

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20TH APRIL 2018

PRESENT: Councillor J.D. James (Chair)

Councillors:

J.A. Davies, P.M. Edwards, A.L. Fox, T.A.J. Davies, A. Vaughan Owen and D. Thomas;

Councillor D. E. Williams – Substitute for Councillor A. Davies;
Councillor M.J.A. Lewis – Substitute for Councillor A.D.T. Speake;
Councillor K. Howell – Substitute for Councillor S.J.G Gilasbey;
Councillor D.M. Cundy – Substitute for Councillor T. Higgins;
Councillor T. Evans – Substitute for Councillor A. James.

Also in attendance:

Councillor H.A.L. Evans, Executive Board Member for Environment;
Councillor P.M. Hughes, Executive Board Member for Public Protection.

The following Officers were in attendance:

R. Mullen, Director of Environment;
R. Hemingway, Head of Financial Services;
S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways;
A. Williams, Head of Waste and Environmental Services;
J. Morgan, Acting Head of Homes & Safer Communities;
S. Charles, Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager;
H. Morgan, Economic Development Manager;
A. Kenyon, Performance Management Officer;
K. Thomas, Community Safety Manager;
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

Chamber, 3 Spilman Street, Carmarthen – 10:00am - 12:25pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Davies, S.J.G Gilasbey, T. Higgins, A. James, S. Phillips, B.D.J. Phillips and A.D.T. Speake.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

5. PRESENTATION ON THE TYWI VALLEY PATH PROJECT

The Committee, received a presentation on the Tywi Valley Path Project in as requested by the Committee at its meeting on 12th February 2018 [minute 8 refers].

The presentation provided the Committee with information and illustrated key aspects of the project which included:-

- The background and key objectives of the project;
- The proposed route;
- Economic benefits to the region;
- Associated health benefits;
- Impact on road safety;
- Benefits realised on other similar schemes.

In addition, the Committee was afforded the opportunity to view the fly-through promotional video of the Tywi Valley Path.

The following queries were raised on conclusion of the presentation:-

- It was asked, if the money spent on the Tywi Path would have a detrimental impact on the other cycle routes within the County? The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager clarified that there were currently two funding streams and that the money for Tywi Path was predominately funded from external sources which had been ring-fenced and not included within the Active Travel fund.
- It was commented that whilst the Tywi Path development was welcomed and the benefits were recognised, it was queried if officers could provide further information with regard to opportunities for the local building trade. The Head of Transportation & Highways reported that due to the scope and scale of the entire scheme, there is a significant construction element to the works which will provide opportunities for employment. Framework contract arrangements were in place which included local suppliers. Furthermore, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager also confirmed that the Framework arrangements including an obligation for contractors to deliver community benefits.
- In response to a query relating to the costs per kilometre of the path, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated he would not be able to provide detailed information on the costs per kilometre until after the land negotiations had been completed. However, the total scheme would cost in the region of £5-8m.
- A concern was raised that cyclists would not utilise the path in a circular motion and perhaps use the A40 as a leg of their journey. It was asked what measures were being put in place to encourage cyclists to stick to the path. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager confirmed that there would be many attractions at located at various points along the length of the path to encourage users to remain on the safe passage of the path.

- With regard to the completion date for the Tywi Valley Path, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that the estimated completion date was set for August 2020.
- Following a query, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager confirmed that through the cycling strategy, the scheme would be seeking to work closely with other cycle routes throughout Carmarthenshire, in order to present and promote the common branding 'Carmarthenshire, the cycling hub for Wales'.
- Following a query raised in relation to the increase in local objections, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager explained that a number of years ago Sustrans tried to develop the route and did receive objections during early consultation. However, in November 2015, the Council re-addressed the pre-consultation phase and invited all land owners to attend a presentation which provided information on the proposed development of the Tywi Valley Path. The success of the presentation resulted in the public being more informed and reduced the number of objections significantly. Furthermore, the project team continued to work with landowners in order to achieve mutual suitable solutions. The Director of Environment added that landowners had raised legitimate concerns and the team have worked hard to alleviate those concerns raised, adjusting the route where possible to better meet the needs. Furthermore, due to good relations with landowners, the timeframe of the project has shortened, allowing an earlier than anticipated completion date.
- It was asked, how many employment opportunities would the project create? The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that following the completion of the project there would be between 17 and 41 jobs created both directly and indirectly, which included the hospitality trade.
- It was recognised that on a practical level, areas of the path would be surrounded by trees. It was therefore asked if there was a cleaning plan for the leaves and debris which could prove to be hazardous to users. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that there would be a dedicated resource to the scheme providing an effective and robust maintenance programme.
- A query was raised regarding access to motorised vehicles. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that there would be access restrictions in place to motor vehicles with expectation of emergency service vehicles and that there would be measures in place in order to deter and prohibit the use of motorised vehicles.
- It was asked, how much the total scheme was to the Authority? The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that the 5 year capital budget had included capital funding of circa £2m. However, it was reported that the scheme costs could reduce as and when alternative funding was made available.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

6. CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2017/18

The Committee considered the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report as at 28th February in respect of the 2017/18 financial year. The report provided members with budget monitoring information for the Environment Service, Public Protection Service and the Community Safety Service and considered the budgetary position.

In summary, the revenue budget for the services within the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny remit were forecasting a £307k overspend.

Whereas, the main variances on capital schemes showed a forecasted net spend of £8,493k compared with a working net budget of £11,592k giving a £-3,099k variance.

The following issues were raised during consideration of the report:-

- Reference was made to Appendix B, a query was raised regarding the vacant posts within business support. The Director of Environment stated that that the vacant posts were as a result of a recent realignment of services and that the posts would be appointed shortly.
- A query was raised regarding the vacant positions within the Public Rights of Way department. The Transportation and Highways Manager stated that a Countryside Access Officer had recently been appointed. He also advised that a wider review of the Public Rights of Way was currently underway which was coming to a close.
- Reference was made to Appendix B – Green Waste Collection. In response to a query raised the Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained that it was envisaged that the Green Waste Collection Scheme would be in a position to pay for itself, 'self-financing' in 3-4 years. However, the timeframe and the ability to become self-financing would depend on the number of customers using the scheme.
- A further query was raised in regarding scheme's customers who have difficulties lifting and/or have access issues. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services stated that it was acknowledged that the current provision, in terms of the use of hessian sacks was not an ideal solution that could be universally applied and that there was a Health and Safety consideration with regards to operatives lifting the heavy sacks. The Health and Safety department in conjunction with officers were pursuing to agree a workable and safe solution. In light of this, it was commented that elderly customers would also have difficulty managing the heavy hessian sacks. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services stated that a review of this aspect of the service would likely to be completed by the end of May 2018. To assist householders in managing the distribution of waste, the Executive Board Member for Environment reminded the Committee that compost bins were also available as an option to the public for a fee of £12.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. 2017/18 WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 3

The Committee considered a report detailing progress against the actions and measures in the 2017/18 Well-being Objectives delivery plan relevant to the Committee's remit, as at 31st December, 2017.

The following queries were raised on the report:-

- Reference was made to missed target relating to the percentage of waste sent to landfill. It was asked, if there was any capacity to store waste, should a similar scenario occur? The Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained the difficulties of storing 'black waste' and that Carmarthenshire had a limited storage capacity. However, longer term solutions were currently being considered with partners Cwm Environmental.
- A query was raised in relation to the future of bus services. The Head of Transportation and Highways stated that whilst funding had been reducing the Department had sought external opportunities for funding. For example the Traws Cymru and Bwcabus services were developed through external funding. The Department would continue to pursue external funding opportunities.
- Generally, across Wales, patronage on public transport falling but interventions such as Bwcabus were bucking that trend. However if patronage falls on the public transport network services would be at risk.
- In response to an additional query regarding plans to extend the Bwcabus service into other areas. The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that Bwcabus had been originally funded for 3 years by a European Grant but the project had now run to nine years due to its success, the project had recently been extended into Pembrokeshire. The Authority will continue to explore options to sustain the service. Expanding the service would be considered further should the funding opportunity arise.
- Clarification was sought in relation to the definition of 'street' within the performance measure set out on page 32 of the report 'the percentage of streets that are cleaned'. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services stated the different levels cleanliness for different types of streets are set out within a guide created by Keep Wales Tidy.
- In response to a comment raised regarding the high amount of litter emanating from fast food outlets, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services stated that the strategy team were currently working with fast food outlets throughout Carmarthenshire in order to attempt to better manage the litter issue. The Director of Environment added that the UK had the highest rate of people who eat and drink on the move. In addition to current enforcement measures in place, it was identified that educating the public on the impact of litter in the countryside could prove beneficial.

- It was raised that Town/Community Councils were forming litter picking groups. In order to lead by example, it was suggested that the Committee arrange a litter picking day. The Committee agreed that this would be beneficial and would consider and agree on a location before the end of June 2018.
- In response to a query regarding the reduction of the operation vehicle fleet by 1% of the year, the Head of Transportation and Highways explained that the authority had been reducing the number of vehicles to help deliver efficiencies. This reduction however, had not been made at the detriment to the quality of services provided. For example, gritting vehicles had reduced from 35 to 21, by replacing dedicated gritting vehicles to dual function vehicles that provided a more efficient operation. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services added that similarly this had been the case with the waste/cleansing fleet.
- With regard to 'supporting safer communities', an update was requested on the current situation on CCTV's in Carmarthenshire. The Community Safety Manager stated that the installation of the Police system in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford town centres was running on target for completion in the summer. It was reported that the new police funded CCTV system would be monitored at Police Headquarters and that the location of the cameras have been identified by the Police. The Community Safety Manager added that, the Authority would be considering the locations of the old CCTV cameras owned by the Council that have not been included within the new Police Funded system.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. CARMARTHENSHIRE PARKING STRATEGY

The Committee received the Parking Strategy which had been reviewed and developed as an action arising from the Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group review of parking.

The Committee noted that the aims of the Parking Strategy was to ensure that future changes to the parking provision were both forward thinking and supportive of the economic attractiveness and vitality of the diverse areas within Carmarthenshire and that town centres had a balanced mix of transport modes to reduce risk of congestion with the consequential impacts on air quality.

The report sought Scrutiny Committee's comments prior to further consideration by Executive Board.

The following queries were raised on the report:-

- It was asked, if there were any proposals to deal with the high levels of demand on parking spaces within Ammanford? The Head of Transportation and Highways stated that the results of an analysis of data for the peak periods of activity during August and December 2016. Activity has changed since that time and the data indicates that that the current parking levels were adequate.
- In response to a query regarding the parking of motorhomes, the Head of

Transportation and Highways acknowledged that this was a growth sector which would be considered further in the future. Following a further query, it was confirmed that motorhomes can currently use the car parks but would need to pay for the car parking bays that they use, if the motorhome extended to two bays, they would be required to pay for two bays.

- It was commented that the public seemed unaware when the free car parking days were. The Executive Board Member for Environment stated that the setting of the free car parking days was a decision made by each Town Council and as a prerequisite, Town Councils were requested to publicise accordingly.
- Reference was made to the Demand and Capacity graphs in relation to Llanelli set out on pages 7 & 8 of the report. It was commented that the demand for car parking spaces seemed low and underused and that the short stay bays could be cheaper. The Head of Transportation and Highways confirmed that there is capacity at the Llanelli car parks, short stay charging is required at town centres to prioritise spaces for shoppers not commuters. He confirmed that parking ticket sales were pretty consistent when compared to previous years.
- In relation to the installation of card payment machines, a comment was raised urging the Council to provide options of payment to include 'contactless' as soon as possible. The Executive Board Member for Environment stated that it was intended to replace the current ticket machines with Wi-Fi enabled card payments which was currently being reviewed.
- The Head of Transportation and Highways stated the funds for the card machines would need to be made available and that a bid for capital funding is required. In response to an additional query, the Committee was informed that the revenue surplus from carparks was used to sustain highway and transport services that included public transport.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD that the Parking Strategy be approved.

9. DRAFT NEW CORPORATE STRATEGY 2018-23

Members received the draft new Corporate Strategy 2018-23. The draft new Corporate Strategy would replace the current one which was published in 2015 and would consolidate the following plans into one document:-

- the 2015-20 Corporate Strategy;
- the Improvement Objectives, as required by the Local Government Measure 2009;
- The Wellbeing Objectives as required by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- Carmarthenshire County Council's Executive Board key projects and Programmes for the next 5 years, as set out in "Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire: the next 5 years".

The Committee noted that the same set of Well-being objectives for 2018/19 would be kept along with an additional objective 'Building a Better Council and Making Better Use of Resources'.

The Committee considered the relevant well-being objectives relevant to the remit of the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee as follows:-

Well-being objective	Actions (Reference)	Measures (Reference)
8 - Live Well-Help people live healthy lives	Reference A – Eat and Breath Healthily	A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7;
	Reference B – Physical Activity	B4 and B5
9 – Live Well/Age Well – Support good connections with friends, family and safer communities	Reference B – We will promote and develop strong connections for people, places and organisations	B1 and B2
	Reference C – We will identify the strengths and resource within communities which can contribute to promoting an supporting the health and wellbeing of neighbours	C4
	Reference D – With our partners we will continue to support Safer Communities	All measures, D1 – D11
12 – Healthy and Safety Environment – Look after the environment now and in the future	Reference A – Address requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016	All measures, A1 – A12
	Reference B – We monitor delivery of CCC’s Environment Act Forward Plan	B1
	Reference C – We will continue to implement and promote the increased use of renewable energy	All measures, C1 – C3
	Reference D – We will protect our environment and properties through delivering our Flood and Waste Management Plan; and protect and manage our coast by delivering the Shoreline Management Plan	D1
	Reference E – We will deliver actions form the ‘Towards Zero Waste strategy’, to become a high recycling nation by 2025 and a zero waste nation by 2050.	All measures, E1 - E12
13 – Healthy and Safe Environment – Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity	Reference A- We will develop the highway infrastructure to meet the priorities of our Regeneration Plan	All measures A1 – 16
	Reference B – We will continue to successful integrated public transport network	B1 and B2
	Reference C – We will plan to redesign our school transport network to support the modernising Education Programme	C1
	Reference D – We will continue to support community transport	D1
	Reference E – We will meet our objectives set out in our Road Safety Strategy	All measures E1 – E15
	Reference F – Modernising our vehicle fleet	F1

The Director of Environment informed the Committee that some of the measures and actions within Objective 12 overlap with Community Scrutiny however the necessary information would also be provided to this Committee.

It asked how progress on the Well-being objectives would be reported, the Economic Development Manager stated that all actions and measures would be reported via the internal performance management system PIMS and returned to the relevant Scrutiny Committees on a quarterly basis.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD that the draft new Corporate Strategy 2018-23 be endorsed.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIONS UPDATE

The Committee received a report detailing the progress achieved in relation to actions, requests or referrals emerging from meetings since 2nd October 2017.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

11. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meetings to be held on 18th May, 2018 be noted.

12. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE:-

12.1. 15TH JANUARY 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held on the 15th January, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

12.2. 12TH FEBRUARY 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held on the 12th February, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE