

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3 - MONDAY, 22 APRIL 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3 HELD REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY, 22 APRIL 2024 AT 16:00

Present Virtually

Councillor P Davies – Chairperson

S J Bletsoe
P W Jenkins

N Clarke
I Williams

C Davies
MJ Williams

M J Evans

Apologies for Absence

MJ Kearn and W J Kendall

Officers:

Janine Nightingale
Ieuan Sherwood
Paul Smith

Corporate Director – Communities
Group Manager – Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability
Decarbonisation Programme Manager

Meryl Lawrence
Lucy Beard

Senior Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny
Scrutiny Officer

Invitees:

Alasdair Wilcock

Director of Maple Cone

Declarations of Interest

None.

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70. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>Resolved:</u> That the minutes of a meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 dated 25 September 2023, 19 March 2024 and 26 March 2024.
Date Decision Made	22 April 2024

71. Caerau Heat Scheme

Decision Made	<p><u>Resolved:</u> Following consideration of the report and detailed discussion with Cabinet Members and Senior Officers the Committee made the following comments and recommendations:</p> <p>The Committee discussed in detail the activity undertaken as part of the European Regional Development funded Caerau Heat Scheme project that had closed, including the creation of the Minewater Heat Toolkit and the recommendations evaluated by an external evaluator, the financial implications and total eligible cost of the scheme which had been approved by the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Having discussed the Caerau Heat Scheme report, Members felt there was an opportunity to strengthen the processes for management of future Research and Development projects. The Committee recommended that some research be undertaken of best practice processes for the management of Research and Development projects, including the management of finances and gateway protocols, to incorporate and strengthen the processes for any future projects of this type.2) Members felt it was important to keep moving forward, and while understanding that not all demonstrator projects would be successful, from the public's perspective the Authority had to be responsible with the funding provided, so it was imperative to build on lessons that had been learned, where money is spent and explore where things could be done differently. Members acknowledged the toolkit created by the Authority following the Caerau Heat Scheme project and the lessons learned to share with others. The Committee recommended "that due consideration should be given to the financial risks, constraints and pressures for each and every similar type of project", be added to the lessons learned. <p>Additional Information</p>
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	<p>The Committee requested the following additional information:</p> <p>Members discussed the financial implications, what the final cost of the scheme had been spent on over the life of the project and requested the break down / summary of the funding spent on the project, that the Corporate Director of Communities had advised could be shared with Members.</p>
Date Decision Made	22 April 2024

72. Information Report for Noting - Quarter 3 Performance 2023/24

Decision Made	<u>Resolved:</u> The Committee acknowledged the publication of the information report on Quarter 3 Performance 2023-24.
Date Decision Made	22 April 2024

73. Forward Work Programme Update

Decision Made	<p><u>Resolved:</u> The Committee considered and noted the Forward Work Programme Report and its appendices, agreeing that there was a need to consider key priorities for future items.</p> <p>Members also resolved that:</p> <p>a) Having regard to the length of time since last scrutinising Highways, the Committee requested that a report be added to the Forward Work Programme to include; repairs and maintenance, road resurfacing and potholes, network management, management of utilities, and the development of internal metrics for repairs, closing referrals, etc.</p> <p>b) Members requested a report to be provided on Progress on Empty homes in the County Borough, including the number, the Empty Homes Policy and Grants available and agreed to this being discussed at the next Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 work planning meeting with a view to whether the topic could be incorporated within the Housing report scheduled for the 30 September 2024.</p> <p>c) Following a briefing with Valley to Coast which was attended by some of the Committee members, members requested an opportunity to have a further discussion with Valley to Coast regarding</p>
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	<p>operational practices.</p> <p>d) Members referred to a Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) report to Governance and Audit Committee in January, when it was agreed that the next DFG report would be reported to a Scrutiny Committee to be determined. Members felt that the positive earlier report had been contradicted by the Performance Indicators reported in the Quarter 3 Performance 2023-24 Information Report noted by this Committee meeting and the Committee requested that next DFG report be reported to SOSC 3 for consideration.</p> <p>e) Concern was expressed regarding sickness levels in the Authority and its effect on decision-making in the Communities Directorate should sickness continue to increase, in particular the impact of sickness levels moving forward on whether to procure or explore bringing services in house. The Chair and Scrutiny Officer agreed to discuss in the next work planning meeting as either the item would be within the remit of this Committee or an overarching Authority report to a Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>
Date Decision Made	22 April 2024

74. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	22 April 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#) for Part One and this [link](#) for Part Two.

The meeting closed at 17.53.