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## **PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2025.

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

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

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

Also present: M. Blackmore and K. Mitchell (Tenant Working Group / Panel Representatives); Councillors G. Bruce, L. Burnett (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), J.E. Charles, W.A. Hennessy, G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing), Dr. I.J. Johnson, B. Loveluck-Edwards, S.D. Perkes (Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement), E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health) and M.R. Wilson (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services).

### **49 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.”

### **50 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR –**

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** Councillor C. Iannucci-Williams be appointed Vice-Chair for the Municipal year.

### **51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –**

These were received from G. Doyle and G. Niblett (Tenant Working Group / Panel Representatives) and O. Carroll (Citizens Advice Cardiff and Vale Representative).

### **52 MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2025 –**

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** the minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

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### 53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

### 54 NOTICE OF MOTION – A VOLUNTARY BAN ON THE SALE AND USE OF “FLYING RINGS” THROUGHOUT THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN (REF) –

The reference from Council on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2025 was introduced by the Chair.

Subsequently, one of the proposers of the Motion at Full Council (and a Member of the Place Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Stallard, spoke about the Motion and reference to the Committee. Councillor Stallard explained that the main point of this Motion was to bring in a voluntary ban on the so-called ‘Flying Rings’, thereby not requiring enforcement or similar actions to be undertaken. The Motion was part of an appeal to the wider public and their goodwill, as well as raising their awareness of the issues and potential harm of the sale and use of flying rings in the Vale of Glamorgan and elsewhere. It was therefore important to make progress on this matter as soon as possible rather than having to wait on the work of a Task and Finish Group and their findings or recommendations. Such a group should be considering the bigger, broader issues around this and other related matters instead. The Council should rather carry on taking positive steps to help address this issue with flying rings during the summer period.

The Councillor also highlighted the UK-wide campaign on this issue which would be launched shortly, and that the Vale of Glamorgan Council was only one of two Councils in Wales who were already taking action concerning flying rings and their impact (such as unnecessary harm to marine mammals, specifically seals, when discarded).

The Chair referred to the recommendation for this Motion / reference concerning a Task and Finish Group be set up by Scrutiny to look at powers the Council had in its possession to promote byelaws in relation to the issue. Her understanding was that the Council did not have such byelaws in place and sought further advice on how best to move forward from Council officers. In response, the Head of Service for Neighbourhood Services asked if Committee would be happy for him to take away the matter raised, do the appropriate research and undertake any actions that maybe required immediately. He would report back to Committee in July on the progress made.

The Head of Service for Neighbourhood Services stated that what immediately came to mind was the importance of working with the Council’s Communications Team to look at running some media campaigns linked to the national and UK-wide campaign. It would also require working with Council colleagues involved in local tourism and their links or engagement with local traders and businesses in seaside, beach and tourism parts of the Vale, such as at Barry Island, Llantwit Major and other parts of the Heritage Coast, to raise awareness and encourage them to not sell these items but rather other alternatives instead. The Council’s Neighbourhood Services also had links to the County’s beaches, lifeguards and coastal areas which could also be utilised and add value to the national campaign. He also reiterated the Chair’s point that there were no byelaws in place which could tackle this area, and that it would rely on persuasion instead. This would also entail the Council taking a position where it highlighted that it did not support or encourage the

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use of flying rings and asked if local businesses could stop selling these items but rather look at better alternatives.

Councillor Wiliam, due to technical issues, was unable to speak directly, but did make known via messaging that he would move to progress this, following the debate already had at Full Council, and referred to other existing byelaws such as the quarter mile ban on jet skis and the dog walking ban on beaches in parts of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Councillor Champion felt that due to the mandate given by Councillors on this Motion at Full Council and following Councillor Stallard's and the Head of Service for Neighbourhood Services' comments at the meeting today, a Task and Finish Group was not required. Also, due to the efforts already made by Council officers and local Councillors to tackle this issue and the suggestions made by the Head of Service to progress this and to report back to Committee, action was already being taken to address this issue without the need for further investigation.

The above points were echoed by Councillor Ernest, who referred to not only the harm the flying rings did to local wildlife but also, in terms of personal and public safety, as they had been the cause of several incidents where young children had used them at the beach and in the nearby sea and got washed out further than they should as a result.

There being no further comments or questions, and after considering the reference and Motion, the Committee subsequently

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** the relevant Council officers be tasked to take away this Notice of Motion on a Voluntary Ban on the Sale and Use of "Flying Rings" throughout the Vale of Glamorgan, 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 in July about what actions had been taken to tackle this issue.

#### Reason for recommendation

Following consideration of the Motion and the discussions at the meeting, Committee felt that the actions that were currently being undertaken in relation to this and those to be carried out in the near future, as well as the need for this issue to be tackled during the summer period meant that, coupled with the lack of enforcement options and the desire to do this in a voluntary, consensual way, the issue did not warrant a Task and Finish Group. Instead, it was felt that it would be more effective for Council officers to take direct action now and to report back on the progress being made to tackle this issue to Committee shortly.

#### **55 VALE OF GLAMORGAN REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (RLDP) 2021-2036 – HOUSING GROWTH IN BARRY (REF) –**

The reference from Cabinet of 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2025 was presented by the Head of Sustainable Development to the Committee, the purpose of which was to ensure that the document had the necessary consideration, scrutiny and as part of the public consultation on potential RLDP allocations in the Barry area.

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The Chair, to assist and refresh the Committee's understanding of this topic, explained there had already been a public consultation on the preferred strategy for the RLDP and this report was for consideration of the proposed changes to potential allocations in the Barry area only.

Subsequently the Head of Sustainable Development outlined to the Committee the reference / report, the Cabinet recommendations, the approval of the RLDP, the subsequent proposed changes, as well as the development and growth options, the ecological and other constraints, and key issues for consideration / consultation for this strategy and housing allocation in relation to the Barry area. This included:

- The deliverability concerns around Argyl Lane / Northeast Barry and the recommendation to not include this site as part of the Deposit Plan.
- Land at Northwest Barry. Whilst not as large as the Northeast Barry site that it was replacing, it had the capacity to accommodate approximately 376 new dwellings, including much needed affordable housing.
- Land at Hayes Lane, The Bendricks site, which had been identified as a potential site to be allocated for housing, opposite an existing recently completed Council housing development at Hayeswood Road. It could accommodate approximately 70 dwellings. It was considered that this site should be taken forward for housing rather than continue to be retained for employment.
- Land at Neptune Road, Barry Waterfront. The proposed site / allocation was located to the north of an Asda Superstore and east of land recently granted planning permission for a new college campus. The site was being promoted by the site owner alongside a Housing Association and it was anticipated that the site would be brought forward for a 100% affordable housing scheme. The site could accommodate approximately 40 units, which would make a valuable contribution to the significant affordable housing need in Barry. Considering the significant need for affordable housing, it was proposed that the site should instead be allocated for housing in the RLDP.

The consultation proposed on housing growth in Barry would be a targeted non-statutory consultation on growth specifically in Barry which would help inform the preparation of the Deposit Plan. It would allow interested parties the same opportunity to comment on site specific placemaking for the proposed new key site at Northwest Barry as was afforded on the other key sites during the non-statutory consultation held in Autumn 2024. As it was non-statutory it was proposed that the consultation be held for four weeks between mid-June and mid-July. This reflected the timescales for the site-specific placemaking consultation.

After the consultation was completed, the matters raised would be reviewed, and a consultation report prepared. This report would be presented to Full Council, before the Deposit Plan, which was anticipated in late 2025 (probably December). The Deposit Plan would then be shared in early 2026.

Following the presentation of the reference / report, Councillor Hennessy, with permission to speak, referred to the proposed development in northwest Barry and the potential impact on Weycock Cross and Port Road should the entrance to this development site be located near there. This area had a high volume of traffic already which could be made

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significantly worse by this development, the potential location of the entrance and would therefore adversely impact both Barry and Rhoose. The Chair reiterated that no decisions would be made on these proposals at this meeting, and these were part of the consultation process only at this time. The Head of Sustainable Development echoed the Chair's comments, adding that the transport work and considerations around their location, etc., would be ongoing for the proposed allocated sites, and these would be subject to full assessment and review on their strategic impact, viability and any mitigations that may be needed, in tandem with the responses from the public, Elected Members and others as part of the consultation process.

Councillor Hooper referred to the proposed site at Neptune Road, and that Council officers, as part of the public consultation, should discuss with Asda the potential use of land owned by them near to this proposed housing development site in relation to affordable / social housing. He also talked about the proposed development near to Weycock Cross, and that this had been a proposed candidate site before for a previous Local Development Plan, but had been withdrawn due to several factors and he wanted to make sure these had since been addressed. He finally referred to the Argyll development and reference to its proximity to Barry Town Train Station in the RLDP which did not appear to take into account the challenges faced by anyone returning from the train station by foot (uphill return journey, which could take some time). There was a risk this went against the RLDP principles and would create another car-centric estate.

In response to Councillor Hooper's questions, the Head of Sustainable Development firstly stated that contact could be made with Asda on the potential use of land owned by them near to Neptune Road. However, this would depend on what Asda wished to do with this land and whether they still aspired to develop it commercially. On the proposed development near to Weycock Cross, he was unsure if this had been pulled previously due to fundamental, technical, reasons which should prohibit it being considered now, but rather it was believed that this was because of a decision made by Elected Members, due to better options or alternatives being available instead. On the Argyll development and its proximity to the local train station, it was agreed that on one direction of travel it would be quicker and easier than the other to travel on foot. However, the Council could not guarantee that the residents of a proposed housing site would walk or cycle to their nearest train station, but rather the key aspect was that the housing site and its residents were close enough to the train station that they had the opportunity to use it and to travel by foot or cycle, should they choose. This same principle also applied to accessibility and proximity to other day to day services for occupants for new housing sites as well. This all had to be balanced with the need to develop and grow affordable housing where land was available and deliverable, at a time when there was only limited land available for such development. The absence of nearby public transport hubs such as train stations, etc. was not necessarily in itself a reason to discard a potential site, but the Councillor's comments and concerns were noted.

Councillor Ernest referred to page 17 of the report and the Sully side of Hayes Lane and Neptune Road. He felt that there would be an adverse impact on the local economy should parts of the land there be taken away from commercial and employment use and developed for housing instead, including land set aside for the possible development of a hotel and office space in Neptune Road. Whilst there was a pressing need for housing there was also a need to increase employment and commercial opportunities as well. It was explained that with Neptune Road, there had been no interest so far shown in

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developing the potential space for a hotel in addition to the one currently there. On Hayes Lane, there was sufficient land allocated to employment locally to satisfy demand and to also have land that could be used for and make a valuable contribution to, affordable housing, etc., within the Vale of Glamorgan, should it be found via the assessment that this outweighed the merits of keeping it as employment land. No decision had been made on this as yet, and it was a challenge to try to balance these two competing, and not directly measurable priorities but a decision and judgement would have to be made on what was the overwhelming priority based on the assessment made. Factors would include whether the site was struggling for other employment opportunities and / or the proximity of this site to any residential properties which could be a disincentive for occupiers of economic land due to the risk of complaints, etc., from residents which could impact their use.

The Vice-Chair suggested that details were provided on accessibility and walking distances to and from the proposed site near Weycock Cross and the other proposed housing sites, including to the nearest bus / train stations and routes, as well as regarding access to the nearest cycling lanes as part of the active travel approach. This would give the public a better idea on the distances involved.

Councillor Penn stressed the importance of, and supported the public consultation process on, development of land in the County in order to gauge residents' views. There was a massive shortage of affordable housing within the County and just as important as the 'where' for these new housing builds (as laid out in the RLDP), was 'what' was proposed to be built. This included both the quality of build and the design / layout of the housing builds. The place a person lived in did have a significant impact on life chances if they grew up in a place where it was well designed and well thought out with local amenities.

Councillor Perry referred to the need for information on the carbon budget for the RLDP, Strategic Growth Area and the expected carbon footprint of development of each of the new sites coming forward. He also referred to the knock on need to increase highway capacity / car use as part of developing these proposed sites, as implied in the RLDP, which went against the goals of the Council declaring a Climate Emergency, which sought to reduce these. He also referred to the issue of affordable housing, and the need to address the related issues / problems of empty homes, the prevalence of Airbnb, the existence of second and third home ownership, under-utilisation of existing homes, scarcity of building materials and the carbon environmental footprint of building materials problem, among others. This meant that building more housing would exacerbate these problems. To ensure greater sustainability, it was important to address these problems first and use existing housing stock more efficiently, rather than the current emphasis from Welsh Government to simply keep building more housing. He also emphasised the need for greater availability and accessibility of public transport at or near the various proposed sites around Barry and Rhoose, prior to any further development, as well as considering sustainability needs overall.

Following Councillor Perry's comments, the Chair reiterated that no decision had been made on the proposed sites yet, as these were part of the current public consultation. Due to several Committee Members raising issues around accessibility and walking distances to and from the proposed sites, as well as the importance of considering sustainability, the Chair proposed to include these as part of any comments /

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recommendations to be forwarded as part of this consultation and asked for clarification on whether the issues raised were already included in the consultation process. The Head of Sustainable Development replied that within the report (paragraph 4.28) this did refer to isochrone maps that had been produced for the Northwest Barry sites in respect of both walking distance and cycling, but any further information requested by the Committee could be included as part of this process.

Councillor Norman referred to the potential benefits of the proposed site near to Weycock Cross, which would be near to various shops and facilities, as well as having access to a good, regular, bus service going down into Barry and access to nearby schools (such as on Port Road).

There being no further comments or questions, and after considering the reference and report, the Committee subsequently

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** the following comments and feedback from the Committee meeting be provided, as part of the consultation exercise:

- That Council officers, as part of the public consultation, discuss with Asda the potential use of land owned by them near to the proposed housing development site at Neptune Road, Barry Waterfront;
- That Council officers confirm whether there were any historic issues that prohibited the use of the Weycock Cross site when it was previously considered as a potential housing development site, and if so, whether these were subsequently addressed;
- That the Council note the concern of this Committee about the potential loss of employment sites. However, the Committee also recognised that such considerations did need to be balanced with the current housing shortage and that Council officers had confirmed that no firm decisions had been made yet on these sites;
- That, as part of the consultation / plan, it would be helpful if details were provided on accessibility and walking distances to and from Weycock Cross and the other proposed housing sites, including to the nearest bus / train stations and routes, as well as regarding access to the nearest cycling lanes as part of the Active Travel approach;
- Finally, consideration should be given to the importance of sustainability for these developments, in terms of design, build quality and their carbon footprint, as well as providing any information that could be shared as part of the consultation process in relation to those issues which would also be helpful.

#### Reason for recommendation

In order for the recommendation, comments and opinions of the Committee to be included in the consultation process for the Vale of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP).

56 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26 (DCR) –

The report, presented by the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, requested Members to consider the draft Annual Forward Work Programme items, including topics for investigatory work (Task and Finish Review) for 2025/26, and the new Place Scrutiny Committee. A draft Forward Work Programme Schedule for 2025/26 was attached at Appendix A, and Members of the Committee were asked to consider the contents for approval. In addition, the Committee was asked to note the remit of the Place Scrutiny Committee, as shown in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

The Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer pointed out a typo out on page 10, Appendix A, the Committee Meetings title referred to 'Live Well', when it should refer to the 'Place' committee. He reassured the Committee that the rest of the document referred to, and dealt with, the Place specific reports and other items for the Committee. This would be amended prior to publishing and for future instalments of the Work Programme.

In addition, the report outlined a new mechanism where reports for information and noting would be shared with Members electronically. The new Work Programme also indicated those topics that would be considered via Members' briefings outside of the formal Committee meeting settings. The Work Programme schedule was a proposed list of items for consideration and may be subject to change depending on prevailing circumstances.

On Task and Finish, a committee may identify an area of work which would benefit from a deeper dive to explore the issue further. These would be in addition to formal committee meetings and facilitated by Democratic Services, with topics initially identified at the start of the year when a committee was identifying and agreeing its forward work programme. Task and Finish would leverage the expertise of officers, partners, wider stakeholders alongside evidence and insight from the people of the Vale of Glamorgan. Investigative scrutiny would help hold the Cabinet and Council officers accountable on specific topics while proactively shaping the Council's policy direction. As part of this process, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer would collate a list of suggested topics by Members, etc., and undertake a light scoping / feasibility exercise based on those suggestions, with the aim of reporting back to the Committee in July who would then agree Task and Finish topics for the municipal year.

Following the presentation of the report, Councillor Hooper referred to several omissions on the Forward Work Programme, which included reports on the Coastal Erosion Review / Monitoring, Cardiff Capital Region and update on Aberthaw Power Station, as well as the parking review for Barry Island. These would be addressed by the relevant officers and added to the Work Programme for Place going forward. The Head of Service for Neighbourhood Services stated that he would pick up on the Coastal Erosion Review / Monitoring report. On the parking review and the other reports, he stated that a report on the parking review was due to go to Cabinet in the near future which could be referred to this Scrutiny Committee, with the Chair stating that the Committee would wait to hear whether this and the other reports referred to would come as references from Cabinet or there was the opportunity for Members to also call-in the reports for scrutiny should this not happen.



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Several Committee Members made suggestions for consideration as part of the Task and Finish process, which included:

- Councillor Ernest referred to Councillor Champion's suggestion to look at more help and support for high streets within the Vale of Glamorgan from the Council. This may also tie in with the Placemaking agenda. On the concerns raised by Councillor Hooper about possible 'duplication' in undertaking a Task and Finish exercise on this considering the other work and reporting being undertaken via Placemaking, the Chair explained that this and other topics would be decided on what 'added value' could be given to such topics through greater scrutiny and investigation and to avoid unnecessary duplication.
- Councillor Hooper suggested a deeper look into the risk profile of the Council, particularly those areas that touched upon the remit of the Committee and where it could offer both added value and support on several issues on the profile which had been 'red' rated.
- A Tenant Representative proposed 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.
- Other suggestions concerned the issue of refuse on local beaches and around local holiday resorts.
- Councillor Penn referred to 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 via Task and Finish, such as looking at the opportunity for greater regional cooperation. It was noted however, that this may come under, at least in part, the Resources Scrutiny Committee, and so this would be investigated further to see if this should fall under that committee instead or some kind of collaborative work undertaken between the committees concerned.
- Another suggestion for Members' consideration (from officers in Housing) concerned a review of the results of the Tenant and Leaseholder Participation Strategy / STAR Survey Improvement Plan.

Subsequently, a way forward was agreed concerning the areas for deeper dive Task and Finish review investigations, which included further Committee Member consideration and consultation on the topics to be chosen.

Following the discussions on this report, Committee

#### RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the Committee considered and agreed items for its Forward Work Programme Schedule for 2025/26 (Appendix A to the report), subject to the omissions highlighted by Members at the meeting (such as the Coastal Erosion Review, Cardiff Capital Region, etc. reports and updates) being included and clarification on whether such reports would be referred from Cabinet to the Committee for scrutiny. A way forward was also agreed concerning areas for deeper dive Task and Finish review investigations, which included further Committee Member consideration and consultation on the topics to be chosen.

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- (2) T H A T the remit of the Place Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To agree the items and topics that the Place Scrutiny Committee would consider for 2025/26.
- (2) To note the remit for the new Place Scrutiny Committee.