

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12TH FEBRUARY 2018

PRESENT: Councillor J.D. James (Chair)

Councillors:

J.A. Davies, P.M. Edwards, A.L. Fox, S.J.G. Gilasbey, T.M. Higgins, T.A.J. Davies,
A. Vaughan Owen, B.D.J. Phillips, J.S. Phillips and D. Thomas.

Also in attendance:

Councillor K.V. Broom – Substitute for Councillor A. Davies;
Councillor E. Williams – Substitute for Councillor A.D.T. Speake.

The following Officers were in attendance:

R. Mullen, Director of Environment;
S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways;
J. Morgan, Acting Head of Homes & Safer Communities;
S. Charles, Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager;
B. Jenkins, Strategy and Implementation Manager;
S.E. Watts, Environmental Protection Manager;
A. Price, Public Lighting Engineer
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen – 2:00pm - 3:15pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Davies, A.D.T Speake and P. M. Hughes [Executive Board Member for Public Protection].

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

5. SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2017/18 - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SERVICES

The Committee received a report which contained an Environmental Protection Services Delivery Plan for 2017/18. The Plan included an outline of the Council's service aims and objectives providing links to the corporate objectives and plans.

The Plan provided the scope and demands of the Environmental Protection Services and included a breakdown of resources is provided, including staffing costs, administration, supplies and services, training etc. with comparisons between financial years.

The Committee noted that the Environmental Protection Section was required by the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive to produce an annual Service Delivery Plan.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:-

In relation to Food Hygiene, Safety and Standards Service requests, it was asked, why the number of requests had significantly increased since 2009/10? The Environment Protection Manager informed the Committee that the main reason why the numbers had increased was due to an improvement and unification of the recording process.

In relation to the Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infection Disease section of the report, a query was raised in regarding the Towy Valley Path and how the potential spread of diseases was going to be controlled. The Environmental Protection Manager explained that whilst path users are encouraged to stick to the path and keep dogs on leads, the department would be working closely with various agencies to monitor and reduce any potential risks of the spreading of infectious diseases. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager added that the potential risk of biosecurity issues were considered as part of the planning process and that whilst little to no risk to biosecurity had been found, mitigating measures such as cattle grids had been included.

With regard to the provision of dog chipping and enforcement, reference was made to the lack of additional funding which would have been utilised to implement legislation, resulting in an increase in demand on the officers. Concern was raised regarding the public perception of this information. The Environmental Protection Manager emphasised that whilst funding had ceased, enforcement continued to be carried out but was more intelligent based.

It was asked if the Council could enforce new dog owners to update the microchip information following a change of ownership. The Environmental Protection Manager stated that she would verify with the current legislation and report back to the Members.

In response to a query regarding to the air quality measures in Llandeilo, the Head of Highways and Transportation announced the Welsh Government had been allocated funds for the delivery of the bypass scheme.

However, changes in legislation meant that it would be necessary to repeat stage 2 of the Transport Appraisal Process in order to determine that the right intervention was being pursued.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Service Delivery Plan 2017/18 Environmental Services be received.

6. HIGHWAY FOOTWAY AND ROAD SAFETY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee considered a Highway Footway and Road Safety Investment Programme Update report which provided Members with an update on the current investment programme in relation to road safety and associated infrastructure.

The report apprised members with information on the following aspects:-

- Local Transport Plan / Local Transport Fund
- Safe Routes in the Community
- Active Travel Act and Local Authority Obligations
- Road Safety Improvement and Footway Improvement Programme
- Local Road Safety Grant (Capital)
- Traffic Management and Accident Prevention Programme

Set out within the report was a summary of funding for road safety related and other infrastructure schemes for 2017/18 and the prioritised programme for road safety, footway and other infrastructure.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:-

In response to a query regarding the outcomes of the cycle route consultation, the Head of Highways and Transportation stated that under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 sat an Active Travel Action Plan which emphasised the importance of effective consultation in the development of existing route and integrated network maps and included short, medium and long term priorities. The Head of Highways and Transportation stated that he would forward a link to the Active Travel Action Plan to Members for their information.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Highway Footway and Road Safety Investment Programme Update report be received.

7. REVIEW OF LED CONVERSION PROJECT

The Committee considered a report which provided the committee with an update on the phasing and progress of the LED lantern conversion program.

Members noted that the report provided the details of the phasing and the savings achieved approaching the end of the second phase of the program.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:-

In response to a query regarding working with community councils, the Head of Highways and Transportation stated that whilst there were a number Community Councils who were not part of the current scheme.

However, a piece of work was currently being carried out to develop a package in order to discuss further with Community Councils.

A further query was raised regarding the cost to Community Councils for the lighting. The Head of Highways and Transportation stated that recharges would be modified and charged accordingly.

It was raised that there had been some concern amongst community residents regarding the different coloured lighting following which, it was asked if there was a specific timescale for completion. The Head of Highways and Transportation explained that a problem had emerged over the last 6 months regarding sodium lamps however, as soon as more information is available he would update members in the meant time specific timescale would be obtained from the team.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the LED Conversion Project Update report be received.

8. TOWY VALLEY PATH - EXPENDITURE

Following consideration of a referral from the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, the Committee at its meeting on 15th January 2018 [minute 11 refers] requested to receive a report which provided details on the expenditure on Towy Valley Path in order for the Committee to Scrutinise the expenditure.

The Committee considered a report on the Towy Valley Path – Expenditure which provided members with detailed information including:-

- The project introduction and background
- Expenditure to date
- Expenditure profile including the funding breakdown to date
- Future Funding Profile
- Future Benefits

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:-

In response to a query regarding the completion date, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that in line with the forward work plan, it was anticipated that the project completion date would be the end of March 2019.

A query was raised regarding the inclusive usage of the path and how it would accommodate horse riders and wheel chair users. The Head of Highways and Transportation explained that the team were currently liaising with the British Horse Society and engaging with a range of disabled groups in order to match up aspirations on how the path can best accommodate different user groups.

It was commented that the report had not included the financial aspects for the future maintenance of the path. The Head of Highways and Transportation stated that as part of the project, maintenance would be considered and that it would be included as part of the capital expenditure.

In response to a comment raised regarding negotiating with the farmers, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that parcels of land had been acquired on the West end of the path and that the some land on the East end of the path was currently going through the planning process.

It was proposed that it would be beneficial for the Committee to receive a presentation on the Towy Valley Path. The Head of Highways and Transportation agreed to provide a presentation to the Committee.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:-

- 8.1 the Towy Valley Path – Expenditure report be received;**
- 8.2 to arrange for a presentation on the Towy Valley Path be provided to Committee.**

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

Members noted that since the meeting on the 15th January, 2018, there had been a change to the forthcoming items for the next scheduled meeting on the 2nd March 2018, due to reports being included on the agenda for this additional meeting.

The Committee considered the revised list of forthcoming items for the meeting scheduled to take place on the 2nd March 2018 and was afforded the opportunity to request for information to be placed in to the reports.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the revised list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 2nd March 2018 be noted.

CHAIR

DATE