

LIVE WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 17th March, 2026.

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

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

Present: Councillor A.M. Collins (Chair); Councillor B. Loveluck-Edwards (Vice-Chair); Councillors I.R. Buckley, C.A. Cave, B. Dodd, S.M. Hanks, W.A. Hennessy, S. Lloyd-Selby, J. Lynch-Wilson, 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) and Dr. I.J. Johnson.

726 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”.

727 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor G. Bruce.

728 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 13th January, 2026 be approved as a correct record.

729 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor S. Loveluck-Edwards declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 5 – Social Services and Environment & Housing Directorate Plans 2026/27 – in that relatives were in receipt of social car packages and telecare support. The Councillor had a dispensation from Standards Committee to speak and vote and therefore remained in the meeting for the item.

730 HOUSING SUPPORT GRANT DELIVERY PLAN 2026-2029 (DEH) –

The report was presented by the Operational Manager for Public Housing Services with support from the Supporting People Co-ordinator. Officers advised that the Housing Support Grant (HSG) Programme was the policy and funding framework for delivering housing related support to vulnerable people in different types of accommodation and across all tenures. It aimed to deliver high quality and strategically planned housing-related support services that were cost effective, complement existing services and provided service users with the best possible outcomes. The HSG programme was also essential in assisting the Local Authority to fulfil its duties under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, and the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

In accordance with the Welsh Government Guidance for the Housing Support Grant, all Local Authorities were required to develop a Local Delivery Plan and an annual Spend Plan for 2026-2027, both of which must be submitted to Welsh Government by 30th April, 2026.

Welsh Government had announced an indicative HSG grant allocations of £5,971,179.00 for 2026-2027 representing an uplift of 3% and the HSG Delivery plan and accompanying HSG Spend plan had been produced based on this indicative allocation.

Officers added that Welsh Government recently reiterated its commitment that all HSG services should pay staff at least the Real Living Wage. The Supporting People Team had recently completed budget negotiations with support providers. By utilising the HSG uplift and making efficiency savings, the SP Team had produced a balanced spend plan that ensured the Real Living Wage commitment was being met and that all services were financially sustainable for the financial year 2026-2027.

There were no direct resource implications to the Council associated with the report as all funding requirements identified for resourcing under the HSG Programme were financed through grant funding from Welsh Government.

Having considered the report, Members of the Live Well Scrutiny Committee noted the significant unmet need highlighted in the Housing Support Grant Delivery Plan 2026–2029, particularly across homelessness (463 unmet cases), mental health (330), and domestic abuse (290), and raised concerns about domestic abuse provision, equality impacts, mental health categorisation and lengthy waiting lists for supported accommodation and refuge spaces. Officers advised that unit comparisons could be misleading due to variation between floating support and accommodation-based services and explained that overlapping needs were captured through the updated 2024 HRS referral form. They confirmed that the HSG Spend Plan 2026–2027 relied on the £5.97m allocation and required service reconfiguration and efficiency savings, such as changes to under-capacity floating support contracts, to meet Real Living Wage commitments.

In response to queries from the Committee, Officers also clarified that HSG services provided housing-related support rather than clinical mental health treatment but

worked closely with GPs and specialist agencies and confirmed pathways for residents seeking to return to the Vale from temporary placements out of county.

With no further comments or questions raised, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Housing Support Grant Delivery Plan 2026-2029 be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T the Housing Support Grant Spend Plan 2026-2027 be endorsed.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To ensure that the Council complies with the requirements of the Housing Support Grant (HSG) Guidance (Wales).
- (2) To ensure that the HSG Spend Plan 2026-2027 is submitted to Welsh Government in accordance with the Housing Support Grant (HSG) conditions.

731 SOCIAL SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT & HOUSING DIRECTORATE PLANS 2026/27 (OUTLINING YEAR 2 ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ASSOCIATED PERFORMANCE TARGETS) TO DELIVER VALE 2030, THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (DSS/DEH) –

The report was presented in partnership between the Director of Social Services and the Director of Environment and Housing. Through a series of PowerPoint Slides, the Directors presented the planned activities, performance measures and associated performance targets in the Social Services (Appendix A) and Environment & Housing Services Directorate Plans 2026-27 (Appendix B). The Social Services Directorate Plan aligned primarily to the remit of the Live Well Scrutiny Committee. The Environment and Housing Directorate Plan aligned to both the Live Well Scrutiny Committee and Place Scrutiny Committee who would also have an opportunity to consider the Plan. The other Directorate Plans were being considered by relevant Scrutiny Committees, and their collective comments and recommendations were to be considered by Cabinet on 16th April, 2026.

The Directorate Plans had been informed by the Council's 50 commitments detailed in Vale 2030 and actions and measures had been aligned to the five well-being objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan for the period 2025-30.

Having considered both Plans, Committee members welcomed the positive performance reported, particularly the significant reduction in waits for domiciliary care and the improved co-ordination around hospital discharge. Councillor Hennessy sought clarification on the number of patients in hospital awaiting social care packages; in response, the Director of Social Services advised that there were currently no waits for domiciliary care, with packages arranged within 24 hours, and explained the limitations of delayed transfer measures, noting that many delays arose from complex decisions such as care home placements, capacity assessments and financial processes. Members of the Committee stressed the

importance of understanding not just the number of people waiting for care, but also the length of those waits, noting the value of including this in future reporting.

Members also welcomed ongoing improvements in adult social care pathways and stronger service co-ordination, citing noticeable progress over recent years and interest was expressed in the development of the Mockingbird fostering model, with a request for further information outside of the meeting.

In addition, Councillor Hennessy asked about outstanding WHQS insulation works, with the Director of Environment and Housing confirming that only a small number of blocks remained, with the Director committing to provide further detail following the meeting.

Councillor Hennessy also queried how tenant satisfaction was measured, particularly for those who were digitally excluded, and Directors outlined the range of survey methods, face to face engagement, paper communications and library based digital support available. Councillor Loveluck-Edwards echoed Councillor Hennessy's point of digital exclusion and the need for clearer description of how public feedback informed service changes. Members emphasised the need for accessible, non-digital communication methods and clearer demonstration of how public feedback was acted upon. Members also highlighted the importance of ensuring tenant engagement methods remained varied and inclusive, especially for those less comfortable with digital channels. The Director of Environment and Housing provided reassurance that communications would continue to use mixed methods and highlighted ongoing work on digital tools.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby then questioned why new performance indicators lacked targets, emphasising the need to capture both numbers waiting and the length of waits; the Director of Social Services explained the challenges of target-setting in demand-led services but confirmed that dashboards tracked waiting durations and were monitored regularly. In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Lloyd-Selby as to whether metrics being captured would appear in the forthcoming Director's Report. The Director of Social Services confirmed that the point was under consideration; charts and trend data were useful, but this needed to be balanced against the length and accessibility of the report.

In conclusion, Directors and Service Area Officers were thanked for their work and encouraged to continue balancing detailed performance data with accessible reporting.

With no further comments or questions raised, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Social Services (Appendix A) and Environment & Housing Services (Appendix B) Directorate Plans, and associated measures and performance targets for 2026/27 contained within them, be endorsed.

Reasons for recommendations

To ensure that the planned activities, associated measures, and performance targets for the Social Services and Environment & Housing Services Directorates, as

detailed in the Plans are relevant, and together with the other three Directorate Plans become the main means through which performance against Vale 2030 is monitored and measured during 2026/2027.

732 TASK & FINISH RESPONSE REPORT: LEISURE SERVICES [COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP] –

Since the Live Well Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 27th May, 2025, the established Task & Finish Working Group had met on several occasions to explore barriers to participation for women in physical activity, especially within the 18 – 50 age category, to help mitigate inactivity, sedentary lifestyles, and poor health. As well as looking at informal organised physical activity, to increase social participation to reduce feelings of anxiety and loneliness.

Therefore, the report presented to the Committee provided a timeline of events, context and research reasoning for the recommendations that the Working Group were now resolved to present to Cabinet for consideration.

The Chair of the Working Group began by thanking all Members of the Task and Finish Group for their positive contributions, and expressed particular thanks to officers, especially the Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, for their support throughout the review. The Working Group Chair also extended appreciation to members of the public who attended meetings or provided evidence, noting the valuable insight they offered into improving participation in physical activity. Special recognition was given to the young women from the Young Ambassadors Network Group, who attended a session to share their experiences; their testimony highlighted issues including body shaming, exclusion and examples of toxic masculinity, which they felt went unaddressed and which contributed to declining participation in sport among girls. The Working Group Chair described these accounts as shocking and unacceptable, urging that the matter be considered urgently by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee, and therefore a recommendation was included within the report.

Councillor Loveluck-Edwards, who had originally proposed the review, welcomed the report and acknowledged the work already undertaken by the Council and its partners. They emphasised that despite positive activity levels, gaps remained, particularly for women with caring responsibilities, work commitments, or limited access to information. They noted that many of the proposed actions were low-cost and focused on improving communication, co-ordination, and access to information across services and networks to address participation barriers. They added that participation in physical activity had wide-ranging benefits for wellbeing and community inclusion and reflected on how her own assumptions were challenged during the review.

Councillor Thomas echoed the previous comments raised by member of the Working Group, commending the Chair's leadership of the Group. They noted that while participation in the Vale was generally strong, barriers such as cost, lack of information, and limited time persisted. They expressed concern about the particularly sharp decline in participation among girls and highlighted the troubling

behaviours described by the Young Ambassadors, which had discouraged young women from continuing activities despite previously enjoying them. Therefore, they stressed the importance of the Start Well Scrutiny Committee considering the Working Group's evidence given its relevance to the Start Well Committee's remit.

With no further comments, the Chair thanked officers, members and members of the public for their involvement, noting the value of the insights gained through the review, and the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the report and recommendations contained therein be referred to Cabinet for consideration and that a formal response be requested including agreed next steps.

Reason for recommendation

To present the findings and subsequent recommendations compiled by the Live Well Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Working Group, and subsequently agreed by the Live Well Scrutiny Committee, for approval.