



ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD IN PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 25TH OCTOBER 2022 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor A. Hussey (Vice-Chair Presiding)

Councillors:

M.A. Adams, C.J. Cuss, D.T. Davies (part of meeting), N. Dix, C. Elsbury, M. Evans, A. Gair, A. Leonard, S. Kent, D.W.R. Preece, H. Pritchard, J.E. Roberts, S. Williams, C. Wright

Cabinet Members:

Councillors S. Morgan (Leader of Council), C. Andrews (Education and Communities), P. Leonard (Planning and Public Protection), C. Morgan (Waste and Green Spaces), J. Pritchard (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change), J. Simmonds (Highways and Transportation), E. Stenner (Finance and Performance)

Together with:

M.S. Williams (Corporate Director for Economy and Environment), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services), M. Lloyd (Head of Infrastructure), P. Griffiths (Green Space Strategy and Cemeteries Manager), D. Thomas (Countryside Planning Assistant), M. Jacques (Scrutiny Officer), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer), J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer)

Also present to speak on the Notice of Motion:

Councillors J. Reed and J. Jones (Ynysddu Ward), Councillor K. Etheridge (Blackwood Ward), Mrs J. Jones and Mr L. Reardon (Local Residents)

CHAIRING ARRANGEMENTS

In view of a request from Councillor D.T. Davies MBE owing to a prior appointment, Councillor A. Hussey (Vice-Chair) presided as Scrutiny Chair for the duration of the meeting in order to provide continuity around proceedings.

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded and would be made available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to View](#) Members were advised that voting on decisions would be taken via Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R. Chapman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 6TH OCTOBER 2022

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2022 be approved as a correct record and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 13 for, 0 against and 1 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee held on 6th October 2022 (minute nos. 1 – 7) be approved as a correct record.

4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Mark Jacques (Scrutiny Officer) presented the report, which outlined details of the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the period October 2022 to March 2023.

Members were asked to consider the FWP alongside the Cabinet work programme and suggest any changes prior to publication on the Council's website. The Scrutiny Committee noted the details of the reports scheduled for forthcoming meetings.

Members' approval was also sought to add a report to the Forward Work Programme on Grass Cutting Regimes for the meeting on 7th February 2023.

It was moved and seconded that subject to the inclusion of the aforementioned report, the report recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 14 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that subject to the inclusion of a report for 7th February 2023 (Grass Cutting Regimes) the Forward Work Programme as appended to the meeting papers be published on the Council's website.

6. CABINET REPORTS

It was confirmed that there had been no requests for any of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda to be brought forward for discussion at the meeting.

7. NOTICE OF MOTION - RE-EVALUATE THE CABINET DECISION OF THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2022 - B4251 YNYSDDU TO WYLLIE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Consideration was given to a Notice of Motion received from Councillors J. Reed and J. Jones, and supported by Councillors K. Etheridge, A. Farina-Childs, B Owen, and N. Dix. The Notice of Motion requested a re-evaluation of the Cabinet decision taken on 9th February 2022 in relation to the B4251 Ynysddu to Wyllie Highway Improvement.

At the meeting, Councillor Kevin Etheridge also handed in a petition of 124 signatures on behalf of residents and campaigners, which requested that the Scrutiny Committee following the notice of motion on the safety aspects of the Wyllie Bends recommends to Cabinet that the matter is discussed and debated at Full Council on the 24th November 2022 to all 69 Councillors.

Mrs Jo Jones, the mother of Miss Laurie Jones who tragically lost her life in an accident on Wyllie Bends in October 2019, addressed the Scrutiny Committee and detailed the circumstances and road conditions that led to her daughter's death. Mrs Jones outlined areas where she believed appropriate consultation had not taken place, and inaccuracies that she felt required addressing as they were not included in the report considered by Cabinet in February 2022.

The Scrutiny Committee were asked to note that the family had not been aware of the Amey Safety Report, and they felt that the Local Authority had not been open or transparent in this regard as they had been unable to explore the report or to fully engage with the consultation. From the first meeting they considered that Highways Officers did not have an accurate understanding of the accident and were surprised that the risk assessment conducted by them had been a desktop exercise with no site visit conducted. This they felt should have been conducted either after hours or in inclement weather and in liaison with Gwent Police. The police officer who had been involved with the consultation process had been a ward PC, who had no knowledge or experience of Wyllie Bends incidents and accidents, and not with the Collision Investigation Team despite Inspector Martin Smith being readily available to discuss improvements and ensure that they were robust and linked well with accident causes. Mrs Jones also stated that the accident investigation had revealed that there were no defects with her daughter's car when it was examined after the accident.

Reference was then made to the Cabinet report and the options offered, and the Scrutiny Committee were asked to note that although the concrete posts and chain link fencing was the preferred option, however this was not what was installed, and no other options such as crash barriers or street lighting were presented for consideration. Members were advised that Vehicle Restraint System crash barriers were designed to fall apart and would absorb impact and there was little chance of bounce back. Mrs Jones expressed her firm belief that crash barriers and additional street lighting was needed to prevent further accidents and asked the Scrutiny Committee to support the re-evaluation of the road and a thorough independent assessment that should include the full application of expert knowledge of past events and incidents in liaison with the Gwent Police Collision Investigation Unit.

Councillor Janine Reed, as proposer of the motion, presented the Notice of Motion and using photographs outlined the road in question and the boundary fence. The Scrutiny Committee were asked to note that the Amey safety report did not recommend the installation of a chain link fence, which was detailed in the Cabinet report as being the most appropriate safeguard for this section of the road and in accordance with relevant design standards, might reduce the risk of vehicles leaving the road and protect pedestrians. However, a mere boundary fence was installed, which Cllr Reed considered

would not provide the same level of protection to road users as a VRS.

Reference was then made to the Amey report and although it stated that a VRS or Vehicle Restraint System was considered to be disproportionate to the benefits it would achieve, it was worth noting that there had been 3 further accidents this year on Wyllie Bends where all 3 vehicles have left the carriageway. Councillor Reed asked the Committee to consider why this safety measure had been installed on other roads in the borough similar in topography to Wyllie Bends but not on Wyllie Bends, and advised that between 1999 and 2021 there had been 32 accidents: 21 slight, 9 serious and 2 fatal.

Councillor Reed asked the Scrutiny Committee to support the Jones family and the concerned local communities by recommending a reassessment of the road and the installation of a VRS System at strategic places along this dangerous road.

Councillor Jan Jones, as the second proposer of the motion, focused on reasons why night lighting should be reinstated on the Wyllie Bends. Councillor Jones asked the Committee to consider the 32 recorded incidents between 1991 to 2021 and the additional 3 incidents that have occurred in recent months, and that although the report advised that accidents occurred mainly during daylight hours or within street lighting operational hours, it was during the hours of darkness that the more serious incidents and fatalities occurred.

Councillor Jones advised that no reference was made to street lighting in the Cabinet report or the Amey report, and this she felt prevented Cabinet from making an informed decision. The Scrutiny Committee were asked to note the wording of the Amey report in relation to night lighting, and this Councillor Jones felt to be ambiguous and wrongly interpreted by Officers. Councillor Jones accepted that reinstating the lighting would probably not prevent accidents happening at night, however night lighting might well save other lives in the future, particularly given the history of this stretch of road and that it runs alongside a fast-flowing river.

Councillor Jones asked the Scrutiny Committee to consider the Notice of Motion and support the request for an independent re-evaluation of the safety of Wyllie Bends.

Councillor Kevin Etheridge, as a signatory of the Notice of Motion, then addressed the Scrutiny Committee and presented a petition of 124 signatures and asked that the Scrutiny Committee recommend that Cabinet consider recommending that the Notice of Motion also be presented to Council on 24th November 2022, so that all 69 Members can consider and debate it, and requested that a site visit between all respective ward members and Cabinet Members also be held.

Councillor Etheridge thanked Jo Jones for her emotive speech and asked for the Committee's compassion and understanding when considering the Notice of Motion.

Members thanked Jo Jones for her presence and expressed their condolences for the tragic loss of her daughter.

A Member expressed his support for the motion and his concern that a lot of information had appeared to have been lost between the Amey report and the Cabinet report, which prevented them from making, what he felt to be, an informed decision. Although accepting the supplier issues, the recommendation from Cabinet was for the installation of a chain link fence and not a boundary fence, which would in his opinion do little to prevent cars from leaving the road, and he also felt that street lighting had a part to play in the accident and its reinstatement in this area should be fully explored.

A Member referenced the safety report and the recommendation to reduce the speed limit on the road to 40mph, other significant traffic calming measures on the road as

recommended by the safety consultant and issues raised on social media about driver behaviour on this stretch of road and asked what, if anything could be done in this regard.

Clarification was then sought in relation to the Amey report and its consultation with the community and stakeholders, and what form this took and particularly whether the family had been aware of it. The Member also asked if any resurveying of traffic speeds on Wyllie Bends had been undertaken since the reduction of the speed limit had occurred.

A Member then queried if an independent re-evaluation was approved, how would it be conducted and how would Members be able to satisfy themselves that all aspects of the concerns raised at the Scrutiny meeting would be covered.

Officers in responding to the concerns raised, advised that the Amey report was independent, and Officers had worked extensively on the recommendation made therein. Should a subsequent independent report be required, then another consultant would be commissioned to undertake it.

Officers also highlighted that the Amey report and relevant actions implemented were clearly highlighted and detailed in the Cabinet report of the 9th February.

Officers explained that the VRS can itself cause a hazard, because it is designed and tested to be impacted with a certain angle and certain speed. The use on particularly tight radii such as Wyllie Bends can cause impact angles to be far too steep and then become a hazard in itself to the occupier of an errant vehicle. This was clearly highlighted in the Amey safety report. This view was taken into consideration when the safety report was reviewed, and as the consultants had not considered VRS necessary and can create a hazard, this was the reason this option was not taken forward. It was noted that as a result of ash dieback and the removal of a number of trees, the road had been significantly opened up. This was referenced in the Cabinet report and was the reason why a further review was undertaken and why a boundary fence was put in. The Officer confirmed that a meeting was held with the family to discuss the options and what the three options would be going forward to Cabinet. The Officer also confirmed that Cabinet had agreed a concrete post and chain link fence, however, the lead time for the materials due to supplier issues because of Covid were a further 3 months and so the Officer took a delegated decision to change to a steel post which was readily available but still complied with the highway specifications. Members were advised that the delegated decision had been posted for their awareness.

The Officer confirmed that the report also highlighted that the most beneficial improvement would be to change the road to 40mph, which was implemented, and further recommendations for additional chevrons were also implemented. The position and type of road markings were detailed and it was noted that solid markings could not be installed in sections along the road due to the location of the bus stops where overtaking would be required. The Officer also clarified that the road currently has a wide central hatched marking, which drivers should be aware of are there to deter any overtaking movements (in accordance with the highway code)

In relation to street lighting, Members were asked to note that this had been reviewed, and evidence from police reports did not attribute any of the accidents to street lighting, with most accidents occurring either during daylight hours or while street lighting was on.

In terms of driver behaviour, the Officer advised that they would be more than willing to look at a road safety campaign. It was noted that speed surveys had shown that the 85th percentile speed for the road is 40.5mph, so the vast majority of drivers were adhering to the speed limit, and because of this, the installation of enforcement cameras would be unlikely to be supported by GoSafe (the speed camera operator).

Members expressed further concerns that there seemed to be a disparity between safety recommendations as to what was and was not sufficient, and given this, felt that further investigation was warranted.

A Member queried whether the cutting down of the trees and opening up the road now meant that more substantial fencing should be installed, and referenced the fact that sections of the current fencing had already been obliterated, which seemed to illustrate that this needed to be looked at again.

Further concerns were then expressed regarding drainage on the road, and whether there were enough gullies present to prevent the build-up of water, and if there were any other safety measures that could be taken that would prevent any cars that did leave the road from entering the river. A Member then queried whether mature tree planting of 4/5 inch trunks could be used to provide a natural barrier to the river, further slowing vehicles.

The Officer advised that he was not aware of any system that would prevent cars from entering the river and was mindful that anything installed could become a hazard itself. In terms of the drainage system, he agreed that any road and not just Wyllie Bends could become overloaded depending on the level of rain. Members were asked to note that although it would not withstand a head on collision, the present boundary fence does provide some restraint, but the suitability and level of protection afforded by any barrier depends on the speed and angle of the impact. As to tree planting, they had the potential to be hazards themselves, but this could be considered.

The Officer advised that they were still waiting on information from Gwent Police on the latest accident, and as soon as that was received, then all safety information would be reviewed and considered.

Having fully considered the Notice of Motion, it was moved and seconded that it be supported and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 11 for, 2 against and 2 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the Notice of Motion be supported.

Councillor D.T. Davies abstained from voting on the item as he had not been present for the whole of the debate.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

8. IMPLEMENTATION OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY - PROGRESS REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Waste and Green Spaces presented the report, which updated the Scrutiny Committee on the implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy following its adoption in November 2020.

It was noted that significant process has been made in the delivery and implementation of the Strategy since its adoption. However, further work is required in order to integrate this important strategy into other services of the organisation over and above that of the Green Space Strategy Team, including the development, preparation and implementation of a 5-year integrated action plan originally outlined in the initial Cabinet report in 2020 whereby local priorities and projects were identified. The importance of the implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy at this strategic level will continue throughout the plan

period for the 2nd Replacement County Borough Local Development Plan process. The Strategy has been utilised in securing strategic grant funding and will continue to do so for a number of years.

It was noted that green infrastructure is a multi-functional strategy which offers multiple benefits whilst understanding and undertaking enhancement projects. These functions include biodiversity, access, water management, tourism, community regeneration, health and wellbeing, education and landscape amenity. The Scrutiny Committee were also asked to note examples of successful green infrastructure enhancement projects undertaken since November 2020, including community tree planting, river corridor and riparian habitat enhancement, Plant a Patch for Pollinators, Hedgehog Highway and Nature Isn't Neat.

The Scrutiny Committee referred to the Members Seminar on Biodiversity and Grass Cutting Regimes which had been held the previous evening, and complimented the usefulness of this session.

There were no questions received for Officers and the Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report.

9. STREET LIGHTING REVIEW

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation presented the report, which updated the Scrutiny Committee on a high level review of street lighting undertaken in lieu of the employment of LED and Part Night Lighting which was fully introduced across the County Borough in February 2021 and the Climate Emergency that has been declared by the Council. The report also sought Scrutiny Committee's views on a set of Officer recommendations prior to consideration of the review by Cabinet.

The Scrutiny Committee were advised that to meet the challenges of carbon reduction commitments and rising energy costs, in May 2018 the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee recommended a programme to Cabinet for the installation of LED lighting and implementation of a part night-lighting (PNL) strategy. This programme was subsequently agreed by Cabinet and was rolled out across the county borough over a 20-month period between April 2019 and February 2021. The system has been operational since, with full LED infrastructure and PNL between the hours of midnight and 5.30am.

Members were reminded that the Council has declared a climate emergency, and so the reduction in carbon emissions is a commitment to the prevention of the long-term threat of climate change to which energy reduction plays a key role. Whilst other activities affect climate change more than lighting, it is still a very strong contribution from a single industry sector. Experts agree that the Council will not meet the goals for mitigating climate change without reducing the amount of carbon being emitted into the atmosphere. In addition to the experiences of climate change which are now evident across the world, the Council's resources are inevitably finite, both operationally and financially. This, combined with rising energy costs, has reinforced the need for a proportionate response in terms of street lighting service provision.

The Strategy that was supported by Scrutiny and Cabinet has resulted in carbon savings of circa 2836 tonnes per annum, together with significant financial/future cost avoidance savings as set out in the report. It was noted that the total number of street lights across the Authority has increased over the last 5 years and now stands at 27,373 units. This increase in the street lighting asset has coincided with a period of MTFP savings, increasing energy costs and the very real threat of climate change being felt by communities. Following the implementation of the LED and Part Night Lighting Policy

approved in 2018, the Council has 22,344 street lights that are switched off at midnight for five and a half hours, 2684 illuminated signs and 711 flexible bollards. Signs continue to remain lit through all hours of darkness and bollards are no longer illuminated.

The report therefore set out the parameters of a high level review undertaken by Officers which considered a number of alternative options and examined the resultant carbon impact and financial implications of each option.

The Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change also spoke on the report and, in referencing the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in 2019, the Council's ongoing commitment towards reducing the long-term threat of climate change, and the carbon savings achieved to date, asked the Scrutiny Committee to consider the implications of increased carbon emissions and at a time when the general public is actively reducing their own personal electricity and energy, if they were to support extra lighting during the hours of midnight and 5.30am.

The Scrutiny Committee discussed the report and one Member suggested that part night-lighting had been implemented for financial and not environmental reasons, and stated that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent had expressed a personal opinion in a recent article in support of keeping street lights on at night. The Member also questioned the validity of a county-wide policy in this regard and suggested a need for a rationale on a case-by-case basis for street lighting in each area of the county borough.

One Member advocated the adoption of a Central Management System for street lights in line with neighbouring Local Authorities. He also highlighted safety concerns around reports from residents in that sometimes the lighting does not come on at 5:30am as planned, and he also observed that on long terraced streets midpoint lighting should be provided during the hours of darkness. The Member also highlighted how the Rhymney area had received Safer Streets funding specifically for street lighting and sought clarification on how this funding had been allocated and spent.

A Member suggested that installing a Central Management System would allow the Council to be more creative in terms of exploring dimming options. He highlighted safety concerns for vulnerable people associated with the part night-lighting scheme and queried if further options beyond midnight to 5:30am could be explored, such as switching lights off for shorter periods during the night.

One Member queried the environmental aspect highlighted in the report, given that all energy to power the street lighting across the county borough is generated through renewable sources, and suggested that the current policy had only been implemented for financial reasons.

Mark S. Williams (Corporate Director for Economy and Environment) responded to these queries, and in referring to information received from the Energy and Water Officer, explained that even though the Council utilises green renewable energy, they do not recoup the associated benefits when reporting emissions back to Welsh Government, as there is still a carbon emissions factor associated with consumption and an implied assumption that green energy is not being used. The intention of this WG reporting policy is to force councils to work harder at decarbonisation strategies. If any electricity passes through a meter for a commercial supply, there is a carbon implication and the Council are expected to log that electricity in the reporting as though it is not from a renewable source.

Members were advised that if the Council were to revert to switching the lights on late at night, apart from the increase in costs, it would create additional electrical demand on the grid. At times when renewables are not able to meet this demand, this could result in electricity being generated from fossil fuel sources such as gas power stations or nuclear

energy. In view of this, if street lights were switched back on between midnight and 5.30am, then the result would be an increase in carbon emissions of circa 470 tonnes per annum which would need to be reported to Welsh Government.

One Member suggested that residents could explore buying personal head torches and solar-powered lighting for their properties late at night, if they had any concerns regarding the current policy.

A Member raised a question regarding antennas on top of street lighting columns within the county borough, which if operational would allow dimming by a management system allowing some light and reducing the carbon footprint. Marcus Lloyd (Head of Infrastructure) advised Members that the installation of a Central Management System would cost circa £3.5M and have a payback of approximately 40 years depending on the option chosen. He also highlighted how the nodes currently on columns are designed to regulate switch on/off times and not dimming options.

Mr Lloyd also highlighted the ways in which renewable energy can be stored and utilised at different times of day and night, along with some minor irregularities in the switching times during the time when the clocks go forward or back one hour during autumn and springtime. It was also explained that the current policy allows for street lights to be turned back on if required, following regular review and consultation between officers and Gwent Police colleagues, should there be a clear evidence base to do so. Examples of this were provided in the report, with it emphasised that the evidence to date indicates no increase in crime as a result of the part-night lighting policy. Mr Lloyd further explained that the levels of complaints received from residents in regard to the part-night lighting policy is exceptionally low.

One Member observed that a measured approach, where certain streets/areas could be switched on at night, rather than the current county borough-wide policy, would also reduce the carbon footprint and increase night-time safety on streets.

Following consideration of the report and the Officer recommendations and with the Scrutiny Committee having offered their views, an amendment to the recommendations was moved and seconded, to state "*Cabinet is asked to review the Street Lighting Policy and look at implementing the Central Management System so that the policy is fit for purpose*". By way of roll call (and in noting there were 9 for, 5 against and 0 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

The Committee Members were advised that the amendment as carried negated the original report recommendation 3.1 - that "*the existing street lighting policy is maintained*."

It was therefore moved and seconded that the amended Recommendation 3.1 as set out at the meeting and Recommendations 3.2 – 3.3 as set out in the report be forwarded to Cabinet for approval. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 12 for, 2 against and 0 abstentions), this was agreed by the majority present.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:-

- (i) Cabinet Members are asked to review the Street Lighting Policy and look at implementing the Central Management System so that the policy is fit for purpose;
- (ii) Officers continue to work with their colleagues in Gwent Police in accordance with the existing, agreed protocol relating to crime;

- (iii) Issues relating to fear of crime are recognised by the Authority and where these issues are considered to be serious, taking account of the vulnerability of the complainant then an individual response is offered through the Community Safety Partnership which will include a number of wider interventions, such as security advice and guidance.

10. CAERPHILLY BIODIVERSITY REPORT 2022

The Cabinet Member for Waste and Green Spaces presented the report, which outlined the Council's Biodiversity Report for 2022 and sought any comments from the Scrutiny Committee prior to its presentation to Cabinet for approval and subsequent submission to Welsh Government.

Members were advised that under Section 6(7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, from the end of 2019 and before the end of every third year thereafter 2019, all public authorities are required to publish a report on what they have done to comply with the Section 6 in respect of Biodiversity. The next report is due in December 2022 and details of the Caerphilly Biodiversity Report 2022 was appended to the Officer's report.

It was explained that the Caerphilly Biodiversity Report 2022 detailed the actions and projects delivered in the county borough to halt the decline of biodiversity, and acts as a driver for ensuring that all service areas consider biodiversity and actively enhance biodiversity when carrying out their day-to-day activities.

A Member asked how the Council monitors the success or failure of their biodiversity policy, and Officers explained that the Caerphilly Biodiversity Report 2022 itself carries out this monitoring role, which demonstrates the progress that is made in terms of maintaining and improving diversity, including the activities that take place across the whole of the Council. Officers gave reassurances that a whole raft of monitoring takes place across the Authority in terms of biodiversity considerations, including the monitoring of species and habitats by Council ecologists, together with monitoring on a wider regional basis through collaboration with specialised working groups.

Following consideration of the Caerphilly Biodiversity Report for 2022, the Scrutiny Committee noted its contents.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Before closing the meeting, it was noted that Councillor D.T. Davies' wife was currently unwell, and Members expressed their best wishes to Mrs Davies for a speedy recovery.

It was also noted that Rebecca Barrett (Clerk to the Scrutiny Committee) was leaving Committee Services in the coming weeks to take up a post elsewhere in the Authority, and this would be her last Scrutiny Committee meeting. Members thanked Rebecca for her approachable manner and the professional support she had given to the Committee over the last nine years, and wished her every success in her new role.

The meeting closed at 7.23 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2022, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR