

LIVE WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 9th September, 2025.

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

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

Present: Councillor A.M. Collins (Chair); Councillors G. Bruce, I.R. Buckley, C.A. Cave, S.M. Hanks, W.A. Hennessy, S. Lloyd-Selby, M.J.G. Morgan and N.C. Thomas.

Also Present: O. Carroll (Cardiff and Vale Citizens Advice); Councillors L. Burnett (Executive Leader and cabinet Member for Performance and Resources) and G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing).

260 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”.

261 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors B. Loveluck-Edwards (Vice-Chair) and J. Lynch-Wilson.

262 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 8th July, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

263 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor W.A. Hennessy declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item No. 4 – Libraries Annual Report 2024/25 in that the Councillors was a trustee of Rhoose Library. Councillor Hennessy had a dispensation from the Standards Committee to speak and vote on general matters relating to Rhoose Library and to speak only on matters regarding property or finance at both Vale of Glamorgan Council and Barry Town Council meetings, therefore Councillor Hennessy remained in the meeting for the item.

264 LIBRARIES ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 (DLS) –

The Library and Cultural Services Manager attended the meeting in support of the report, the purpose of which was to provide an overview of how the Library Service operated, an evaluation of its key achievements and an evidence base for demonstrating the positive impact the Council's library services had made to Vale of Glamorgan communities, as well as how the service worked towards achieving Vale 2030.

The full Libraries Report was attached at Appendix 1 of the covering report, with the Welsh Public Libraries Standards Framework 6 at Appendix 2, the Welsh Public Libraries Standards Framework 7 at Appendix 3 and the Welsh Public Libraries Standards Annual Report at Appendix 4.

During the course of the debate, all Members commended the staff and volunteers involved in providing such a valuable and good quality service across all libraries in the Vale of Glamorgan area.

In response to a query raised by Councillor Morgan as to whether there was scope to re-introduce the use of mobile libraries, the Library and Cultural Services Manager advised that the service was continually adapting and open to new ways of working to the benefit of Vale of Glamorgan residents however, future projects would be subject to relevant funding and feasibility. Councillor Cave then noted how the use of mobile services would be beneficial to residents in the more rural areas of the Vale of Glamorgan and Councillor Thomas referred to the e-book borrowing scheme which was incredibly useful for individuals living in more rural areas of the Vale of Glamorgan, as well as individuals with limited mobility. Councillor Cave then raised a suggestion for Officers to consider for additional library resources to be included in the Cube equipment boxes already being made available across area.

Councillors Hennessy and Lloyd Selby then commented on how libraries had offered more warm spaces for vulnerable individuals and that it was wonderful to see how the service had developed into becoming a critical hub serving Vale of Glamorgan communities.

Councillor Hanks then sought further information in relation to the NHS blood pressure scheme expected to be rolled out within Vale of Glamorgan libraries. To which, the Library and Cultural Services Manager advised that in partnership with University Health Board colleagues, 180 blood pressure machines were due to be rolled out across all libraries in the Vale of Glamorgan, to allow service users to access blood pressure machines more easily and readily to help them monitor their personal health. The scheme would be promoted over the upcoming winter months within the library warm spaces.

With the Committee's permission, Councillor Franks then advised of his involvement with Dinas Powys Community Library and echoed the comments of previous Members in relation to the excellent service provided however, also noted that the self-funding nature of libraries could be an overwhelming task especially in relation to ongoing maintenance.

The Chair then referred to the tablet loan scheme and enquired after the current engagement numbers for the scheme. In response, the Officer advised that both library staff and digital champions had recently been involved in refresher training in relation to the scheme, in order to help improve the levels of engagement that had seen a dip in recent months. It was the intention of the Library Service to showcase the tablet loan scheme further as well as the more recently introduced data SIM hire scheme.

The Leader of the Council echoed the positive comments received collectively from the Committee and noted how the current Library Service structure originated from decisions of the Council taken back in 2012/13. Therefore, it was wonderful to be able to look back, in hindsight, at how such forward thinking decisions had made a positive impact on local communities.

In conclusion, the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources offered the Council's sincere thanks to all volunteers involved in dedicating thousands of hours and efforts to support fund raising events in order to make Library Services possible.

With no further comments or questions, the committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the progress and outcomes, as set out in the Libraries Annual Report, be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T the report be referred to Cabinet along with the recommendation of the Live Well Scrutiny Committee as follows:
 - T H A T the Re-launch of the Tablet Loan Scheme, and recognition by Welsh Government as leaders in digital inclusion, be promoted as much as possible going forward.
- (3) T H A T any future iterations of the report be received by Committee Members via the For Information Scrutiny Reporting process.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report to brief Elected Members on the performance of the Libraries Service for the 2024/25 period.
- (2) To ensure that Cabinet has oversight of the performance of the Library Service, and its impact during the period, as well as supports the re-launch scheme to improve access to digital services for those without personal devices and help to reduce digital exclusion across Vale of Glamorgan communities.
- (3) To ensure that the Live Well Scrutiny Committee maintains effective oversight of library service delivery and its performance and impact over the reported period.