

**ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15th APRIL 2016**

Present: Councillor A.P. Cooper (Chair)

Councillors: A. Davies, D.B. Davies, P.M. Edwards, D.C. Evans, I.J. Jackson (Vice-Chair), A.D.T. Speake, D.E. Williams

**Councillor W.T. Evans – Substitute for Councillor W.J. Lemon
Councillor J.D. James – Substitute for Councillor W.G. Thomas
Councillor H.I. Jones – Substitute for Councillor J.A. Davies
Councillor T. Theophilus – Substitute for Councillor A. James**

Also in attendance:

**Councillor H.A.L. Evans – Executive Board Member for Technical Services
Councillor T.J. Jones – Executive Board Member for Environmental & Public Protection**

Councillor P.A. Palmer – Executive Board Member for Communities (including Police Liaison, Community Safety and Social Justice / Crime & Disorder)

The following officers were in attendance:

Mr. S. Pilliner – Head of Transport & Engineering
Mr. J. McEvoy – Road Safety & Traffic Manager
Mrs. S. Watts – Public Health Services Manager
Mr. M. Hughes – Assistant Consultant

Venue: Spilman Street Chamber, Carmarthen (10:00 – 11:00am)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.A. Davies, A. James. W.J. Lemon and W.G. Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of party whips.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

No public questions were received.

5. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

Clarification was sought as to when the corporate manslaughter development session requested by the Committee, would be held. The Assistant Consultant informed the Committee that its request had been referred to the Learning & Development Unit but as yet, no date had been arranged. The Executive Board Member for Technical Services confirmed that this development session had been provided for Executive Board members and that it would now be offered to all members.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on Friday 13th May 2016, be noted.

6. ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

The Committee considered the Carmarthenshire County Council's second Road Safety Strategy for 2016-20. The Committee received a brief presentation which outlined the strategy's aims to address a number of key challenges, namely:

- Reducing the number of road deaths and serious injuries
- Rural road safety
- Working to protect young persons and motorcyclists
- Reducing inappropriate and illegal road user behaviour including speeding, drink and drug driving, and careless and dangerous driving
- Protecting pedestrians and cyclists
- Improving the Authority's knowledge and understanding of casualty data to solve road safety problems

The Committee was informed that the Authority would continue to invest in road safety through funding of road safety education, evaluation and engineering and continued support for enforcement action by the Police. Officers would also continue to engage in collaboration and partnership working to deliver road safety education initiatives and identify sites for enforcement and engineering intervention.

The following issues were raised in relation to the report:

Reference was made to the increasing number of road safety incidents involving older drivers and in response to a question on the relationship between General Practitioners (GPs) and the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), the Head of Transport & Engineering stated that GPs and DVLA relied on individuals declaring any medical issues or conditions that might disqualify them from holding their driving licence any longer. He informed the Committee that in light of the recent refuse lorry accident in Glasgow, the DVLA had issued new guidance to GPs on the requirements to notify DVLA, although the issue of patient confidentiality is a difficult one for GPs.

It was asked whether the data gathered by the Authority in relation to road traffic collisions enabled officers to drill down and look at trends relating to the time of day or weather conditions when an accident took place. The Head of Engineering & Transport informed the Committee that this was possible and it was a key piece of work which the Authority wanted to develop in order to help officers better understand the data and potential causes of accidents. A Data Sub-Group was due to be established by the local Road Action Safety Group to action this work.

In response to a comment regarding young people's perceptions of risk, the Head of Transport & Engineering acknowledged that this was a challenging area for officers as individuals' understanding of risk often did not develop fully until their mid-twenties which made the Authority's work with young people all the more critical.

Clarification was sought in relation to the criteria for establishing 20mph zones outside schools and whether this was now compulsory. The Head of Transport & Engineering stated that it was not compulsory to introduce these zones outside schools but it was a policy aspiration of Welsh Government. Establishing such zones outside schools was based on assessment criteria linked with the number of incidents, traffic and pedestrian volumes but ultimately, the programme was dependent on the funds available at any given time.

Reference was made to those driving for work and that elected members had been required to provide details of their insurance policies to confirm that their vehicles were insured for business use. It was asked whether elected members were now covered by the Authority's Driving at Work policies and whether members could have sight of these documents. The Head of Transport & Engineering informed the Committee that the Authority had a 'Fleet Road Risk' Policy as well as a 'Travelwise Work Wise' guide and other guidelines for driving on work business and he was happy to circulate these to members. These policies included ensuring that fleet drivers were qualified and were adequately trained. The Authority's expenses system required that officers confirm that in submitting claims, their vehicles were insured for business use, maintained to the required standard and the driver had a valid driving licence. He added that in recent years, an incident rate of 44% involving drivers on Council business had been reduced to 25% by instigating a wide range of interventions and policies.

It was asked whether schools were required to take part in cycling proficiency courses and to date, how many took part in such activities. The Head of Transport & Engineering stated that he did not have the data to hand but was happy to circulate further details to the Committee. He added that as well as the Authority, the Police also provided such courses in schools.

In response to comments regarding speed / accident reduction interventions on the A40 / A48 in and around Carmarthen, the Head of Transport & Engineering reminded the Committee that the South Wales Trunk Road Agency (SWTRA) would be aware of any injuries or fatalities occurring on these trunk routes and the Police and GoSafe (the Welsh Road Casualty Reduction Partnership) enforced speed limits. He reminded members that SWTRA had introduced improvements along the A48 between Cross Hands and Pont Abraham including the closing of cross-over junctions. He agreed to request an update from the Agency regarding any future plans it had for improving safety on the A48 between Cross Hands and Carmarthen.

It was asked whether officers provided training for users of mobility scooters, as they were often seen on the county's roads around villages and towns. The Head of Transport & Engineering acknowledged the comment but added that to date, the data had not identified any accidents or incidents directly related to the use of mobility scooters.

In response to a question on the process of implementing engineering safety measures, the Head of Transport & Engineering stated that the delay experienced between requesting improvements and implementation was simply related to the resources available. The service had a budget of £194,000 set aside for new signs/road markings across the whole network and therefore all requests had to be prioritised. Occasionally however, some projects could be supported via grant funding.

Reference was made to drink driving and it was asked whether local shops could play a part in reporting drivers who were already under the influence of alcohol and yet were buying more. The Head of Transport & Engineering stated that as this was a criminal matter, it was for the Police to target such individuals.

It was suggested that many individuals who were caught speeding were actually residents of the local area and it was asked whether there was a means of 'naming and shaming' in order to reduce the incidents of speeding. The Head of Transport & Engineering again noted that speeding enforcement was a matter for the Police and not the Authority. However, he added that one successful scheme to deter speeding had been the partnership between the Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, schools and the Authority. Those caught speeding were offered the choice of accepting a penalty fine or speaking to the local school children to explain their actions. The Executive Board Member for Communities informed the Committee that the Community Safety Partnership had purchased speed monitoring equipment to be used by communities within the county as a means of monitoring and deterring speeding motorists within their communities. The Head of Transport & Engineering stated that he was unable to confirm how many communities had taken up the offer of utilising this equipment but he could circulate details to members.

The introduction of a 20mph zone in Saron (near Ammanford) was welcomed and clarification sought as to what proposals were being developed for the Capel Hendre cross roads. The Head of Engineering informed the Committee that design options for improving safety at the junction were being developed although the challenge would be to implement any changes within the resources currently available.

Reference was made to the speed camera on Pontaman Road (A474) in Ammanford which had been labelled with a 'camera not working' sign. Whilst this was not the responsibility of the Local Authority, it was asked whether there was any specific reason for this camera was no longer a deterrent to speeding drivers. The Head of Transport & Engineering suggested that this either related to maintenance work on the camera or was linked to a Department of Transport directive to inform drivers of the location of speed cameras and whether or not they were in use.

The Committee **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that:

- 6.1 The report be received.
- 6.2 The action measures outlined in the Road Safety Strategy for 2016-20 be endorsed for consideration by the Executive Board.

7. THE ENVIRONMENT ACT 1995 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON CARMARTHEN AIR QUALITY

The Committee considered an update on the consultation process undertaken in relation to a proposal to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) within Carmarthen. The Committee noted that it had previously been consulted on the proposal at its meeting in April 2015. The report outlined the responses received during the consultation period which commenced on the 5th October 2015 and ended on the 30th November 2015. No specific objections were received in respect of setting the boundary although the Public Health Services Manager acknowledged that concerns had been raised that the proposed boundary did not include Job's Well Road, College Road or Llansteffan Road.

The following issues were raised in relation to the report:

Disappointment was expressed that Job's Well Road, College Road and Llansteffan Road remained outside the AQMA boundary. The Public Health Services Manager informed the Committee that due to the supporting evidence required to designate an AQMA, air quality monitoring previously carried out on these roads had indicated that it was unlikely there would be a breach of the Air Quality Objective (AQO). However, due consideration had been given to the concerns in respect of these roads and it was acknowledged that some sections of the roads suffered from considerable congestion at peak times. The new Carmarthen West development and Link Road also had to be taken in to account and, as yet, the impacts from these developments were unknown. It was considered that the link road would relieve pressure on these roads and with these factors in mind, it was not considered appropriate for them to be included within the AQMA boundary at this time. However, these areas would be continue to be monitored and could be included at a future date, should it be required.

Reference was made to the NO₂ Diffusion Tube results for 50 Priory Street and it was asked what could have caused such a significant increase after 2011/12. The Public Health Services Manager stated that the reason was unknown but might have been as a result of road works, introduction of traffic lights or the weather. She added that should the proposal to declare an AQMA be approved, action groups involving a variety of officers would analyse this data in more detail to ascertain the reasons for this variance. The Head of Transport & Engineering stated that it was likely to be the result of a combination of factors such as vehicle technology improvements, traffic flow and the introduction of a 20mph zone outside Richmond Park School.

The Committee **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the report be received and that the Executive Board be recommended to endorse:

- 7.1 The proposal to issue an Order designating the boundary of an Air Quality Management Area, (AQMA), for Carmarthen as illustrated in attached

report;

- 7.2 The proposal to set up a Steering Group made up of all relevant stakeholders to assist in the development of an Action Plan and;
- 7.3 The proposal to develop an Action Plan in accordance with legislative requirements that will pursue the improvement of air quality and the reduction of nitrogen dioxide levels within the AQMA.

8. THE ENVIRONMENT ACT 1995 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON LLANELLI AIR QUALITY

The Committee considered an update on the consultation process undertaken in relation to a proposal to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) within Llanelli. The Committee noted that it had previously been consulted on the proposal at its meeting in April 2015. The report outlined the responses received during the consultation period which commenced on the 5th October 2015 and ended on the 30th November 2015. No specific objections had been received in respect of setting the boundary and the need to designate an AQMA. However, the Committee was informed that following a significant response received requesting that Sandy Road be included within the boundary of the AQMA, the proposed boundary map had now been amended to include both Sandy Road and Bassett Terrace.

Reference was made to the poor air quality in Llandeilo and it was asked whether there was any update on progress relating to the proposed by-pass. The Executive Board Member for Technical Services informed the Committee that since a By-Pass Forum meeting early in the new year, both she and the Head of transport & Engineering had been pressing the Welsh Government Minister for clarification on the status of the scheme. The Head of Transport & Engineering stated that the last communication received from the Welsh Government had stated that various studies were due to commence in February / March and would include ecology and hydrology studies along the preferred routes. Officers were eager to keep the relevant local stakeholders informed but to date, no response had been received.

It was suggested that an update on the Air Quality Management Area in Llandeilo be presented to the Committee at a later date. The Public Health Services Manager agreed to include this in the Committee's work programme for 2016/17.

The Committee **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the report be received and that the Executive Board be recommended to endorse:

- 8.1 The proposal to issue an Order designating the boundary of an Air Quality Management Area, (AQMA), for Llanelli as illustrated in attached report;
- 8.2 The proposal to set up a Steering Group made up of all relevant stakeholders to assist in the development of an Action Plan and;
- 8.3 The proposal to develop an Action Plan in accordance with legislative requirements that will pursue the improvement of air quality and the reduction of nitrogen dioxide levels within the AQMA.

9. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

RESOLVED that the reason for the non-submission of the Committee's Task and Finish Group Final Report relating to Car Parking Charges, be noted.

10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 26TH FEBRUARY 2016

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 26th February 2016 be signed as a correct record.

SIGNED: _____ (Chair)

DATE: _____