

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Hybrid Meeting held on 20th January, 2026.

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, P. Drake, A.M. Ernest, M.J. Hooper, J.M. Norman, E. Penn, I.A.N. Perry, C. Stallard and S.T. Wiliam.

Also present: M. Blackmore, K. Mitchell and D. Paskin (Tenant Working Group / Panel Representatives); O. Carroll (Citizens Advice Cardiff and Vale); and Councillors B.E. Brooks (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places), L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), C.P. Franks, S.M. Hanks, G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing), Dr. I.J. Johnson, E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health) and M.R. Wilson (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services).

584 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer 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”.

585 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors C.E.A. Champion and V.P. Driscoll.

586 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

587 PETITION SUBMISSION – DECLARE A LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (LNR) AT BARRY’S OLD HARBOUR (DCR) –

The covering report to the petition, introduced by the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, asked Members of the Committee to consider a public petition submitted relating to a proposed declaration for a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) to be located at Barry’s Old Harbour.

On 6th May, 2025 a petition from R. Curtis was submitted, on behalf of Barry Action for Nature, calling on the Council to “Declare a local nature reserve at Barry’s Old Harbour to help protect local wildlife’. As Lead Petitioner, R. Curtis was invited to present the petition at the meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee on 20th January, and, in line with the Council’s petition scheme, would be afforded 3 minutes speaking time in which to address the Committee.

Key considerations included the rationale for the petition (the protection of the Old Harbour’s saltwater marsh and the local wildlife through declaring a LNR), the level of support for the petition (a total of 607 signatures), and the response from Council officers, such as the Director of Place, the Head of Service - Neighbourhood Services and County Ecologist - Regeneration Section, which, whilst in principle this location had considerable merit in being considered as a LNR, there were challenges and points that needed to be considered as well, such as resourcing and funding. Overall, the conclusion was that the petition proposal on declaring a LNR at this location was not practicable and should not be pursued at this time, but could be reconsidered in the next financial year.

R. Curtis, the Lead Petitioner, raised several points to the Committee to consider, including the birdlife and the existence of the salt marsh there, and giving the wider local wildlife a space to feed and rest. Declaring a LNR would protect the local habitat / species such as the Curlew and support the local environment, such as preventing flooding and stop further development in the area. It would also help to address the issue of jet skiers and dog walkers who may be unintentionally disturbing the wildlife and habitat at the Old Harbour, and address pollution / sewage discharged locally.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services highlighted the local habitat and flooding considerations, noting the ongoing liaison with Natural Resources Wales and Dwr Cymru regarding these issues and maintaining a watching brief at the site in question. He emphasised the need to protect species such as the Curlew without attracting undue disturbance and encouraged reporting of any harmful activity. He added that the saltwater marsh and wider habitat required further investigation and assessment.

Councillor Dr Johnson asked what declaring a Local Nature Reserve would mean in practice, i.e. what protections it provides, what responsibilities it places on the Council, the resources required, and the key benefits and challenges involved. The Chair also added what the definition for sufficient wildlife value was in terms of designating the local area as an LNR. In response, the County Ecologist explained that the County already had three LNRs. The guidance was clear that the Council should have aims and objectives in declaring an LNR, an idea of how it would manage it, monitor it, engage the public, opportunities for education and what the costs were. Sufficient wildlife value had to be considered in this context, but this did not mean exceptional wildlife value, as seen in other types of nature reserve, but rather considerations would be around the value or benefit to the local community in having this natural area nearby, etc. Also, as part of the review of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and as part of the Coastal Project, local coastal sites were considered for their importance in nature conservation. The Old Harbour qualified under these criteria and had therefore been included in the revised list of Sites of

Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). If this was completed, it would offer some protection, but only within a planning context.

K. Mitchell, a Tenant Representative asked about the potential funding and grants available to set up a LNR at the location and the conservation / educational aspects of it. The Head of Service – Neighbourhood Services would undertake research on what it would cost, etc. to manage this site as an LNR and to address the concerns around jet ski use and dog walking / fouling in the area, through measures such as a Public Space Protection Order.

Councillor Hooper, whose ward included the Old Harbour, broadly supported progressing the petition. He highlighted the need to assess the resources, timescales, and potential funding required to designate the site as an LNR and whether the Committee could agree this LNR designation in principle for referral to Cabinet.

The Director of Place explained that while the Old Harbour had potential as an LNR, other sites, such as Rhoose Point, might be higher priority and had to be considered as well. He added that designating the area as an LNR would require significant resources, such as from the Council's Neighbourhood Services and that the SINC status may offer stronger protection than an LNR.

The Chair subsequently asked if the LNR and SINC statuses and their respective protections could run in parallel with each other at the relevant site. The County Ecologist replied that the SINC status offered more protection in terms of preventing further development at the location. The LNR recognised the value of the local wildlife and landscape at the site, and the conservation of the environment there, as well as the benefit this would provide to the local community. The SINC / LNR could be run in parallel, and some sites also overlapped with sites of special scientific interest (SSSI).

The County Ecologist also confirmed that there would be no 'break' in the Ecologist role, due to him retiring, and his replacement would be starting immediately thereafter.

Councillor Hooper felt that the focus should be on the proposed site presented to the Committee, which had been brought forward, rather than any other potential sites at this time which had not been previously brought forward to the Committee before the meeting tonight.

Councillor Ernest supported the proposed LNR, citing the size of the petition, and further LNRs should be designated in the County to help protect biodiversity. He raised concerns around funding this proposal, citing the issues that had been faced securing funding from the Local Nature Partnership (LNP). However, there were important reasons to put forward this proposed LNR at the Old Harbour. The Director of Place reiterated that the proposal was in principle suitable, but consideration was needed around ongoing funding (via national government and other bodies) for this proposal and around other potential sites which may be more of a priority. Key sites for SINCs would also be considered as part of the LDP process.

Councillor Penn referred to the richness and diversity of the inter-tidal zones, such as the Old Harbour, and more research was needed to identify wildlife, etc., at the location. Planting seagrass at the location would be very beneficial and the salt marsh there was a rare thing that needed to be protected due to its benefits in terms of biodiversity. Work between the Committee, the Council, Dwr Cymru and Natural Resources Wales should be undertaken to reduce and prevent pollution at the Old Harbour site. Therefore, this site should be designated as a LNR or under another suitable form of designation / protection.

The Vice Chair said that the numbers involved in the petition to designate the Old Harbour as an LNR and the level of support at the Committee indicated that this site should be given a higher priority in relation to other possible sites. It would also be useful to have a list of potential LNR or similar sites within the County. The Director of Place explained that a list did exist, as part of the list of local areas identified as potential SINC's in the LDP and its proposed replacement. The SINC designation could provide further protections as compared to simply having the LNR one alone. Current resources meant that not all these sites could be progressed and designated at this time, coupled with statutory and planning considerations.

Councillor Wiliam welcomed and broadly supported the proposed LNR at the Old Harbour, as well as this report highlighting the understaffing and resources issues faced by the Council. He urged the Council to not do anything that might introduce to the local habitat invasive species, such as introducing different kinds of grasses, and therefore a proper audit of the area and its flora and fauna was needed. The County Ecologist stated that coastal salt marshes were an incredibly rare habitat, and there was a lot of knowledge already accumulated around the habitat at Old Harbour and what the potential risks were. Designating the area as a LNR could help to ensure the importance and protection of local wildlife and the habitat already in place and it would include a management plan to help cover this.

Following its discussion on the petition and report, Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Committee agrees, in principle, that a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) be declared at the Old Harbour site at Barry.
- (2) T H A T additional work would be required to identify the resource requirements for designating the Old Harbour site as a Local Nature Reserve. This additional work / process should also consider other potential sites in the Vale of Glamorgan that may also warrant being designated as a LNR as well.
- (3) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council work with Barry Action for Nature and any other relevant groups to ensure that work be undertaken to identify and address any immediate risks to wildlife at the Old Harbour site. That work should also consider any mitigating action that could be taken immediately.
- (4) T H A T Welsh Water / Dwr Cymru and Natural Resources Wales be invited to attend this Committee at its next meeting in March, in order to address the issue of

bathing water quality and the potential impact of sewage discharge on wildlife in the Vale of Glamorgan.

(5) T H A T the above recommendations be referred to Cabinet for their consideration and comment.

Reason for recommendations

(1-5) For Cabinet and any relevant Council officers to consider the recommendations made by the Place Scrutiny Committee regarding the Petition Submission to declare a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) at Barry's Old Harbour and the related report.

588 PROJECT ZERO UPDATE REPORT (DCR) –

The report and accompanying presentation were shared with the Committee by the Project Zero Programme Manager, the main purpose of which was for Committee Members to consider the progress and funding detailed in this report and Appendix A to the report in relation to the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan and the work of the Public Services Board (PSB) to tackle the climate and nature emergencies, as well as to refer this report and any comments to Cabinet.

The report and the presentation detailed the wide range of activity being undertaken to ensure the Council continued to deliver against its commitments in the Climate Change Challenge Plan and to take forward Project Zero. This included the RAG (red, amber, green) rating of progress against the steps in the Climate Change Challenge Plan and undertaking a new case study approach in the appendix.

The report provided Members with an update regarding the finances associated with Project Zero and on the PSB work to tackle the climate and nature emergencies which were a priority in the PSB Well-being Plan. The report also provided an update of the Council's carbon emissions for 2024/25 and on the approach to programme management.

Following the presentation, and the Vice-Chair's query on the 'no planned action' status seen in some instances within the Climate Change Challenge Plan, it was clarified that some areas with a 'no planned action' status currently depended upon the progress on, or were awaiting the finalisation of, the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). For others, such as Challenge 12 on reducing energy use and sourcing clean / renewable energy, etc., there had been no planned action in the previous six months, but with the new Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) Officer now in post, further work on this would progress in due course.

Councillor Penn made several comments on the positive increase in recycling rates locally, on soft plastics collection, the importance of lobbying Welsh Government to remove single use plastics and changing the way local residents travelled (including active travel and improving public transport), with less car use as a result. On his suggestion around Challenge 14 (on improving the energy efficiency of existing Council stock) and the increased use of local companies in order to help speed this

process up (and benefit the local economy), the Project Zero Programme Manager would take back this suggestion and the other comments to the relevant Council officers for consideration.

On the Chair's query about the 6% rise in carbon emissions compared to 2023/24 which was due largely to increase in supply chain emissions, and what measures were in place to address this (such as through procurement / contracts), it was explained that work was ongoing in terms of procurement around this. Due to the complexity of the supply chains, emissions could change year on year significantly making comparison difficult. Procurement spends had gone down, but emissions had gone up. Due to this, there was ongoing work on social value, contracts, and other aspects around streamlining and decarbonising procurement in conjunction with partners, such as through Ardal, and to improve scope 2 data.

Councillor Hooper felt that this was a good report but Project Zero was under resourced, despite the risk factor for the Council on this being high. The Council needed 'to get a handle' on this crucial area and ensure that action was taken immediately and effectively, rather than performatively. He referred to the new LAEP Officer in place and their key role around Project Zero, requesting more details on their role. Both the Project Zero Programme Manager and the Director of Place provided further details on the officer's role, etc., including them being key to taking forward the wide-ranging LAEP agenda with other stakeholders, including other relevant officers from the Cardiff Capital Region and Welsh Government (WG), as well as alongside bodies like the National Grid. Councillor Hooper felt it would be good for the Committee to be updated by the LAEP Officer on progress made in this area going forward.

Councillor Ernest referred to the active travel approach, and that for many residents this was not practical with cycling and public transport options being of limited benefit or efficacy and this was not being addressed adequately by the Committee. The Chair referred to the fact that key areas of public transport, etc., were covered by this Committee, which received regular updates on them. Councillor Norman also echoed the limitations of active travel and public transport in parts of the Rural Vale, despite its benefits. Councillor Stallard wished to defend and welcomed the WG focus on active travel and the Council's support of this, citing the benefits it gave to residents, such as younger persons.

K. Mitchell, a Tenant Representative, referred to the positive impact of funding for public transport, such as the roll out of higher kerbs at bus stops for elderly, disabled and other persons.

The Project Zero Programme Manager would feedback to the relevant officer(s) both the positive comments and concerns raised around active travel and public transport in the Rural Vale and the roll out of measures such as higher kerbs, etc. Further updates would be shared with the Committee in due course.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services referred to the further roll out of soft plastics recycling in the County soon which had been highlighted in the meeting and that outstanding / 'Amber' actions such as the Flood Risk Management

Plan and those relating to Building Services and the LAEP would be discussed with Council officers and progressed.

Following the discussions and scrutiny on this report, Committee

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the progress and funding detailed in the report and Appendix A to the report in relation to the challenges within the Climate Change Challenge Plan and the work of the Public Services Board (PSB) to tackle the climate and nature emergencies, be noted.
- (2) T H A T the carbon emissions for 2024/25 be noted.
- (3) T H A T the report be referred to Cabinet for their consideration.
- (4) T H A T the report be shared with all elected Members, members of the Public Services Board and all Town and Community Councils for their information.
- (5) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Local Area Energy Plan, including the work, development and implementation undertaken as part of it, and the role of the new officer appointed in order to progress it, be included in the Committee's Forward Work Programme for future consideration and scrutiny (if this has not been done so already).

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) Having regard to the contents and recommendations of the report, as well as the discussions at the meeting.

(3) To enable Cabinet to consider the report as part of its consideration of progress in delivering the Climate Change Challenge Plan.

(4) To update all Elected Members and other stakeholders on the arrangements in place to deliver Project Zero.

(5) To update the Committee on, and to provide it with an opportunity to, consider and scrutinise the Vale of Glamorgan Local Area Energy Plan, the work undertaken as part of it and the role of the new officer appointed in order to progress it.

589 TREE STRATEGY UPDATE REPORT (CX) –

The update report provided an overview of progress on the Council's Tree Strategy since its adoption. The Strategy underpinned the Council's commitment to protecting, enhancing, and valuing the local environment, supporting biodiversity, and addressing the climate emergency.

The Committee agreed that, due to the inclusion of an Urgent Item for Committee Members' consideration at the meeting tonight, and in order to allow sufficient time

for the Committee to consider and scrutinise the update adequately, the report should be deferred to the next meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee for its scrutiny then.

Subsequently, Committee

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Tree Strategy Update Report be deferred to the next meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee for its consideration then.

Reason for recommendation

In order to allow sufficient time for the Committee to consider and scrutinise the update at the next meeting of the Committee, following the inclusion of an Urgent Item for Committee Members' consideration at the meeting of the Committee on 20th January, 2026.

590 COASTAL MONITORING UPDATE (CX) –

The update report, and accompanying presentation was presented by the Engineering Manager – Environment which informed the Committee on the progress with the monitoring of the coastline with regards to flood and coastal erosion risk management. This highlighted various areas such as the Wales Coastal Monitoring Centre (WCMC), managed by the Council, who continued to prioritise monitoring of coastal areas and datasets across the Vale of Glamorgan. The Vale contained around 45km of open coastline, including 4km of Council-maintained formal defences. The coast remained vulnerable to ongoing erosion and flooding, with a projected sea-level rise of around one metre over the next century which increased future risks.

Regular topographic beach profiles were collected to track changes and identify areas of loss or gain. In 2025, 100 profiles were completed through the WCMC programme, with an additional 176 unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) based Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) profiles commissioned by the Council at The Knap (2.4km), Swanbridge and Sully Island (1.2km), and Penarth (4.6km). Outputs included a dense colourised point cloud and pseudo-nadir imagery. Further ad hoc UAV surveys were undertaken following reported cliff falls at locations such as Jackson's Bay and Penarth Head. At Penarth, wave and water-level monitoring also continued via devices installed on Penarth Pier.

Ongoing monitoring would entail the establishment of a consistent and routine monitoring regime around the coastline, to help inform a risk-based approach to managing coastal interests, in conjunction with continued support for the WCMC and collaboration with academia.

Following the report, the Vice-Chair asked about technology and other means the Council could use to warn or prevent risks in areas prone to rock falls. The Committee's Task and Finish Group was also reviewing existing coastal signage, and she asked whether advanced warnings about rock falls could be added where needed, such as to existing signage already in place. The Chair added how

accessible were the signs, how confident was the Council that it currently had them in all the right places and was the Council aware of any locations where signage was missing and should be installed. The Engineering Manager – Environment explained that the technology / means concerning advanced warning of rockfalls was available, but this had to be deployed proportionately, and a risk-based approach undertaken to deploy these to the appropriate 'hot spots', i.e. those areas of the coast at risk, where there were significant numbers of visitors. Work was being undertaken on this with Cardiff University. There was signage already present on such risks at locations such as Jackson's Bay. This was more about managing the risk appropriately (including signage), rather than prevention, which was more difficult to achieve (such as using strain gauges). Other options included the possibility of using Artificial Intelligence to provide automated alerts and warnings to visitors at cliff areas at risk of rock falls.

On the Chair's follow up question on how the public could report rock falls and similar risks, it was explained that this could be done via social media, the Council's website, the Council's call centre (C1V), the Coast Guard and Welsh Government, or the relevant landowner (if not under the Council's management). The Head of Service – Neighbourhood Services thought this would be a good opportunity to have an audit of such signage incorporated with the work being undertaken around beach signage as part of the Task and Finish Group and to ensure that the signs were appropriate and covered the relevant risks present. Such signage did already exist in areas such as Jackson's Bay and Llantwit Major beach.

Councillor Wiliam welcomed the audit of signage suggested, citing Jackson's Bay, and raised queries about the potential risks of repeat flooding for the new housing built at the Waterfront development in Barry (opposite the Council's Docks Offices) and on the status of sand levels along the local coastline as well as on the monitoring around this. It was explained that regarding the Waterfront development, the ground levels there had been raised and the flood risk had been managed through the planning process, in conjunction with Natural Resources Wales (NRW). This aimed to prevent any major instances of flooding. On sand levels, most monitoring was targeted on beach sand levels, with some offshore monitoring as well. Various types of data collection and survey work had been undertaken, and there were currently no major trends being observed around sand loss. There had to be a longer-term collection of data in order to discern any trends around sand levels, due to significant variations in the short term, such as from the impact of storms and tidal flows. Where there had been access to longer term data collection and monitoring, no significant loss of sand had been seen and in fact at one site, the Old Harbour Barry, sand levels had increased. There was no direct evidence of any legacy impacts from previous dredging which had since been stopped and was not sufficiently close enough now to impact the local coastlines.

Councillor Ernest highlighted concerns from Penarth residents about the potential impact of coastal erosion on property safety and house values. He asked for reassurance that the WCMC was engaging directly with affected residents and that future reports should reflect this. The Chair asked how residents could access information on how erosion might affect their homes. It was explained that residents were engaged with wherever possible, although not everyone wished to take part, and therefore work was ongoing to improve this engagement. It was a challenge to

decide how much information was appropriate to share with residents, as too little could be unhelpful, while too much risked causing unnecessary concern or even affecting property values. There was an emphasis on coastal erosion which could not be entirely prevented and that it was a natural, long-term process. In some areas, a “hold the line” policy was in place, where existing defences would continue to be maintained. However, a small number of properties – particularly around Penarth Head and further south – were identified as being at some risk of coastal erosion. Even so, it was difficult to apply precise timescales, and such impacts were unlikely to occur for a long time. Predicting the exact location of the next cliff failure was extremely difficult, but residents had access to the National Coastal Erosion Risk Management dataset through NRW. This included both flood-risk mapping and coastal erosion information. The enhanced monitoring that had been carried out along this part of the coastline, especially around Penarth, was intended to improve future updates of this dataset. Once the mapping was refreshed, the survey flights would help improve understanding of current erosion rates and the accuracy of projected “buffer zones” showing how far the cliff line might retreat over the next 30 to 50 years. Several gardens were already affected, particularly along the coastal path in front of the park in Penarth, where fences had been moved back, but current modelling showed that no homes fell within the defined risk zone. When significant cliff falls occurred, Council officers notified nearby residents and advised them on managing any risks. Although there was no imminent threat to homes, this monitoring data was being gathered to determine whether sea-level rise was accelerating erosion or whether the rate remained stable. Work was also underway locally and nationally to improve how shoreline management policies were communicated to the public. The new national erosion-mapping tool was designed to give residents easy access to current predictions and risk information.

Councillor Hooper felt there was a wider audience of people who would be very keen and interested in the work that was being undertaken in this area and this needed to be disseminated to them, such as using social media to reach out to younger residents and others.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services welcomed the report and presentation. He stressed the importance of adequate signage and visitor awareness at cliff areas where risks such as rock falls existed. He also noted the challenges posed by local weather conditions, tidal ranges and ongoing coastal erosion. Ongoing collaboration with academic partners and the development of predictive analysis were highlighted as key to managing these risks. He further emphasised the need to liaise with affected residents and to engage with wider groups, including young people, as part of this work.

Following on from the comments made by Members on this report, the Head of Service – Neighbourhood Services felt there was an opportunity here to improve the information on the Council’s website regarding this topic. It already had flood and coastal erosion risk management pages, along with coastal protection information that included most of the links mentioned at this meeting. He explained that a review of these pages would be undertaken, as well as reorganising the content, and identify any additional links that could be added. It was also intended to check and update the advice provided to the public about how to contact the Council if they had concerns or wished to report anything related to flooding or coastal erosion. He also

would take up the point raised on widening engagement on this topic, such as identifying opportunities to undertake events such as roadshows to help raise awareness with the wider community and key groups, such as younger people.

Following the discussions and scrutiny on this report, Committee

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T, as a tie-in to, and as part of, the Committee's Task and Finish work around accessibility to beaches and related areas within the Vale of Glamorgan, an audit of signage be undertaken by the Council at coastal areas, i.e. where there was a risk of cliff falls, etc. to ensure they were appropriate and covered any and all relevant risks at these locations.

(2) T H A T consideration be given to adding to, and / or reviewing and auditing existing information on, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website on how members of the public can report rock falls and similar issues to the appropriate persons and bodies (including the Council) more easily at coastal areas, including any relevant links to other websites, such as to the Natural Resources (NRW) website, to access information on areas where costal erosion was a particular concern.

(3) T H A T further opportunities be explored to engage, inform and update relevant members of the public on coastal erosion and related matters within the Vale of Glamorgan area, such as young people, through various means of communication and engagement, such as local roadshows.

(4) T H A T the progress and the current programme of coastal monitoring be noted.

Reason for recommendations

(1-4) Having regard to the contents and recommendation(s) of the report, as well as the discussions at the meeting and that Council officers consider the relevant recommendations made by the Committee for further action and consideration.

591 MATTER WHICH THE CHAIR HAD DECIDED WAS URGENT –

RESOLVED – T H A T the following matter which the Chair had decided was urgent for the reason given beneath the minute heading be considered.

592 REVISED STREET SCHEME STRATEGY (2026-2031) (REF) –
(Urgent as the report was brought forward at the same time as the budget consultation report due to the need to amend the revenue budget (if agreed), as well as start work on the posts associated with the service and publicity required to notify residents about the change.)

Cabinet, on 15th January, 2026, had referred the report to Scrutiny Committee for consideration. This was presented to the Committee by the Head of Service –

Neighbourhood Services for Members' consideration and scrutiny.

The report was accompanied by a presentation in order to set out the key points for consideration, which included several topic areas, particularly the role and impact of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme for packaging regulations which came into force on 1st January, 2025, and the subsequent funding provided for EPR (£3.8m (post appeal)) and its uses for the revised Strategy, such as investment for enhancing recycling performance and for additional on-street recycling provision. Current recycling investment would also continue with the soft plastics roll out. The report proposed a new strategy (the recommended investment led approach (Option 3)), that transformed street cleansing into a visible, proactive, sustainable, and community-focused "Street Scene" service. The aims were to improve environmental standards, enhance local places in line with the Council's Place Making plans and to strengthen partnerships with communities, supported by reallocated budgets and new EPR funding.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services stated that the proposals would make these services far more proactive and effective and would help the Council to engage with residents and communities around this topic which would complement more traditional means of people raising requests and concerns with the Council on waste and cleaning. As well as the focus on towns and urban areas, there would also be an emphasis on the County's rural areas and villages as part of the proposed Strategy. The Council were now, through their efforts and ongoing improvements to, and expansion of, recycling / waste services, the third best Local Authority in Wales in terms of recycling, which was due in large part to the efforts of both Council staff and residents.

Councillor Hooper welcomed the report, and raised several comments / questions concerning the open space privately managed at the Waterfront in Barry and how the duties and legislation around the Strategy would apply to these types of spaces, as well as the removal or replacement of bins for public spaces as part of this Strategy and process, and that there needed to be the ability to reassess whether to reinstate bins should this be required by the Council and to have the right numbers of bins in place to avoid public inconvenience and backlash. It was explained that the relevant duty at the open spaces at the Waterfront would be with the private management in place, but the Council could still undertake enforcement if litter and waste management was not being undertaken properly by the private management or landowners. The Strategy would require a higher level of engagement with partners in the private and other sectors, as well as residents, and be increasingly community-led as part of this transition process. Regarding the allocation of bins, there would be further investment (including EPR) in allocating further street bins and recycling points. Residents could also contact the Council if they had concerns about a lack of bins, etc., and a litter survey would be undertaken in order to help address this and allocate or repurpose bins if needed in order to meet the Council's duties with regards to the provision of these.

Councillor Norman asked how residents would be informed of the soft plastics recycling roll-out and how this would be collected. It was explained that bespoke leaflets would be distributed to residents outlining the roll out and specific blue bags issue to hold this type of recycling waste. These would be then put in the current

bags which hold plastics and metals. These would be reclaimed and recycled at the County's recycling centres at Barry and Cowbridge. There was a suggestion for the Committee to undertake a visit of these recycling facilities, prior to the soft plastics roll-out in April. On Councillor Norman's follow up query about the cleaning arrangements for Llantwit Major's public toilets, this would be the responsibility of Llantwit Major Town Council, once these assets had been transferred to them from the County Council, as part of the current asset transfer process being undertaken.

K. Mitchell, a Tenant Representative, thought it was positive to see the Council trying to engage and involve residents in this revised process and Strategy and to have more responsibilities for local communities in terms of cleaning and waste management.

Councillor Ernest informed the Committee that he and his colleagues in the Conservative Group supported this proposed Strategy and Scheme, which would support services that had been previously impacted financially.

The Vice-Chair asked if Council officers would consult with Elected Members on the allocation of street bins in their local wards and that the new recycling bins seen at Barry Island would be allocated elsewhere, such as at other beach resorts, parks and green spaces within the County. It was explained that under the last on-street recycling provision, there was only funding for 25 bins, which were shared out across various locations within the County. Under this revised Strategy there would be several funding opportunities for further recycling provision at public spaces, as well as residual general waste provision.

The Chair asked that the Committee be kept informed of the Strategy's progress, its welcome investment in key services and engagement with residents and communities, and that updates be provided accordingly.

Following the discussions and scrutiny on this report, Committee

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T, having considered the urgent item, endorsed and noted the revised Strategy and, in view of no recommendations being received from the Committee, the relevant recommendations of the report were therefore considered as being agreed by Cabinet.

(2) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council ensures that it exercises any relevant powers it has in its possession to make sure that privately owned or managed public spaces be monitored, etc., effectively.

Reason for recommendations

(1) Having regard to the contents and recommendations of the report, as well as the discussions at the meeting, and to ensure that all relevant recommendations be taken forward as promptly as possible, following their consideration by Cabinet and the Committee.

- (2) To ensure effective monitoring and engagement by the Council in relation to privately owned or managed public spaces within the Vale of Glamorgan.