

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Hybrid Special Meeting held on 12th January, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

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

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

Present: Councillor Carys Stallard (Deputy Mayor in the Chair); Councillors Anne Asbrey, Julie Aviet, Gareth Ball, Rhiannon Birch, Bronwen Brooks, Gillian Bruce, Ian Buckley, Lis Burnett, Samantha Campbell, George Carroll, Christine Cave, Charles Champion, Janice Charles, Amelia Collins, Marianne Cowpe, Brandon Dodd, Pamela Drake, Vincent Driscoll, Anthony Ernest, Christopher Franks, Wendy Gilligan, Russell Godfrey, Emma Goodjohn, Ewan Goodjohn, Stephen Haines, Sally Hanks, William Hennessy, Nic Hodges, Mark Hooper, Catherine Iannucci-Williams, Gwyn John, Dr. Ian Johnson, Susan Lloyd-Selby, Belinda Loveluck-Edwards, Julie Lynch-Wilson, Kevin Mahoney, Michael Morgan, Jayne Norman, Helen Payne, Elliot Penn, Sandra Perkes, Ian Perry, Joanna Protheroe, Ruba Sivagnanam, Neil Thomas, Steffan Wiliam, Margaret Wilkinson, Edward Williams, Mark Wilson and Nicholas Wood.

557 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors Naomi Marshallsea (Mayor) and Rhys Thomas.

558 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillors Julie Aviet, William Hennessy, Julie Lynch-Wilson and Margaret Wilkinson declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 3(a) – Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Proposals in that they were Council tenants but that this did not equate to a prejudicial interest having regard to paragraph 19.3.3 (ii) (A) of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Councillor Emma Goodjohn declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 3(a) – Final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Proposals – as a Board member of Newydd Housing.

All Councillors had dispensation from Standards Committee.

559 FINAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET PROPOSALS (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 8th January, 2026 was presented by the Leader who indicated that the proposals had been considered by Place Scrutiny Committee, and that the Council needed to lay out a 30-year business plan, including rent and charges, and notify Welsh Government accordingly. She shared that Welsh

Government consulted on rent policy during the summer, with a focus upon affordability and proposed an increase of CPI plus 0.5%, meaning rents would increase by an average of 4.3%, close to local housing allowance rates, and that all bar one Local Authority were increasing their rents by 4.3%, who are not increasing rent due to their local situation. She further noted that the cost of services was based on the cost affordability, and recent benchmarking data had identified that the Vale of Glamorgan was in the middle quartile in Wales, with rent being an average of 30-33% of income.

Councillor Dr. Johnson reflected that the Housing Revenue Act was more complex than it appeared at surface level, and that people paid for a service and less rent than the private sector, meaning it was an attractive prospective as rent was lower than social landlords. He questioned the fairness of the policy approach in general as Council tenants paid for services for a number of years, often after the cost of the asset had been paid off but supported the plan to build additional Council housing due to increased waiting lists. He also sought to understand around ranking 11th out of 22 Councils in terms of affordability, indicating that 11 Councils did not have housing stock.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services agreed that equivalent mortgages would have been paid off for longer term tenants, but noted that due to being tenants, the Council undertook a range of repairs and maintenance to ensure quality housing, and that rent increases were needed to support this. He further emphasised that the Housing Revenue Account needed to be resilient and sustainable for the future, as it was critical in supporting the most vulnerable within communities.

Councillor Carroll acknowledged the need for fairness and equity in all decisions, and the general trend of rising costs to provide services, and that whilst it was reasonable to take CPI into account, he was uncomfortable in increasing above inflation, preferring a freeze in real terms.

The Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement shared that rent charged was amongst the lowest in the Vale of Glamorgan when comparing to other sectors, and that the policy was aimed to be as affordable as possible. She shared benefits to the policy including not evicting tenants if in financial difficulty and replacing areas such as kitchens and bathrooms regularly to ensure high quality accommodation. She noted that the 30-year development plan was based upon the need to build additional housing in line with Welsh Housing Quality Standards, and to achieve decent homes at an affordable price, a 4.3% increase was felt to be reasonable.

Councillor Hooper noted that points made and information discussed at Place Scrutiny Committee to support in the decision-making process had not been adequately considered, but this was important as it represented the viewpoints of how all Councillors' experienced services. He believed that the policy placed the biggest financial burden on the least able to afford.

The Leader reflected that in 2012, the Cabinet at the time inherited a situation where families were living in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, and that there was

unmaintained housing stock, and they had stepped in to address this and set the ambition of having good quality homes for life. She shared about a planned visit to an Extra Care facility, which will provide homes to a number of potentially vulnerable people who required support; that rent was 30% lower than private sector and lower than social landlord partners, and that rents needed to be set to also support the Council's future ambitions around housing.

A Recorded Vote took place as follows:

	For	Against	Abstain
Anne Asbrey		√	
Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch	√		
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Gillian Bruce		√	
Ian Buckley	√		
Lis Burnett	√		
Samantha Campbell		√	
George Carroll		√	
Christine Cave		√	
Charles Champion		√	
Janice Charles		√	
Amelia Collins		√	
Marianne Cowpe		√	
Brandon Dodd		√	
Pamela Drake	√		
Vincent Driscoll		√	
Anthony Ernest		√	

	For	Against	Abstain
Christopher Franks		√	
Wendy Gilligan	√		
Russell Godfrey		√	
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
Stephen Haines		√	
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy		√	
Nic Hodges		√	
Mark Hooper		√	
Catherine Iannucci-Williams	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Ian Johnson		√	
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		
Kevin Mahoney			√
Michael Morgan	√		
Jayne Norman	√		
Helen Payne	√		
Elliot Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		
Ian Perry		√	

	For	Against	Abstain
Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam	√		
Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		
Steffan Wiliam		√	
Margaret Wilkinson	√		
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson	√		
Nicholas Wood		√	
Total	28	22	1

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the final Housing Revenue Account budget proposals for 2026/27 set out below be approved:

	Original 2025/26	Change	2026/27 Final Proposed Budget
			£000
Expenditure			
Supervision & Management – General	4,909	(90)	4,819
Supervision & Management – Special	1,962	(87)	1,875
Repairs & Maintenance	5,920	805	6,725
Capital Financing Costs	6,889	737	7,626
Rent, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	298	(29)	269
Increase in Provision for Bad Debts	691	29	720
Capital Expenditure from Revenue Account (CERA)	6,979	(322)	6,657
	27,648	1,043	28,691
Income			
Dwelling Rents	(26,158)	(1192)	(27,350)
Non Dwelling Rents	(199)	(6)	(205)
Interest	(215)	(7)	(222)
Charges For Services and Facilities	(817)	54	(763)

Contribution towards expenditure	(95)	0	(95)
Grant Income	(205)	0	(205)
	(27,689)	(1,151)	(28,840)
(Surplus)/ deficit for the year	(41)	108	(149)
Working Balance Brought Forward as at 1st April 2026	(3,885)	(440)	(4,325)
Working Balance Carried Forward as at 31st March 2027	(3,926)	(548)	(4,474)

(2) T H A T an average rent increase of 4.3%, as set out in paragraph 2.24 of the report be approved.

(3) T H A T the increase suggested for other services as set out in the table below and in paragraphs 2.26 to 2.34 of the report be approved.

50 Week Basis	2025/26 Actual Charges	2026/27 Proposed Charges	
	£	£	
Grounds Maintenance	1.51	1.48	per week
Cleaning of communal areas	3.00	3.19	per week
Lighting of communal areas	3.60	2.52	per week
Laundry Facilities	0.41	0.40	per week
Window Cleaning	0.18	0.16	per week
Lift Maintenance	1.25	1.82	per week
Door Entry	0.80	1.05	per week
Intercom	1.29	1.86	per week
CCTV	1.43	1.78	per week
Sewerage Treatment Plants	467.54	485.00	per annum
Cesspools	451.00	468.14	per annum

(4) T H A T all changes to rents and service charges be approved and implemented from 1st April, 2026, with the first week of April being a non-chargeable rent week and that increase notices be sent to tenants two months in advance of the new charges coming into effect as required by the Rented Homes Wales Act.

(5) T H A T the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2026/56 be approved.

(6) T H A T the information provided to Members from Place Scrutiny Committee on 6th January, 2026 be noted.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To facilitate budget monitoring and to demonstrate a balanced budget with a drawdown from HRA reserves to bring the reserve back into balance with the Housing Business Plan 2026/27.

- (2) In order that new rent levels were set within the specified Welsh Government guidelines and to meet the tenant notification deadline as required by statute.
- (3) That charges were approved and to meet the tenant notification deadline as required by statute.
- (4) In order that charges were approved, new rent levels were set within the specified Welsh Government guidelines and to meet the tenant notification deadline as required by statute.
- (5) Having obtained Cabinet approval for the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2026/56 (draft) prior to referral to Full Council.
- (6) Having regard to the discussion at the Scrutiny Committee meeting.