

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes** of the meeting held at the County Borough Council Headquarters, Clydach Vale on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 at 5 p.m.

**PRESENT**

County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies – in the Chair

**County Borough Councillors**

S.Bradwick	G.Holmes	G.Smith
(Mrs.)J.Bonetto	(Mrs.)S.Pickering	M.Weaver
S.Carter	(Mrs.)A.Roberts	T.Williams

County Borough Councillors C.J.Willis - Scrutiny Performance Co-Ordinator

**Officers**

Mr.C.B.Jones – Service Director, Legal & Democratic Services  
Mr.N.Wheeler – Service Director, Streetcare  
Mr.N.Brinn – Service Director, Highways, Transportation & Strategic Projects  
Mr.P.Mee – Service Director, Public Health & Protection  
Mr.R.Waters – Head of Highways, Transportation & Strategic Projects  
Mr.T.Phillips – Senior Engineer (East)(Traffic Management)  
Mr.A.Stone – Capital Projects Manager  
Mr.A.Critchlow – Parking Services & Streetworks (NRASWA) Manager  
Ms.A.Griffiths – Head of Management Accounting

**17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors (Mrs.)L De Vet, J.Elliott, L.Langford and (Mrs.)M.Tegg.

**18. CONGRATULATIONS**

The Chairman announced that Emma Coates, who provides the scrutiny support services to this Committee and Andrew Wilkins, who provides the legal services to this Committee got married on Saturday last (4<sup>th</sup> October) and it was agreed that a letter of congratulations be sent to the couple on behalf of Members of this Committee.

**19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, the following declarations of personal interest were made:

- County Borough Councillor G.R.Davies – Agenda Item 3 – “I am a Landlord and provide services for substance misuse”.

- County Borough Councillor S. Bradwick – Agenda Item 5 – “Part 9.2.3 Resident Parking, I have a Residents Parking permit 302, I have paid £10 to RCT Council for this, I have met with Officers regarding the new Residents Parking for Aberdare”.

**20. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – to approve the minutes of the Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 as an accurate record.

**21. EXCEPTION REPORT – COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 2014 (QUARTER 1)**

The Head of Management Accounting presented to Members the Exception Report agreed at the meeting of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2014, which outlined the financial and performance management information for Environmental Services for the period to the 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2014. Members were asked to consider key issues extracted from the main report that had been presented to the Cabinet Performance and Resources Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2014.

The Service Director, Streetcare was questioned in respect of the fixed penalty notices that had been issued for offences in respect of car litter, trade, etc but it was noted from the report that no penalty notices had been issued for dog fouling. The Service Director, Streetcare indicated that work had been concentrated on the new policy for side waste collection, and that dog fouling was a difficult area to evidence as people will not provide the necessary information for action to be taken. However, the next quarter should see some notices issued as a dedicated team will be patrolling areas to identify incidents of dog fouling and litter dropping.

The Service Director, Public Health and Protection was asked if a comparison could be made with other authorities in relation to the number of cases that had been completed in respect of substance misuse as the Quarter 1 performance was 60% compared to a target of 74%. The Service Director, Public Health and Protection reported that, Officers were also surprised at the drop in performance and had taken a closer look at the figures, it should be noted that the performance measure is derived from aggregate data from various service providers i.e. if one service provider is not performing like the others then it affects the overall data. This information is a key performance indicator that is reported to the Welsh Government, however, during the first Quarter, the Welsh Government made changes the data base and Officers have some concerns about the reliability of the data in that Quarter. It was therefore, agreed amongst Officers that when the Quarter 2 information has been processed, the Quarter 1 information will be re-looked at. A further question was raised in respect of the problems associated with substance misuse in town centres as a result of the distribution of medication by local pharmacies to substance misuse users and the Service Director, Public Health and Protection outlined the action that had been taken, particularly in the Pontypridd area with the installation of additional CCTV and the ongoing

dialogue with the Police over certain incidents. He further reported that should Members experience problems with a locality that they contact his Section and the matter can be referred to the appropriate body e.g. Area Planning Board, Community Safety Partnership etc.

The Service Director, Public Health and Protection was asked for an explanation in respect of the IDVA intervention (domestic abuse/sexual violence), where, for Quarter 1 the performance was 61% compared to a target of 80%. In response, the Service Director, Public Health and Protection reported that during the first Quarter there had been a number of difficult cases whereby when children are involved, the perpetrator has access rights, which can lead to the continuation of indirect abuse and likewise with the query raised in respect of substance misuse a close eye would be kept on the performance indicators for the next Quarter.

The Service Director, Streetcare was asked whether the Council would meet the targets in respect of the percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill and recycling. The Service Director indicated that measures were in place to achieve the target for landfill waste and the recycling target would be achieved for the next Quarter (2) but he was uncertain whether this would continue into the full year. It was hoped that the Council's new policy on side waste collection would contribute to a positive target on recycling, which commenced in the Rhondda area this month, to be introduced in the Cynon area in November and the Taff-Ely area in January of next year and at the next meeting of this Committee, Members will receive an update on progress. He further reported that this Council collects more recyclable materials than most e.g. polystyrene and bottles.

A Member raised concern that the Council was ranked 21 on the all Wales Comparative Data for 2012/13 in respect of the percentage of principal (A) roads that were in poor condition. The Service Director, Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects reported that whilst the "scanner" survey that is used for the PI is fairly sophisticated it was not particularly compatible with the Council's highway network as it was designed primarily for high speed roads. It was found that there was a low texture value on the Council's mountain roads which unfortunately brought the overall figures down. He reassured Members that there were no problems with the quality of the mountain roads, it was just that the particular measure used did not favour such highways.

The Service Director, Streetcare was asked if comparisons could be made with other authorities in respect of sickness/absence with staff with similar jobs, as, whilst the trend was lower than the previous year, it was still a matter of concern. In response, the Service Director indicated that he would try to get some comparative data from other authorities and further stated that the percentage of staff that go on short term sick is far less (1.21%) than the people on long term sick (4.15%) and there was very little that Managers could do to address this as the policies and procedures were being followed.

At the conclusion of this item, one of the Members wished to place on record his thanks to the Chairman for the way in which, he responded to the Wales Audit Office during their delivery of the Council's Annual Report at the Council Meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2014 in respect of recycling.

The Committee **RESOLVED** – to note the contents of the report.

## **REPORTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

### **22. WORK OF THE STRATEGIC PROJECTS SECTION**

Through the aid of a PowerPoint presentation which gave a visual representation of the report in front of Members, Mr.A.Stone, Capital Projects Manager provided the Committee with details of the structure and work carried out by the Strategic Projects Section within the Highways, Transportation and Strategic Division.

Mr.Stone reported that the Strategic Projects service area consists of four distinct teams, which are lead by the Strategic Projects Manager:

- Flood & Tips Risk Management
- Projects
- Traffic Management
- Land Reclamation Client

The responsibilities of each of the four teams were reported upon together with examples of their respective projects.

Members **RESOLVED** – to note the contents of the report and the information contained within the PowerPoint presentation.

### **23. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT – SUMMARY REPORT**

Mr.A.Critchlow, Parking Services and Streetcare Manager provided the Committee with a PowerPoint presentation in respect of the Civil Parking Enforcement (update), which complimented the report of the Service Director, Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects.

Mr.Critchlow gave his observations under the following headings and reported that the Civil Parking Enforcement commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2012:

#### ***Civil Parking Enforcement:***

- Background Information
  - Traffic Regulations (Lines & Signs) enforced.
  - South Wales Parking Group (SWPG) as back office provider (based in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)
  - All income retained by this Council to be invested into Highways Technical Service & Traffic Management

- 11 Civil Enforcement Officers who issue Penalty Charge Notices
  - The fines are set by UK Government - £70 or £50 and reduced by 50% if paid within 14 days.
  - Challenges – discounted charge
  - Representations – full charge
  - Appeals – Independent Tribunal (Traffic Penalty Tribunal)
  - Failure to pay/ignore a Notice will result in a referral to County Court and then onto Bailiffs.
- Service Update - 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2014
    - PCNs issued: 9266 (2013/14); 12440 (2012/13)
    - PCN payment rate: 80% (2013/14); 75% (2012/13)
    - PCN cancellation rate: 8.7% (2013/14); 9.2% (2012/13)
    - PCN income: approximately £750k.
  - Unlawful Parking
    - Contravention Code: 01 – Parking in a restricted street during prescribed hours (waiting prohibited)
    - Contravention Code: 25 – Parking in a loading place during restricted hours without loading
    - Contravention Code: 27 – Parking adjacent to a dropped footway
    - Contravention Code: 40 – Parked in a designated person's parking place without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge.
    - Contravention Code: 48 – Parked in restricted area outside a school
    - Contravention Code: 99 – Parked on a pedestrian crossing and/or crossing area marked by white zig-zag lines
  - Additional Information
    - MTO's (Moving Traffic Offences)
    - CCTV Enforcement
    - Online Parking Permit Applications.

Following the presentation made by Mr.Critchlow, many questions were asked by Members, in response to the question raised regarding the profit/loss of the service, it was reported that information would be provided to Members at a future meeting. In response to the question raised in respect of employing additional Civil Parking Enforcement Officers, this was currently being reviewed.

Members were intrigued to note the comments of the Parking Services and Streetcare Manager in respect of the number of Penalty Charge Notices that had been served on one individual, amounting to 44, all of which had been duly paid.

### ***Traffic Management – Review of Residential Parking***

Members received Mr.T.Phillips, Senior Engineer (East) (Traffic Management), who with the aid of PowerPoint slides gave his observations under the following headings:

- Background
  - History of complaints regarding parking
  - Multiple requests from Members and general public for residents parking schemes
  - Cabinet Decision – 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2014 to review residents parking in 2014/15
- Areas Under Review
  - Pontypridd (Graig, Graigwen, Maesycod and Trallwn)
  - Treforest (Broadway, Lawn Terrace, Wood Road, King Street, Queen Street, Glyntaf, Bertha Street, Meadow Street etc)
  - Aberdare (Gadlys, Maes-y-Dre and Foundry Town)
- Progress to Date
  - Pontypridd and Treforest
    - First round of informal residents consultation completed – June 2014
    - Public exhibitions at Pontypridd Museum and Taff Meadow Community Centre with over 200 attendees
    - 2,266 consultation letters sent out
    - 547 returns received (response rate of 24%)
    - Response varied between 8% and 100% per street
    - Of the 43 streets asked whether they wanted residents parking – 35% voted yes; 60% voted no and 5% were split.
    - The main points of objection were – where were visitors to park; residents parking scheme not required; scheme will introduce problems where none existed before; should not have to pay for permits.
    - Llantwit Road area of Treforest objected to the scheme
    - Residents of Trallwn voted overwhelmingly in favour of residents parking.
    - Way Forward following consultation – e.g. reduce operating hours of residents parking zones
  - Aberdare
    - Site Survey and assessment of areas concerned – completed.
    - Draft proposals presented to Members
    - Residents consultation to be undertaken along with a public exhibition
    - Consultation to commence end of October, 2014

- Key Dates
  - Pontypridd – Public Consultation mid October – Implementation February/March, 2015 following public notice (December, 2014) and formal approval (January, 2015).
  - Aberdare – Residents Consultation end of October – Implementation early April/May, 2015 following public notice (December/January, 2015) and formal approval (February/March, 2015).

Following the presentation made by the Senior Engineer, a question was raised as to whether the scheme would be implemented in other areas, when it was reported that it would roll over into the next financial year, however, the areas had not yet been identified.

Members **RESOLVED** – to note the information in respect of the update on the Civil Parking Enforcement and Residential Parking.

#### **24. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT – SEPTEMBER, 2014**

Members received Mr.R.Waters, Head of Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects, who with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation gave an overview of the Home to School Transport following the commencement of the new school year in September of this year.

He reported that the Council provides transport for 11,600 mainstream pupils (including schools and colleges) and 900 SEN pupils to over 120 educational establishments with a budget of £11.3 million being the largest school transport provider in Wales.

Mr.Waters indicated that this had been the most successful September and one of the ways that the Section measures success was through the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system and the number of enquiries from the public in respect of Home to School transport during the two period following the August Bank Holiday, where for the 2013 year – 561 enquiries were made and for this year there were 458 a drop of 18%.

**RESOLVED** – to note the information.

**25. URGENT ITEM**

The Chairman verbally reported that he had received a request from a Member of the Committee that a Working Group be established to look at "Community Recycling Centres" and it was **RESOLVED** – That a Working Group be established to look at Community Recycling Centres following the completion of the work of the Working Group which had been set up in respect of Empty Properties as agreed at the meeting of this Committee held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 (Minute No.14 refers).

**G.R.DAVIES  
CHAIRMAN**

**The meeting closed at 6.40 p.m.**