

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 FEBRUARY 2019

PRESENT: Councillor J.D. James (Chair)

Councillors:

J.M. Charles, T.A.J. Davies, J.A. Davies, K. Davies, A.L. Fox, B.D.J. Phillips,
A.D.T. Speake, D. Thomas and A. Vaughan Owen.

Also in attendance:

Councillor G. Jones – Substitute for Councillor P. Edwards;
Councillor T. Evans – Substitute for Councillor S. Phillips;
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:

A. Williams, Head of Waste and Environmental Services;
S. Charles, Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager;
D.W. John, Waste Services Manager;
P. Morris, Environmental Enforcement Manager;
R. S. Waters, Highways and Transportation Manager;
A. Price, Public Lighting Engineer;
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen: 10:00am - 12:00pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Edwards, S.J.G. Gilasbey, T. Higgins and J.S. Phillips.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. REVIEW OF LED CONVERSION PROJECT

The Committee considered a report which provided 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 third phase of the program.

The following was raised in relation to the report:-

- Appreciation was expressed with regard to the expeditious turnover from old style lighting to the new LED lanterns at Travellers Rest, Carmarthen.
- In response to number of queries raised in respect of the LED lighting and Town and Community Councils, the Public Lighting Engineer informed the Committee that detailed costings were currently being considered and would be provided in the form of a written report.

The Public Lighting Engineer, in response to a further query stated that details would be forwarded to all Town and Community Councils upon completion of the report.

- It was commented that the LED lighting emitted less light than the previous standard lighting. The Public Lighting Engineer explained that he had received a mixed response to the LED lights with some comments stating they were too bright. However, with the new LED lights emitting a more directional light, people quickly become accustomed to the new lighting.
- In response to a query, the Public Lighting Engineer stated that the conversion to LED lighting would not have any impact on the current staffing levels.

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

5. 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 communities
- Active Travel Act and Local Authority Obligations
- Road Safety Improvement and Footway Improvement Programme
- Road Safety Grant (Capital and Revenue)
- 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 2018/19 and the prioritised programme for road safety, footway and other infrastructure.

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

- Reference was made to the Electronic Vehicle (EV) Charge Points. It was asked if Members could receive a map which symbolised where the EV Charge Points were located. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager acknowledged that the current provision of EV charging points was limited and that in terms of the bid it was intended to increase the provision to be available on a further 25 sites. Upon success of this bid a map denoting all EV charging points would be shared with members of the Committee.

In response to a further query regarding input from Town and Community Councils, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager explained that whilst the bid for 2018/19 had already been submitted input from Town and Community Councils would be welcomed.

Concern was raised regarding the lack of EV charge points located in rural areas. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that next tranche of bids would include the widening of the EV charging provision into rural areas.

- It was asked if the increased usage of mobility scooters had been taken into consideration, the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager explained that the planning, design, approval, construction and maintenance of active travel routes in Wales must be done so in accordance with the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 Design Guidance. Designing the travel networks using the design model would ensure accessibility to all and included the maintenance of the accessibility to tracks for all legitimate users, including all types of cycle, pedestrians and wheelchair/mobility scooter users.
- Reference was made to the section relating to Safer Routes in Communities. It was raised that the road outside Model School, Carmarthen was an excellent example of a safe route to school, due to the traffic calming measures in place which included a traffic speed restriction of 20mph. However, despite the traffic calming measures being in place it was commented that much of the traffic exceeded the 20mph restriction. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager explained that in locations where lower speed limits had been introduced, it was envisioned that the measures in place would adopt a self-enforcing tactic. However, should this prove to be unsuccessful, a case would be put to the Speed Limit Working Group.
- It was strongly emphasised that a National Speed Limit of 60mph was not acceptable through small rural villages, it therefore asked, if it was possible to set a blanket speed limit of 30mph through all small rural villages? The Highways and Transportation Manager explained that the set National Speed Limit for roads with street lighting was 30mph.

However, the current speed limit regime enabled traffic authorities to set a local speed limit in situations where local needs and conditions suggest a speed limit which is different from the respective national speed limit. In addition, speed limits should be evidence-led and self-explaining and would primarily seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel.

- In response to a query raised in relation to the Integrated Network Map (INM) that was submitted in 2017 and approved by the Welsh Government. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager explained that the INM was set out in relation to the number of built up areas of a population in excess of 2k, schemes within semi-rural areas were widely spread throughout the County, details were provided within the report thereto. Furthermore, whilst the schemes were prescribed from Welsh Government which currently concentrate on urban areas, meetings had taken place to emphasise that many rural areas within Wales could benefit from such schemes.
- Reference was made to the Road Safety Education and Training - National Standards Cycle Training. It was queried if any evidence was available which would demonstrate that the training work with the children had increased the uptake of cycling to school. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager explained whilst it was difficult to measure the direct uptake, one of the key areas in the safer routes to communities was to educate both year 6 children and adults in an effort to encourage them to opt for cycling as the method of active travel to their chosen secondary school.
- Concern was raised regarding the increase in school related traffic and the chaos that this generated during peak drop off and pick up times. In an attempt to alleviate the traffic problems, it was asked, if it was possible to stagger school's start and finish times? The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated whilst this had been successfully trialled in England, it was difficult to ascertain the corporate position in terms of the shared school transport services. The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager stated that he would discuss this option further internally. A Member of the Committee raised that School Governors had authority to adjust school start times and finish times.

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

6. ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT TEAM ACTIVITY UPDATE

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the work and activity undertaken by the Environmental Enforcement Unit the report included the Carmarthenshire's General Enforcement Policy and planned work programme 2019.

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

- Introduction and Background
- Offences dealt with:-
 - Dog fouling
 - Litter
 - Fly tipping
 - Duty of Care
 - Graffiti and Fly posting
 - Abandoned Vehicles
 - Highway Offences
- Current Situation
- Successes
- Future

It was reported that in accordance with the current statutory requirements, Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) require to be renewed every 3 years. As Carmarthenshire implemented PSPO's in 2016 a renewal would be required later prior to July this year. In readiness for the renewal, the Committee noted that a consultation was currently ongoing and that outcomes of the consultation would be reported to the Committee at its meeting in May 2019.

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

- Reference was made to the number of dog fouling complaints. It was commented that as dog fouling was a significant problem it was surprising to note that only 396 complaints had been received in relation to dog fouling. The Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that often members of the public were reluctant to raise an official complaint due to the intelligence necessary to enable a successful prosecution which in turn deters the reporting of fouling offences. However, it was emphasised that complainants could remain anonymous by providing information such as the location of regular re-occurrences including days and times in order for resources to be directed accordingly possibly leading to a prosecution.

It was asked if it was possible to increase the publicity that dog fouling was an offence. The Environmental Enforcement Manager stated that the press and social media platforms were utilised as much as possible. Examples of recent campaigns were explained to the Committee.

It was commented that Llanboidy Community Council had developed a flyer/poster to raise awareness the dog fouling was an offence and how to report offenders. The Environmental Enforcement Manager commended this and any form of initiative to eradicate from a preventative point of view.

As an example of best practice, the Committee wished to ask Llanboidy Community Council if a copy could be forwarded to the Committee and Officers.

- The Environmental Enforcement Manager, in response to a query raised in relation to the current amount of the current fixed penalty and if it was enough of a deterrent. The Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that the fixed penalty of £100 was restricted by law and that the Authority did not have any powers to increase the amount.

Furthermore, the Environmental Enforcement Manager reported that following agreement with the Police, he had recently completed training Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) throughout the County which enabled them to act as Enforcement Officers on the Authority's behalf.

- In response to a query raised regarding vehicles for sale on the roadside, the Environmental Enforcement Manager stated that it whilst it was not an offence to sell a vehicle at the roadside it is illegal for one person to sell two cars or more on the same stretch of road i.e. within 500m of each other. This legislation was aimed to eliminate roadside car dealers.
- It was commented that the litter surrounding fast food outlets was an increasing problem. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained that the Waste Department were currently working closely with fast food outlets throughout the County which included discussions regarding the provision of litter bins.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Environmental Enforcement Activity Update report be received.

7. HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES POLICY REPORT

The Committee considered a report which provided information on the proposed new policies in relation to waste restrictions on Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

The report detailed information in relation to:-

- Site Performance Factors
 - Commercial Waste
 - Waste from neighbouring counties
 - Recycling Waste
- Opening Times
- Recommendations including Savings and Impact

The report highlighted that Carmarthenshire County Council provided waste services to approximately 89,000 households and currently offered a fortnightly residual black waste collection and co-mingled kerbside recycling service as well as a weekly food collection.

The Committee noted that should the proposals outlined in the report be adopted, a 4.1% increase in the County's overall recycling rate and a potential net saving to the waste budget of approximately £275k for reinvestment into other initiatives to further increase recycling could be achieved.

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

- Clarification was sought on the HWRC opening times. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services confirmed that whilst it was proposed to reduce the opening times by one hour summer to 6:00pm and in the winter to 4:00pm all sites would be open 7 days a week.
- In response to a query raised in relation to residency checks at HWRC's, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained that the current legislation stipulate Local Authorities to provide free access for local residents to HWRC's to deposit household waste and recycling. However, following the introduction of tighter restrictions across Swansea's HWRC network during 2016, Carmarthenshire had experienced a significant increase in waste deposited at Carmarthenshire Council's HWRC facilities.

In an attempt to reduce costs and increase recycling performance targets, it was suggested that the use of Carmarthenshire Council's HWRC's by 'non-local' residents be prohibited, hence the necessity to seek proof of residency in the form of a driver's licence/utility bill upon entry.

- In relation to a comment raised regarding the recycling provision in the North of the County, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services stated that a Household Waste Recycling Centre Provision report had been included on the Committee's Forward Work Programme 2019-2020.
- In response to a query regarding commercial waste, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services stated that there would be opportunities in the future to capitalise on commercial waste when upon diversion to the Council's Teckal Company; CWM Environmental Ltd.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO EXECUTIVE BOARD that the following proposals in respect of Carmarthenshire County Council's HWRC's be approved:

- **Reduce opening hours by 1 hour each day – 1st April 2019.**
- **Ban on commercial waste – 1st April 2019.**
- **Residency checks – phased from 1st April 2019.**
- **Permit system – 3rd June 2019.**
- **Black bag sorting – phased from 1st October 2019.**

8. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee noted the non-submission of the Budget Monitoring Report which in line with the reporting cycle would be considered at the next Committee meeting on 18th April 2019.

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received the forthcoming items for the next meeting scheduled to take place on 18th April 2019.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items for the Committee meeting to be held on the 18th April, 2019 be agreed.

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

10.1. 10TH DECEMBER 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held on the 10th December, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

10.2. 14TH JANUARY 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held on the 14th January, 2019 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE