

*Mae'r cofnodion hyn yn amodol ar gymeradwyaeth yng nghyfarfod priodol nesaf y Pwyllgor*

These Minutes are subject to approval at the next appropriate meeting of the Committee.

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at Bryn Pica, Llwydcoed, Aberdare on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

**PRESENT**

County Borough Councillor S. A. Bradwick – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

M Diamond	E Stephens
D Grehan	W Treeby
G Hughes	T Williams
D Owen-Jones	M Weaver
S Pickering	

**Cabinet Member**

County Borough Councillor A Crimmings – Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Heritage Services

**Officers**

Mr N. Wheeler – Director Highways & Streetcare Services

Mr S. Humphreys – Head of Legal, Planning & Environment

J. Nicholls – Senior Democratic Services Officer

**16. WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Heritage Services, County Borough Councillor A. Crimmings to the meeting.

**17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillors A. Chapman, M. Fidler-Jones, E. George and W. Owen

## **18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED** -In accordance with the Code of Conduct, there were no personal declarations of interests made, pertaining to the agenda.

## **19.. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee held on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018

## **20. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETCARE SERVICES - CURRENT POSITION AND IMPROVING RECYCLING REPORT**

The Director of Highways and Streetcare Services presented his report in respect of the Council's current position on recycling, the problem materials and what needs to be done to improve the recycling rate.

It was reported that although in 2016/17 the Council achieved over 64% of its recycling rate, its next significant target of 70% by 2024/2025 will only be achieved with further changes having been implemented to the current service. The Director reported that a reduction in the frequency of residual waste collections can impact positively on the levels of recycling and despite other councils reducing their residual collections, to three or four weekly collections scrutiny was given assurance that this is not a consideration for Rhondda Cynon Taf Council. It was clarified that both increased enforcement powers and active campaigns will assist the local authority reach its next target.

It was reported that by implementing the recent changes to the residual waste levels across the County Borough the service is trying to engage those residents who do not participate in the recycling service at all rather than impact on those who already actively engage in the Council's recycling scheme. Members were pleased to note that the changes to the residual waste collections has not had any impact on the levels of fly tipping.

The Director explained that one problematic material is wood and varnished wood which cannot be recycled and which continues to have an impact on the overall municipal rates by nearly 4% despite changes to the residual waste collections. The Council has entered into discussions with an ethical wood press organisation in the UK so that areas are identified to process the wood and change the market.

Scrutiny was informed that the Council's recycling teams are tackling contamination in recycling and target those residents who do not recycle at all. One way of addressing this is by issuing fixed penalty notices (FPN's) to those residents who do not participate in the scheme although this is used as a last resort when the teams have exhausted every other avenue. It is crucial that the local authority improves its rate by 6% from the current rate of 64% to 70% by 2025 or else it will face financial penalties

A national initiative is being led by the Director of Highways and Streetcare Services which is looking to change behaviours towards recycling through targeted campaigns across Wales, aimed at dealing with specific areas such as plastics and recycling in communal areas (the latter currently being considered as part of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Working Group). Through the targeted work, it is anticipated that there will be a consistent message at a national level although at a local level the campaigns will be carried out in a way that reflects the requirements and needs of the communities. It is proposed that this work will be rolled out over the next few months.

The Director updated Scrutiny in respect of developments at Bryn Pica. From January 2019 it is anticipated that school children will visit the new education centre and there is potential to hold sessions which will educate the residents of RCT in lieu of issuing fixed penalty notices. It was confirmed that discussions are ongoing with Welsh Government and other potential partners in respect of securing funding for the Eco Park project and planning permission is being sought in December 2018 to expand the site.

Scrutiny discussed the use of FPN's with caution but agreed that it offers an effective way of encouraging residents to recycle, when other avenues have been exhausted. In conjunction with Welsh Government and all Welsh Councils, under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and Clean Neighbourhoods Act (CNA), a local authority is now able to issue a notice to residents to inform them that they are unable to place any recyclable material within their residual bin or bag. Failure to do this and following a number of warnings, a FPN of a £100 can be issued. It was clarified by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Heritage Services that there are processes in place to help those elderly or blind residents who need additional support such as assisted collections. Members agreed that assisted collections are effective but need to be promoted.

A Member suggested that the Council's recycling teams could look to work with other Council staff that carry out home visits or work in care homes so that they are encouraged to recycle and become aware of the recycling procedures. It was also suggested that the recycling teams could visit sheltered accommodation providers to educate the residents and staff alike in respect of the recycling and food waste procedures. Following discussion, scrutiny agreed that this was an area that could be considered as part of the working group currently tackling recycling in communal areas.

The Director assured Scrutiny that all avenues are being pursued to better the recycling targets across the County Borough. It was confirmed that the worst and better performing areas are being targeted to increase the levels of awareness in those under performing areas but also to maintain the performance of those that currently recycle. Another area alluded to by the Director where improvements could be made to the recycling rates is a traffic light system of correspondence to residents to monitor and rate their recycling performance. A green letter will indicate good performance, amber where performance can be improved and red where no recycling is taking place at all. It is considered that the letters will encourage those residents to maintain their level of recycling or inform them of

their poor performance with support to hand in the form of recycling officers should they need it.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** that Members:-

1. Acknowledge the contents of the report and the work undertaken by the recycling teams across the County Borough; and
2. Continue to monitor and challenge the reports in respect of the municipal recycling rates.

## **21. PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (DOG CONTROLS)**

The Director of Highways and Streetcare Services reported on the success of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) since its implementation on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017. Previous attempts to address dog fouling across the County Borough had been unsuccessful and therefore the Council introduced the PSPO in 2017 so that reasonable and proportionate restrictions on the use of publicly accessible land across the County Borough could be implemented. Scrutiny was reminded that the PSPO came into force following a comprehensive public consultation process which demonstrated overwhelming public support.

Scrutiny was informed that since the introduction of the PSPO the Council has issued 246 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's). A breakdown of the offences was provided to Scrutiny as was the current position with regards to payments made to date and clarification was provided in respect of some areas such as 'partly paid' which means that the resident is paying the fine by instalments.

In response to a query, the Director confirmed that there are currently four dedicated enforcement officers who do target the worst affected areas (Scrutiny was provided with a list of the 10 worst affected areas across the County Borough).

It was agreed that there is sufficient provision of dog bins within the local authority but there was a suggestion that their location should be officially mapped so that members of the public can arrange their dog walking routes accordingly. It was suggested that an online provision such as 'Find My Bin' would be a handy tool to enable residents to arrange their dog walking route around the their nearest bins.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the report delivered by the Director of Highways and Streetcare Services and that Committee continues to scrutinise and challenge the progress of the Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Controls).

## **22. VOLUNTARY SNOW WARDEN SCHEME**

Scrutiny was presented with the report of the Director of Communications and Interim head of Democratic Services in respect of the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group set up to consider the

Voluntary Snow Warden Scheme as referred to in the Notice of Motion considered by Full Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Scrutiny was reminded of the original four recommendations (and the additional recommendation as implemented by the Cabinet) that were endorsed at its meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018 i.e.

- That the dedicated number for Elected Members is utilised to provide Members with support and advice for all Elected Members during periods of inclement weather ;
- That a targeted campaign is undertaken to promote community self help (Communities coming together to help each other on a voluntary basis during times of extreme weather) and to encourage residents to become 'good neighbours';
- That appropriate, practical guidance and good practice in relation to community action in severe weather is shared with the residents of RCT via the Council website (GOV UK -Guidance on Community Action in Severe Weather);
- That further work is undertaken in respect of the public liability aspect of insurance for voluntary work undertaken in a safe manner; and
- That the Mini Ploughs are brought on site before the October Council meeting for all Members to view.

The Director of Highways and Streetcare Services confirmed that on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018 all Elected Members were provided with the opportunity to view the new mini ploughs which were brought to the Council Headquarters prior to Full Council. He advised that the mini ploughs would enhance the current provision and support the existing fleets.

Scrutiny was informed that the recommendations reflect the discussions of the Working Group, that the spirit of volunteering in the community in times of severe weather conditions should be promoted and that clear and practical advice is provided to the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf via the Council website. The Working Group agreed in principle with the Voluntary Snow Warden scheme but had concerns in respect of the costs incurred to establish the scheme and the impact on officer time. The Working Group also recommended that further work is undertaken in respect of the public liability aspect of insurance for voluntary work undertaken in a safe manner.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED:-**

1. To acknowledge that the Executive considered and endorsed the above-mentioned recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group; and
2. That Scrutiny monitors progress of the recommendations as part of its forward work programme.

Chair  
S. A. Bradwick

The meeting closed at 6.30pm