

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 16th September, 2025.

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

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

Present: Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby (Chair); Councillor C. Iannucci-Williams (Vice-Chair); Councillors G.M. Ball, C.E.A. Champion, P. Drake, V.P. Driscoll, A.M. Ernest, M.J. Hooper, J.M. Norman, C. Stallard and S.T. Wiliam.

Also present: M. Blackmore, G. Doyle and K. Mitchell (Tenant Working Group / Panel Representatives); O. Carroll (Citizens Advice Cardiff and Vale); and Councillors G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing), S.D. Perkes (Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement) and E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

288 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”.

289 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors E. Penn and I.A.N. Perry; and G. Niblett (Tenant Working Group / Panel Representative).

290 MINUTES–

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

291 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor V.P. Driscoll declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 – Update on the Delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund 2022-2026. The nature of the interest was that he was a shareholder in a company that received a grant for solar panels on their offices under the Shared Prosperity Fund. He felt that this was both a personal and prejudicial interest and would therefore withdraw from the meeting should the item be voted on or if required to speak or debate the item in question.

292 UPDATE REPORT – NO FLYING RINGS CAMPAIGN (DEH) –

The report was presented to the Committee by the Head of Neighbourhood Services, the purpose of which was to update Committee on the progress of the No Flying Rings Campaign.

Full Council, on 28th April, 2025, discussed the UK Seal Alliance – “No Flying Rings Campaign” and agreed that this should be considered as part of a first Task and Finish Group and resolved to:

- Promote a Voluntary Ban on the sale of “Flying Rings”, encouraging shops to sell alternatives instead and discouraging the use of “Flying Rings”;
- Write to both the Welsh and the UK Governments in support of the ban;
- Promote the campaign through its media channels so that the public and visitors to the County’s coastline also supported the action.

The Place Scrutiny Committee on 20th May, 2025 subsequently discussed the proposal but determined that the campaign should be managed by service area officers, rather than any specific Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group. This was in order to address this issue with local traders, to help support the related national campaign with additional local publicity and then to report back to Committee about what actions had been taken to tackle this issue.

This subsequent report highlighted to Members the following details, which included that the Neighbourhood Service team had subsequently been working with the UK Seal Alliance and local traders located at resorts within the Vale of Glamorgan to promote the voluntary ban and to raise awareness of the negative impacts flying rings had on marine life. The team also engaged with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) to inform them of the summer campaign and to request that beach lifeguards working on behalf of the Council, assisted with the promotion of the campaign by approaching visitors using or bringing flying rings to one of the local beaches. Although not all traders were selling the flying rings, the engagement was hopefully sufficient to prevent others from potentially stocking them in the future.

The service area officers identified several shops that were located at local resorts / beaches that could potentially stock these rings and set about engaging with them, on a one-to-one basis, to understand how many were actively selling the flying rings. These were located at Penarth, Barry Island and Llantwit Major. All traders were supplied with copies of the “Save our Seals” shop poster (Appendix B to the report) and upon engagement, it was noted that some had already been supplied with posters and displaying them in their shop window, which was encouraging.

Media promotions were also undertaken to warn the public about the dangers of flying rings to local wildlife and the environment, such as seriously injury or even the danger of killing seals if they ended up in the sea, and around a seal’s neck. The Council also engaged with Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) and its Resort Supervisor in order to help address this issue.

Also, for the 2026 bathing season the Council would include artwork promoting the campaign and its commitment onto beach signage at all designated bathing water beaches.

Additionally, at the end of this summer, the service area would seek a suitable method, most likely through Wales Coast Forum, to write to the Welsh and UK Governments to present the work undertaken this summer and to express participating Councils' support behind a permanent ban on the supply of plastic flying rings.

Following the report, several questions and comments were raised by the Committee, starting with Councillor Champion referring to the sale of flying rings at larger retailers in the Vale of Glamorgan (such as Waitrose) and the potential need for the Council to reach out to such retailers to prevent the purchase and sales of flying rings going forward. The Head of Neighbourhood Services would ask his team to look into and address this issue by, firstly, reaching out to Waitrose and subsequently writing to other major retailers within the County on this matter. This would be picked up in the Autumn season and these retailers would also be included in the Council's preparations for the next summer and bathing season.

Councillor Stallard, as one of the co-authors for the Notice of Motion on flying rings, wished to endorse the work of the Council on, and thank the various teams and officers from the Council who were involved in, the summer campaign addressing the sale, etc. of flying rings within the County. Regarding Waitrose, some of the larger retailers had proactively stopped selling flying rings, but it would also be worth reaching out to the relevant seal and related groups to write to the larger retail chains and who would be able to engage with this UK wide. The Chair thanked the Councillor for her efforts with the flying rings, and to all the traders who had responded to this campaign.

The Chair had a query in relation to the letters which were to be sent to the Welsh and UK Governments and whether there had been any response to these yet. The Head of Neighbourhood Services explained that the letters had not been sent out yet, with the intention to send these after the summer / bathing period, following discussions with the relevant bodies, such as the Welsh Coastal Group which the Council belonged to. This would be followed up and the Committee updated in due course. The Chair stated that it would be interesting to see what support there was at the national and UK Governmental level for the efforts being made at a more local level on tackling the purchase and sale of flying rings.

Following the discussions on this report, Committee

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the contents of the report be noted and that the actions undertaken and proposed as part of the campaign were deemed both proportionate and sufficient and were therefore endorsed.

(2) T H A T the Council considers what would be the most effective way of engaging with larger retailers in advance of the next bathing season, including the

possibility of direct engagement at a local level to prevent the purchase and sales of flying rings, as well as liaising with the appropriate interest and action groups on this topic to help progress the discouragement of sales and implementing a voluntary ban of flying rings at the national level.

(3) T H A T the Council, following consultation with the appropriate environmental, interest and action groups, send letters to the Welsh and UK Governments on this matter, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the issue of stopping the purchase, sale, etc., of flying rings.

Reasons for recommendations

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

(2) To ensure more effective engagement with large retailers within the County in order to assist in preventing the purchase and sale of flying rings, etc., and to look at addressing this issue nationally as well.

(3) To ensure a co-ordinated approach to the issue of stopping the purchase, sale, etc., of flying rings.

293 UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY OF THE SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2022 – 2026 (DP) –

The report and an additional presentation on the Shared Prosperity Fund were shared with the Committee by the Team Leader – Community Development, in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer – Rural Regeneration and the Director of Place. The purpose of the report was to provide this Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan 2022-2025, and the 2025/26 transition year. A further report / update would be provided when this current financial year and programme were completed. Key points raised, as part of providing Members with an expanded view on and background to the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), included the following topic areas:

- Details on the allocation of funding from UK Government, a mix of revenue and capital funding, with the Vale of Glamorgan Council allocated to a regional group (reflecting the Cardiff Capital Region) that had to submit an Investment Plan on how the funding would be used;
- £14.029m (plus a further £145k) had been allocated for the 2022 to 2025 Period;
- In late 2024 the UK Government announced a one-year transition extension of the SPF into 2025/26 financial year at a reduced level of approximately 60% of the 2024/25 financial year budget. The Vale's allocation for 2025/26 was £4.668m. This provided continuity and stability for some, but not all, local partners, and projects whilst work progressed nationally on future funding arrangements;
- The breakdown of investment priorities (Community and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills) were detailed and shared;

- Emerging headlines from the start of the Plan in 2022 were outlined (persistent inequality, reduce emissions, support locally significant sectors and jobs and the need respond to post-Covid recovery, Brexit, rural areas, deprivation, etc.);
- The allocation 'mix' for funding in the Vale of Glamorgan was outlined: internal allocation, third sector organisations, Town and Community Councils, businesses and educational establishments;
- The use of publicity and engagement as part of this process such as press releases, social media, workshops, webinars, etc.;
- The allocation and distribution of funding, with the relevant details and breakdown was also shared for the 2022-25 and 2025-26 periods under the investment priorities. This was used to deliver a range of projects under these priorities. Delivery had supported a wide range of local initiatives, strengthening communities, supporting economic recovery and investing in skills and employment opportunities;
- The project assessment process was explained, which included an assessment by a panel on projects and funding under specific criteria;
- The output and outcomes from the funding were highlighted and the work around these;
- Several case studies were also shared with the Committee on projects that had received funding which were having a positive impact on local communities and residents within the County, including "Castaway Stress" and Celt +.

Following the presentation, Members raised several comments and queries, starting with Councillor Champion, who asked about how Celt+ would continue without more funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and would this funding carry on in the years ahead. The Director of Place advised that the Council was still waiting to hear on what was happening with the SPF (or its successor) in 2026/27, and the outcome of discussions between the Welsh and UK Governments on this funding going forward. It was believed that funding had been allocated but this would be no more than what was allocated in 2025/26.

On the Chair's query on timescales for future funding via the SPF, the Director of Place explained that this had not been confirmed as yet, despite the Council's efforts to obtain this information from the Welsh and UK Governments. It was unlikely that such timescales would be confirmed until the fiscal statement in November 2025. This would have a negative knock-on impact on projects such as Celt+.

Councillor Ernest endorsed the SPF programme, referring to the implementation of this by the previous Conservative and current Labour UK Governments, and in the early phase the allocation of monies to Local Authorities so that they could decide how this was spent. It was also good to see the criteria used, and consideration made, by the Council on how this funding was best allocated and spent. If further funding was provided, then it would be important that the Council continued to apply and carry forward the principles and criteria it had used in relation to this funding programme previously. The Director of Place welcomed the Councillor's comments, adding that the Council had been effective in supporting local businesses, community groups and services to gain opportunities through the provision of the SPF. There had been benefits to having the Council (and other Local Authorities)

delivering this funding, due to the Council having established close relationships with local businesses and other key groups. This point had also been made to the Welsh Government. The Director would like to see a funding programme which lasted longer than 12 months (which the current programme model did) as this limited the opportunities to provide businesses with grant funding, unlike the previous funding lifecycles.

K. Mitchell (Tenant Working Group / Panel Representative) referred to her own personal experiences of the positive work undertaken by projects funded by the SPF, such as Celt+.

The Chair and Committee wished to thank Council officers and local partners, etc., who had worked hard to ensure that the SPF had been utilised across the County so effectively, citing the examples of the positive work and benefits undertaken by some of the projects referred to in the case studies.

Following the above comments and queries raised on this report, Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the final position for delivery of the Vale of Glamorgan Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) 2022 to 2025 programme be noted.
- (2) T H A T the position on the 2025/26 transition year programme and the approvals made to date be noted.
- (3) T H A T the Committee receive a further report in 2026 on the final position of the funding programme, following the completion of the transition year programme.
- (4) T H A T the Committee also receive an update on the next stages of the funding programme as soon as that was available to Council officers.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1&2) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (3&4) To ensure effective scrutiny of programme delivery and financial management, as well as on the future development of this programme.