

Document Pack



sirgar.llyw.cymru
carmarthenshire.gov.wales

MONDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2020

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE CHAMBER, - COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN. SA31 1JP. AT 10.00 AM ON FRIDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY, 2020 FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA.

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PLEASE RECYCLE



Democratic Officer:	Janine Owen
Telephone (Direct Line):	01267 224030
E-Mail:	JanineOwen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 MEMBERS

PLAID CYMRU GROUP – 8 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Karen Davies |
| 2. | Councillor | Mansel Charles |
| 3. | Councillor | Jeanette Gilasbey |
| 4. | Councillor | Dorian Phillips |
| 5. | Councillor | Susan Phillips |
| 6. | Councillor | Alan Speake |
| 7. | Councillor | Dai Thomas |
| 8. | Councillor | Aled Vaughan Owen (Vice Chair) |

LABOUR GROUP – 3 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|--------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Penny Edwards |
| 2. | Councillor | Tina Higgins |
| 3. | Councillor | John James (Chair) |

INDEPENDENT GROUP – 2 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|---------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Arwel Davies |
| 2. | Councillor | Joseph Davies |

NEW INDEPENDENT GROUP – 1 MEMBER

- | | | |
|----|------------|-------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Eryl Morgan |
|----|------------|-------------|

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.
3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)
4. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT 5 - 6
5. HIGHWAY FOOTWAY AND ROAD SAFETY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE 7 - 18
6. TASK AND FINISH MONITORING REPORT 19 - 30
7. ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIONS UPDATE 31 - 40
8. REFERRAL FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - JOINT TRANSPORT PLAN FOR SOUTH WEST WALES 41 - 44
9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS 45 - 46
10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 13TH JANUARY 2020 47 - 54

This page is intentionally left blank

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	EXPLANATION	REVISED SUBMISSION DATE
AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA (AQMA) ANNUAL UPDATE	Sue Watts, Environmental Protection Manager	<p>The section is awaiting further results from the current air monitoring programme which will provide a better overall picture county wide for air quality.</p> <p>Additionally, meetings have been proposed to review the current action plans. It is anticipated that the outcomes of the meetings will provide more meaningful position for proposed future actions for improving air quality.</p>	17 th April 2020

This page is intentionally left blank

ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

HIGHWAY FOOTWAY AND ROAD SAFETY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

Purpose:

To provide an update on the current investment programme in relation to road safety and associated infrastructure.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

That the Committee considers and comments on the current investment programme in relation to road safety and associated infrastructure.

Reasons:

For the Committee's information.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Councillor H.A.L Evans - Environment

Directorate		
Name of Head of Service: S. Pilliner	Designations: Head of Transport & Engineering	Tel Nos. 01267 228150 01267 228136
Report Author: S. Charles	Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager	E Mail Addresses: SGPilliner@carmarthenshire.gov.uk SCharles@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21st FEBRUARY 2020

HIGHWAY FOOTWAY AND ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

1.0 Introduction and Background.

1.1 The County Council employs many measures to prevent road traffic casualties including education, publicity campaigns, training, traffic management and other road safety initiatives as well as the construction of a number of road safety improvement schemes each year. The overall strategy is outlined in the Carmarthenshire County Council Local Transport Plan which is contained within the Joint Local Transport Plan for South West Wales.

1.2 These measures are funded from a variety of sources including both capital and revenue grants and other funds which are summarised as follows with further details provided in the Summary Table at the end of the report.

2.0 Local Transport Plan / Local Transport Fund

2.1 The South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH) was formally dissolved in early 2014 and Welsh Government required local authorities to prepare a Local Transport Plan. The four West Wales local authorities agreed to continue a collaborative approach which is linked to the Swansea Bay City Region and the emerging City Deal. The priorities within the Carmarthenshire County Council Local Transport Plan (LTP) were approved in 2015.

2.2 Funding which was previously allocated to the Regional Consortium is now allocated to the individual local authorities on a competitive basis and bids for the Local Transport Fund (LTF) are submitted to Welsh Government on an annual basis. This LTF Grant is subject to an ever increasing level of scrutiny as the all Wales funding is limited. Carmarthenshire County Council secured LTF funding of £2,070,000 in the current financial year towards 3 schemes.

3.0 Local Transport Network Fund

3.1 Local Authorities prepared and submitted Local Transport Plans (LTPs) to the Welsh Government; the four authorities in South West Wales worked collaboratively to create an overarching City Region LTP (with four local programmes of projects and the joint LTP providing the framework for improving connectivity to, from and within the region) for the period 2015 to 2020 - funding is now allocated to the individual local authorities on a competitive basis [bids for the Local Transport Network Fund (LTNF) to be submitted to Welsh Government annually].

3.2 LTNF Grant provides a funding opportunity for the Authority to deliver projects / implement measures so as to improve public transport journey time reliability, to reduce public transport journey times and to connect communities and enable access to employment, education and key services.

In the current financial year, LTNF funding of £450,000 was awarded for Carmarthenshire Strategic Public Transport Corridors.

4.0 Active Travel Act and Local Authority Obligations

4.1 The Active Travel (Wales) Act makes provision for a number of items including the development of approved maps of existing active travel routes, the promotion of active travel journeys and to enhance the provision made for walkers and cyclists among others.

4.2 A number of key obligations have been passed to Local Authorities to implement, including the mapping of routes, the need to have regard for the active travel route network in the development of transport policies, the promotion of active travel journeys and to enhance the provision made for walkers and cyclists.

4.3 One of the obligations involved Welsh Government requiring all Local Authorities to submit details of all walking and cycling routes for inclusion in all Wales database of such routes (known as Existing Route Map). These details included an audit of all routes and Carmarthenshire County Council were one of only five Local Authorities that secured Welsh Government approval without the need for further work. The Authority was also required to submit an Integrated Network Map (INM) during 2017 which has subsequently been formally approved by Welsh Government.

4.4 Welsh Government have recently advised that future funding for Active Travel related projects will be based on these INMs.

In the current financial year 2019-20 a total of £316,000 has been awarded for the development of routes identified on the INM for works such as feasibility studies, scheme design, land purchase and consultation/engagement.

In addition to this funding we have secured £1,641,000 for capital works constructing schemes identified on the INM. These include upgrade of the active travel network in South Llanelli and the construction of shared use link toward Hendy.

Year 2020/21: Welsh Government Transport Grants & Active Travel Fund Grant

Welsh Government Transport Grants and Active Travel Fund Grant funding is allocated to individual local authorities across Wales on a competitive basis; to support / enable schemes and proposals to develop integrated, effective, accessible, affordable, safe and sustainable transport systems, modes and networks.

A number of bids are currently being drafted for submission to Welsh Government by 14th February 2020 - to include such proposals as:

- Cross Hands Economic Link Road
- Llanelli Urban and Coastal Belt Network Improvements
- Towy Valley Path
- Access to Pembrey Country Park
- Ammanford Distributor Road
- Strategic Public Transport Corridors // Modernising Services - Public Transport
- Active Travel (3no. geographical schemes)
- Electric Vehicles Charging Hub (Cross Hands)
- Package of extreme weather resilience measures (mix of infrastructure and monitoring equipment)

5.0 Safe Routes in Communities

5.1 The Safe Routes in Communities (SRiC) grant provides direct funding from the Welsh Government for the County Council to deliver projects that create or enhance active travel within communities with the aim of improving accessibility and safety. This will help create greater social inclusion and improved community safety. Safe Routes in the Communities funds capital works such as: -

- crossings
- traffic calming measures
- shared use paths
- footpaths
- secure cycle facilities (including stands), lockers and changing facilities.

5.2 The County Council must bid for this funding on an annual basis. The Welsh Government has advised that schemes must link directly with the Integrated Network map or have been included in a schedule of works to upgrade safe walking routes to schools included in a response to the Minister in the summer of 2014. Carmarthenshire County Council has been highly successful in securing this SRiC funding being consistently among the highest awards for this particular grant.

Two projects are included in the current financial year for works in the Llanelli West and Ammanford/Betws areas; a total of £849,744 funding secured for these areas.

Bids listed below for next year's SRIC funding have been submitted to Welsh Government on 24th January 2020:

- Llwynhendy - £823,080
- Ammanford & Betws Phase 2 - £423,500

6.0 Road Safety Improvement and Footway Improvement Programme

6.1 At its meeting on the 14th November 2011 the Executive Board approved the criteria for assessment, selection and prioritisation of Road Safety Improvement and Footway Improvements to be funded from the Council's capital budget allocation for such works. A new 3 year rolling programme was developed and implemented from 2013-14. The criteria for assessment was updated in the spring of 2017 and formally approved by Executive Board on 27th February 2017.

6.2 During the summer of 2017 the prioritised programme was reassessed in accordance with the criteria to determine the 3 year rolling programme (commencing in 2018-19); the schemes will be subject to further feasibility works in future years, subject to the availability of funding.

6.3 Previously committed schemes continue to be developed and implemented as funding and any other constraints permit.

7.0 Local Road Safety Grant (Capital & Revenue)

7.1 The Road Safety Grant was introduced in 2000. The Capital Grant provides direct funding from the Welsh Government for the County Council to provide engineering solutions to road safety problems on the county road network. The Revenue Grant is used to provide a programme of road safety related education and training initiatives.

7.2 The County Council must bid to the Welsh Government for both capital and revenue funding on an annual basis. The revenue allocation is set for each LA by use of a formula based on the latest available population numbers (60%) and casualty numbers of those killed or seriously injured (40%).

7.3 The County Council prioritises the selection of road safety engineering projects for its capital bids on the basis of historic collision and casualty statistics along rural routes and at urban cluster sites. The Council assesses the collision and casualty reduction performance of each scheme delivered using the grant. There is a strong partnering approach to all initiatives funded from this grant through groups such as the Carmarthenshire Speed Limit Working Group with bodies such as Dyfed Powys Police and GoSafe.

7.4 For its revenue bids priority is given to high risk groups of young people and motorcyclists and also to child pedestrian and cycling training. The programmes are designed to improve people's awareness, knowledge, skills, and behaviour and develop safer attitudes towards using the highway.

7.5 Bids listed below for next year's Road Safety Grant funding have been submitted to Welsh Government on 24th January 2020:

Capital

Llanelli South Area
A476 Llanelli - Ffairfach

Revenue

Mature Driver Programme

Biker Down Cymru

Dragon Rider Cymru

Pass Plus Cymru

Kerbcraft

National Cycling Training

Mega Drive

Active Travel & Road Safety Training

8.0 Traffic Management and Accident Prevention Programme

8.1 The following traffic and accident prevention elements are provided on the county road network using the Councils revenue budget allocation for such works: -

- Traffic orders for speed limits, one way working, weight restrictions, width restrictions, buses only, no entry order, no motor vehicles order, disabled persons parking bays, waiting restrictions, residents parking zones;
- Traffic calming elements, road humps, narrowing's and chicanes, gateway and entry treatments, vehicle activated message signs, speed limit roundel markings, coloured surfaces, surface texture – skid resistant material;
- Hatched road markings, countdown signs, bollards, disabled parking bays.

8.2 The current programme of traffic management and accident prevention projects being delivered using the revenue funding is shown in the Summary Table at the end of the report.

9.0 Recommendations.

Members are asked to note the report.

SUMMARY OF FUNDING FOR ROAD SAFETY RELATED AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEMES FOR 2019 - 2020

PROJECT	COMMENTS	2019/2020 BUDGET
Road Safety Improvement Programme - (previously committed proposals)		£289,330
C2134 Tycroes	Delivery of Phase 1	
Prioritised Programme for Highway Infrastructure and Road Safety Improvements -		
Allt y Cnap Road / Llanstephan Road, Johnstown, Carmarthen (B4312 / C2078)	Ongoing	
Ponthenri (B4317 / C2077)	Ongoing feasibility	
Llanybydder Square to Pencarreg (A485)	Ongoing feasibility	
A484 between Idole and Cwmffrwd (A484)	Ongoing feasibility	
Nantgaredig to Abergorlech (B4310)	Ongoing feasibility	
Oaklands Junction, Cwmffrwd (A484 / B4309)	Complete	
Nantycaws (C2071)	Investigation and feasibility complete	
Carway / Pontyates	Investigation and feasibility complete	
Kidwelly (Carmarthen Road) (A484)	Investigation and feasibility complete	
Carmarthen Road, Cwmann (A485)	Location included in WG Active Travel Fund (in year award - 19/20)	
Safe Routes in Communities -		<i>External Grant allocation:</i>
Ammanford & Betws	Funded by WG Grant	£440,171.50
Llanelli West	Funded by WG Grant	£409,572.34
Active Travel Projects -		<i>External Grant allocation</i>
Active Travel Fund (Core Allocation)	Feasibility designs / minor works only	£316,000
Active Travel Fund (In year award)	<p>Comprised of:</p> <p>Additional monies for cycle shelters/barrier removal - £40,000</p> <p>Llanelli Masterplan - £1,051,000</p> <p>Cross Hands to Ammanford - £400,000</p> <p>Cwmann - £150,000</p>	1,641,000

PROJECT	COMMENTS	2019/2020 BUDGET
Local Transport Fund Projects -		<i>External Grant allocation:</i>
Cross Hands Economic Link Road	Construction of the Cross Hands Economic Link Road	£1,300,000
Llanelli Urban and Coastal Belt Network Improvements	Surveys, design and land purchase for highways improvements in Llanelli	£550,000
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure	Deliver Phase 1 of electric vehicle charging infrastructure	£220,000
Local Transport Network Fund -		<i>External Grant allocation:</i>
Strategic Public Transport Corridors	Measures to improve journey time reliability, accessibility, safety and attractiveness of public transport	£450,000
Road Safety Schemes (funded by WG Road Safety Grant - CAPITAL)		<i>External Grant allocation:</i>
A485 / A4243 Carmarthen to Cwmann Route	Measures to reduce personal injury collisions and casualties.	£250,200
Burry Port / Pembrey area	Measures to reduce personal injury collisions and casualties. Measures to encourage Active Travel in the local community and to local schools.	£247,500
Road Safety Education & Training (funded by WG Road Safety Grant – REVENUE)		<i>External Grant allocation:</i>
Biker Down	A training process that has been tailored for motorcyclists who wish to enhance their knowledge and broaden their experience in dealing with road related incidents or collisions that may require basic First Aid intervention at the roadside	£3,300
Dragon Rider	The training package encourages post-test motorbike riders to improve their riding skills and follows the syllabus as laid down by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency Enhanced Rider Scheme.	£6,750
Kerbcraft	The scheme is designed to teach children to be safe pedestrians by giving them practical roadside training and showing them how to make the right decisions to keep safe when crossing the road.	£54,970
National Standards Cycle Training	The scheme is aimed at pupils in their last year at Primary school i.e. year 6 pupils, which in turn will encourage active travel to their chosen secondary school	£37,400
Older Drivers	A driver education and coaching programme, tailored to meet the older driver's specific needs.	£12,000
Rural Roads	Engagement events in targeted rural areas where there is a history of local resident casualty issues.	£6,500
Pass Plus	An established initiative aimed at new drivers between the ages of 17 and 25 who have less than one year driving experience	£8,280

PROJECT	COMMENTS	2019/2020 BUDGET
Traffic Management Schemes - Miscellaneous		£242,000
Minor TM schemes (Various locations)	Road signs and markings	
Meidrim (Phase 2)	20 mph speed limit	
Cenarth	Speed limit extension	
Penlon Road, Newcastle Emlyn	Speed limit	
Wernddu Road, Ammanford.	Speed limit extension.	
Pantyrathro, Llanstephan.	Speed limit.	
Longacre Road, Carmarthen.	Speed limit.	
Llangadog.	Speed limit extension.	
A 476	No overtaking signs.	
Llanelli schools.	School keep clear markings order	
<div> <div>DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?</div> <div>NO</div> </div>		

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: S G Pilliner

Head of Highways & Transport

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Road Safety is one of the Carmarthenshire Integrated Community Strategies. Road Safety strategies are also set out in the Carmarthenshire County Council Local Transport Plan which is contained within the Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales.

Delivery of sustainable transport projects is also one of the objectives of the Carmarthenshire County Council Local Transport Plan which is contained within the Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales.

2. Legal

The Council has a statutory responsibility to manage and maintain public roads. That duty includes the investigation of road traffic accidents, the provision of road safety measures and enabling the expeditious movement of traffic.

The Council has a statutory responsibility to promote walking and cycling and other sustainable modes of transport as outlined in the Active Travel (Wales) Act.

3. Finance

The budgets for the current financial year to deliver sustainable transport and road safety projects are set out in the report.

5. Risk Management Issues

Potential for challenge to the Council's management of sustainable transport and road safety project grant claims.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: **S G Pilliner** Head of **Highways & Transport**

1. Local Member(s) - N/A.
2. Community / Town Council - N/A.
3. Relevant Partners - N/A.
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales		http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1085004/Joint-Transport-Plan-300115.pdf

This page is intentionally left blank

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

TASK AND FINISH MONITORING REPORT TASK AND FINISH REVIEW 2017/18 – A REVIEW OF THE MAINTENANCE PROVISION OF HIGHWAY HEDGEROWS AND VERGES

Purpose:

To provide an update for information and consideration on delivering the recommendations developed by the Task and Finish Group and subsequently approved by Executive Board.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

Members to consider and note the contents of the report which provides an update on progress on delivering the recommendations developed by the Task and Finish Group.

Reasons:

The report provides a progress update on delivery of the Task and Finish Group's Recommendations approved by Executive Board on the 4th March 2019.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: No

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Councillor Hazel Evans

Directorate Name of Head of Service: Steve Pilliner Report Author: Richard Waters	Designations: Head of Highways & Transport Highways and Transport Services Manager	Tel Nos. 01267 228150 E Mail Addresses: SGPilliner@carmarthenshire.gov.uk RWaters@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
--	---	--

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

TASK AND FINISH MONITORING REPORT TASK AND FINISH REVIEW 2017/18 – A REVIEW OF THE MAINTENANCE PROVISION OF HIGHWAY HEDGEROWS AND VERGES

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee agreed in November 2017 to set up a Task and Finish Group to review the maintenance provision of highway hedges and verge rows.

The Task and Finish Group presented a report of their subsequent findings which included five recommendations regarding the future management of highway verges. The group's report along with their recommendations were adopted by Executive Board on the 4th March 2019.

The attached report provides brief background regarding:

- the scope and objectives of the Task and Finish Group's work;
- it's methodology;
- the Group's recommendations;
- progress report on the actions allied to the Task and Finish Group recommendations.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

Yes

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: S.G.Pilliner

Head of Highways and Transport

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES

Risk Management Issues

Highway verges are mown primarily to ensure the safety of the travelling public and a risk based approach is adopted on all verge moving areas. Particular attention is given to junctions and bends to ensure visibility.

Physical Assets

Carmarthenshire has the second largest highway network in Wales and much of that network is rural in nature. This rural network provides significant 'green' corridors of highway verge which we manage, within the resources we have available, to ensure public safety but also with a high regard to biodiversity and promoting natural habitats.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: S G Pilliner

Head of Highways and Transport

1. Local Member(s) - N/A
2. Community / Town Council - N/A
3. Relevant Partners - N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

This page is intentionally left blank

ACTION PLAN MONITORING REPORT

TASK AND FINISH ACTION REVIEW 2017/18 – A Review of the Maintenance Provision of Highway Hedgerows and Verges

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee of 17th November 2017, agreed to establish a task and finish group to review the current maintenance provision of highway hedgerows and verges.
- 1.2 It was agreed that the main objective for the review would be to:

To review the current provision for the maintenance of highway hedgerows and verges and if appropriate make recommendations for service change.
- 1.3 The group was chaired by Cllr. John James and had a politically balanced Elected Member representation of 6 County Councillors
- 1.4 A total of 8 meetings were held (January 2018-November 2018).

2. Scope and Objectives of the Group's work

- 2.1 The Committee agreed the scope, aims and objectives for the work as set out below:

Scope:

'To review the current provision for the maintenance of highway hedgerows and verges and if appropriate make recommendations for service change.'

2.2 Objectives:

- Review the number of staff carrying out the service.
- Review the number of times roadside hedges and verges are cut with particular focus on hedges around Junctions.
- Review the requests for services process in relation to hedge cutting demands from the public.
- Environmental impact including biodiversity

2.3 Corporate objectives and well-being objectives

The review would contribute towards achieving the following corporate objectives and well-being objectives :-

- County Council's Corporate Strategy 2015-20
- Well-being objectives:-
 - In a Healthy & Safe Environment:-
 - Objective 12 -
Looking after the environment now and for the future
 - Objective 13 -
Improving the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity

2.4 Main aims of the review

- To review the current maintenance provision and programme for County roads. Including the nature, timing and equipment used for cuts.
- Consider the current maintenance provision and programme for Trunk roads.
- To review the balance between in house and external services and procurement of those services.
- To review the number of staff carrying out the service. (e.g. has there been a detrimental impact in service due to the reduction of staff (based on previous years)).
- To review the number of times roadside hedges and verges are cut with particular focus on hedges around junctions.
- To review how much contact demand the Council receives about this issue and the request for services process for hedge cutting demands from the public. To include both requests to cut and not to cut.
- To review the budget allocation and the impact of any changes to the provision.
- Consider landowner responsibilities and enforcement powers of the Council.
- Consider the environmental impact including biodiversity.
- To formulate recommendations for consideration by the Executive Board.

3. Methodology

Throughout the review the Group considered evidence and information from a variety of sources. Each session was designed to provide the Group with the relevant information, context and background to the topic. Officers from Highways, Conservation and Waste and Environmental Services provided specialist advice and support during the Group's review

Furthermore, as part of the research, the task group interviewed the local contractors to ascertain their views on their experience of being a local contractor and the tendering process.

4. Report Conclusions

Following the review, the Task and Finish Group trusted that the Council undertook a thorough and effective job in ensuring that highways were kept safe for those who use them. The Group concluded that there was a general public perception that all roadside hedges were the Council's responsibility.

In order to alleviate some of the issues experienced by both the Council and the Contractor, the Group suggested that:

- There is a clear rationale to the current regime for maintaining rural highway verges but needs greater flexibility to facilitate further environmental enhancement for biodiversity.
- There are common misconceptions regarding duties and responsibilities for hedges, verges, ditches and grips which would benefit from clarification, potentially through the publication of an information brochure.
- There are opportunities to be investigated to encourage local farmers and contractors to tender for contract work.
- Greater availability of guidance and support for local farmers and contractors in relation to bid for works would be beneficial to the local economy and encourage a greater consistency of cutting throughout the County.
- The verge maintenance regime should consider greater flexibility to allow the early cutting of lower class roads in instances where the safety of higher class roads is not compromised.
- Opportunities to work collaboratively with Town and Community Councils should be investigated further, particularly with respect to urban highway verges and amenity grass cutting.
- Whilst litter remains a challenge, the Council could promote a clear message to drivers to take their litter home.

5. Report recommendations

The research undertaken by the Task and Finish group during the review on the current maintenance provision for highway verges resulted the following recommendations:-

Recommendation One

That the County Council's Environment Directorate should largely continue with its current provision for maintaining rural highway verges but considers adopting greater flexibility to:

- a) Facilitate further environmental enhancement for biodiversity, such as late or biennial cutting of selected areas, or other appropriate management provision;
- b) Consider the early cutting of minor roads in instances where the safety of main roads is not compromised.

Recommendation Two

That the County Council's Environment Directorate raise public understanding of highway verges as important areas for care, maintenance and habitat by:

- a) Providing a Carmarthenshire County Council guide to highlight the roles and responsibilities of the highway authority and adjacent landowners.
- b) Programming targeted campaigns to discourage the littering of verges and promote public awareness of highway verges and hedges as valuable natural habitat.
- c) Including clear information on the Council website with specific regard to the conservation and management of roadside verges.

Recommendation Three

That the County Council seeks to safeguard the highway maintenance budget as far as possible to ensure the safety of the travelling public, reduce future liability and protect key habitats.

Recommendation Four

That the County Council's Environment Directorate promotes opportunities to encourage local farmers/contractors to tender for work and engage with potential bidders to explain the tendering process.

Recommendation Five

That the County Council's Environment Directorate work collaboratively with Town and Community Councils to promote a more proactive role in managing and maintaining verges, hedges and landscaped areas, equally in both urban and rural areas.

Progress against the actions is set out in the following table - Action progress

Recommendation One	Progress to Date (February 2020)
<p>That the County Council's Environment Directorate should largely continue with its current provision for maintaining rural highway verges but considers adopting greater flexibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Facilitate further environmental enhancement for biodiversity, such as late or biennial cutting of selected areas, or other appropriate management provision. b. Consider the early cutting of minor roads in instances where the safety of main roads is not compromised 	<p>Additional flexibility is being taken forward in a number of areas, particularly with regarding to protecting the environment and encouraging biodiversity. This includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Conservation Team are identifying a number of upland areas for biennial mowing. These areas will be considered for implementation within the 2020/21 verge mowing programme as a pilot study with a view to further areas being identified in future years. <p>In woodland areas where vegetation helps stabilise steep embankments selected areas may not be cut if there is no overriding highway safety or encroachment concerns. This will promote slope stability and to allow the natural vegetation of the bank.</p> <p>Late cut verge areas are currently identified within our mowing programme with routes reviewed by the Conservation Team when resources permit to include additional late cut verge areas where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Start of season reviews are held annually with Highway Inspectors and Contractors to agree programmes for verge mowing. The flexibility to carry out the early cutting of minor roads will be incorporated where safety and effective verge maintenance is not compromised.

Recommendation Two	Progress to Date (February 2020)
<p data-bbox="96 201 689 344">That the County Council's Environment Directorate raise public understanding of highway verges as important areas for care, maintenance and habitat by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="141 384 689 560">a. Providing a Carmarthenshire County Council guide to highlight the roles and responsibilities of the highway authority and adjacent landowners. <li data-bbox="141 608 689 783">b. Programming targeted campaigns to discourage the littering of verges and promote public awareness of highway verges and hedges as valuable natural habitat. <li data-bbox="141 831 689 975">c. Including clear information on the Council website with specific regard to the conservation and management of roadside verges. 	<p data-bbox="712 201 1933 264">Public awareness and understanding of the management of highway verges has been taken forward through the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="763 312 1989 528">a. A brochure entitled <i>Adjacent Landowners and the Public Highway: A guide to roles and responsibilities</i> has been published and is available on Carmarthenshire County Council website. The brochure has also been publicised to Town & Community Councils. The brochure can be accessed at: https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/travel-roads-parking/ <li data-bbox="763 568 1989 823">b. The Council's approach to litter has been set out within our new Litter Management Plan and a number of initiatives are underway to raise public awareness of both littering and the recognition of highway verges as a valuable habitat. Projects such as '<i>Pride in your Patch</i>', have been publicised on Radio Carmarthenshire which bring together volunteers and key partners including Town and Community Councils, fast food outlets, major employers and schools to promote anti-litter campaigns and undertake clearance works. <li data-bbox="763 863 1928 935">c. Information has been updated on the County Council's website and includes <i>Ecological Advice Note 11: Managing Road Verges for Safety and Biodiversity</i>. <p data-bbox="808 975 1977 1046">In addition, information regarding the important role of pollinators which references highway verges which can be accessed at: https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/biodiversity/pollinators/#.Xhcae-S7Kul</p>

Recommendation Three	Progress to Date (February 2020)
That the County Council seeks to safeguard the highway maintenance budget as far as possible to ensure the safety of the travelling public, reduce future liability and protect key habitats.	<p>The first Highway Asset Management Plan Annual Report was presented to Environment Scrutiny Committee in September, 2019 setting out the condition of the highway asset and explaining the impacts of various funding scenarios.</p> <p>Further reports will be presented annually in the Autumn period ahead of budget setting.</p>

Recommendation Four:	Progress to Date (February 2020)
That the County Council's Environment Directorate promotes opportunities to encourage local farmers/contractors to tender for work and engage with potential bidders to explain the tendering process.	<p>There is an existing commercial contract in place to mow rural highway verges but in the lead-in to the retendering of the contract the opportunities for local farmers and contractors will be publicised through conduits such as the National Farmers Union Cymru, the Countryside Landowners Association and Farmers Union of Wales. The next retendering exercise is planned to be undertaken ahead of the 2021/2022 mowing season.</p>

Recommendation Five:	Progress to Date (February 2020)
That the County Council's Environment Directorate work collaboratively with Town and Community Councils to promote a more proactive role in managing and maintaining verges, hedges and landscaped areas, equally in both urban and rural areas.	<p>A dialog has been started with Carmarthenshire Town Council regarding the maintenance of verge areas as a pilot to establish the viability of Town and Community Councils maintaining areas of highway verge and to provide a potential model for future use.</p>

6. Conclusions

The Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group provided confirmation of the current service actions and identified areas to further improve service delivery and public awareness. As recognised by the Group, collaborative working will remain a focus for the Department with key partners and Town and Community Councils. The service will continue to develop these areas to provide a legacy to the Task and Finish Group's valuable work.

This page is intentionally left blank

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIONS UPDATE

To consider and comment on the following issues:

To scrutinise the progress made in relation to actions, requests or referrals recorded during previous meetings of the Committee.

Reasons:

To enable members to exercise their scrutiny role in relation to monitoring performance.

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: NO

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: *NOT APPLICABLE*

<p>Directorate: Chief Executive's</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Linda Rees-Jones</p> <p>Report Author: Janine Owen</p>	<p>Designations:</p> <p>Head of Administration & Law</p> <p>Democratic Services Officer</p>	<p>Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:</p> <p>01267 224010 lrjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p> <p>01267 224030 JanineOwen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
---	--	--

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIONS UPDATE

During the course of a municipal year, several requests for additional information are made by the Committee in order to assist it in discharging its scrutiny role.

The attached report provides members of the Committee with an update on the progress made in relation to requests made during the 2019/2020 municipal year.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

1. Local Member(s) – N/A
2. Community / Town Council – N/A
3. Relevant Partners – N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Reports and Minutes	Meetings from September 2015 onwards: http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=134

This page is intentionally left blank

Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Actions 2019-2020

Ref No	Meeting Date	Recommendation / Action / Referral	Description	Progress Update	Member / Officer	Status
E&PP 01-19/20	17th May 2019	Recommendation	<p>6. REPORT ON PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER CONSULTATION</p> <p>6.1 the duration of the Carmarthenshire County Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2016 be extended for a further period of 3 years with effect from the 1st July 2019;</p> <p>6.2 the Council makes an Extension Order to give effect to the above extension and endorses the 2016 Order with suitable wording to reflect the fact that the duration of the 2016 order has been extended.</p>	<p>6.1 Complete</p> <p>6.2 Due for completion 30th June 2019.</p> <p>New orders commence on 1st July 2019.</p>	Ainsley Williams	Complete
E&PP 02-19/20	17th May 2019	Recommendation	<p>6. REPORT ON PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER CONSULTATION</p> <p>The Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to meet with the Environmental Enforcement Manager to discuss proposed future controls.</p>	A meeting between the Chair and Vice Chair of E&PP Scrutiny Committee, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services and Environmental Enforcement Manager has been arranged for 4th March 2020.	Ainsley Williams	Complete
E&PP 03-19/20	17th May 2019	Recommendation	<p>7. CORPORATE STRATEGY 2018-23 - DRAFT UPDATE JUNE 2019</p> <p>Action 2 of Well-being Objective 8, - Air-quality, Members noted that the action did not appear to be ambitious in relation to the corporate ambition to develop a clear plan for a route towards being net zero carbon within 12 months, and to be a zero net carbon local authority by 2030. Members were critical of the lack of specific targets, and encouraged the alignment of targets. It was agreed that this should be fed back to the Executive Board following a meeting with the Head of Homes and Safer Communities.</p> <p>RESOLVED that following a meeting with the Head of Homes and Safer Communities, the Executive Board Member for Public Protection to feedback to the Executive Board in relation to greater ambition and alignment of environmental targets.</p>	<p>A meeting with the Vice Chair of the Committee along with the Executive Board Member for Public Protection has been arranged.</p> <p>Update - Meeting has taken place and agreed that new measures will be developed for air quality for 2020/21</p>	Jonathan Morgan	Complete

Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Actions 2019-2020

<div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"> Page 36 </div>	10th June 2019	Recommendation	5. ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION TASK & FINISH GROUP 2019/20 PLANNING AND SCOPING DOCUMENT The membership of the Task and Finish Group be as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Joseph Davies • Councillor Karen Davies • Councillor Penny Edwards • Councillor Jeanette Gilasbey • Councillor John James • Councillor Dai Thomas 	The Chair of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor John James, was decided at the group first meeting held on 12th July 2019. A project plan has also been agreed in that a number of meetings have been diarised with a view to provide a final report to E&PP Scrutiny Committee in April/May 2020.	Janine Owen Roger Edmunds	Complete
E&PP 05-19/20	10th June 2019	Recommendation	UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:- 4.2 that a representative from the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee attend the Toilet Strategy Study Group.	The matter was discussed at the Executive Board meeting on the 29th July 2019 [Minute 19 refers] - 'The Executive Board noted the request from the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee, that a representative from the committee should attend the Toilet Strategy Study Group. However the Board advised that the Study Group should remain an officer led group. Updates from the group should be presented to the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee as required.'	Ainsley Williams	Complete
E&PP 06-19/20	5th July 2019	Action	4. DRAFT - CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19 In regard to Well Being Objective 12 [Healthy and Safe Environment] the Head of Transportation and Highways agreed to ascertain the reason why there had been a delay in sowing seeds and planting out flowers in some areas where beds had been prepared;	A check has been undertaken with the respective service areas, for areas within the remit of County Council services, we have been unable to find any delay in the programme for planting.	Steve Pilliner	Complete
E&PP 07-19/20	5th July 2019	Action	5. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT Officers agreed to ascertain the current situation regarding the leases of the Livestock markets and the bad debt provision.	Information on the Council owned livestock markets was emailed to Committee Members on 5th July 2019. A further e-mail providing the current position regarding the lease of Nantyci Livestock Market was forwarded to Committee Members on 16th July 2019.	Jonathan Fearn	Complete

Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Actions 2019-2020

E&PP 08-19/20	5th July 2019	Action	6. UPDATE ON PROGRESS IN DELIVERING CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENT ACT FORWARD PLAN • Concern was expressed that there was no reference in the Plan to the eradication of Japanese Knotweed. Members were advised that the Authority had a duty to treat Knotweed on its property but on private land it was the owner's responsibility..... The Head of Homes and Safer Communities agreed to ascertain from the Legal section as to whether the recent Network Rail case regarding Japanese Knotweed had any implications for the Authority.	Update as follows:- "The case re-affirms that once the required knowledge of Japanese knotweed is established on any land, the landowner has a duty to do all that was reasonable in the circumstances to prevent or minimise any damage and/or the interference with the adjoining landowners' use and enjoyment of their properties."	Jonathan Morgan/	Complete
E&PP 09-19/20	5th July 2019	Recommendation	8. ACTIVE TRAVEL ACT UPDATE Unanimously resolved:- 8.2 that the Chair liaise with the Executive Board Member for Environment to compose a letter to the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport along the lines referred to above. [minute 8 refers].	Letter from Councillor Hazel Evans and Councillor John James has been sent to Lee Waters AM 12th February 2020.	Cllr J. James; EBM Member for Environment; Steve Pilliner	Complete
E&PP 10-19/20	30th September 2019	Recommendation	9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS Unanimously resolved:- 9.2 the Business and Consumer Affairs Annual Report should be circulated outside of the committee process;	Following the meeting the Chair considered the Draft Agenda for the next meeting scheduled to take place on 15th November 2019. The Chair requested that the Business and Consumer Affairs Annual Report remain on the agenda as the report may contain relevant information in relation to the current Task and Finish Review. In order to reduce the number of items on the agenda, the Chair requested for the Environmental Protection Annual Report 2018/19 & Service Delivery Plan for 2019/20 and the Budget Monitoring (for this meeting only) to be circulated to Committee Members via e-mail. Forward Work Program 2019/20 has been updated to reflect the above.	J. Owen	Complete

Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Actions 2019-2020

<div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"> E&PP 11-19/20 Page 38 </div>	30th September 2019	Recommendation	9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS Unanimously resolved:- 9.3 that an update on the Ash Dieback programme be circulated to Members outside of the committee process.	A verbal update was provided to the Committee during the Environment Act Forward Plan Agenda item at the meeting on 15th November 2019. At its meeting on 15th November 2019, the Committee resolved that a seminar on Ash Dieback disease be arranged.[see action number E&PP 13-19/20].	Jonathan Fearn / Rosie Carmichael	Complete All-member seminar to be arranged (See Action E&PP 13-19/20)
E&PP 12-19/20	15th November 2019	Recommendation	4. CLLR J. JAMES - SCRUTINY AGENDA ITEM REQUEST - DOG BREEDING IN CARMARTHENSHIRE Unanimously resolved:- 4.2 dog breeding in Carmarthenshire be the subject for Committee's next Task and Finish review. proposed that dog breeding in Carmarthenshire be the subject for Committee's next Task and Finish review.	This matter shall be the subject for the next review undertaken by the Committee's Task and Finish Group upon completion of the current review. This will be taken into consideration and planned for at the Committee's Forward Work Programme 2020/21 Development session.	Cllr J. James; Janine Owen Roger Edmunds	Complete
E&PP 13-19/20	15th November 2019	Recommendation	7. REVIEW OF CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT FORWARD PLAN 2016-2019 Unanimously resolved:- 9.3 that a member seminar on Ash Dieback disease be arranged	Provisional date of 1st April has been secured. Notice of the arrangements will be forwarded to all members in due course.	Jonathan Fearn / Rosie Carmichael / Cllr. P. M. Hughes	In progress
E&PP 14-19/20	15th November 2019	Action	8. NET ZERO CARBON ACTION PLAN 'With a view to relay the plan to communities, it was requested that a more accessible version be created including a version suitable for a young person to understand.'	Following the adoption of the Net Zero Carbon Plan by full Council on 12th February 2020, an accessible version of the Plan including a version suitable for a young person to understand will be created in the coming months.	Jason Jones/ Kendal Davies	Completed
E&PP 15-19/20	13th January 2020	Action	6.ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020-23 'It was suggested that it would be beneficial to include the Environment Departmental structure within the plan in order to provide Councillors with a visual representation of departmental roles. The Director of Environment agreed...'	Single reference sheet will be prepared and distributed to Councillors to include visual representation of the divisional responsibilities/services within the Environment department.	Jackie Edwards	Complete

Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Actions 2019-2020

E&PP 16-19/20	13th January 2020	Action	9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS The Committee received the Executive Board's Forward Work Programme up to October for consideration. In response to an observation raised in relation to the absence of reports within the Environment section, <i>the Director of Environment stated that this was due to departmental administrative error and would ensure that it would be rectified.</i>	An Executive Board Forward Work Programme which includes reports within the Environment section is available for viewing on the website.	Ruth Mullen / Gaynor Morgan	Complete
---------------	-------------------	---------------	--	--	------------------------------------	----------

This page is intentionally left blank

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

REFERRAL FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE JOINT TRANSPORT PLAN FOR SOUTH WEST WALES

To consider and comment on the following issues:

To consider a referral from the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales

Reasons:

To enable Committee members to exercise their scrutiny role.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder(s):

Cllr. H.A.L. Evans (Environment)

Directorate: Chief Executive's Name of Head of Service: Linda Rees Jones Report Author: Martin S. Davies	Designations: Head of Administration & Law Democratic Services Officer	Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses: 01267 224010 lrjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk 01267 224059 MSDavies@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
--	---	---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

REFERRAL FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE- JOINT TRANSPORT PLAN FOR SOUTH WEST WALES

The Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider the following referral from the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee:

Agenda Item:

Environment Departmental Business Plan 2020/2023

Date: 27th January 2020

Issue: Request to consider means of securing improvements to the Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales with a view to maximising opportunities to improve public transport within Carmarthenshire.

At its meeting on the 27th January 2020, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered extracts of the Environment Departmental Business Plan 2020-23 relating to the Property Division which were relevant to the Committee's remit.

During consideration of the report reference was made to the problems faced in recruiting staff and it was considered that the lack of suitable public transport was probably also a contributory fact. In light of this, the Committee resolved that:

“the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider means of securing improvements to the Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales with a view to maximising opportunities to improve public transport within Carmarthenshire.”

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report. Signed: Linda Rees Jones Head of Administration & Law						
Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below: Signed: Linda Rees Jones Head of Administration & Law
1. Local Member(s) – N/A 2. Community / Town Council – N/A 3. Relevant Partners – N/A 4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A
Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: <div style="text-align: center; padding-top: 20px;">THERE ARE NONE</div>

This page is intentionally left blank

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST FEBRUARY 2020

FORTHCOMING ITEMS for next meeting to be held on 17th April 2020

In order to ensure effective Scrutiny, Members need to be clear as to the purpose of requesting specific information and the outcome they are hoping to achieve as a consequence of examining a report. Limiting the number of agenda items may help to keep meetings focused and easier to manage.

Proposed Agenda Item	Background	Reason for report
Quarter 3 Corporate Strategy Performance Monitoring Report 2019/2020	This item will provide a report on the progress against the actions and measures in the 2019/20 Well-being Objectives delivery Plan relevant to the Committee's remit, up to 31st December 2019.	This item will enable the Committee to consider and comment upon progress achieved. To enable members to exercise their scrutiny role.
Waste Collections Strategy Review Update	In order to meet the future challenging statutory recycling targets whilst ensuring that a sustainable, climate conscious service and waste collection fleet is provided, options on the provision for a future waste collections service delivery approach are to be developed.	The purpose of this report is to afford Members the opportunity to consider the preliminary high-level outcomes/options of the Waste Collections Service Review.
Cleansing Review Update	Update on the Cleansing review	To enable members to exercise their scrutiny role.
Public Convenience Strategy Update	Update on the Public Convenience Strategy	To enable members to exercise their scrutiny role.
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) Annual Update *Deferred from 21 st February 2020	The Environment Act 1995 places a duty on local authorities to assess and manage air quality in its area. This is achieved through the Local Air Quality Management work. For Carmarthenshire, the main pollutant of concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO ²) from road traffic which is monitored regularly.	This update will enable Members to exercise their scrutiny to monitor progress in relation to the Air Quality Management Areas within the County.
Budget Monitoring	This item enables members to undertake their monitoring role of the Environment Department, Public Protection Services and Community Safety Team's revenue and capital budgets.	The Committee is being requested to scrutinise the budget information as part of their scrutiny role.

**Items circulated to the Committee under separate cover
since the last meeting held on 13th January 2020**

No items have been circulated to members of the Environmental and Public Scrutiny Committee for information since the last meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 JANUARY 2020

PRESENT: Councillor J.D. James (Chair)

Councillors:

J.M. Charles, T.A.J. Davies, J.A. Davies, K. Davies, P.M. Edwards, S.J.G. Gilasbey, T.M. Higgins, E. Morgan, B.D.J. Phillips, J.S. Phillips, A.D.T. Speake and A. Vaughan Owen.

Councillor D.E. Williams - Substitute for Councillor D. Thomas

Also in attendance:

Councillor E. Dole, Leader of the Council;

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;

J. Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities;

S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways;

A. Williams, Head of Waste and Environmental Services;

L. Quelch, Head of Planning;

G. Ayers, Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager;

R. James, Group Accountant;

J. Edwards, Business Improvement Manager;

J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP: 10:00am - 11:15am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D. Thomas.

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

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
S.J.G. Gilasbey	4 - Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2020/21 to 2022/23	She is a member of Kidwelly Industrial Museum and Trust

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2020/21 TO 2022/23

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 (Appendix A) which had been endorsed by the Executive Board for consultation purposes at its meeting on 6th January 2020. The report provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2020/2021 together with indicative figures for the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 financial years. The report was based on officers' projections of spending need and took into account the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government on 16th December 2019.

The Head of Financial Services advised whilst the announced provisional settlement represented an increase of 4.3% as an average across Wales on the 19/20 settlement, Carmarthenshire had received an increase in WG grant of 4.4% (£11.5m) taking the Aggregate External Finance to £274.159m for 2020/21. This increase was after certain transfers into the funding for Teachers Pensions and Pay, which were only partially funded within the settlement and accounted for some £5.8m of the overall funding increase.

The Committee noted that the current projection for the Revenue Outturn for 2019/20 and that the main reasons for the Environmental Department overspends were primarily due to an increase in ALN pupil transport numbers and a shortfall in planning application income.

The report included details of the Welsh Government Service Specific Grants which were provided alongside the provisional settlement at an all Wales level. Whilst many remained at a broadly similar level, the Committee noted the all-Wales reduction of £1.8m to the Sustainable Waste Management Grant, which would reduce the support for Carmarthenshire's core waste budgets by around £110k.

In summary, the budget proposals assume the full delivery of all savings proposals, together with the identification and delivery of the shortfall in savings proposals 2021/22, and 2022/23. Further cost reductions would need to be identified and/or larger council tax increases be agreed to deliver a balanced budget for the latter two years. Furthermore, given the scale of the pressures and forecasted budget gap, Council Tax increases have been maintained at the previous MTFP levels of 4.89% in each of the three financial years which offers some mitigation to the savings proposals.

Furthermore, it was reported that due to the delay in receiving the provisional settlement, the consequential impact on Welsh Government's budget finalisation and publication had been equally delayed. Therefore, the final settlement was due to be published on 25th February, 2020 and the County Council would set the final budget on 3rd March, 2020.

The Committee thereupon considered the following detailed budget information appended to the Strategy relevant to its remit:

- **Appendix A(i)** – Efficiency summary for the Environment and Public Protections Services;
- **Appendix A(ii)** – Growth Pressures summary for Environment Service;
- **Appendix B** – Budget monitoring report for the Environment and Public Protection Services;
- **Appendix C** – Charging Digest for the Environment and Public Protection Services.

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

- Reference was made to Appendix A(ii)-Growth Pressures. It was asked if the annual £230k spend on food waste bin liners was a necessary cost? The Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained, a recent analysis of the content of black bags observed that 25.8% of the black bag content in Carmarthenshire was made up of food waste and prior to the introduction of the liners it was observed from the monitoring of kerbside collection, that household food waste recycling participation did not exceed 50%.

Furthermore, feedback from a Household Waste and Recycling Service Consultation had identified that of the respondents who said that they did not partake in recycling their food waste, 64% said that they would be more likely to do so, if they were provided with free liners. Therefore, in order to support the transition of food waste from black bags into the food waste recycling scheme, food waste liners were introduced to all householders in Carmarthenshire in October 2019.

In terms of treatment costs, an increase in food waste would result in an approximate decrease in the overall annual treatment spend, whilst enabling the Authority with the ability to meet statutory targets thus avoiding the risk of a fine.

It was therefore reported, that the annual cost of the liners was necessary as it outweighed the costs associated with the method of extracting food waste placed in black bags and the financial impact on the operational vehicles, improving the efficiency of the collection and reducing vehicle breakdowns attributed to the collection of loose food.

Members reported that since the introduction of food waste bin liners, positive feed-back had been received from residents particularly in relation to hygiene and in deterring vermin.

- With reference to Appendix C - Charging Digest, concern was expressed that the income generated from providing MOT testing to the general public at a rate lower than the maximum rate set by the DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency) was providing an unfair platform for the local private sector. It was asked, if the Authority had considered the impact of this on its competitors?

The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that whilst the maximum possible charge for Class 4 was £54.85 as set by DVSA, the price set by the Authority was deemed to be competitive for the local market with competitors also decreasing their prices. Furthermore, the Authority did not carry out any repairs on vehicles, only providing an independent MOT testing service, ensuring an objective test with unbiased results.

In response to a further query, the Head of Transportation and Highways stated that maintenance on hire/lease vehicles was charged on an hourly basis and only carried out as part of the suppliers hire/lease contract arrangements.

- Concern was expressed regarding the draft proposal to close the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Whitland. It was commented that the recycling centre was a much needed provision in the area with the next closest located in Nantycaws, Carmarthen. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained that the closure of the HWRC facility proposal was purely a financial consideration on the basis that the Whitland facility was the smallest out of the four HWRC facilities in Carmarthenshire which made the least contribution to the Councils overall waste recycling targets. The proposal was not related to the performance of the facility. It was also reported that the closure would also achieve a saving of £80k from year 2 in 2021/22.

In response to a further comment in relation to the performance targets, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services acknowledged that whilst the HWRC at Whitland had been meeting its recycling targets, it only served 7% of the County thus making the least contribution to the Councils waste recycling targets. It was emphasised that a full consultation on this proposal would be undertaken in due course.

- Reference was made to School Crossing Patrols. Whilst it was noted in the comment that 'the school crossing patrols section has reviewed all patrols to identify where there is no requirement to provide them according to the National Safety criteria', it was asked if any surveys had been undertaken in relation to the proposal to not fill future vacancies that arise in the sites that do not require school crossing patrols? Concern was expressed that School crossing patrols were an area of safety for all ages and residents.

The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that School Crossing Patrols were provided where the National Safety Criteria required them, and that the Council funded around 50% of crossings located at other locations where the criteria had not indicated a Patrol was required. The draft proposal was to retain the Patrols where they were required but phase out patrols where there was no requirement according to the criteria. Members were assured that each site would be subject to its own review.

- The Head of Transportation and Highways, in response to a request for an update on the Road Safety Manager vacancy, stated that a Road Safety Manager was currently being recruited. Furthermore, a temporary vacancy had arisen within the Road Safety Unit which had also been advertised.
- A query was raised regarding the different pricing structure for car parks throughout the County, the Head of Transportation and Highways explained that the car parking charges applied were banded primarily on the level of activity and social demographics of the surrounding area.

RESOLVED that:

4.1 The 2019/20 – 2021/22 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received;

4.2 The Charging Digest for the Environment and Public Protection Services, as detailed in Appendix C to the report be endorsed.

5. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

The Committee received for consideration the budget monitoring reports for the Environment Service, Public Protection Service and the Community Safety Service as at 31st October 2019 in respect of the 2019/20 financial year.

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

- In response to a query raised in relation to the monitoring update provided for waste services within Appendix C, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained that in order to assist in addressing the budget position, a report containing the preliminary high-level outcomes/options of the Waste Collections Service Review would be presented to Committee members for consideration in due course, but this unlikely to be before April 2020.
- Reference was made to the progress update which stated that the green waste collection service was not yet self-financing. A further update was requested. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services echoed the comment provided within the report in that the service was not anticipated to break-even this financial year, as per the original business plan. Currently, the service had circa 4,500 customers, however it was hoped that further marketing would increase customer levels facilitating towards the service to break-even in future years.
- It was commented that as the report provided was up to October 2019 a verbal update was requested with regard to Appendix F, managerial and policy savings 'off target'. The Director of Environment provided reassurance to Committee Members that the department was actively managing and continuously addressing the issues that were off target.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

6. ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020-23

The Committee considered the Draft Environmental Departmental Business Plan 2020 - 2023 which outlined the priorities for the department and identified how the department supported the five ways of working and the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The report included extracts of the aspects relevant to the Environmental and Public Scrutiny Committee including the following elements:-

- Highways and Transport
- Waste and Environmental Services
- Business Improvement

The following issues were discussed during consideration of the plan:

- It was suggested that it would be beneficial to include the Environment Departmental structure within the plan in order to provide Councillors with a visual representation of departmental roles. The Director of Environment agreed, however urged Members to continue to utilise the Democratic Services Unit recording system to ensure that all requests/complaints are recorded, managed and monitored appropriately.
- In relation to target completion dates on key actions and measures, it was queried what happens in cases where it had been necessary to change the completion dates. The Principal Business and Development Officer explained that all key actions, measures and progress were recorded on the internal Performance and Information Management System (PIMS) and it was rare for target dates to be changed. However, should any target dates significantly change in future, the Committee would be notified accordingly.

RESOLVED that the Environment Departmental Business Plan 2020-2023 be received.

7. COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020-23

The Committee received the Communities Departmental Business Plan 2020 - 2023 which provided Members with comprehensive overview of the Communities Departmental progress. It was noted that whilst the plan enveloped the whole of the Departments' priorities, the Committee's role was to scrutinise the Public Protection elements set out on 29 of the plan.

RESOLVED that the Communities Departmental Business Plan 2020-2023 be received.

8. CHIEF EXECUTIVES DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020-23

The Committee considered the Report on the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan 2020 - 2023. The report contained extracts of the aspects relevant to the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee in relation to Community Safety.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Chief Executives Departmental Business Plan 2020-2023 be received.

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received the forthcoming items for the next meeting scheduled to take place on 21st February 2020.

In order to manage the Scrutiny Committee's workload over the remaining few months of this municipal year, following discussions with the Chair, the Committee received an updated Forward Work Programme for consideration.

The Committee received the Executive Board's Forward Work Programme up to October for consideration. In response to an observation raised in relation to the absence of reports within the Environment section, the Director of Environment stated that this was due to departmental administrative error and would ensure that it would be rectified.

The Head of Homes and Safer Communities informed the Committee that the department had focussed on integrating the Environmental Protection Service Delivery actions into the Divisional Plan which had eliminated the need to develop a separate Environmental Protection Service Delivery Plan.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that

9.1 the list of forthcoming items for the meeting of the Committee to be held on the 21st February, 2020 be agreed;

9.2 the revised E&PP Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be noted.

10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 15TH NOVEMBER 2019

It was raised that the minutes had omitted Councillor D. Phillips' apologies and that Councillor M.J.A. Lewis had attended in his place.

RESOLVED that the, subject to the above amendments being made, the minutes of the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held on the 15th November, 2019 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE

This page is intentionally left blank