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| Meeting of:                              | <b>Place Scrutiny Committee</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Date of Meeting:                         | <b>Tuesday, 22 July 2025</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Relevant Scrutiny Committee:             | Place Scrutiny Committee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Report Title:                            | Task and Finish Review Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Purpose of Report:                       | To determine Task and Finish Review activity for the Place Scrutiny Committee.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Report Owner:                            | Director of Corporate Resources                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Responsible Officer:                     | Mark Thomas, Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Elected Member and Officer Consultation: | <p>Director of Place</p> <p>Director of Environment and Housing</p> <p>Head of Housing and Building Services</p> <p>Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport</p> <p>Operational Manager, Regeneration</p> <p>Operational Manager - Public Housing Services</p> <p>Director of Corporate Resources</p> <p>Operational Manager - Corporate Strategy and Insight</p> <p>Project Zero Programme Manager</p> <p>Members of the Place Scrutiny Committee</p> |
| Policy Framework:                        | This report is in accordance with the recommendations of the Audit Wales (formerly Wales Audit Office) Democratic Renewal report and follows a review of the Council's scrutiny function.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

Executive Summary:

- The report requests Members to consider items and topics of investigatory group work (Task and Finish Review) for the new Place Scrutiny Committee.
- A range of suggestions were collated from members of the Committee both at its meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2025, and with further suggestions sent to the Chair / Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer after the meeting via email.
- The relevant Directors and / or officers have assessed all suggestions and have proposed 5 possible reviews to be considered for progression. These align closely to current Council priorities and Corporate Plan – Vale 2030, as well as being considered achievable within the 12-week Task and Finish Review cycle.
- The proposed suggestions are:
  1. What the Council could do to help High streets within the Vale of Glamorgan, such as bringing empty buildings back into use, making pavements an exciting environment, etc.
  2. Looking at the results of the tenant satisfaction survey. To help in developing the relevant actions with other stakeholders, etc.
  3. A deeper look and focus into those areas that touched upon the remit of the Committee which were part of the Council's risk profile and register, where it could offer both added value and support for these, particularly those relevant areas which had been 'red' rated and therefore were of highest risk to the Council (such as Climate Change and Nature Emergency and the financial pressures and current state of budgets limiting the Council's ability to invest in key areas related to these).
  4. A Task and Finish exercise about greater accessibility to beaches in the Vale of Glamorgan for people with disabilities (such as wheelchair users) and others.
  5. Suggestions concerning the interlinked issues of refuse on local beaches and the wider matters around local holiday resorts.
- There were also two other suggestions which were considered but not included in the final proposals, which were:
  - The issues faced by the Council around its house building programme and the cost of building materials or procurement of these, and how these could be addressed such as looking at the opportunity for greater regional cooperation. Due to this matter covering corporate level procurement, this will probably need to be considered by the Resources Scrutiny Committee.
  - The use, or non-use of s.106 funding, to improve Local Leisure facilities, where other general funding is not available. However, it has been established that this would fall under the remit of the 'Live Well' Scrutiny Committee due to its coverage of leisure related matters and having the Leisure Centre Working Group and has been referred to that Committee as a result.
- In addition, various suggestions were made whilst speaking to Council Officers. To be considered at a later date and / or to help form the basis for future reviews undertaken by Members should they consider them appropriate.

- Another suggestion, based on a motion from Full Council at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025, concerning a voluntary ban on the sale and use of 'Flying rings' throughout the Vale of Glamorgan, was considered by the Place Scrutiny Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> May. However, it was decided that this would be dealt with in an alternative, more appropriate, way, by Council Officers and their efforts reported back to the Committee in the near future.
- The Scrutiny Committee is therefore requested to prioritise and agree the order in which the reviews are to be undertaken.
- In addition, the Committee is requested to confirm and agree the size and membership of the Task and Review Group. The suggested number of members on a Task and Finish Review Group is 6, but a lower or higher number can be accommodated based on the wishes of the Scrutiny Committee, with the Chair decided by the "home" Scrutiny committee. Ideally the Task and Finish Review Group would have representation from all political groups and from the Co-Opted Members, those being the Tenant Representatives and the Representative from Citizens Advice Cardiff and Vale.
- The Committee is also asked to determine if representation from any interested parties outside of the organisation would have merit.
- Once the review topic and membership has been agreed, Democratic Services will prepare a schedule of meetings, with it being envisioned for a review to be completed within 12 weeks. This will exclude the summer recess.
- It is planned that the first meeting of the Task and Finish Review Group will include the appointment of a Chair and Vice-Chair. The first meeting will also include consideration of a full scope of how the review will be completed. The Group will also be asked to consider the most appropriate time for it to meet and any expert witnesses that it would like to call to provide evidence, guidance and to answer queries.
- At the conclusion of the review, a subsequent report and recommendations would be fed back to the relevant Cabinet Member(s), home Scrutiny Committee(s) and Cabinet for consideration.

## Recommendations

1. That the Scrutiny Committee prioritises and agrees the order in which the Task and Finish Reviews (deep dive investigations) are to be undertaken.
2. That the size, composition and membership of the Task and Review Group is agreed.

## Reasons for Recommendations

1. To agree the Task and Finish Review Group activities for the Place Scrutiny Committee.
2. To agree the size, composition and membership of the Task and Review Group of the Place Scrutiny Committee.

## 1. Background

- 1.1** On 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025, Cabinet agreed proposals for new Scrutiny arrangements to take affect for the 2025/26 Municipal year and which were aligned to the new objectives contained within the Council's new Corporate Plan – Vale 2030. A copy of the Cabinet report can be found in the following link:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf)

- 1.2** The new arrangements were subsequently agreed by Council at its meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Which included a new Committee structure as follows:

| Committee Name | Corporate Plan Objective                                                                         | Remits                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Start Well     | Giving Everyone a Good Start in Life                                                             | Schools, Schools Improvement, Post 16 Education and Training, Skills, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Youth Services, Flying Start/Families First, Play and Welsh (external policy).  |
| Live Well      | Supporting and Protecting Those Who Need Us<br><br>Creating Great Places to Live, Work and Visit | Adult Services, Children and Young People's Services, Libraries, Arts, Culture, Leisure, Sports, Community Learning, Homelessness, Public Protection and Equalities (external policy). |

| Committee Name | Corporate Plan Objective                                                                            | Remits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Place</b>   | <b>Creating Great Places to Live, Work and Visit<br/>Respecting and Celebrating the Environment</b> | <b>Economic Development and Regeneration, Tourism, Countryside and Parks, Waste management and cleansing, Highways and Engineering, Planning, Transportation, Climate and Nature Emergency, Placemaking and Public and Private Sector Housing.</b> |
| Resources      | Being the Best Council We Can Be                                                                    | Corporate Policies and Performance, Communication and Participation, Customer Relations, Finance, Procurement, Digital, Property, Human Resources, Equalities (internal policy) and Welsh (internal policy).                                       |

- 1.3** During its meeting in May 2025, members of the Scrutiny Committee were asked to put forward suggestions for deep dive investigations of a Task and Finish Review Group. Once collated all suggestions have been subject to a feasibility exercise to ensure that they closely align to Council priorities and corporate objectives. The relevant Directors and Council Officers have been consulted and from the suggestions proposed 5 areas of Task and Finish activity that could be progressed. These are shown in Section 2 of the report (including the two suggestions not progressed / to be considered by another Scrutiny Committee, as well as some further suggestions by officers, to be considered at a later date).

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** A range of Task and Finish review suggestions were collated from Members of the Committee both at its meeting held on 20th May, 2025, and with additional suggestions sent to the Chair / Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer after the meeting via email.
- 2.2** A list of all suggestions is shown at Appendix A (below) which includes commentary as to whether each review suggestion should proceed.
- 2.3** The relevant Directors and Council Officers have assessed all suggestions and proposed 5 possible reviews to be considered for progression. These align closely to current Council priorities, the Vale 2030 Corporate Plan and considered achievable within the 12- week cycle.
- 2.4** The 5 proposed suggestions are:
1. What the Council could do to help High streets within the Vale of Glamorgan, such as bringing empty buildings back into use, making pavements an exciting environment, etc.
  2. Looking at the results of the tenant satisfaction survey. To help in developing the relevant actions with other stakeholders, etc.

3. A deeper look and focus into those areas that touched upon the remit of the Committee which were part of the Council's risk profile and register, where it could offer both added value and support for these, particularly those relevant areas which had been 'red' rated and therefore were of highest risk to the Council (such as Climate Change and Nature Emergency and the financial pressures and current state of budgets limiting the Council's ability to invest in key areas related to these).
  4. A Task and Finish exercise about greater accessibility to beaches in the Vale of Glamorgan for people with disabilities (such as wheelchair users) and others.
  5. Suggestions concerning the interlinked issues of refuse on local beaches and the wider matters around local holiday resorts.
- 2.5** There were also two other suggestions which were considered but not included in the final proposals, as outlined in the Executive Summary and Appendix A. These will be considered by other, relevant, Scrutiny Committees.
- 2.6** Other, possible suggestions following discussions with Council Officers, have also been added, which could be considered or form the basis of Task and Finish exercises at a later date.
- 2.7** Another suggestion, based on a motion from Full Council at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025, concerning a voluntary ban on the sale and use of 'Flying rings' throughout the Vale of Glamorgan, was considered by the Place Scrutiny Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> May. However, it was decided that this would be dealt with in an alternative, more appropriate, way, by Council Officers and their efforts reported back to the Committee in the near future.
- 2.8** The Place Scrutiny Committee is therefore requested to prioritise and agree the order in which the reviews are to be undertaken.
- 2.9** In addition, the Committee is requested to confirm and agree the size and membership of the Task and Review Group. The suggested number of members on a Task and Finish Review Group is 6, but a lower or higher number can be accommodated based on the wishes of the Scrutiny Committee, with the Chair decided by the "home" Scrutiny committee. Ideally the Task and Finish Review Group should have representation from all political groups and from the relevant Co-Opted Members.
- 2.10** The Committee is also asked to determine if representation from any interested parties outside of the organisation would have merit to leverage the expertise of officers, partners, wider stakeholders alongside evidence and insight from the people of the Vale of Glamorgan who will be invited and encouraged to participate as expert witnesses and share their lived experiences.
- 2.11** Once the review topic and membership has been agreed, Democratic Services will prepare a schedule of meetings, with it being envisioned for a review to be completed within 12 weeks. This will exclude the summer recess.
- 2.12** It is planned that the first meeting of the Task and Finish Review Group will include the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair. The first meeting will also

include consideration of the Group's Terms of Reference of how the review will be completed. The Group will also be asked to consider the most appropriate time for it to meet and any expert witnesses that it would like to call to provide evidence, guidance and to answer queries.

- 2.13** The proposed timeline guidance, which may be subject to change dependent upon the scope of the work, is outlined below:

| Week  | Stage                | Stage Description                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre   | Initiation           | Identification of topic based; sourced from areas such as performance, Reshaping, Corporate Plan, audit reports and Members interests                                 |
| 1     | Start up             | Appoint Members, agree meeting dates, Members ways of working and Terms of Reference                                                                                  |
| 2-3   | Planning and Scoping | Agree key outcomes, action points, evidence collation, including wider stakeholders                                                                                   |
| 4-9   | Delivery             | Delivery of content of T&F receiving, challenging and sharing information to support direction of travel                                                              |
| 10-12 | Concluding Report    | Production of final report by T&F Chair, including recommendations, to be considered by the relevant Cabinet Member(s), commissioning Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. |

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** Task and Finish review activities undertaken by the Scrutiny Committees will form a key part of them meeting their Terms of References which are aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan – Vale 2030, which in turn, is aligned to the Wellbeing Goals for Wales.

### **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 4.1** None as a direct result of this report.

## **5. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

**5.1** None as a direct result of this report.

### **Employment**

**5.2** None as a direct result of this report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

**5.3** None as a direct result of this report.

## **6. Background Papers**

Cabinet report with new Scrutiny proposal – 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf)



## APPENDIX A – Task and Finish Review Suggestions

| <b>Councillor / other</b>  | <b>T&amp;F Suggestion</b>                                                                                                          | <b>Comment</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Councillor C.E.A. Champion | A review on what the Council could do to help High streets within the Vale of Glamorgan.                                           | This may tie into Placemaking but also would cover areas such as bringing empty buildings back into use, making pavements an exciting environment, etc. Having someone from the Federation of Small Businesses and a Chamber of Trade representative on the group would be useful. Following discussions with the Director of Place and the Operational Manager – Regeneration, this review would probably be better undertaken later in the municipal year due to resourcing and the need to undertake other key projects first, such as Placemaking, which would help with this review, once these were more established. |
| Council Officer suggestion | Looking at the results of the tenant satisfaction survey. To help in developing the relevant actions with other stakeholders, etc. | Suggested by Housing Officers of the Vale of Glamorgan Council following discussions very early on around topics for investigation. Members would be able to get involved at an early stage and assist to identify key actions to go into a new improvement plan. The Council just had the most recent report, so the next step would be to receive feedback from the                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | consultant on key issues / themes from that, then for the Council to separately consider the actions it might want to take to drive improvements in future satisfaction levels. Following discussions with the Head of Housing and Building Services and the Operational Manager for Public Housing Services, it was agreed that this initiative could be implemented in the near future. This would also involve other stakeholders, such as tenant and residents' groups.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Councillor M.J. Hooper | A deeper look and focus into those areas that touched upon the remit of the Committee which were part of the Council's risk profile and register, where it could offer both added value and support for these, particularly those relevant areas which had been 'red' rated and therefore were of highest risk to the Council (such as Climate Change and Nature Emergency and the financial pressures and current state of budgets limiting the Council's ability to invest in key areas related to these). | This has been discussed with the Operational Manager - Corporate Strategy and Insight and the Project Zero Programme Manager. It was felt that it would probably be useful to consider the 12 corporate risks when looking at potential Task and Finish work, but they will vary in scale as well as level of risk so for example climate change would be quite a big issue to look at as opposed to some of the other risks which may have a more defined scope e.g. cyber security. Some of the risks were also themes that will be looked at via an audit or have recently been audited. In terms of how well the risk is being managed that is what Governance and Audit would be looking at through |

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|                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>the quarterly reporting so it would need to be clear what aspect of the risk Members were looking at or looking at how well the risk was being managed. With regards to climate change specifically the Council is about to commence a piece of work through the Public Service Board (PSB) which would be a climate change risk assessment with its partners. This needs to be completed by the end of March 2026. The relevant Councils Officers will therefore struggle to be involved in two pieces of work running at the same time and it was suggested that it would be better to wait for the outcomes of the PSB exercise and the learning from that and the PSB response to inform whether a Task and Finish on climate risk would be beneficial.</p> |
| K. Mitchell (Representative from the Tenant Working Group / Panel) | <p>A Task and Finish exercise about greater accessibility to beaches in the Vale of Glamorgan for people with disabilities (such as wheelchair users) and others.</p> | <p>Following discussions with the Head of Neighbourhood Services, it was agreed that this Task and Finish initiative could be implemented in the near future, based on the focused remit it had and in readiness for the holiday season for 2026. This could cover Barry Island and the other beach / coastal resorts such as Ogmere by Sea and Southerndown. It could also look at alternative approaches undertaken by other Local</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Authorities, as well as examples of best practice which could be built on, and complement or improve upon existing initiatives, i.e. the Wheelchair Scheme at Barry Island.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby (Chair) | Suggestions concerning the interlinked issues of refuse on local beaches and the wider matters around local holiday resorts.                                                                                                          | This was discussed with the Head of Neighbourhood Services. These wider issues could be looked at following the initial review of disabled visitor access to beaches. Some initiatives were already being undertaken i.e. refuse on local beaches, via Keep Wales Tidy and the Council.                                                                          |
| Councillor E. Penn                | The issues faced by the Council around its house building programme and the cost of building materials or procurement of these, and how these could be addressed such as looking at the opportunity for greater regional cooperation. | Following discussions at the meeting and with the Head of Housing and Building Services and the Operational Manager for Public Housing Services, it was decided that due to this matter covering corporate level procurement, this will probably need to be considered by the Resources Scrutiny Committee. To be forwarded to this Committee for consideration. |
| Councillor A.M. Ernest            | The use, or non-use of s.106 funding in order to improve Local Leisure facilities, where other general funding is not available.                                                                                                      | It has been established that this would fall under the remit of the 'Live Well' Scrutiny Committee due to its coverage of leisure related matters and having the Leisure Centre Working Group and has been referred to that Committee as a result.                                                                                                               |
| Various Council Officers          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at income generation opportunities for Neighbourhood Services.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                 | Various suggestions made whilst speaking to Council Officers. To be considered                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review / improve communication on social housing.</li> <li>• Look at the clean streets' approach / community volunteering for refuse.</li> <li>• Review the approach to addressing empty properties.</li> </ul> | at a later date and / or to help form the basis for future reviews undertaken by Members should they consider them appropriate. |
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