

No.

HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 1st April, 2025.

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

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

Present: Councillor J.E. Charles (Chair); Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chair); Councillors G.M. Ball, I.R. Buckley, C.A. Cave, A.M. Collins, C.M. Cowpe, S. Lloyd-Selby, J. Lynch-Wilson, J.M. Norman and C. Stallard.

Also present: Councillors W.A. Hennessy, G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing) and Dr. I.J. Johnson and E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

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”.

MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

QUARTER 3 REVENUE MONITORING 2024/25 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 6th March, 2025 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Operational Manager for Accountancy.

The Officer advised that the revenue position for 2024/25 continued to reflect challenging demand and inflationary pressures with continuance of some key service pressures. There was evidence of increasing demand in respect of Children’s and Young Peoples Care and Adults Social Care reflecting an increased incidence and complexity of need as well as significant increases in the cost of placements and care packages.

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Across services, inflationary pressures were also being experienced in respect of pay most notably where market forces were being utilised, and additional funding had been allocated in year to offset the funding gap between provision for the 2024/25 pay award and the actual pay award for 2024/25.

There had been an overall improvement in Directorate positions due in part to additional Welsh Government funding, staff vacancies and additional external income received in year, the various Council workstreams progressing to mitigate the unplanned use of reserves and in year overspends had reduced corporately.

Specific to the remit of the Committee, the Officer added that the current Social Services budget was set at £96.326m for 2024/25. The budget position for quarter three was presented to the Committee within Appendix 3 of the report. The savings target for Social Services for 2024/25 was £1.755m and it was expected that 72% of savings would be delivered or mitigated in year. The projected outturn for Social Services in 2024/25 was an adverse variance of £5.1m and was further detailed in Appendix 3. This represented a reduction from the sum reported in Quarter 2. The adverse variance represented a further increase in the overspend against Children and Young People Services. The Adult Community Care budget also remained overspent in year but had been offset by staff vacancies, income for care packages and grant income. The predominant driver for the overspend was an increase in the number of and complexity of care arrangements across Social Services which was further explored in Appendix 3 of the report.

Key pressures in addition to the reserves funding set out within the Directorate included the following:

- Rising costs associated with placements for Children and Young People.
- Additional legal costs associated with increased complexity and incidence of care proceedings.
- Increase in care hours required for adults due to a significant ageing population.
- An increase in residential and nursing placements, an increase in direct care placements and respite.
- The increase in residents aged over 75 having a significant impact on the levels of care required and the demographic pressure being particularly acute in the Vale.

Following the Officer's presentation of the report, the Chair made reference to the staff vacancies that had, in part, offset the Adult Community Care budget and queried if the related vacancies were due to be filled. In response, the Officer advised that there were some vacant posts within adult services however, there were also roles that were substantially funded via grant funding and therefore, the point was a more rounded picture, with some vacancies filled on a part year basis, during the course of the year, which had resulted in an underspend in the 2024-25 financial year.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

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RECOMMENDED – T H A T both the Cabinet reference and appended Cabinet report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of both the Cabinet reference and appended report to ensure that Committee remained updated on the in-year Revenue Monitoring position at Quarter 3.

CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL TO
31ST DECEMBER, 2024 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 6th March, 2025 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Operational Manager for Accountancy.

The report provided an update on the progress of the Capital Programme for the period 1st April, 2024 to 31st December, 2024. The Officer advised that details by scheme were shown in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 provided a summary of the position of the Capital Programme by Directorate from approval at Full Council on 6th March, 2024 through to 31st December, 2024.

The report also set out any requested changes to the 2024/25 and future years' Capital Programme and noted the current approved programme of £89.933m. It was important to note that many areas were continuing to experience an increase in costs associated with delivery of schemes. Tenders were being received over the current allocated budgets and officers were reporting the requirement to re-negotiate submitted tenders. Schemes would be closely monitored, and slippage requests would be requested in the outturn report.

In conclusion, the Officer advised that work would continue with project managers and sponsors to ensure value for money and that all possible funding opportunities were identified and were fully explored. The implications of the implementation of IFRS16 were also noted within the report.

Following the Officer's presentation of the report, the Vice-Chair thanked finance officers for the collection of highly detailed finance reports on the same agenda, which were clear and extremely useful to answer the Committee's questions. The Vice-Chair also noted that there was little content within the report under the specific remit of the Committee and therefore was happy to move the report as noted.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T both the Cabinet reference and appended Cabinet report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of both the Cabinet reference and appended report to ensure that Committee remained updated on the in-year Capital Monitoring position at Quarter 3.

SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE PLAN 2025/26 (INCLUDING ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ASSOCIATED PERFORMANCE TARGETS) TO DELIVER VALE 2030, THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2025-30 (DSS) –

The report presented for Members' consideration set out the planned activities, performance measures and associated performance targets in the Social Services Directorate Plan 2025-26 (Appendix A). The Director of Social Services advised that the Directorate Plan aligned primarily to the remit of the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee. The other four Directorate Plans were being considered by relevant Scrutiny Committees and their comments and recommendations were to be considered by the Corporate Performance and Resources Committee to form a composite reference to Cabinet on the five Directorate Plans for 2025-26.

The Directorate Plans had been informed by the Council's commitments in Vale 2030, the Council's approved Corporate Plan (Full Council, 10th March, 2025) for the period 2025-30. Progressing the activities and associated performance targets outlined in Directorate Plans would help to meet the Council's statutory obligations under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG). Both pieces of legislation placed specific duties on the Council in relation to reviewing and setting objectives, keeping performance under review and reporting on performance, with a focus on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Vale of Glamorgan citizens

In referring to the draft Directorate plan, the Director highlighted the key risks identified in section 3.4 as well as the mitigating action plan in section 4.0, and noted that the Directorate continued to monitor, manage and report on risks across its services including contributing to mitigating corporate risks. The Directorate's services worked with key partners and stakeholders including communities and the wider public and third sectors where appropriate to mitigate identified and emerging service risks sustainably. Some of the mitigating actions within the action plan were easily identified and already underway within service areas and established ways of working.

It was therefore hoped that the new structure of the Directorate Plan document, and corporate reporting process, would make it easier to follow the Directorate's progress going forward.

Following the Director's presentation of the report, Councillor Lynch-Wilson commended the report and in particular the continued prevalence of the eliminate initiative. The Councillor also congratulated officers on the incredible speeds that

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domiciliary care plans were now being established to the benefit of Vale of Glamorgan residents.

In response to a subsequent enquiry from the Vice-Chair of the Committee in relation to the work currently being undertaken by the Directorate to support individuals when leaving hospital in partnership with health board colleagues, the Director advised that a lot of work was ongoing in that particular space and was pleased to report that current performance levels were at the highest that had ever been seen in the Vale of Glamorgan. The Committee had previously been sighted on the difficulties the Council had faced in delivering domiciliary care packages, but the average turnaround time was now the same day. It was also important to note the significant efforts of the hospital discharge team who worked tirelessly to respond to assessments as soon as possible to support the Council with putting arrangements in place.

The Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer then took the opportunity to thank all Members, on behalf of the Head of Democratic Services, for attending the Member Briefing Session previously provided to all Elected Members on the structure of the new Directorate plans, and noted that feedback received as part of the briefing had been taken on board and actioned upon by the performance monitoring officers who were also in attendance at the briefing.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Social Services Directorate Plan and associated measures and performance targets for 2025/26 contained within, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T the Committee's endorsement of the Social Services Directorate Plan be passed to the Director of Corporate Performance and Resources.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report to ensure that the planned activities, associated measures and performance targets for the Social Services Directorate as detailed in the Plan are relevant and, together with the other four Directorate Plans, become the main means through which performance against Vale 2030 is monitored and measured during 2025/2026.
- (2) For the Director's presentation of the Directorate Plans at the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee in order for a composite response to be developed and referred back to Cabinet on 1st May, 2025.