

HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 6th March, 2019.

Present: Councillor S.J. Griffiths (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Ms. B.E. Brooks, B.T. Gray, Mrs. S.M. Hanks, M.J.G. Morgan, Mrs. M.R. Wilkinson and M.R. Wilson.

Also present: Ms. D. Murphy (Cardiff and the Vale Citizens Advice), Mrs. G. Doyle, Mrs. I. Gannon, Mr. A. Raybould and Ms. H. Smith (Tenant Working Group Representatives).

809 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillor Mrs. C.A. Cave (Chairman); Councillors Ms. A.M. Collins,

810 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 6th February, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

811 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

812 PRESENTATION: PREVENTION OF TERRORISM –

The Principal Community Safety Officer in conjunction with the Community Safety Manager, provided Members with an overview of the work being undertaken around the prevention of terrorism. The Principal Community Safety Officer stated that the presentation would not consider radicalisation as this was a subject to a detailed training programme.

In beginning the presentation, the Principal Community Safety Officer advised that the aim of the presentation was for Members to have a better understanding of the role of local government and the Prevent Partnership working in delivering the Prevent duty. The presentation would cover the following areas:

- Governance;
- Prevent;
- Risk and threat;
- Training;
- Referral pathways and channel;

Members were advised that there was a UK wide counter terrorism strategy called CONTEST. This had been in place since 2003 and contained four key elements:

- Pursue – to stop attacks;
- Prevent – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent acts;
- Protect – to strengthen our protection against terrorist attacks;
- Prepare – where an attack cannot be stopped to mitigate its impact.

With regard to governance, the Principal Community Safety Officer stated that there was the Regional Contest Board for the Cardiff and Vale area which reported to the All Wales Contest Board. Members noted that the Principal Community Safety Officer was the representative for the Vale of Glamorgan. The Regional Board's primary role was to progress the delivery of the Wales Contest Strategy by ensuring effective multi-agency partnership working. In order to do this, an action plan been prepared in order to help prepare and prevent possible terrorist attacks.

Next, the Principal Community Safety Officer outlined to Members what was Prevent. The aim of this was to reduce the threat to the United Kingdom and to safeguard those at risk of radicalisation. Members noted that there were many different ways in which people could become radicalised, with the internet being a key priority for the Regional Board. Members noted that there was not one single form of work to tackle radicalisation and a multi-agency approach, all of which needed to come together around sharing information, to ensure protocols were robust and that actions were in place. On a regional basis, actions were targeted in relation to training and ensuring specialist support was available.

In relation to understanding risks and threats, the Principal Community Safety Officer referred to the Counter Terrorism Unit's Annual Plan which included actions for Local Authorities, but this was not a public document. The Annual Plan would include local data and intelligence in order to consider where the threats could potentially come from. In addition, information would be shared with neighbouring Local Authorities in order to create a more rounded picture. The Annual Plan would therefore help inform the Regional Action Plan and would enable agencies to respond in a timely way. From the intelligence, a Counter Terrorism Local Profile would be created which would then help to develop a risk assessment.

A key part of the response in relation to the prevention of terrorism was Workshops to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP). WRAP remained the standard tool for those likely to come into contact with those at risk of radicalisation. This was a training tool organised by the Police and would help raise awareness of frontline staff of the threats and the referral process. In addition, an e-learning module was available for those who required a base level of knowledge. The Committee then received information regarding the referral process and how threats were identified, with Members noting that the Police would screen all referrals and if a threat was identified, then a Prevent Gateway Assessment would be carried out.

Finally, the Committee was made aware of Channel meetings, which were multi-agency safeguarding meetings. These provided early support for individuals who were vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The benefits of the multi-agency approach included the early identification of individuals at risk, the assessment of the nature and extent of the risk and the building of tailored support plans. Members noted that membership of Channel meetings were wide-ranging and included Cardiff

and Vale Councils, the Home Office, Cardiff and Vale College, South Wales Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Probation and Health specialists. Members also noted that membership of the Channel meetings would be tailored to individual cases and so if appropriate, religious leaders could be invited.

The Committee asked how successful was the Prevent Strategy. In response, the Principal Community Safety Officer advised that the Regional team was relatively new, so the main priorities at this stage was ensure that working practices were fully embedded and that there was better information sharing.

A Committee Member queried how much support and awareness was provided to schools and educational bodies. In reply, the Principal Community Safety Officer stated that the Regional Board would work very closely with the Education Department and schools, particularly in relation to Channel meetings and the Contest Panel. They could be targeted so the message around WRAP was important as was how it was fed to schools. Therefore, training sessions were being provided to schools with actions provided in the Action Plan. Members noted that the Regional Action Plan would be provided to Committee at a later date.

In reply to a query regarding learning and the circle of information, the Principal Community Safety Officer stated they were constantly learning as new threats emerged. She referred to updates on the strategy being provided to CONTEST Board, as well as the close links developed with other agencies and how communication and information sharing was being improved. In addition, the Officer referred to checks being made on aircraft enthusiasts, and the importance of CCTV operations and community cohesion in order to reduce tensions.

With regard to future funding, the Principal Community Safety Officer stated that structures were already in places which were based on requirements issued by the Home Office. There had however been a delay with the announcement of funding as a result of Brexit. In addition, the Head of Housing and Building Services advised that there was tension between the Home Office and Welsh Government. The Prevent Strategy was led by the Home Office, who had identified that local intelligence was key in identifying those that “went under the radar”, and so, there had been challenging conversations around funding between the Home Office and Welsh Government. The Head of Housing and Building Services referred to a pilot project that had been underway in the Swansea, the outcomes of which were still being considered.

In discussing the need for training and awareness raising, the Committee suggested that the Welsh Local Government Association resources in relation to the Prevention of Terrorism be shared with all Councillors.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the presentation of the prevention of Terrorism be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Following consideration of the presentation provided by the Principal Community Safety Officer.

813 YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE: SIX MONTH PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2018 (DSS) –

The Youth Offending Services Manager presented the report which provided information on the performance of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) during the period April 2018 to September 2018.

The performance report for April 2018 to September 2018 was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. This included some analysis of the performance data.

Local performance measures had been included to provide a greater depth of understanding of performance in specific areas. Where available comparisons with other areas across Wales had also been included for First Time Entrants (FTEs), re-offending and custody performance indicators.

Performance data for First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice system (WYJI 1) was for the 12 months from July 2017 – June 2018. Performance reflected an 11.8% increase when comparing figures to June 2016 – July 2017. However this equated to four children, figures for 2016 – 2017 showed there were 32 children in the cohort compared to 36 in 2017 – 2018. Despite the increase, the rate of FTEs continued to be below 40 so performance overall was positive.

When comparing the performance across other areas, there had been a 1.2% increase across South Wales; a 15.9% reduction across Wales and a reduction of 13.7% across the (Youth Offending Team) YOT family, which included England and Wales. The figures were supplied from the Police National Computer and may differ from the YOS local reporting, as the service was unable to verify the Police National Computer data.

Reduction in re-offending (WYJI 2). The information presented in Appendix 1 to the report produced by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) showed an increase in the binary rate (number of young people reoffending) from nine reoffenders from a cohort of 23; to five reoffenders from a cohort of 12 when comparing October - December 2015 against October - December 2016. The percentage rate had increased from 39.1% to 41.7%, because there had been a reduction in the size of the cohort and a reduction in the number of re-offenders, but the number of re-offences committed had increased.

The frequency rate (the number of re-offences committed by young people who re-offend) of re-offending for the same period demonstrated an increase from 2.78 to 8.20. These figures related to the average number of re-offences committed by the number of children / young people who re-offended within the tracking period i.e. five children / young people re-offending committing 41 re-offences $41/5 = 8.20$.

Evidence from detailed analysis of the performance data showed that 31 of the 41 offences were committed by one child, who was looked after and had complex welfare needs. The majority of the offences took place within a care home setting. If this child was removed from the cohort, there would be a total of 11 children / young people within the cohort, four of whom re-offended, committing a total of ten re-offences, which equates to 2.5 re-offences per re-offender. (8.20 re-offences per re-offender with the child included.) Using this information demonstrated effectively the impact of one individual on small numbers within the cohort.

It was important to note that the YJB performance data was always approximately 18 months behind. The Ministry of Justice had changed the methodology for measuring reoffending. There had been a move to a three month cohort rather than a 12 month cohort. The cohort would still be tracked over 12 months. One child could therefore appear in the tracking cohort more than once, which would impact on the overall performance over time. Changing from annual cohorts to quarterly cohorts resulted in a greater proportion of prolific offenders and hence higher reoffending rates, although both measures showed similar trends over time at a national level.

Local performance information based on a cohort for the period 1st January 2018 – 31st March 2018, in relation to re-offending showed that both the number of young people offending and the number of re-offences had reduced; nine of the 33 young people tracked had re-offended within six months committing a total of 22 offences. This equated to a re-offending percentage of 27.2%.

Appendix 1 to the report contained additional information to provide an insight into the complex needs of children / young people within the Youth Justice System and the range of interventions provided by the YOS and its partners to try and address the underlying causes of offending.

The YOS continued to have a low custodial rate (WYJI 3) during the first six months from April to September 2018, zero custodial disposals were imposed. When comparing custodial disposals; October 2017 - September 2018 this showed that there was one compared to three in October 2016 to September 2017. Generally the reasons for sentencing to custody related to either the seriousness of the offence or non-compliance with Court Orders. This demonstrated custody was used as a last resort.

In respect of engagement in education, training and employment, (WYJI 4) this indicator reflected the number of hours of education a young person had been offered, alongside the number of hours the young person attended the provision. The information enabled stakeholders to identify if performance was being affected by a lack of suitable provision or if there were attendance issues which needed to be addressed.

Data provided by the YJB indicated that during period April to September 2018; children / young people of statutory school age were offered an average 17 hours at the start of their intervention, 17.4 hours at review stage and ended on an average of 18.2 hours. The average hours attended by children / young people was less at 12 hours at the start and 12.4 at the end. Both the hours offered and attended were below the recommended 25 hours.

Young people above statutory school age were also offered and attended less than the recommended 16 hours provision, with the average hours being attended at the start 4.2, at review 7.4 and 7.4 at the end. Although there was an increase from the starting point, the number of hours attended remained low with some young people not starting a provision, following support from YOS and Careers Wales, until after their YOS intervention had ended.

Regarding access to suitable accommodation (WYJI 5), performance continued to be positive. During the six month period, nine young people had a closed community based penalty; all were in suitable accommodation at the start and only one child was in unsuitable accommodation at the end of their interventions. This child was on remand in a Secure Children's Home, which was classed as unsuitable for the purposes of this measure. There were no children / young people with a closed custodial penalty during this period.

Performance in respect of access to appropriate support for substance misuse difficulties (WYJI 6) demonstrated the majority of young people referred continued to engage in assessment and treatment.

April to September 2018, ten young people were identified as requiring a substance misuse assessment, with eight young people being referred as two were already in receipt of services. Of the eight young people, three refused an assessment and five received an assessment within five days from referral (100%). Five young people were assessed as requiring a service and all five received this within ten days from assessment (100%).

Access to mental health services, (WYJI 7) improvement in this area was a key strategic aim of the Welsh Government / YJB Children and Young People First Strategy. The measure identified if children / young people were appropriately screened within 28 working days of referral date and where appropriate, received a mental health assessment within 28 working days of screening. Nine children / young people were identified by screening as requiring a mental health assessment. One refused a service, five were already in receipt of mental health services. Two children / young people were referred for an assessment. Following assessment, no children / young people required treatment.

A Committee Member queried why the number of hours of education a young person provided was lower than the average of 17 hours available. In reply, the YOS Manager stated that if a child or young person did not regularly attend a session then a referral would be made to the Welfare Officer to find out why. In addition, it was known that many children faced many challenges, with these children not seeing education as a priority.

The Committee queried information provided on page 4 in Appendix 1 which provided a comparison of other YOTs across Wales. The Committee queried the methodology of how this information was compiled and it was agreed for the YOS to provide information via e-mail.

A Committee Member stated that an important element in supporting children and young people was around the school curriculum. The Member stated in order for it to become more relevant, all Scrutiny Committees should have opportunity to review any new curriculum, which should be broader and not simply academic. The Member commented that local authorities were not necessarily meeting the needs of children with challenging behaviours, with some Council departments still working in “silos” and not take account of Welsh Governments five ways of working.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the contents of the performance report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

To ensure that Elected Members are able to exercise oversight of the Youth Offending Service performance against designed indicators.

814 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2018 TO 31ST JANUARY 2019 (DEH) –

The Finance Support Manager advised Members of the progress relating to revenue and capital expenditure for the period 1st April, 2018 to 31st January, 2019.

Members noted that it was currently projected for the 2018/19 revenue budget to outturn on target.

The forecast for the services within this Committee's remit is shown in the following table.

Directorate/Service	2018/19	2018/19	Variance
	Amended Budget	Projected	(+)Favourable (-) Adverse
	£000	£000	£000
Public Sector Housing (HRA)	(77)	(77)	0
Youth Offending Service	692	692	0
Regulatory Services	2,112	2,112	0
Council Fund Housing	1,382	1,382	0
Private Housing	1,058	1,058	0
Committee Total	5,167	5,167	0

Youth Offending Service – It was anticipated that this service would outturn on target at year end.

Regulatory Services – The allocation represented the Vale of Glamorgan's budget for its share of the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS). A separate set of accounts was maintained for the SRS and periodically reported to the Shared Regulatory Service Joint Committee. It was anticipated that the SRS would outturn on target.

Council Fund Housing – It was anticipated that this budget would outturn on target.

Private Housing – Income from the Disabled Facilities Grant agency fee, which was shown in the revenue budget, was now projected to outturn on target and therefore it was anticipated that this service would outturn within budget at year end.

As part of the Final Revenue Budget Proposals for 2018/19, a savings target of £6.298m was set for the Authority. Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was a statement detailing all savings targets relating to this Committee.

It was anticipated that savings relating to this Committee would be achieved this financial year.

Appendix 2 to the report detailed financial progress on the Capital Programme as at 31st January, 2019.

91 Salisbury Road Boiler – Boiler renewal had been completed but further works were required to the pipework and valves in order to balance the heating system. This work could only be carried out during the summer. It had therefore been requested that £2k be carried forward into the 2019/20 Capital Programme.

Disabled Facility Grants – £200k of works had been committed in 2018/19 but would be carried out and paid for in 2019/20. It had therefore been requested to carry forward £200k into 2019/20 Capital Programme.

A Committee Member referred to Appendix 2 and the capital project to provide accommodation with care for older people in Penarth which had an outlay of £100k for 2018/19. In providing a progress update, the Head of Housing and Building Services began by explaining that funding for this project came from the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) and also explained that this was a Welsh Government initiative provided across the whole of Wales. With regard to the accommodation with care for older people in Penarth, the Member stated that the information in Appendix 2 to progress up to the end of December 2018. Since then, £100k had been provided by the ICF from health to undertake a feasibility study. This had been completed and was not just about the physical building alone but related to an integrated health and social services approach which looked at how services could be delivered.

Having considered the report, the Committee

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the position with regard to the 2018/19 revenue and capital budgets be noted.

Reason for recommendation

So that Members are aware of projected revenue and capital outturn for 2018/19.

815 ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY (HOUSING) – SIX MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT (DEH) –

The Head of Housing and Building Services presented the report which provided an update on the progress in implementing the Environment and Neighbourhood Strategy (Housing).

A key principle of the Strategy was around targeting investment in environment and schemes in order to achieve a significant impact. On that basis, budget provision had been set aside to undertake estate improvement works at Buttrills Estate (Phase 2 and 3) with additional sums set aside at Williams Crescent, Irvine Place and Owens Close the year after and then Gibbonsdown in 2020/21.

The approach taken to working up the detail of the schemes involved consultation with tenants regarding priority themes i.e. security, car parking, provision of open space, play areas etc. These ideas were then translated into proposals and be subject to further consultation to ensure the environmental investment met the needs of local people. This approach would be developed further and tweaked to reflect lessons learnt and this would form the basis of a toolkit to support future investment.

At the Buttrills Estate, following a wide ranging consultation with local tenants and residents, a programme of works was agreed, the contract had been let and contractors were on site. The improvements being carried out included: new roofs, replacement windows, upgrades of communal areas, external wall insulation plus external landscaping. Significant progress had been made already but work would continue on site in Phases 2 and 3 over the next 12 months.

Alongside the capital budgets for larger schemes, there was a smaller annual revenue budget set aside to support resident led environmental schemes in other areas. To date this had paid for raised flower beds at sheltered housing schemes, benches, changes to bin storage areas, community noticeboards etc.

The physical appearance of estates was also identified as a priority in the Strategy and a “photobook” had been developed which was a set of agreed environmental standards used to grade the quality of estates and drive improvements. Regular estate walkabouts were also an important part of improving standards and a more formal programme of walkabouts was now in place so tenants had the opportunity to take part or engage with their Neighbourhood Manager when they were on site.

A number of community “helping hand” events had taken place as part of the Initiatives to improve the appearance of estates. These had involved tenants, contractors and partner agencies and had been very well received. At Gibbonsdown, a rubbish amnesty resulted in the removal of a large amount of rubbish and household items which had been building up in homes, outhouses and gardens. The events had been an effective means of raising the profile of the Neighbourhood teams and enabled staff to establish themselves as a key point of contact and build relationships with the tenants. A toolkit for running these events had been developed and would improve the success of future events in different areas.

An important element of the strategy was estate action planning. The development of tailored estate action plans which picked up local issues and priorities was underway and draft action plans were in place for ten estates.

Finally, there were still some changes to be made regarding the use of the smaller pot of revenue money for estate improvements. There were some good examples of this fund being used to make improvements to recycling and rubbish disposal at blocks of flats, however there was scope for further publicity of this funding so tenant groups across the Vale could make applications to fund creative solutions in their area.

A Committee Member queried the use of the 101 telephone number and stated that it was taking longer than anticipated to get through to an operator. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services stated that the service encouraged people to report issues through one mechanism. The officer stated that he would clarify with the relevant officer whether there had been any issues or any plans to improve the 101 service.

In reply to a query regarding the use of garages, the Head of Housing and Building Services advised that the Housing Asset Management Strategy had been considered by Cabinet and previously this Scrutiny Committee. The Strategy would be presented to the Committee again for final approval, which would outline plans for the future use of garage sites. There were various options that could be taken, with some being demolished, some being developed or left as open spaces for car parking, while some could be the subject of a possible Community Asset Transfer. The Head of Housing and Building Services also advised that the Strategy would take account of issues such as anti-social behaviour.

The Committee queried the low uptake with regard to tenant walks. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services advised that usually tenant walks were monthly, although some were held weekly. The officer stated that there had indeed been a low uptake but this was not necessarily down to a lack of awareness. The Service routinely advertised these walks and also introduced the new Time Banking voucher in order to encourage tenants to take part. The officer stated that the Service would continue to encourage tenants to take part in these walks, but was always open to new ideas and suggestions.

A Committee Member queried an action on page 3 of the Appendix in relation to the research around the development of a business case for a garden service to assist disabled or elderly tenants. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services stated that the Local Authority, many years ago, would routinely cut gardens but this had been removed due to costs. Recently, and before Christmas, discussions had been ongoing with a social enterprise about taking this service on and so this was currently being explored. The Member added that the completion date for this was around May 2018, so queried whether this had been completed. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services advised that the Member's comments would be taken on board. He also advised that the business case had been completed and work was ongoing.

In referring to an action on page of 5 of the Appendix relating to the business case for a community garden in Colcot, a Committee Member queried the green RAG status given that a grant application had not been successful, and the Member requested queried the objective. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services advised that work on this action for Margaret Avenue in Colcot was still ongoing. A business case had been developed, but funding was available to undertake garden improvements which would be consulted on with tenants.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Operational Delivery Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be amended to reflect comments made by the Scrutiny Committee.

Reason for recommendation

In order to ensure that the statuses of actions reflect current progress.

816 QUARTER 3 (2018-19) PERFORMANCE REPORT: AN INCLUSIVE AND SAFE VALE (DEH) –

The Committee was presented with performance results for Quarter 3, 1st April to 31st December, 2018 for the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcome 1, “An inclusive and safe Vale”.

An overall Green RAG status had been attributed to Well-being Outcome 1, “An Inclusive and Safe Vale” to reflect the good progress made towards achieving improved outcomes for residents and our customers during the quarter.

At Quarter 3, 52 (90%) of the 58 Service Plan actions attributed to this Well-being Outcome were on track to be delivered giving an overall Green performance status for actions.

Of the 33 performance measures aligned to this Well-being outcome, 23 were annual measures; consequently these would be reported at the end of the year. Of the six measures where data was provided at Quarter 3, five were attributed a Green performance status and one an Amber status.

In relation to the objective “reducing poverty and social exclusion”, 95% (18) of actions were on track for delivery giving an overall Green performance status reflecting the excellent progress made at Quarter 3.

87% (34) of actions were attributed a Green performance status in relation to the objective “providing decent homes and safe communities”. 10% (four) of planned actions aligned to this objective had been attributed a Red status and as a result, there was a need to progress the review of existing support arrangements in place for householders and landlords to improve private housing; develop a Vale connects community messaging service, expand restorative justice approaches for Looked After Children and deliver key actions in response to the Lord Laming report.

Two Performance Indicators (PIs) aligned to the objective, “reducing poverty and social exclusion” were attributed a Green performance status. The remaining 11 PIs were annual indicators therefore would be reported at end of year.

Of the 20 measures aligned to the objective, “providing decent homes and safe communities”, three were attributed a Green performance status and one was attributed an Amber status. A RAG status was not applicable to 16 measures as they were annually reported therefore expected during Quarter 4.

A detailed report outlining the progress this quarter towards achieving Well-being Outcome 1 was provided at Appendix A to the report.

The Committee was then provided with an update on those service plan actions with a Red RAG status. The Head of Regeneration and Planning began by referring to action RP/A083 regarding vacant properties, and advised that a review had been due to be completed by September 2018. This had been delayed to the recent decision by Cabinet to remove the discretionary discount and as a result of the budget process and the decision regarding funding for the post Empty Homes Officer.

With regard to Action Plan SRS/A009, the development of a Vale Connects Community Messaging Service to inform about current scams and new modes of operation by fraudsters, Members were advised that this was taking longer than anticipated due to a delay in the provision of training for staff on the Vale Connects system, a delay in compiling a mailing list, the need to rework certain aspects in the context of the General Data Protection Regulations and the need to confirm individuals’ sign up preferences. Members noted that since January, the service had in place for the first time a staffing resource to handle and analyse intelligence, and management of the Community Messaging Service sat perfectly within this remit. As a result, it was anticipated that the Community Messaging Service would launch in Quarter 1 of the 2019/20 financial year.

For his service areas, the Head of Housing and Building Services referred to action CS/A021 and the proposal to expand restorative justice approaches through implementation of the Policing Looked After Children Protocol. Members were advised that this action was 50% complete and had been delayed because of the departure of the relevant officer. This post had been filled in August and that person was now working at speed in order to complete this action. It was planned for this initiative to be fully rolled out during the next year.

In regard to action CS/A023 and the need to deliver key actions in response to the Lord Laming report in relation to “In Care and Out of Trouble”, Members noted that a Welsh Government task and finish report had been considered and again, due to the departure of a member of staff implementation had been delayed. Since then, senior managers had been looking at the report with a plan to roll out a strategy in 2020.

The Committee were then taken through some key achievements, with Officers referring to the following:

- Use of loans to improve the quality of the private housing stock and bring vacant homes back into use.
- Ongoing work around Digital Inclusion.
- During quarter 3, planning permission being granted to 33 new dwellings, 9 of which were affordable, with more planned for Maes-Y-Fynnon and Bonvilston.
- The continued work to reduce time taken to let an empty property, to an average of 18.7days, down from 22 days.
- The successful initiatives to prevent homelessness.

A Committee Member referred to the Empty Homes action and stated that she was worried that many private landlords were leaving the sector. In reply, the Head of Regeneration and Planning stated that he shared the Member's concerns and actions to address this were contained within the Housing Strategy. He stated that most of the landlords were likely to have a small rental portfolio but it was recognised that the Council relied on the private sector. The Council had been working with landlords and a number of initiatives were available such as a Bond scheme.

A Committee Member referred to action IS/001 and the development of a Digital Inclusion Strategy and asked for an update. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services stated that he would check with the relevant officer and report back via e-mail.

A Committee Member asked for an update in relation to the former school vacated at the Eagleswell site in Llantwit Major. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services stated that this site had been offered for disposal for which a number of tenders had been received. Following this, there had been a number of issues with the successful tender, and so, it had been decided that this could not be progressed. Since then, Welsh Government had announced the removal of the borrowing cap on capital projects. This meant that the Council could now be more ambitious on what was proposed for the site. Therefore, the Council were currently undertaking a financial assessment of what funding was available, and so news on this would be provided over the forthcoming weeks.

A Committee Member referred to the new report template and stated that the section in relation to Ward Member consultation was confusing and seemed inconsistent. The Member also stated that it was not always clear who the report author or report owners were. Members agreed that this needed to be considered either by Cabinet or the Performance and Development Team, and possible by the Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group.

A Committee Member stated that more regular attendance of the Cabinet Member should be made at Scrutiny Committee meetings. In reply, the Vice-Chairman stated that he would take this up with the relevant Cabinet Member.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the performance results and progress towards achieving key outcomes in line with the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcome 1 – “Citizens of the

Vale of Glamorgan have a good quality of life and feel part of the local community” be noted.

(2) T H A T Cabinet be advised of the view of the Committee that the new covering report template requires more development, particularly in relation to greater clarity and consistency between Report Owner and Report Author, and also in relation to whether Ward Member consultation is required or has been carried out.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To ensure the Council clearly demonstrates the progress being made towards achieving its Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of Vale of Glamorgan citizens.

(2) To advise Cabinet of the need to provide greater clarity within the new covering report template.

817 VALE OF GLAMORGAN WELL-BEING / IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN PART 1 2019/20 (DEH) –

The report sought Members’ endorsement of the Improvement Plan Part 1 outlining the Council’s Well-being and Improvement Objectives, the associated priority actions as reflected in the Service Plans and proposed service improvement targets for 2019/20.

The report presented the Council’s eight Well-being (Improvement) Objectives for 2019/20 and its commitments in relation to delivering these Objectives which were reflected in Service Plans to show how individual areas would contribute, including the Council’s service specific contributions associated with Service Plan delivery. It also proposed challenging service improvement targets associated with the Council’s Well-being Objectives that would enable it to effectively demonstrate progress towards achieving its Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and the national Well-being Goals.

Publishing the Council’s Well-being Objectives at the start of the financial year would enable it to meet its statutory requirements in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA), both of which placed specific duties on the Council in relation to objective setting and reporting. Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the Council was required to publish its Well-being Objectives by 31st March each year and to keep those under review. Under the Measure, the Council also had to set annual Improvement Objectives and publish these as soon as possible at the start of the financial year.

In line with the Council’s duties under the WFGA Act, it continually reviews the relevance of its eight Well-being Objectives in the Corporate Plan through its integrated planning processes in order to ensure the Council continued to reflect the priorities for the Vale of Glamorgan and focus its improvement activity on the areas in need of the most improvement. Ensuring the relevance of the Council’s objectives

had been further reinforced via its annual reporting process in 2018, the Public Opinion Survey 2018/19, the Council's budget consultation for 2019/20, emerging findings from recent discussions via the Insight Board and the ongoing 'Big Conversation' workshops. As a result, going forward into 2019/20, the Council was assured that the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and associated priorities continued to be relevant in delivering improved outcomes for Vale residents and contributed to the national Well-being Goals.

In line with the Council's Performance Management Framework, its Corporate Plan priorities for 2019/20 were reflected in Service Plans for 2019-20 which Members were being asked to endorse. Progress against these priorities and the Council's proposed service improvement targets would be monitored via quarterly performance reports to the relevant Scrutiny Committees as aligned with the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes, supplemented with an overall summary report to Cabinet.

Members were asked to consider and endorse via recommendation to Cabinet, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Well-being Objectives, associated Services Plans and improvement targets for 2019/20.

Following approval by Cabinet, publication of the Improvement Plan Part 1 would take place via a variety of media (including social media) which would ensure the Council was complying with its statutory duties.

A Committee Member asked for clarity in regard to the definition of sustainable development. In reply, the Head of Regeneration and Planning stated that wording around sustainable development was contained within Planning Policy Wales. In addition, there were Technical Advice Notices which provided guidance but the key document was the Council's Local Development Plan 2017-2026 which was worded in such a way as to directly refer to the definition as provided by Planning Policy Wales.

A Committee Member referred to the Council's Digital Strategy and the role out of Microsoft Office 365, commenting that I.C.T. was an area for development. The Member also stated that people had concern with regard to the CCTV operations and the Member asked for an update. In reply, the Head of Housing and Building Services stated the Digital Strategy came under the remit of another Scrutiny Committee, but the Strategy was being overseen by an internal working group that included the Managing Director. Around CCTV operations, he stated that this sat within Community Safety, and he referred to previous grant money that had since ceased from which Local Authorities across Wales were able to install and upgrade CCTV cameras. Therefore funding for CCTV was now solely down to Local Authorities. He added that the camera system was becoming more difficult to maintain, and so a review of operations was underway. One possible option that may come out of the review was for the Council to provide a specific capital budget in order to maintain and upgrade cameras. It was clear that the current model was not sustainable and discussions were needed with partners such as the Police. The Head of Housing and Building Services stated that a report on this would be provided over the forthcoming months.

A Member referred to pages 11 to 17 of the Appendix and queried how some objectives would be achieved. The Member specifically referred to the need to tackle loneliness and isolation which sat under Well-being Objective 1 and the need to reduce poverty and social exclusion. The Member stated he could not find many actions that would address social exclusion although there was a bit on time banking and something around digital inclusion. The Member queried what the Council was doing in order to tackle loneliness. In reply, Members were advised that most of the actions were cross-cutting across different Directorates and so there may be actions within other Service Plans which were not presented to this Committee. Members agreed that these comments should be fed back to Cabinet.

In referring back to the Empty Homes Strategy, a Member stated that the Council should be more ambitious and look to increase the number of properties brought back into use. In reply, the Head of Regeneration and Planning stated that the Council was aware of a few properties with long term challenges. He referred to the Vale being the third most successful Local Authority in Wales but performance was likely to be impacted following Welsh Government's decision to change the definition around empty properties. This would be felt across the whole of Wales. The Head of Regeneration and Planning also stated that tackling this issue was not simply about providing a legal penalty to landlords, and he added that the Council was being proactive and he referred to the removal of discretionary discounts which it would hope would bring more properties back into use.

Having considered the report, it was

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the related Service Plans (Housing & Building Services) and other service actions contributing to Well-being Outcome 1 including proposed targets for 2019/20 be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet advised of the view of the Committee that greater consideration may be required in meeting Well-being Objective 1 and specifically in relation to social inclusion and tackling isolation and loneliness.

Reason for recommendation

- (1) To confirm the Service Plans as the primary documents against which performance for the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcome 1 will be monitored and measured.
- (2) In order for the Cabinet to consider the need for greater focus in tackling isolation and loneliness.