

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Bryn Pica, Llwydcoed, Aberdare on Monday 10th March, 2014, at 5.00 p.m.

Present

County Borough Councillor G R Davies – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

S Bradwick	(Mrs) L De Vet	J Elliott	P Howe	(Mrs) S Pickering
G Smith	R K Turner	M Weaver	T Williams	

Officers

Mr G Jones – Group Director, Environmental Services
Mr N Wheeler – Service Director, StreetCare
Mr P Mee – Service Director, Public Health & Protection
Mr N Brinn – Service Director, Highways, Transportation & Strategic
Projects
Mr A Wilkins – Corporate & Democratic Services Solicitor
Mr T O’Leary – Trading Standards Manager

47 MINUTE SILENCE

As a mark of respect the Committee observed a minute silence in respect of the recent passing of Mr Howard Thomas, Highways Technical Services Manager.

48 CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank officers for organising the site visit of Bryn Pica, which was conducted by the Committee prior to the formal committee meeting.

Members of the Committee were also advised that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for Monday 7th April at 5pm in Clydach Vale.

49. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors (Mrs) J Bonetto, G Holmes, L Langford, S Powderhill, (Mrs) A Roberts and (Mrs) M Tegg.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct there were no declarations of personal interest pertaining to the agenda.

51. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 27th January, 2014 as an accurate record.

REPORTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES.

52 COLLABORATIVE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRADING STANDARDS IN THE CWM TAF REGION

Through his report the Service Director, Public Health & Protection provided the Committee with an update on the current position in regard to the collaborative delivery arrangements for Trading Standards Service across the Cwm Taf Region.

The Service Director, Public Health & Protection referred Members back to a previous meeting where members were advised of the agreed Memorandum of Understanding between Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and Merthyr Tydfil Council to enable the collaborative delivery of Trading Standards Services across the Cwm Taf region. Members were advised that the report before them provided a summary of the work delivered to date, the outcomes of the collaborative arrangements, including specific examples of joint projects delivered.

The Committee were advised of the planned collaborative work recognised prior to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the identified benefits of collaboration and opportunities. Examples of joint projects delivered by the service such as 'Cwm Taf Trading Standards National Rogue Trader Day 2013' and Garage Forecourt Surveys were also highlighted. The Committee were advised of the monitoring arrangements for the collaborative work, with the Service Director explaining that this was through a Joint management and Governance Board that meets on a quarterly basis.

The Service Director, Public Health and Protection concluded his report by advising members of the successful implementation of the delivery arrangements over the first year of operations, advising that the benefits witnessed had been predominantly of a more practical nature rather than financial, although some financial savings had been achieved through successful bids for joint funding. The Service Director also commented upon the benefits noted with consistency of practices across boundaries and the further opportunities for joint working within the service.

One Member commented upon the project with garage forecourt surveys and queried whether there was the opportunity for 'Member site visits and observations' within the project. The Service Director, Public Health &

Protection commented that a practical approach could be developed, to allow a small number of Members to accompany a relevant officer.

Members thanked the officer for the report and commended the service on the steps forward in respect of collaborative working. The Officer was queried further as to any 'lessons to be learnt' in respect of collaborative working, going forward and the Service Director commented that collaboration should not be simply an exercise in the reduction of costs, but for an overall benefit. The Group Director, Environmental Services also commented on the Memorandum of Understanding formed between the two Authorities, allowing a more informal process of collaborative working being developed.

Target dates within the report were also highlighted by Members and the Service Director, Public Health & Protection provided Members with an explanation as to the project plan and the intention of using the programmes to monitor the progress.

Following discussions the Committee **RESOLVED**:-

- a) To note the content of the report.
- b) That the Service Director, Public Health & Protection provide a proposed mechanism for Member site visits with garage forecourt surveys.

53 FLY TIPPING

The Service Director, Street Care provided the Committee with a PowerPoint presentation in respect of Fly Tipping within Rhondda Cynon Taf Council. The Committee were provided with details of Fly Tipping from 2010-11 to date, with the Committee being advised that the incidents of reported fly tipping during 2013-14 was at 2578. The Service Director advised that this figure was from April to December, therefore highlighting a potential slight increase from the previous year's 2829. The Committee were also advised that the number of fly tipping incidences removed within 5 working days equated to 99.07%.

The Service Director, advised Members of the Committee of the actions taken by the service to address Fly Tipping, advising that during 2013/14 10.09% of the Fly Tipping reported led to enforcement action, with 101 warning letters issued.

Members of the Committee queried the use of discreet CCTV in know Fly Tipping hotspots, and the Service Director, Street Care advised of the use of mobile cameras and also commented upon the restrictions placed on CCTV usage.

One Member queried the impact the changes to bulky waste collections had on the local amenity centres, and the Service Director confirmed that there had been a marked increase in their usage. The Service Director commented upon the recent trend noted, with residents taking black bag waste to the centres, and the need for the service to look at tackling this in the future.

Fly Tipping within rivers was also highlighted as a point of concern by Committee Members and the Group Director, Environmental Services advised that this issue was out of the control of the local authority and fell under the remit of Natural Resources Wales. The Group Director referred Members to previous work of the Committee, when two working groups were created to review the issue.

Members of the Committee **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the presentation.

54 GREEN GLYNCOCH – A ZERO WASTE VILLAGE.

Through the use of a PowerPoint presentation the Service Director, Street Care presented the Committee with an overview of the 'Green Glyncoch' project, following a request at the previous Committee meeting.

The Committee were advised that the aim of the project was to make Glyncoch a zero waste village, which meant a village where at least 90% of the residents recycle both their dry recyclables and their food waste, and that all residents respect their environment, all communal areas and open spaces, with no litter on the ground. The aim also included the intention that all dog owners should be signed up to the good owners guide.

The Service Director, Street Care highlighted that the initial project commenced in November 2009 and spoke of the positives that resulted from the pilot which were further extended upon, following the changes to fortnightly refuse collections.

The Committee were advised of the latest stages of the project, with a source segregated recycling collection service being trialled in partnership with the Community. It was reported that the Welsh Government had provided the vehicle and that the trial service would continue to be managed by the Street Care service, with community volunteers collecting and sorting dry recyclables on a weekly basis. The Committee were provided with statistical information that illustrated the success of the project with the steep increase in dry recycling and food waste over a 4 week period.

The presentation was concluded with the Service Director, Street Care outlining the responsibilities needed to be taken forward by the service such as management of the project, procurement of collection vehicles. In respect of the Community, the Service Director commented on the need for buy in from the community to support the project, the provision of volunteers for collections, and the continuation to raise awareness and challenge non participants of recycling.

Members of the Committee queried whether the project would be rolled out across other Communities within the County Borough and the Service

Director confirmed that this was not a sustainable project, advising of the intensive resources needed to be put into the project to take it forward. Members commented upon the positive increase with the recycling rates and wished the project continued success.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the information contained within the PowerPoint presentation.

55 USER SATISFACTION SURVEY – RECYCLING SHOP.

The Service Director, Street Care provided the Committee with a verbal update on the user satisfaction survey undertaken in relation to the County Borough's 'Recycling Shop'. Members were advised that the feedback was obtained via a questionnaire and general feedback.

Positive feedback was received in relation to the school uniform recycling scheme, and the savings witnessed by parents partaking in the scheme. The Committee were also advised of the positive reports with the refurbishment of bikes and the scooter hire scheme. Positive feedback was also received in relation to the staff working within the 'Recycling Shop'.

Members of the Committee commented upon the successful schemes and the enthusiastic staff within the 'Recycling Shop' and examples of refurbished uniforms, football boots and bikes were provided, as displayed within the Bryn Pica centre.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the update.

56 EXECUTIVE RESPONSE – HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION.

The Corporate & Democratic Services Solicitor referred Members to the report before them, which provided the response received from the Executive to the findings and recommendations to the Environmental Services Scrutiny Committees - HMO Scrutiny Working Group. The Officer commented that the working group report was well received at a cabinet meeting, advising that the full response was detailed within Appendix B of the report.

Members of the working group commented upon the detailed review undertaken and the positive response received from the Executive in respect of implementation of effective regulation, within the area.

The Committee **RESOLVED:-**

- a) To note the responses received from the Executive
- b) That the Committee receives a further response on the remaining working group's recommendations, following implementation of effective regulation
- c) That the Committee monitors progress in respect of the recommendations as appropriate.

57 EXECUTIVE RESPONSE – BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

The Corporate & Democratic Services Solicitor drew Members attention to the report before them, which provided the response of the Executive to the recommendation of the Committee in relation to Bereavement Services.

The Corporate & Democratic Services Solicitor reminded Members of the detailed report received by the Committee in respect of Bereavement Services at a previous committee meeting, and the resulting recommendation to the Executive that 'Cabinet review the fees and charges for the purchase of a grave to a non resident of RCT'. The Committee were advised of the positive response received from the Cabinet portfolio holder, who had advised that a review into the fees and charges for Bereavement services had been instructed.

Following consideration of the report the Committee **RESOLVED:-**

- a) To note the response received from the Executive
- b) To receive information on the outcome of the review when available.

Cllr G Davies
Chairman

The meeting closed at 17:55pm.