The £10 cost of containers was being introduced for the purpose of cost recovery.
- In terms of abusing the system, the Council did have statutory powers that it could use which included the serving of a notice through Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act. That could also lead to a fixed penalty notice for repeating offenders.

Councillor M. Hooper commented that there were significant risks to the Council's recycling rates particularly due to the changes to the collection of green waste and he was unsure how a 3 black bag limit would improve recycling. Finally, Councillor Hooper stated that he felt that there was very little in the Council's strategy about reducing consumption. In reply, the Operational Manager advised that reduced recycling was a challenge facing all Councils in Wales. With the current proposed changes the Council would be supported by Welsh Government consultants and through the Waste and Resources Action Group (WRAP). The Council would therefore follow national guidance which would help to reduce risks. With regard to black bag collections, the Operational Manager advised that every other Council that had introduced a 3 weekly collection had produced evidence of improved recycling performance. Important factors of the Council's strategy were the educational programs and the support that the Council would provide to those householders that may not fully understand what recycling/waste went where. This was also important as there were issues with black bags being contaminated with things such as food that attracted vermin and reduced the Council's recycling rate.

Councillor S. Wiliam stated that he was in favour of fewer black bag collections, and he commented that he did not believe that fly-tipping would be a major problem. He did however have the same concerns as highlighted by Councillor Hooper, and particularly around how the changes would be managed and how would people be encouraged to subscribe to the new green waste service. In reply, the Operational Manager stated that it did represent a challenge as the amount of waste collected differed across the Vale of Glamorgan. That was why they had limited the number of scenarios around collections, with the Council offering an option for 4 bags to be collected which could rise to 8, but there was also the option of a one-off collection for occasions when more than 8 bags were produced. In order to be successful, the Council had recognised that communication was important which included the use of social media dedicated web pages.

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In reply to a query regarding the cost of co-mingled service and the value of mixed recycling, the Operational Manager stated that the Council paid a company in England to process the Council's recycling. The amount received was dependent on the weight of material to be recycled. That was greatly affected by contamination, which would result in the Council paying a higher processing cost and so reducing the amount paid to the Council. In addition to the financial benefits of co-mingled recycling there were also environmental benefits. Future pressures of that would be reduced when the Council opened its new recycling facility on the Atlantic Trading Estate in Barry.

Councillor J. Aviet commented that she would like the Council to carry out more engagement and communication with the public, and there was also a role for Councillors in helping the Council to get messages out.

Councillor A. Ernest raised the following points:

- Concern with risk of a reduction in the amount of waste recycling material that would result in a financial reduction.
- Consideration of flats and apartments.
- The visual impact that wheelie bins had on conservation areas.
- Extra costs for householder on top of the amount of Council Tax paid.
- For the Committee to hold site visits to the waste and recycling facilities.

In reply, the Operational Manager advised that it was appropriate for the Council to highlight risks particularly in relation to the amount of green waste collected, but the amount of tonnage collected at the recycling sites and also the likely amount collected from the new subscription service should be enough to achieve the minimum set tonnage. The risk was however something that the Council was well aware of, which was why there was a drive to reduce the amount of contaminate in black bags. With regards to flats, it was advised that these would be managed differently as there would need to be negotiations with each individual management company. In terms of extra costs, it was important to recognise that green waste was not a statutory service and also the Council was facing unprecedented financial pressures. It was agreed to look at dates for the Committee to visit the new facilities.

With permission to speak, Councillor M.R. Wilson (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services) thanked the Operational Manager and all officers and staff within the Waste Service. With regards to green waste, he stated that it was important to recognise that 40% of the Vale's population did not use the service, so why should those subsidise the service for the remaining 60%. The Cabinet Member referred to the financial challenges facing the service, and other issues such as attracting suitable labour to certain posts. Therefore, there was a need to fund a budget short fall as well as finding ways to encourage people to recycle more. One of the important factors in moving to a 3 weekly black bag collection, was for people to think more about the waste that they put out and particularly food.

The Chair, Councillor S. Perkes, echoed the thanks to the staff and queried whether a monitoring report could be provided to the Scrutiny Committee. The

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Operational Manager stated that an update could be scheduled for the Scrutiny Committee's meeting in October. This would be added to the Committee's work programme for 2023/24. Overall, the Committee agreed to accept the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the resolutions of Cabinet made on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 in relation to the Recycling and Waste Management Service Changes 2023/24 be accepted.

Reason for recommendation

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

721 RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (2022-2032)  
(REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 was presented by the Operational Manager - Neighbourhood Services.

It was outlined that the Council had adopted the Welsh Government 'Collections Blueprint', which required domestic recycling to be separated in preparation for kerbside collection and was at an advanced stage of rolling that service out across the Vale of Glamorgan.

The 'Collections Blueprint', along with other measures to enhance the Council's recycling service, that were ensuring compliance to current Welsh Government (WG) guidance and waste related legislation had been successfully introduced in the rural Vale and Barry. The rollout to Penarth and surrounding areas would take place on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 after the Resource Recovery Facility was fully operational.

Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> January had approved the new draft 10-year 'Recycling and Waste Management Strategy' that formalised the service delivery along with other measures to ensure the Council met its environmental ambitions and Statutory Recycling targets. This was a key contributing action to the Council's decarbonisation programme, Project Zero.

It was reported that the Strategy had been subject to a 12-week public consultation, and a Management Action Plan had been created to integrate those comments into the Strategy.

The report outlined the intention to enhance the existing kerbside recycling service adding on small electrical items such as kettles, hair dryers and batteries. It also provided an update in respect of waste infrastructure namely construction of the Resource Recovery Facility, the reuse shop, fleet parking in Barry and the proposed replacement Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Llandow.

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With regard to the site at Llandow, the Operational Manager advised that it was proposed that the waste recycling facility be relocated at a new site. However, there had been some challenges in delivering that project at a suitable site that met the requirements of environmental permits and regulations.

The development of a site previously identified had fallen through, so the Council had gone back to stage one. Over the past couple of weeks, a new solution had presented itself, with land available for the waste site, and the Council was looking at the viability of that site and some early outline design concepts.

Councillor C. Champion, stated that the report indicated that the Waste Site in Cowbridge would be retained, but would be kept in review. The Operational Manager advised that a study had been carried out which indicated that it was more viable to retain the site as opposed to running waste vehicles to and from Barry. It was felt necessary to keep the site under review to ensure that it remained viable.

With permission to speak, Councillor M.R. Wilson (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services) stated that one of the most important factors of the new Strategy was its contribution to the Council's Project Zero, for example there was a potential saving over 23,000 litres of fuel. The Strategy represented the good work that the Council was doing to mitigate and reduce climate change.

There being no further comment or queries, the Committee

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** the Recycling and Waste Management Strategy (2022-2032) be accepted.

Reason for recommendation

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

**722 BUDGET 2023/24 FOR CONSULTATION AND FURTHER MTFP UPDATE (REF) –**

The reference from Cabinet of 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 was presented by the Accountant – Resource Management in conjunction with the Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer as part of the consultation process on these key areas. It was explained that the Local Government Settlement for 2023/24 had been more favourable than had been expected. The Welsh Government had directed £227m of its £644m funding to local government, with the Vale of Glamorgan's Aggregate External Finance (AEF) having increased by 8.9% (£16.6m). However, despite this, there still remained a funding gap that the Council would need to address.

The Council had worked at the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) level to revise cost pressures down across Directorates and to submit the cost pressures or increased costs that they anticipated for future years. Such cost pressures included Pay and

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Energy pressures, as well as more specific cost pressures related to this Committee, such as inflationary pressures and the annual uplift in contract costs for the large waste disposal/recycling contracts and school transport inflationary pressures.

As part of the Budget Strategy, the Council had worked to identify a number of savings proposals over ten 'themes'. Savings proposals specific to the remit of this Committee included areas such as increase in fees and charges, a review of car parking charges and provision, a reduction to the annual grass cutting schedule, and also changes to the waste collection for Black Bags to 3 weeks plus the Green Bag subscription charge.

The Council's reserves had also been reviewed to align with the Council's overall objectives and risks. The reserves had also been streamlined which would help with their monitoring and reporting.

The timetable / next steps for 2023/24 Budget for Consultation and Further Medium Term Financial Plan Update were also outlined, from public and Scrutiny consultation in January / February through to the final proposals to go to Council on 6th March, 2023.

Councillor A. Ernest queried the provision for highway repairs, and more specifically the amount allocated to repair pavements in urban areas which was of great importance to people with a disability or those with children. Councillor Ernest's second point related to the maintenance of parks, and he stated that the Council should be looking to provide additional resources to Neighbourhood Services and particularly highways. In reply, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that the current budget allocated for highway repair and maintenance was generous, but it had been a challenging year in terms of repairing potholes, with the amount spent exceeding the allocated budget. In terms of next year's provision, the budget allocated for highway resurfacing was significantly lower, due to the challenges that the Council was facing. A budget of around £1 million had been earmarked, so the plan was to focus on six or seven main roads. Next year was therefore going to be extremely challenging. A report providing more details of the Council's strategy would be provided to Cabinet in due course. In terms of parks and open spaces, the Head of Service stated that as the Council was pressed for funding in that area, many novel ways of working and initiatives were utilised such as the use of volunteer groups. She praised the Council's Planning Section in being able to obtain Section 106 monies which had meant that extra money could be invested.

Councillor V. Driscoll queried the increase with the Council's budget reserves over the past 10 years. In reply, the Accountant referred to amount of grant monies received from Welsh Government during Covid and over the past 2 to 3 years. This had allowed the Council to offset one off costs and put money into reserves for areas that the Council would expect to use money from its own budgets. It was also necessary for the Council to budget for worst case scenarios and to consider areas where it would have to fund cost pressures.

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Councillor L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), with permission to speak, commented that the Council had invested heavily in highway and pavement repairs. Last year additional grant money had been provided by Welsh Government, but due to their cost pressures, it was likely that Welsh Government would be unable to provide the same level of funding. Inflationary pressure on the Council were also having an impact and there were pressures on Neighborhood Services due to the need to prioritise social care and education. The Leader referred to rises in Council Tax and emphasised that a 1% rise would bring in an additional £850k, and she stated that if there were other areas that Members felt required prioritising, then the question should be does Council Tax increase by more than the 4.9% proposed.

The Chair, Councillor S. Perkes queried opportunities to raise additional income. In response, the Head of Neighborhood Services and Transport referred to opportunities for local sports club to run their own facilities. There were also potential opportunities around enforcement and the collection of commercial waste.

Councillor M.R. Wilson (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services), with permission to speak, stated that he would like to have more resources but there was a limited budget. He agreed with Councillor Ernest and pavements and advised that money had been allocated to that area, but there was a need to be patient as the Council had to properly assess the use of roads and pavements before money was spent. Regarding reserves, he commented that it was important to remember that reserves could only be used once, and due to the winter weather, the Council had faced challenges when it came to road repairs.

Subsequently, the Committee

RECOMMENDED – T H A T both the Cabinet reference and appended Cabinet report in relation to the Budget for 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Plan be noted.

#### Reason for recommendation

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

#### 723 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2023/2024 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 was presented by the Accountant – Resource Management.

The Accountant advised that it was a consolidated Fees and Charges report which included fees across Neighbourhood Services, Resources, Place, Learning and Skills and Social Services.

Cabinet had approved the recommendations as outlined in the report, with the majority of the proposed fees and charges reflecting an increase of between 5%



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and 11%. In some cases, the fees had been rounded to the nearest 5p or 10p, and some other fees and charges had increased higher than the percentage, while some had remained the same or decreased to reflect the take up of services and the cost of delivery. The rationale for doing so was outlined in the body of the report.

The majority of charges for Neighbourhood Services were proposed to increase in line with inflation (or slightly more reflecting take up of services and the cost of delivery). A small number of the fees and charges had remained the same as they were deposits paid by the customer which were later refunded:

- Sporting activities – mostly proposed to increase by between 5 – 5.5% which was less than the rate of inflation with the aim of promoting health and wellbeing and keeping these activities affordable. Some charges in Jenner Park had had to increase by greater amounts due to the increase in electricity costs at this site.
- Bulky Waste - it was proposed for bulky waste fees to increase by 25% due to the rising costs of providing this service and work towards full cost recovery. Whilst this did not fully cover the costs of providing these services, the increase was recommended to help reduce the risk of decreasing demand, therefore resulting in the dumping of such items which would then cost the Council more. For these reasons, the collection of additional bulky items (above 3; maximum of 5 items) were not proposed to increase.
- Commercial Waste - due to the competitive nature of the service, but simultaneously increasing costs of delivering this service, the proposed increase of commercial waste charges for 2023/24 was 11%.
- Domestic waste - administration charge for issuing a Household Waste and Recycling Centre van and/or trailer permit was proposed to increase by 11% (to the nearest whole number) due to the costs of delivering the service having increased further. The purchase price for Hygiene Caddies was proposed to increase by 400% from £2 to £10.
- Beach Huts – it was proposed to increase the fees and charges for daily hire and annual passes for beach huts at the recommended 11% for 2023/24. Charges for Weddings and Civil Partnerships at various coastal locations were also proposed to increase in line with the Consumer Price Index of 11%.
- Highways – there was some amendment to the pricing strategies following benchmarking and review of full cost recovery. The report detailed some of the larger increase in fees.
- Filming – guide price increased by 11% however price paid would be negotiable depending on requirements.
- Town centre car park charges (including 2 hour free period) were recommended to remain the same as to ensure residents were not discouraged from using town centre car parks.
- Coastal car parks had not seen an increase in charges since 2018/19. Due to the increasing popularity of our coastal resorts and the associated costs of maintaining them, it was proposed to increase the charge for car parking for up to 1 hour from £1 to £1.10 (10%) and the all-day charge (over 1 hour) from £6 to £6.50 (8%). Charges for parking after 4pm at coastal locations

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were due to change from £1 to £1.10 for up to 1 hour and £3 to £3.25 for the over 1 hour charge.

- A further review of car parking charges across the Council area would be carried out as part of a car park review that was being undertaken to support the 2023/24 budget proposals and alongside the implementation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) at the Council's Coastal car parks. The review was anticipated in the coming weeks, with tiered parking charges properly considered.
- For customers that regularly used the Coastal car parks, seasonal tickets were still available and it was proposed for the charge to be raised by 11% to contribute towards the increased costs of maintenance coastal resorts. The cost of a permit for 12 months would therefore be £55.50 in 2023/24.
- Outdoor Trading Spaces - Café Style licences and outside trading area. Increase of between 66% to 100%. The increases set out above were proposed to help generate income both to cover the costs of providing these services and to contribute any potential extra income towards other services where fees and charges could not be increased to full cost recovery. The increases were significantly larger than the majority of the proposed fees and charges within this report due to a rise in demand within the last year. The increase had been informed by an exercise reviewing the fees and charges levied by other local authorities surrounding the Vale of Glamorgan Council which considered that the proposed fee would still be competitive.
- Transportation - due to the increasing costs of providing school transport, it was proposed that the fee for an annual travel pass on a contracted mainstream school bus service to be increased in line with inflation (11%) and rounded up to the nearest pound; this would also apply to replacement bus passes.
- Porthkerry Cemetery – Proposed prices via Barry Town Council. Mainly increased by 5% however some had remained the same.

With regard to the Directorate of Place Fees and Charges, it was reported that the proposals would enable the Country Parks to plan for the future management of the sites in a sustainable manner in times of reduced funding. Saving targets for the Countryside Service included the generation of additional income and these proposals sought to raise income from users of services which required resources to maintain and/or to deliver, whilst also maintaining viable competitive services and attracting visitors and tourists as appropriate.

In terms of Countryside car parks, it was proposed to introduce a charge of £1 for up to one hour car parking. Previously the charge was £1 for up to 2 hours. The charge for up to 2 hours was proposed to be £2 and the charge for up to 4 hours was proposed to increase from £2 to £4. The all-day charge was proposed to increase from £4 to £5. The increase in prices would contribute to the ongoing increase in maintenance costs of the Countryside Parks

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The Chair welcomed, Mr. J. Osbourne, a member of the public who has registered to speak on the item. Mr. Osbourne was advised that he would be allowed 3 minutes speaking time.

Mr. Osbourne stated that his comments related to trading licences for outdoor cafés and street traders. Some of the proposed fee increases were between 66% and 100%, for which, there had no prior consultation with businesses.

Mr. Osbourne commented that the fees for tables and chairs outside, applied to street pavements and not those on the promenade or any public open space. It was therefore unfair, and so he asked for the fees to be reviewed with the same system in operation for all businesses. He added that costs for businesses were increasingly dramatically such as electricity, so a lot were struggling as was well known. That meant that the trade had concerns about the increase in the fees, which for example resulted in an extra £100 cost just for placing a sign on a pavement. He referred to fees were being increased for cost recovery purposes, and commented that it would be better to do away with systems and thus with it any cost implications.

Mr. Osbourne stated that speaking on behalf of several traders on Barry Island, he could say that they were not happy with the increased fees, so he asked for the matter to be taken back to Cabinet for reconsideration.

In being asked for points of clarification, Mr. Osbourne commented:

- It was his understanding that businesses on the promenade did not have to pay the fees for putting out tables and chairs.
- Following the increases, the amount he would have to pay would likely double.

Councillor L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), not a member of the Committee but invited to comment, stated that for businesses on the promenade, the area that was being referred to was their lease area. If any business was putting out tables and chairs onto the public highway, whether that be pavements or roads, then they would be paying.

Councillor M. Hooper stated that the High Street Traders Association had raised the same concerns that Mr. Osbourne had. The Association had also expressed concern with a lack of engagement and consultation around the increase in fees. Councillor Hooper also referred to concerns raised in relation to increases for hygiene caddies going up by 100%, particularly when it was taken in the context of poverty (49% of single parents living in poverty). That meant that the Council was passing on the cost of those caddies onto the most vulnerable and he asked for that to be reviewed. His final point was that there was a lack of strategic vision, highlighting for example that crane hire was increasing by 600% so he questioned how the Council's previous fees and charges regime had been so wrong.

Councillor A. Ernest, commented on several charges that he felt required re-consideration by Cabinet. These were:

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- The cost for dedication benches, which were sensitive for many people, were increasing from £1065 to £1200.
- Small Plaques
- Café style licences, which for a business in his Ward was increasing from £150 to £250 and which was more than the 11% being proposed. Such increases would therefore have an impact on town centres and could lead to traders going out of business.
- The charge for the docking of the Waverly leisure boat, which was on top of the significant amount required for repair work, may mean that she never docked in Penarth again.
- Filming charges, if these were too high then it would encourage film producers to search of other cheaper locations.
- Parking at country parks was increasing, and this was unfair to Vale of Glamorgan residents as they would be paying twice.

Councillor C. Champion recommended for Cabinet to reconsider the charge for the hygiene caddy as previously suggested by Councillor Hooper, and also review the increase in fees for traders putting out tables and chairs. Councillor V. P. Driscoll agreed that fees for traders should be reviewed, citing the impact of the other increases being proposed.

In reply and with permission to speak, Councillor L. Burnett commented on areas where the Council needed to recover its costs at a time for extreme financial challenge and she asked how services would be funded if it was recommended to remove or reduce certain subsidies.

The recommendations made by Councillor Hooper and Councillor Champion, having been duly seconded and voted upon, were not carried by the Committee.

There followed a point of order from Councillor Driscoll regarding the involvement of Cabinet Members in discussions at Scrutiny Committee meetings, to which the Chair responded by stating that she disagreed as there had been some good debates, and Cabinet Members had the right to reply to questions and lead on items.

Subsequently, it was

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** both the Cabinet reference and appended Cabinet report in relation to Vale of Glamorgan Proposed Fees and Charges for 2023/2024 be noted.

#### Reason for recommendation

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

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724 DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROPOSALS 2023/24 TO 2027/28  
(REF) -

The reference from Cabinet of 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 was presented by the Accountant – Resource Management.

It was noted that on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2022, the Welsh Government (WG) had announced the provisional 2023/24 General Capital Funding (GCF) settlement for 2023/24. The amount awarded to the Council was £6.997m, being made up of £3.545m grant and £3.452m of supported borrowing.

This was an increase of £1.168m from the 2022/23 GCF of £5.829m (2021/22 GCF being £6.867m). WG had also advised that £20m capital across Wales in each year was being provided to enable Local Authorities to respond to the joint priority of decarbonisation. The Council was awaiting further information from WG in relation to that to understand what it meant for us as a Council. WG had also confirmed that the GCF would remain at the same level for 2024/25. No further projections beyond that point have been given.

The Officer presented to the Committee the areas of anticipated spending over the 5-year programme, including those areas within the Committee's remit i.e. an additional £700k for resurfacing. (In addition to £300k already in the programme). Total Capital Programme funding came to just over £98m, which comprised over £74m in various grant, S106, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funding and just over £23m in borrowing. A breakdown of the Council's Capital Programme new schemes 2023/24 was also provided.

The timetable and next steps for the Draft Capital Programme Proposals 2023/24 to 2027/28 were referred to, including public and Scrutiny consultation through to the drafting and submission of the final proposals to Full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2023.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the Cabinet reference and report subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the contents of the Draft Capital Programme Proposals 2023/24 to 2027/28 be noted.

Reason for recommendation

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

725 REVENUE MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL TO 30TH  
NOVEMBER, 2022 (DEH) -

The purpose of the report was to advise Committee of the progress relating to revenue expenditure for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2022

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The revenue position for 2022/23 would continue to be challenging for the Council both operationally and financially due to the ongoing implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis. Emerging pressures during 2022/23 related to energy standing charges, the recent pay award settlement, general inflation particularly in areas such as school transport and cost of living and staffing pressures. Inflationary and demand pressures were being experienced across services and would need to be carefully monitored during the financial year.

Currently, there was a balanced overall position with additional pay pressures being met from an underspend in the Policy Budget and some drawdown of service reserves. However, the pressure in respect of school transport would need to be mitigated as year-end approached.

An efficiency target of £500k had been set for the year and services were currently working towards achieving their targets. There were some issues remaining relating to unachieved savings targets from previous years. Adverse variances were being projected for some services this year and the use of reserves would be required to resolve these issues in the short term.

Neighbourhood Services was currently projected to have an adverse variance of £1.3m against the 2022/23 budget, due to additional costs in relation to HGV drivers, leisure payments and the additional cost of the 2022/23 pay award. Building Services would draw down from reserves to reflect the unbudgeted pay award. The Place budget was subject to a virement to reflect a reorganisation.

Having considered the contents of the report, it was

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the position with regard to the Authority's 2022/23 Revenue Budget be noted.
- (2) T H A T the arrangements to offset the projected overspends in 2022/23, as set out in the report, be noted.
- (3) T H A T the amended Revenue Budget for 2022/23, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the content of the report to inform Committee of the projected revenue outturn for 2022/23.
- (2) To respond to emerging pay and price inflationary pressures in 2022/23.
- (3) To adjust the amended Revenue Budget for 2022/23 for movements between Directorates.

No.

726 CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL TO 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2022 (DEH) -

The purpose of the report was to advise Committee of the progress on the 2022/23 Capital Programme for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2022, within their remit

The report provided an update on the progress of the Capital Programme for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2022. Details by scheme were shown in Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 to the report provided a summary of the position of the Capital Programme by Directorate from approval at Council on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2022, including any changes requested within the report.

The report set out requested changes to the 2022/23 and future years Capital Programme. Capital schemes were facing challenges due to significant cost increases, which could necessitate scheme re-engineering or re-tendering, resulting in delays to projects. Project officers were also reporting long lead times on the delivery of materials and a shortage of skills in some areas.

The report noted the current approved programme of £90.413m but it was important to note that this was unlikely to be delivered and slippage was requested of £2.369m. Schemes would continue to be monitored closely as part of the regular monitoring arrangements with project managers and sponsors. Further slippage would be reported in future reports.

It was reported that one Delegated Authority had been approved that was within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee to increase the current budget for the Barry Dock Interchange scheme by £869k to £2.884m to be funded by grant from Welsh Government. Councillor E. Penn queried the reason for the increase. In reply, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that there had been some cost increases because of some additional work in respect to biodiversity etc. In addition, there had also a small increase in the cost of materials, but overall the scheme was still within budget. There was a dedicated webpage on the Council's website and that provided an update on progress. Subsequently, the Committee

**RECOMMENDED - T H A T** the changes and progress made on delivering the 2022/23 Capital Programme, within the remit of the Committee, be noted.

Reason for recommendation

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