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TUESDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER 2023

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE **PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE **CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN, SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT 10.00 AM ON TUESDAY, 3RD OCTOBER, 2023** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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This is a multi-location meeting. Committee members can attend in person at the venue detailed above or remotely via the Zoom link which is provided separately.

The meeting can be viewed on the Authority's website via the following link:-
<https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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

**PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
13 Members**

PLAID CYMRU GROUP - 6 Members

Cllr. Karen Davies (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. Arwel Davies (Committee Member)
Cllr. Colin Evans (Committee Member)
Cllr. Neil Lewis (Committee Member)
Cllr. Dorian Phillips (Committee Member)
Cllr. Gareth Thomas (Committee Member)

LABOUR GROUP - 5 Members

Cllr. Peter Cooper (Committee Member)
Cllr. Shelly Godfrey-Coles (Committee Member)
Cllr. Tina Higgins (Committee Member)
Cllr. Kevin Madge (Chair)
Vacancy

INDEPENDENT GROUP - 2 Members

Cllr. Sue Allen (Committee Member)
Vacancy

A G E N D A

- 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. WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE** 5 - 14
- 5. BULKY WASTE REVIEW** 15 - 26
- 6. DRAFT STRATEGY FOR GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT FOR POLLINATORS** 27 - 58
- 7. REFERRAL FROM COMMUNITY, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - JUNE 2023** 59 - 70
- 8. FORTHCOMING ITEMS** 71 - 80
- 9. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 21ST JULY 2023** 81 - 88

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PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD OCTOBER 2023

WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE

Purpose:

To provide a summary of the interim waste service change roll out that was implemented on 23 January 2023.

To present an overview of the future strategy, actions and considerations required to achieve blueprint kerbside rollout.

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO: -

1. To note the progress made during the interim phase of the Waste Strategy January 2023.
2. To consider the report and provide observations for the proposed course of action outlined in this report for the next phase of the waste strategy.

Reason:-

This report provides and update on the waste strategy and the interim service change implementation and the outcome of those changes. Setting out an overview of the overarching plan and actions that will be required to deliver blueprint kerbside sort collection methodology.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Edward Thomas- Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services

Directorate

Ainsley Williams

Name of Head of Service:

Daniel W John

Report Author:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
3rd OCTOBER 2023

WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE

Introduction

The Carmarthenshire Waste Strategy 2021 – 2025 was approved by Cabinet in October 2021. This strategy outlines a comprehensive programme of works to deliver service transformational change to achieve 70% recycling by 2025, providing a base for further improvements to achieve zero waste by 2050 and working towards reducing the carbon impact of the service in line with our future carbon reduction ambitions. This strategy provided a two phased approach to achieving blueprint kerbside collection methodology by 2025, with the interim phase successfully rolled out in January 2023.

In February 2019 members unanimously resolved to declare a climate emergency and committed to become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030. The interim phase has commenced our journey in achieving this ambition, with the introduction of our first three ULEV 27t refuse collection vehicles into our front-line fleet, and with further financial commitment from Welsh Government, the Council has the opportunity to further develop and maximise its ULEV fleet capacity during the second phase of the strategy.

Interim Waste Service Change Update

Carmarthenshire County Council currently provides waste services to approximately 91,000 households and since the introduction of the interim waste service change on 23rd January 2023 the delivery is now through a:

- Weekly dry recycling [blue bags] collection
- Three weekly collections of up to three [black] bags of Non-recyclable material
- Introduction of a glass collection service to 95% of properties in Carmarthenshire for glass bottles and jars to be collected from kerbside every three weeks,
- with food waste collection continuing to be collected weekly.

To facilitate this transition, the service acquired an additional 23 vehicles in total. This procurement exercise encompassed not only standard diesel refuse collection vehicles but also featured ten customised glass collection vehicles and three electric refuse collection vehicles, aligning with our broader sustainability objectives. These newly acquired vehicles are all stationed at our new established interim depot located at Heol Stanllyd in Cross Hands, and their usage is for residual and glass collections only. Meanwhile, the vehicles stationed at our three original depots have been dedicated to handling the weekly collections of dry recycling materials and food waste.

This configuration will remain in effect until the complete implementation of the blueprint methodology, at which point, the dry recycling collection vehicles will be replaced by new ones, while the recently purchased residual collection fleet will remain operational.

Whilst the residual waste and glass recycling are collected by separate vehicles and crew, it was important to try and maintain a consistent waste collection day/week for the householder. Due to the operational placement of vehicles in the three principal depots, and geographical spread of the county, by undertaking some changes to the blue bag recycling round, we managed to achieve around 44% of households on the same day for collection for their Blue, Black and Glass collection.

Due to the number of vehicles required to roll out the interim service, there was a need for additional staff. We were successful in recruiting 17 HGV drivers at a time of shortage for HGV drivers, this was achieved through a collaborative approach between our operational team, our internal training team and Coleg Sir Gar. We also employed an additional 28 loaders through a contemporary engaging advert outlining the benefits of working with local government.

86,730 [95%] of properties in Carmarthenshire are now in receipt of glass collection from their home and we are currently undertaking further route assessments which will establish if this percentage can increase. Following the interim service change the glass recycling bring site review is ongoing to rationalise our network of sites. The aim is to continue to provide this service at strategic locations around the County during the interim period, to ensure residents who are unable to receive kerbside glass collection will maintain access to glass recycling in their local community.

A robust engagement and communication plan was implemented to support and assist residents in Carmarthenshire with the changes in relation to their waste collections. Various communication actions were carried out pre and post roll out of the new service, which included social media campaigns, updates to the corporate website, posters installed at key bus stops County wide, including the ten towns and FAQ's on the website. We also delivered training and members seminars to support members in the rationale and process of change so they could assist their constituents directly. In addition to this, a text message/email notification reminder service was rolled out to residents to sign up for to assist in reminding residents of what day their commodities will be collected on.

As of any service change, an Integrated Impact Assessment had been completed and measures were put in place to ensure that these changes did not have a negative impact on Carmarthenshire residents. On the back of this assessment, we have now employed six Waste and Recycling Wardens to undertake the education and enforcement role to assist with compliance to the changes, the wardens are engaging with residents in person and providing advice, targeting areas that we currently experience high contamination and low participation to recycling. The Wardens also have delegation to investigate noncompliance on a more legal basis and enforce when needed if advice and guidance is not followed.

Performance Figures of the Interim measure

Following the roll out in January 2023, Quarter 1 figures of 2023/2024 have been released resulting in the percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted performance of **72.96%**. This is compared to a 2022/23 Q1 performance of **64.5%** showing an **8.46%** increase in performance attributed to our change in service.

The domestic waste provisions of introducing hygiene waste collections to include children's nappies, weekly collection of dry mixed recycling and food waste, introduction of a three weekly glass bottles and jars collection and three weekly black bag collections has seen a significant rise in quarter 1 recycling rate and a marked improvement compared with last year's quarter 1 performance:

Quarter 1 Comparison Table

Waste Stream	2022/2023 Qtr 1	2023/2024 Qtr 1	+ / -
AHP/Nappy Waste	109.36	308.58	199
Blue Bags	3,704.39	3,954.18	250
Food Waste	2,252.98	2,428.26	175
Kerbside Black Bags	4,495.74	3,058.88	-1,437
Mixed Glass	858.20	1,304.38	446

The project team, which encompassed strategic and operational staff from the waste service combined with key corporate services worked hard on the recent service change to achieve this result. This provides a great foundation to what can be achieved for the development and implementation of the second phase of the strategy. If the quarterly performance remains constant throughout this financial year, the authority will have achieved the 70% recycling rate for 2025 by 2024. On current performance the interim service change has been a success and provides us with optimism as we move to kerbside sort, which theoretically should provide a higher grade of recyclable material with less material contamination.

The waste service change and subsequent recycling performance improvement would not have been possible without the support of other teams and departments across the authority. This demonstrates the essential role played by many across the Authority, with effective governance facilitating successful collaborative working and positive outcomes.

Post roll-out feedback

Following the successful roll out of the interim measure, we conducted a feedback initiative to identify best practices and key lessons learned to inform the forthcoming second phase of the waste service change in 2025. To ensure an impartial assessment of the interim phase rollout, the internal TIC team led on this review. A comprehensive survey was conducted to gather input from 44 stakeholders, from the Director, Cabinet Member, Waste Services staff (including depot operational personnel), key project colleagues from other departments, and external stakeholders from Cwm Environmental.

The feedback was consistent across most stakeholder groups with project management, communication and governance featuring positively. It was widely acknowledged the project had delivered a complex and challenging project to many service users with relatively few issues.

The evaluation pinpointed a limited number of issues that can be improved upon and offered valuable feedback mainly concerning resource allocation, improved engagement with front-line staff, enhanced complaint handling structure, and better use of mobile technology utilisation to minimise service disruption to our residents. These aspects are being prioritised for addressing challenged for the second phase of the Waste Service Change.

Overview of Phase Two- Waste Service Change

To achieve the aims within the Waste Strategy and our commitment to the Net Zero Carbon 2030 Strategy, the second phase of the project, aims at implementing kerbside sort collection methodology across the entire county, which will require additional recruitment, vehicle acquisition, waste commodity procurement, and an increase in grid capacity to ensure sufficient energy to charge 50% of our fleet that is planned to be electric.

As transport emissions make up a large part of the Councils overall emissions, this approach can deliver significant benefits to our overall carbon emissions. In addition, the potential development of a centralised depot at Nantycaws presents a real opportunity to advance new renewable energy production and charging infrastructure for the proposed Waste fleet and can also unlock wider collaborative and integrated commercial charging potential.

At present to achieve the aim of an operational, financial and carbon efficient model a review of our current infrastructure is being undertaken. Currently our operational depots (Cillefwr, Glanamman and Trostre) are unable to facilitate and operate the blueprint methodology for the whole County. This is due to the current lack of parking, storage, office and welfare facilities that would be required for the increased number of fleet vehicles and operatives. This combined with a need to invest heavily in waste transfer infrastructure at each location and in vehicle charging infrastructure challenged through limited grid capacity at these locations. Given the challenges at our current locations a centralised depot is being examined, as this would provide a single location investment and enable the ability to maximise ULEV fleet capacity and also support operational efficiency.

At present we are scoping a proposed model for a centralised depot located at Nantycaws which would be co-located with our waste treatment and transfer infrastructure and have the ability accommodate the whole collection fleet, vehicle maintenance unit, offices, storage, welfare facilities, staff parking, together with a vehicle washing bay. This centralised depot could unlock the potential for further development of our corporate Eco Park ambitions, which will incorporate renewable energy production to power our electric fleet.

Work is currently underway to scope the proposed site at Nantycaws to establish the best use of the site and to prepare for a Pre-Application Consultation for Planning Permission if the proposal is approved.

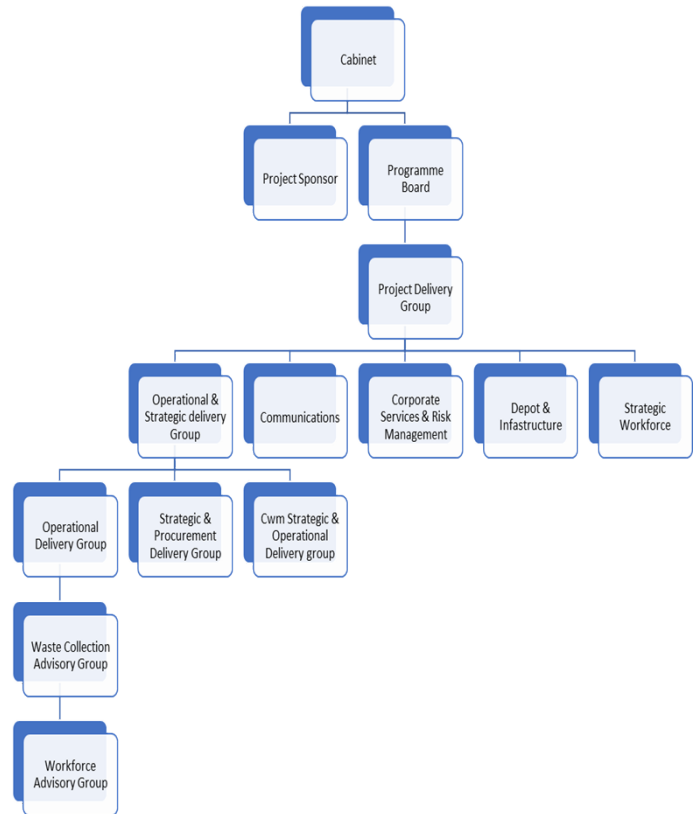
Centralising the depot for waste collections, will also assist in streamlining operational efficiency by consolidating resources, allowing for better coordination of collection schedules and routes, by facilitating the adoption of zonal collection routing for all waste types, and enhance productivity. A centralised depot will not only reduce fuel consumption and associated costs but will provide adequate grid capacity to enable the purchasing of the required number of electric vehicles, both minimising carbon emissions and contributing to a more environmentally sustainable operation.

To assist with the authority's, change to the Blueprint-compliant collection service and the wider creation of Eco Park infrastructure, the authority has successfully received funding from Welsh Government of up to £15,546,000, with the authority to contribute 38% of the overall cost of service change.

Governance

Following a successful governance structure for the interim roll out, it has now been essential that the governance is reviewed and amended accordingly based on the objective and needs of the second phase. The revision has also incorporated views gathered from the feedback sessions.

As you can see, the new Governance Structure enables the project team to deliver on the requirements of this new phase and creates a forum to resolve issues, enabling the decision-making process regarding infrastructure investment and operational issues to be clear, concise, effective, transparent and accountable by each workstream assigned certain roles and responsibilities, with key officers assigned to each workstream.



Vehicles for blueprint kerb side sort collection

We are currently undertaking route assessments to accurately determine the number and size of kerbside sort vehicles necessary for the rollout of the kerbside sort collection methodology by 2025. Following the interim roll-out we have been undertaking an evaluation and performance review of our electric vehicles to understand their restrictions and best utilisation to dictate our future service development.

To meet our Carbon Zero commitment, it is imperative that we maximise the use of ULEV vehicles where practically possible in our waste service delivery. We have recently received demo vehicles to test throughout the County, to establish milage performance on the ULEV vehicle and to understand the impact of Carmarthenshire topography on its performance. As a service, we are planning to initiate the procurement process by December 2023. Through market engagement we have been informed that due to supply issues in the market an anticipated delivery would be between March and September 2025.

Timeline

Following market research and engagement with vehicle manufacturers we have been advised that vehicle the supply timescales (especially for ULEV vehicles) is greater than the 9-10months initially programmed, initial estimates is that there is presently a 18month lead in time.

In addition, the infrastructure development required for blue-print collections either at a single location or across our current network will require planning and civil engineering works.

Both of these factors mean that the second phase of the Waste Strategy in Carmarthenshire isn't feasible for delivery within 2024. The project has developed a new timeline with planned roll-out in Autumn 2025

Communication

Moving forward into the second phase of the Waste Service Change a comprehensive communication and engagement plan will be developed, similar to phase one, with staggered communication to ensure residents are fully informed of the future changes. This will also include further engagement activities with Carmarthenshire residents. As a team, we felt that the engagement and communication plan that was established for phase one was vital in its success.

Commodity considerations for collection

As we learn from other welsh Local Authorities who have already made the transition to kerbside sort collection, we are currently engaging and discussing about the types of materials collected at kerbside and the collection commodities that we can divert from our residual waste stream. This will require a decision on what materials are collected at kerbside and the practicalities and frequency these materials are collected. Once further engagement is undertaken and evidence and statistics are collated in conjunction with costs of commodities, we will provide further comprehensive details on this.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the initial phase of the waste service change has had positive results regarding the County's recycling targets and has established a solid foundation for the second phase. By providing an overview of the course of action for the upcoming second phase, aligning with the objectives outlined in our waste strategy, the Council is well placed to deliver the next phase ensuring we maintain a high-performing, carbon efficient and customer focussed service with a revised timeline for service delivery.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	NO
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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: Daniel W John Head of Environmental Infrastructure

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

- The recommendations are in line with published policy and strategic direction of the authority, in particular the Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives of integration, collaboration and involvement.
- The recommendations in the report are in line with the Carmarthenshire Waste Strategy and procurement requirements through utilising our internal Professional Service Framework.

3. Finance

To fund the additional cost as an authority we have been successful of grant funding from Welsh Government of up to £15,546,000 (Fifteen Million, Five Hundred and Forty Six Thousand pounds), with the Funding relating to the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025 and must be claimed in full by 14 April 2025.

The above figure is the most grant funding Welsh Government will commit to the second phase of the Waste Service Change with the Local Authority contributing towards the project of at least 38% of the Total Project Costs Incurred and Spent.

The grant funding is awarded to support CCC to develop a centralised, upgraded depot at Nantycaws, Carmarthenshire and the procurement of new ultra-low emission (ULE) recycling collection vehicles as part of its Collections Blueprint service change, in order to improve recycling performance and deliver decarbonisation benefits in line with 'Beyond Recycling'.

The grant support can also be used for infrastructure in support of constructing a new centralised depot, recycle collection containers, the purchase of new ULE recycling collection vehicles (where feasible) and a grid upgrade and charging infrastructure.

4. ICT

There is a comprehensive IT development programme for Waste and Environmental Services with resource currently identified. IT Development for information systems relating to our kerbside collection fleet will be required to deliver our long-term aspirations of service improvement and is currently in progress.

5. Risk Management Issues

The current Welsh Government statutory target is 64% recycling, increasing to 70% recycling by 2025, and possibly 80% by 2030, with the aim for Wales to be a zero waste (100% recycling) nation by 2050. If the Authority fails to meet the statutory targets, it could face large financial penalties. This risk of recycling performance failure is identified as part of the corporate risk along with mitigating measures.

In addition, the award funding from Welsh Government of £15,546,000 to assist with the authorities change to the Blueprint-compliant collection service and the wider creation of an Eco Park at Nantycaws is available to claim between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025. The funding must be claimed in full by 14 April 2025, otherwise any unclaimed part of the Funding will cease to be available.

6. Physical Assets

Additional physical resources have been necessary to deliver the interim options set out. With the purchase and lease of additional vehicles to deliver the service configuration. The service has also entered into a lease agreement on a unit at cross hands to effect collections of the additional services. Detailed modelling is being undertaken to fully understand the requirements going forward, which will include further detail on the centralised depot and the number of additional vehicles required.

7. Staffing Implications

Additional staffing resources will be required for the second phase of the service change.

Robust workforce planning will be carried out with dedicated officers responsible for the recruitment and training element. Trade Unions will be actively involved as we develop the second phase of the waste strategy, with member and staff briefings arranged at regular intervals.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED	Yes
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

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PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD OCTOBER 2023

BULKY WASTE REVIEW

Purpose:

To present the scope of review of the bulky waste service for preliminary consideration and comment, with the aim of maximising; the reuse, repair and recycling potential of bulky waste items, promoting sustainability, reducing the service’s carbon footprint and to advance the Council’s Circular Economy project ‘Eto’ and other similar community-based initiatives.

THE SCRUTINY IS ASKED TO:-

Consider the report and provide preliminary observations on the potential options for the future Bulky Waste Collections Service, as a form of early engagement.

Reasons

New and sustainable approaches to waste management are necessary to meet Welsh Government reuse and recycling targets. Increasing the reuse and recycling of our bulky waste is essential to meet the next statutory target of 70% in 2024/ 2025 and to be a part of becoming a zero-waste nation by 2050.

This report outlines the review process and service improvement options for the current bulky waste service.

To deliver an efficient and effective service provision, improving the reuse and recycling performance Carmarthenshire and providing residents domestic items for re-use, ensuring items are in use for longer, reducing carbon footprint and supporting accessibility to low-cost reused and repaired goods.

The report offers the opportunity for the Committee to examine the proposed review criteria and options available to the authority moving forward.

MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3RD OCTOBER 2023

BULKY WASTE REVIEW

Background

The Authority provides statutory waste and recycling collection and management services to approximately 92,000 households. Our bulky household waste collection service managed circa 650 tonnes in 2021/22 with the collection of almost 15,000 items.

At present the service is achieving a diversion from landfill rate of approximately 60%, however this is through recycling alone, with no direct reuse of items collected from residents' properties.

All collections are made using in house resources and there are no formal material reuse partners in place. Although, residents are signposted via the council website to local repair options or select community organisations/ charities that will collect re-usable items free of charge.

Having achieved a recycling rate of 65.25% in 2022/23 and in the context of the upcoming 70% target for 2024/25 (and potentially higher statutory targets in the future), we have already via our Waste Strategy 2021-2025 document, committed to implementing changes to the kerbside recycling service. Hitting higher future targets will require Welsh local authorities to look at the performance of the ancillary waste and recycling services, including bulky waste, which is part of a wider focus on supporting and implementing a Circular Economy.

In 2020/ 2021 the Authority successfully secured funding through the Welsh Government's capital funding programme, to implement projects relevant to the future management of bulky waste:

- Reuse Village, Nantycaws Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) – utilising repurposed containers to deliver a repair and retail outlet for bikes, paint, repair, small electricals, garden tools and furniture, reclaimed wood, alongside an Educational Centre.
- Repair Workshop and Re-Use Shop, Llanelli – located within the Llanelli town centre, with the objective of re-using and reselling items normally destined for disposal of at HWRCs.
- Paint Re-Use Facility, Nantycaws HWRC – development of a paint blending and re-packaging facility to focus on bulking up, blending and treating the contents of part filled paint tins in order to sell at the above retail outlets.

Existing Service Provision

The current bulky waste collection service operates from three depots at Cillefwr, Carmarthen, Glanamman and Trostre, Llanelli. A crew (driver + loader) operate from each depot using 3.5 tonne or 7.5 tonne cage tipper vehicles with a tail lift.

Collections are scheduled over a standard working week (7.5 hours per day, 37 hours per week) with collections taking place Monday - Friday (except on bank holidays). There is a non-refundable charge of £25 for up to three items selected from a prescribed list.

The service can be accessed online, through the HWB or over the phone. Residents can opt to receive a text reminder of when their collection is due, along with an email reminder.

The bulky waste collection resources also deliver additional services and activities:

- Collection of material deposited from small WEEE bring banks (15 banks and c.15t in 2021/22).
- A chargeable bulky waste disposal service for non-household waste, primarily used by Council buildings and schools with few private sector clients (yielding c.72t in 2021/22).
- Weekly or on request deliveries to principal Hwbs and a small selection of private outlets of recycling items e.g. blue bags, food waste bins.

All materials collected by the bulky waste service are then managed at our Household Waste Recycling Centres operated by CWM Environmental. Items are sorted for treatment or disposal and at present the condition of material means they are not suitable for re-use. Material routes for the collected bulky waste streams comprise of:

- Residual (general) waste: Predominantly Energy from Waste with some landfill.
- Recycling and small WEEE: Managed through the same routes as HWRC materials.

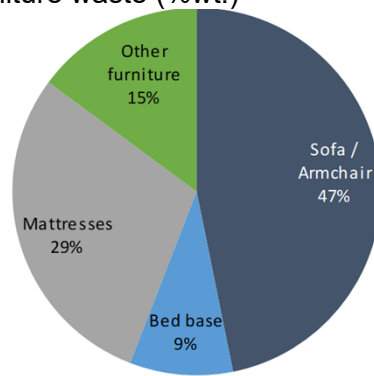
Table 1.1 Bulky waste profile by items and (estimated) weight.

Item category	Number of items	% items	Estimated weight of items (t)	% weight
Furniture	10,434	70%	394	69%
Carpet & flooring	379	3%	10	2%
DIY	314	2%	7	1%
Leisure	273	2%	4	1%
WEEE	3,332	22%	146	26%
Other	242	2%	8	1%
Total	14,974	100%	568	100%

*The weights of the items were estimated using adjusted average item weight data from the Reuse Network.

Below shows a breakdown of the composition of the (predominant) bulky waste categories residents use the service for.

Figure 1.1 Composition of bulky furniture waste (%wt.)



Operationally;

- Trostre depot services the Llanelli post code area in the South of the County,
- Glanamman depot covers the East to Northeast and
- Cillefwr depot services, Carmarthen town and to the West and North boundaries of the county.

The current collection timetable model divides the three depot areas into five collection days, with selected post code areas being serviced Monday- Friday. Slots are booked up quicker in urban locations, resulting in the six-week slot period being filled routinely in these areas. Table 1.2 below shows the slot numbers and take up of the bulky waste services per depot area.

Table 1.2 Operational delivery

Depot	Areas served	Approx. number of slots p.a.	Number of slots used 2021/22	Approx. utilisation (slots)	Items collected 2021/22	Bulky household waste tonnage	Bulky waste recycling rate
Cillefwr SA32 3LZ	Llanelli and South	2,200	1,831	83%	4,659	172	69%
Glanamman SA18 1LQ	East and North East	2,300	1,745	76%	4,441	165	44%
Trostre SA14 9RA	Carmarthen West and North West	2,600	2,308	89%	5,874	231	53%
Totals		7,100	5884	83%	14,974	568	55%

The bulky waste service is near capacity with the remaining 17% of the slots used for; recycling item deliveries, commercial bulk waste and WEEE bank collections from bring site locations.

The Bulky Waste service recycling performance is below –

		2021/2022	% Recycled	Contribution to overall recycling rate
Kerbside Collections	Bulky Waste Recycled	339t	51.16%	0.42%
	Bulky Waste Landfill	323t	48.84%	
	Total	662t		

The 2021/22 service cost profile was

Collection Cost	Material treatment	Income	Net Service Cost
£269k	£32k	£168k	£133k

The average cost of collection per service user was estimated to be c.£46 (or £18 per item). At present the service cost per recycling 1% contribution to our overall recycling performance is over £316k per year.

Considerations

Local Market

The management, and in particular reuse, of bulky items rarely happens via one management route. Many items never enter the local authority system. As they are sold locally or online (via platforms such as eBay, Facebook Marketplace and local Buy & Sell networks, car boot sales etc.) or donated to local charities. Many local authorities have entered formal partnerships or contracts with reuse organisations to divert items for local benefit. Understanding the local network of stakeholders with potential to maximise reuse is an important part of setting an overall strategy for managing bulky items / waste. We have made positive progress in this area because of our Circular Economy ambitions. However, this has not yet resulted in potential future operating relationships being formalised, other than that in place via CWM Environmental.

We have undertaken a scoping exercise of circular businesses within Carmarthenshire and have identified local organisations that manage bulky household waste for reuse. The Authority provides links to these organisations through its website for “good quality furniture”.

Donation stations are provided at Carmarthenshire’s HWRCs for the public to separate (potentially) reusable items prior to depositing items for recycling or disposal. This has the benefit of reducing the Authority’s collection operating costs and generating a supply of items for repair and sale in the new reuse shops / village.

In terms of repair options in the county, several businesses and organisations are identified through a Council study in 2021/2022 and via the Repair Directory, Wales. This exercise has evidenced a reasonable level of capacity in the wider market for repairs of IT equipment and white goods, but less so for furniture.

Resource Rationalisation.

Depot rationalisation as part of the kerbside sort collections blueprint for 2025 could potentially centralise the recycling and waste collections fleet. Presenting an opportunity to redesign the bulky waste collection service to look at; redefining collections and incorporating zonal working.

Reviewing the type of vehicle deployed for bulky waste collection can influence collection productivities with larger vehicles able to collect and carry more items before needing to tip.

In-cab technology: integrated in-cab and back-office technology would help to improve collection productivities by providing real-time information that will make crews more efficient and effective. For example, integrated in-cab and back-office technology would allow for crews to update orders on the ground, for example, where additional items are set out for collection.

Entering properties: At present all of our collections take place from the kerbside, this impacts the quality of collected material as it can be exposed to inclement weather. However, this will have an impact crew collection productivity. Contrary this action will significantly improve the ability to reuse items and also provide a better standard of service to the customer.

Charges and concessions;

Charging levels across the Welsh authorities varies, though standard charging generally sits in the range £20 - £25 for 3 – 5 items (consistent with Carmarthenshire's current charging policy) with additional items charged per unit.

Cost modelling can be used to confirm the current and potential future operating cost profiles for the service. From this derive target reuse and recycling levels, from which an assessment of future pricing strategies can be set. This might include concessionary (or reduced) charges for those in varying social circumstances. A joint approach with other departments where subsidised bulky waste collections may be undertaken to minimise fly tipping of bulky waste items in hot spot areas affecting the local environmental quality of an area.

Delivery partners / structure;

The direction of travel for increasing the circularity of goods through reuse both at HWRCs and as direct reuse service provision is through partnerships. Multiple examples of such practice already exist in Wales, England and Scotland, many of which involve public, private and third sector partners.

Best practice examples

The following summaries capture the outputs of the good practice research by WRAP Cymru on behalf of the Authority, by theme along with commentary on the challenges the Council face (based on the service as it operates now) to implement the identified good practice.

Maximising reuse and recycling



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

North Ayrshire Council subcontracts Cunninghame Furniture to collect items for re-use. As part of a wider Housing Association Cunninghame is able to maximise re-use by adopting innovative approaches such as mattress cleaning. Service statistics:

- 751t bulky waste collected by the Council
- 161t collected by reuse partner (155t re-used)
- Overall reuse rate of 17%

The 'online donation form' used by Cunninghame Furniture Recycling might be used as a guide to additional questions and information that might be captured (by CCC) at the point of ordering to identify items suitable for re-use (versus recycling / disposal): <https://www.cfrcltd.org.uk/donation-form/>

In Cheshire West and Chester all bulky items are collected by CLIC undersub-contract with the Teckal company (Cheshire West Recycling). An overall diversion rate of 55% is achieved where 50% of items are recycled, 5% are re-used

Monmouthshire County Council re-tendered their bulky waste management contract in 2022. This embeds formal re-use and recycling targets in the contract:

- Year 1: 64%
- Year 2: 64%
- Year 3: 70%



CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

There is no single locally identifiable re-use partner with the skills and capacity needed to provide a service across the whole county

Future uncertainty regarding the impact of restrictions on furniture (sofas) containing POPs being sent for re-use, recycling or landfill. These could push down re-use and recycling rates for all LA bulky waste services

Lack of an effective triage system where the re-use potential of an item is identified through the booking system, with revised storage, collection (including home entry) and transport process (enclosed vehicles) adopted accordingly

Designing a service that is future-proofed against the unknown future requirements that come with the proposed application of Extended Producer Responsibility to bulky items such as mattresses, furniture and carpets

Procurement and contract structure;



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Current contracts:

- Conwy and Crest (long standing SLAs (approximately 13 years), for the provision of a bulky waste, textile, small WEEE and a mobile HWRC reuse service
- Pembrokeshire and Frame (long standing SLA) the provision of a bulky waste collection contract with secondary sorting of collected items into material streams
- Monmouthshire and Homemakers Community Recycling (in contract since 2012) ; for the provision of a collection and reuse of household items service
- Oldham and Bulky Bobs (live/awarded); provision of a bulky waste collection and community support service helping vulnerable residents to establish a home in the community
- Shropshire/Veolia/Reviive; A subcontract for the provision of bulky waste service by Veolia (27 year PFI) to Reviive
- North Ayrshire and Cunninghame Furniture Reuse; a contract to deliver a furniture reuse and repair service (excludes non reusable bulky waste)
- Cheshire West and Cheshire/Cheshire West Recycling/Changing Lives in Cheshire; a sub-contract for the provision of an 'all-in' bulky item collection service

Pending / out to tender:

- Monmouthshire – out to tender for a 5+2 years contract, including the following award criteria: Collection of Bulky Waste (30), to be achieved within 1 week of resident payment; Reuse of suitable Items (20); Processing of non-reusable Items (20); Well-being of Future Generations and Circular Economy (30); Price (60)
- Conwy – preparing a 5 year bulky waste collection contract
- Pembrokeshire - preparing a 9 year bulky waste collections contract (quality criteria to include social aims)



CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

If choosing to outsource the collections, CCC will need to be able to guarantee the delivery organisation can provide an equal level of service to all parts of the county. The challenge of servicing properties in outlying rural areas may require consideration of supporting activities, such as mobile HWRC type arrangements

Future-proofing the service (including any associated contracts) against upcoming policy changes, e.g. the need to allow for small WEEE and textiles from non-domestic properties to be added to the household bulky waste service

Delivery Partners/ Structures:



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

All examples of identified good practice involved some element of collaborative working with re-use partners. Examples of such arrangements include:

- Direct contract / Service Level Agreement between Third Sector reuse organisations and local authorities:
 - Conwy
 - Pembrokeshire
 - Monmouthshire
 - Oldham
 - Liverpool
- Sub-contracts to third sector reuse organisations by private waste management companies or Teckals
 - Shropshire (Veolia, via PFI)
 - Cheshire West and Cheshire (Cheshire West Recycling (recently formed Teckal))

Most successful examples of LA partnerships with re-use organisations are based on years of collaborative working and joint investment in the service. In the case of North Ayrshire (Cunninghame) and Oldham (Bulky Bobs) the re-use partners are affiliated with local Housing Associations, providing demand for furniture via other contracts, financial stability and access to supporting infrastructure (IT and maintenance teams)

Section 2 of the report identifies those items most commonly collected via the household bulky waste service. In seeking a potential re-use partner CCC should be looking for expertise relevant to the largest waste streams. By way of example, many re-use organisations have invested in mattress cleaning and refurbishment equipment in recent years, recognising the high numbers of these collected as bulky waste.



CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

Financial sustainability of potential re-use partners in Carmarthenshire, which tend to be dependent on grant funding for the ongoing delivery of certain activities

No sole organisation with the full range of capabilities and ability to service all parts of the County

Lack of a registered 'AATF' in the Carmarthenshire area

No obvious Housing Association with a re-use arm that could provide a service that is akin to Cunninghame Housing (North Ayrshire) or Bulky Bobs (Oldham)

Interface risks associated with a partial outsourcing of the collections. Any savings may be negated by additional management time and the need to allow for spare capacity

Vehicles and technology;



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

A fleet of low-loading 3.5 tonne box vehicles (with supporting transit vans) are considered best practice for the collection of bulky / re-usable items

- Low loading vehicles eliminate the need for a tail lift; increasing the payload by approximately ¼ tonne
- Smaller vans (such as transits) are typically deployed for use in restricted access areas

Examples of mobile HWRC and 'Library of Things' services are starting to emerge. - Examples of the former operate in

- [Conwy](https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Recycling-and-Waste/Recycling-banks-and-household-recycling-centres/Mobile-Recycling-Centre.aspx) (<https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Recycling-and-Waste/Recycling-banks-and-household-recycling-centres/Mobile-Recycling-Centre.aspx>)
- [North Yorkshire](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/mobile-household-waste-recycling-centres) (<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/mobile-household-waste-recycling-centres>); and are proposed in
- [Birmingham](https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/birmingham-to-roll-out-mobile-hwracs/) (<https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/birmingham-to-roll-out-mobile-hwracs/>).

An example of the latter, where residents in rural communities are able to access a mobile item loans service, operates in [Devon](https://www.shareshed.org.uk/) (<https://www.shareshed.org.uk/>).

Limited examples of good practice adoption of IT / in-cab systems were identified. A lone example is found at Cheshire West and Chester/Cheshire West Recycling where access to the Bartec in-cab system is provided to CLIC (Changing Lives in Cheshire), who undertake the bulky items via sub-contract



CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

Planning for vehicle changes that incorporate corporate commitments to carbon reduction, e.g. electrification of vehicle fleets

Allocating jobs such that vehicle volume, time and mileage travelled are all optimised

Designing the service so that the cost implications of 'one-off' bulky waste lifts from rural locations are mitigated. This may justify consideration of variable charges based on location, though such proposals are rarely favoured politically

Entering Properties;



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Reuse organisations (that collect household items for reuse) **do enter** properties for collections and typically adopt the following protocols for managing risk:

- Hold appropriate levels of public liability insurance cover
- Property route/access risk assessments
- All collection staff are DBS checked
- Damage waivers required to be signed by residents (which could be managed digitally)

Ideally, the order booking process should capture sufficient information about where the items are located in the property, the route to entry / exit and any steps or other obstacles along the route of egress. It is important to have clear protocols applying to items or appliances that may be fitted or plumbed in.

Entering properties for the collection of bulky waste is uncommon

- No 'live' examples could be found of local authorities that enter properties for the collection of bulky waste items. However, evidence was found that at some point in time Wandsworth Council in London collected from inside of properties (with an associated cost of £89)
- Only one of the partner organisations interviewed enter properties for bulky waste collections; doing so by request only and requiring a signed damage waiver from the householder



CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

Allowing for the additional time incurred by entering properties and removing items. Having an in-cab system that enables job start / completion times would help generate average job time data that could be used for future planning purposes

Handling protocols to maintain the integrity of items removed from within properties

Staff training and monitoring

Next steps

To work out the best bulky waste service solution that meets the requirements of residents in households without the means or ability to take bulky items to the recycling centre the following options in table 1.3 will be explored in full.

Table 1.3 Bulky waste service options.

Scenario	Scenario description	Detail
0	The baseline	Representation of how service was delivered in 2021/22.
1	Depot rationalisation	Representation of how service may be delivered in 2024/2025 from a central location in the County. Includes 'standard' practice level of reuse associated with improved facilities and practices from depot rationalisation but largely based on existing item assessment and sorting processes.
2	Depot rationalisation with a review of resource allocation	Maximum productivity levels allow for up to 3 appointments per hour of productive time on average.
3	Depot rationalisation with partial outsourcing	Engagement with local partners to collect specific bulky waste item types (e.g. furniture, WEEE, mattresses) for reuse or recycling.
4	All bulky waste collections outsourced	Engagement with a single partner to undertake collections of all bulky waste items.

Modelling undertaken by WRAP Cymru will be considered to formulate a way forward along with a qualitative analysis to recommend a way forward to bulky waste collections for Carmarthenshire. Considerations to service costs, rationalisation of vehicles, routes and charging mechanisms in addition to the overarching objective of increasing reuse potential of bulky items ahead of recycling and disposal options is paramount.

Examples of the best practice and similar models on a local level will be explored and potential for partnership working with CWM Environmental to resource feed stocks into the 'Eto' circular economy project, in turn enhancing sustainability, increasing availability for low cost items to be available for residents to access via our repair and reuse project and sold at the 'Eto' shops, working towards the well-being objectives within the Corporate strategy and Cabinet Vision Statement 2022-2027.

Collaboration with other organisations will also be explored to ensuring a common goal of providing an accessible, affordable, and efficient service for residents, that leads to a higher reuse yield in collection items increasing the lifespan of such items, helping residents via their community work which the Authority may not currently access via the waste management service.

A new way forward for collections will also deliver wider benefits such as improving environmental impact of fly tipping incidences by an improved and more efficient service.

Conclusion

The current bulky waste service needs review and remodelling to deliver a service that maximises the overall reuse of materials and supports our objectives of working towards our recycling and re-use statutory targets set by Welsh Government, the delivery of the WG strategy Beyond Recycling and the wider de-carbonisation of our Council services.

This report provides the high-level considerations and options to be considered and a report on a proposed way forward will follow to ensure we can deliver a bulky waste service that will meet social, environmental and economic goals and maximise material being retained in the local economy for longer.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?	No
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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: Daniel W John

Head of Environmental Infrastructure

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The proposals to reevaluate the bulky waste service and the overall outcome will mean a change in the 'Bulky Waste Service' section of the Waste Management Policy document 2022.

3. Finance

Financial implications will arise from the remodelling of the service, where rationalisation of the service may create financial savings. Albeit considerations to charging mechanism for bulky item collection charged to residents, especially if concessions are incorporated, will pose additional costs as collection and disposal costs could increase.

The changes however should be met by the current budget allocation for the service provision and prove no additional cost to the service. A more accurate reflection of costs will be included in the cabinet paper pending the overall solution decision.

5. Risk Management Issues

The current Welsh Government statutory target is 64% recycling, increasing to 70% recycling by 2025, and possibly 80% by 2030, with the aim for Wales to be a zero waste nation by 2050. If the Authority fails to meet the statutory targets, it could face large financial penalties. This risk of recycling performance failure is identified as part of the corporate risk along with mitigating measures.

7. Staffing Implications

There is potential for staffing resource variation in duties from the current resource provision depending on the appropriate scenario selected as the final future service option.

Trade Unions will be actively involved as we develop the bulky waste service remodelling, and any changes will be discussed and conveyed in a timely manner.

All Human Resource policies will be followed if necessary, pending the outcome.

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

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

THERE ARE NONE

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PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 OCTOBER 2023

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT FOR POLLINATORS

Purpose:

To note the continuing progress of the Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on the CCC Estate 2023-

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:

To note the development of a Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on Council-managed land where there is no conflict between the pollinator-friendly land management practices recommended in the strategy and the existing land use.

Reasons:

It is a statutory requirement that Carmarthenshire County Council prepares, and reports on the delivery of its Environment Act duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience. The delivery of this Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on the CCC Estate will evidence the Council's commitment to managing its land for pollinators, which is consistent with its biodiversity duty and Well-Being Objective 10 on the Corporate Strategy: Look after the environment now and for the future
And Council's [Vision Statement for 2022–27](#), which outlines the starting point of the Council's ambitions over the next 5 years. This includes a vision to:

Increase the biodiversity of all council-owned land, and recognise the strong interrelationship between climate change, the loss of biodiversity and human wellbeing. Consider the use of CCC land for creating havens of wildflowers and pollinators, including roadsides and verges. We cannot solve the threats of human induced climate change and loss of biodiversity in isolation. We either solve both or we solve neither.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Cllr Aled Vaughan-Owen - Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability

Directorate: Place & Infrastructure

Name of Head of Service:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 OCTOBER 2023

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT FOR POLLINATORS

1. SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

The strategy is currently under development to include a change in the policy approach and will set out a delivery plan across the County. The purpose of this report is:

to update Scrutiny on the development of a Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on the CCC Estate 2023–

which sets out the Council's recommended commitment to the adoption of pollinator-friendly land management practices on Council-managed land where there is no conflict between these and the existing land use. This reflects action being carried out across Wales to address the decline in pollinators.

The Strategy sets out a vision, supported by relevant policies, as to how and why CCC will manage its amenity grassland, for which it is responsible. In delivering the strategy contains CCC will play its part in mitigating both the Nature and the Climate Change Emergencies that it and Welsh Government have declared. Successful delivery of the proposed strategy will also deliver the numerous other benefits which good-quality amenity grassland provides and contribute to the development of local environments that will be richer in wildlife and will support sustainable pollinator populations. This approach will contribute to making the places in which people live, work and play more attractive.

It has been written with the intention that other member organisations of the Public Service Board will want to manage their land for the same objectives. With the Council setting the example it is hoped that they will adopt similar pollinator-friendly land management practices, so contributing to the conservation and enhancement of Carmarthenshire's natural environment.

The Strategy reflects local and national policy and legislation linked to the conservation and enhancement of our natural environment and it links to action on carbon reduction and the health and well-being of our citizens.

2. OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND THEIR PROS AND CONS

The Strategy provides a clear direction for the Council and evidence's that we wish to take positive, agreed action to achieve its objectives. It will evidence to WG we are committed to take action to help pollinators.

Without the Strategy we would have to work in a more piecemeal and uncoordinated manner and have less clear means of evidencing our duty to take action under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and also help meet well-being goals under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. It is also a mechanism of making links to the Council's Zero Carbon Plan.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES
Draft Strategy Policy for Grassland Management

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: R. Griffiths

Head of Place & Sustainability

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

2. Legal

The delivery of the strategy and the actions it contains is consistent with the S6 Biodiversity Duty placed on all public bodies in Wales under the Environment Act (Wales) 2016.

Delivery of the actions set out in the Report evidences the Council's delivery and commitment of this duty and its compliance with this Act. It is also consistent with its responsibilities under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in particular the Resilient Wales goal.

3. Finance

In terms of delivering this change in land management practices, the overall impact should be cost neutral to the Council over time. Land managers, e.g. Housing may want the grass areas for which they are responsible cut less frequently to enhance areas for pollinators, and while this may result in some savings, e.g. labour and fuel, some costs may be higher, e.g. cost of removal of arisings and costs of moving machinery from site to site.

Financial savings should not be seen as the driver for this change of practice. The purchase of cut and collect machines has been funded with Welsh Government grant aid in 2021 and 2023 via their Local Places for Nature programme fund for use by Grounds Maintenance. This in itself is a considerable cost saving.

5. Risk Management Issues

Failure to deliver land management practices that are beneficial to pollinators places a reputational risk on the Council and risks its compliance with its S6 Biodiversity Duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

6. Physical Assets

Delivery of the Strategy for Pollinators will have an impact on how the Council manages some of the assets for which it is responsible e.g. grassland management at amenity sites, around property and housing.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

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

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Carmarthenshire County Council Environment Act Forward Plan		Legislation and Guidance (gov.wales) (in the downloads section)

Carmarthenshire County Council

Strategy Under Development

**Strategy for Grassland
Management for Pollinators on the
CCC Estate 2023–28**

Rural Conservation

Place & Sustainability

Version – September 2023

Contents

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Please note that this strategy is a draft version.

Abbreviations – To Be Completed

CCC Carmarthenshire County Council (also referred to as the 'Council)

GBI Green and Blue Infrastructure

NRW Natural Resources Wales

PPW Planning Policy Wales

WG Welsh Government

**TBC – To
Be
Completed**

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed *Policy* for Managing Grassland for Pollinators on the CCC Estate aims to:

- **increase the area and extent of wildflower-rich grassland habitat managed by the Council on amenity grassland***.

We will do this by:

- **adapting our cutting regimes to cutting only when needed,**
- **cutting grass and removing the arisings to reduce fertility and, over time, reduce the amount of grass to be cut.**

(NB If we reduce the amount grass grows in the first place, we have less to cut which should reduce costs)



The strategy has been prepared in response to the Council’s [Vision Statement](#) for 2022–27, which outlines the starting point of the Council’s ambitions over the next 5 years. This includes a vision to:

Increase the biodiversity of all council-owned land, and recognise the strong interrelationship between climate change, the loss of biodiversity and human wellbeing. Consider the use of CCC land for creating havens of wildflowers and pollinators, including roadsides and verges. We cannot solve the threats of human induced climate change and loss of biodiversity in isolation. We either solve both or we solve neither.

* **NB** It does not cover grassland management on verges, country parks, or council-tenanted farms, which are managed by other departments, e.g. Highways, Outdoor Recreation, Council tenants.

It also reflects CCC's Corporate Strategy 2022–27 [Well Being Objective 3-9](#)

“A biodiverse natural environment is good for well-being, with healthy functioning ecosystems, supporting social, economic, and ecological resilience.”

Foreword by Cllr. Aled Vaughan Owen, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability

Grassland habitats, adorned with wildflowers and buzzing with diverse insect life, are invaluable treasures in our natural landscape. These vibrant ecosystems play a pivotal role in supporting pollinators, whose essential services are vital for food production and biodiversity. Amidst the backdrop of a declared climate and nature emergency, Carmarthenshire County Council's estate now stands at a critical juncture, requiring a novel strategy to protect and nurture these grasslands for the benefit of local ecosystems, global environmental sustainability while providing amenities and well being opportunities for local communities.

This strategy represents a beacon of hope, demonstrating our willingness to take meaningful action to ensure a more vibrant, greener and sustainable future for Carmarthenshire and beyond.

Sign Off

Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability

Director's Foreword

TBC

Sign Off

Director, Place and Infrastructure

1.1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1.** In recent years, the loss of wildflower grassland habitats and the pollinating insects they support has become an issue of significant concern across the UK. Publicly owned amenity grasslands have significant potential as reservoirs of wildflower-rich habitat that can contribute to reconnecting and restoring grassland biodiversity. As these areas are in public view, they also offer opportunities for awareness raising, and engaging the local community in supporting action for biodiversity. These areas, if managed with biodiversity in mind, will also support our well-being and the place-making agenda.
- 1.1.2.** Short mown grassland designed for recreational use has been the dominant form of management for grassland on the Council's green estate but is limited benefit to biodiversity. Regularly mown grassland is required for sports pitches and heavily used areas but elsewhere there is the potential for a variety of management to benefit both biodiversity and residents/users. This is one of the drivers of Welsh Government's Local Places for Nature programme and their [It's For Them](#) and [Bee Friendly](#) initiatives.
- 1.1.3.** This Strategy sets out a vision, supported by relevant policies, as to how and why CCC will manage its amenity grassland, for which it is responsible. In delivering the strategy contains CCC will play its part in mitigating both the Nature and the Climate Change Emergencies that it and Welsh Government have declared. Successful delivery of the proposed strategy will also deliver the numerous other benefits which good-quality amenity grassland provides.
- 1.1.4.** Changing the way we manage areas of our amenity grass is a key contribution that we can make to help tackle the **Nature and Climate Emergencies** declared by both Welsh Government and Carmarthenshire County Council.
- 1.1.5.** The delivery of the Strategy will require commitment and involvement of many CCC officers across different departments and service areas. Services area that are responsible for the management of land – including schools, sports grounds, housing, day centres, care homes, property and service areas that have responsibilities for developing land-based plans and projects and securing grants. All service areas have a role to play, such as Development Management, which has a regulatory role. Delivery of the strategy may challenge established land management practices, but change is essential if we are to address the Nature and

Climate emergencies, and if we are to enjoy the many benefits that good-quality amenity grassland can provide. This strategy, based on a policy for managing our amenity grassland will be integrated into CCC's developing Green and Blue Infrastructure work.

1.1.6. The strategy has been prepared in response to the Council's [Vision Statement for 2022–27](#), which outlines the starting point of the Council's ambitions over the next 5 years. This includes a vision to:

Increase the biodiversity of all council-owned land, and recognise the strong interrelationship between climate change, the loss of biodiversity and human wellbeing. Consider the use of CCC land for creating havens of wildflowers and pollinators, including roadsides and verges. We cannot solve the threats of human induced climate change and loss of biodiversity in isolation. We either solve both or we solve neither.

1.1.7. It also reflects CCC's Corporate Strategy 2022–27 [Well Being Objective 3-9](#)

“A biodiverse natural environment is good for well-being, with healthy functioning ecosystems, supporting social, economic, and ecological resilience. “

1.1.8. This strategy is restricted to CCC owned or managed land.

1.1.9. Changing the way we manage our amenity grass is a key contribution that we can make to help tackle the **Nature and Climate Emergencies** declared by both Welsh Government and Carmarthenshire County Council.

1.1.10. It is important to appreciate that the approach to management of grassland for pollinators is not about abandonment or saving money. Active management is required for native wildflowers and their pollinators to thrive as part of managing our amenity green space.

1.1.11. It is also **not** a plan to sow annual wildflower' seed mixes. Annual seed mixes may look colourful, but they have drawbacks. They are sometimes called 'wildflowers' but are often non-native species. They can be expensive to buy, require work to maintain and may need to be sown each year. Herbicides are often used to clear areas before sowing. Sowing these mixes does little to conserve our native wildflowers. They do not support the wide range of invertebrates that feed on native meadow flowers. Our aim is to encourage the native seed bank to flourish through a change in management. This is the most sustainable method of increasing the area and extent of wildflower grasslands in Carmarthenshire.

1.1.12. The plan reflects the fact that well-managed grassland provides multiple benefits:

- Improving our green infrastructure for the public

- Reducing our carbon footprint
- Improving the resilience of local environment.

1.1.13. It is advised that the strategy is reviewed in 2028.

1.2. Good-quality green spaces delivery a wealth of benefits

1.2.1. Grasslands managed for pollinators, contribute to good-quality Green Infrastructure and provide us with many benefits. They create a sense of place, contribute to our well-being and are key components of Green Infrastructure initiatives.

1.2.2. Public perception. A study in Sussex showed twin benefits of reduced mowing in a public park – there was an increased abundance of flowers and flower-visiting insects and 97% of park visitors said they favoured encouraging insects and wildflowers ([Insect Conservation and Diversity](#) 8(2):107-119).

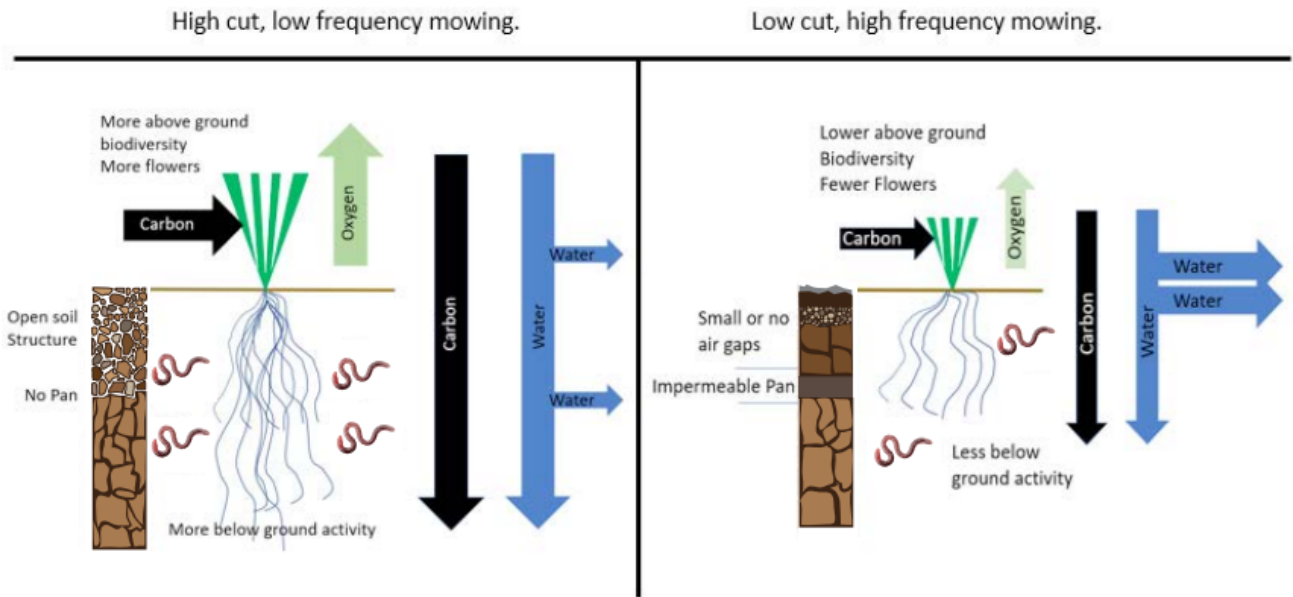
1.2.3. Supporting invertebrates. Regularly cut, closely mown grass may be perceived as ‘tidy’ but has little benefit for wildlife. Grass that is cut with a longer interval will still be quite short but will allow plants to flower provide food for pollinating insects such as butterflies, hoverflies, beetles and bees. Grass that is managed as a meadow provides food and shelter for a range of wildlife. ([PDF](#)) [Small areas of wildflower grassland in urban areas support significant species richness and abundance of pollinating insects \(researchgate.net\)](#)

1.2.4. Climate Change and flooding. Plants absorb carbon from the atmosphere. Reducing mowing allows plants to grow bigger root systems, storing more carbon in the soil. Better root systems increase soil aeration, which increases water storage and so helps reduce flooding. [its-for-them-frequently-asked-questions-a-5-leaflet.docx \(live.com\)](#)

Parc Howard – area managed for pollinators.



Nature Isn't Neat Mowing Regime Rationale



(From Monmouthshire's [Nature Isn't Neat](#) website)

1.2.5. Pollinators pollinate many farmed crops that we eat. They pollinate wild plants to produce seeds, fruits and nuts which birds and mammals eat. They are essential for the maintenance of food production. Many wild pollinators are in decline, mainly due to loss of habitat. Pollinators need flowers to feed from, places to live and lay eggs, and shelter for their young to develop. Honey bees are also pollinators. In Wales, they are largely a managed species and are not in decline.

1.2.6. **People and Places.** Connecting with wildlife can benefit our health and mental wellbeing making us feel calmer, happier and more focused. Creating more meadow-like areas allows us to experience nature day by day.

1.2.7. Flower-rich habitats, make great places to live, work and visit – tourism in Carmarthenshire is dependent on a rich and diverse natural environment. In built up areas resilient 'Green Infrastructure' with colourful flowering plants add to the experience of living and working there. There is numerous research evidencing the health and mental wellbeing benefits of well-managed natural spaces. e.g. [Urban Ecosystems volume 21](#), pages875–886 (2018). [The role of managed natural spaces in connecting people with urban nature: a comparison of local user, researcher, and provider views | SpringerLink](#)

2. Background Policy & Strategic Framework

2.1.1. Delivery of the action will address different responsibilities and agendas.

2.1.2. Wales policy and Legislation

- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- Environment Act (Wales) 2016 - to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the proper exercise of our functions and in doing so promote the resilience of ecosystems.
- Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 11, and the updated version of this to be published in 2023, PPW12 – with reference to both Chapter 6 and to Green and Blue Infrastructure.
- Welsh Government's [It's for Them - Changing mowing to save wildlife campaign](#). to engage with local residents and community groups about changes to mowing practices.
- [WG Local Places for Nature programme](#) which is in WG's Programme for Government and WG's [Bee Friendly](#) initiative.

2.1.3. Carmarthenshire

- Carmarthenshire's Well-being Plan (PSB) and Carmarthenshire County Council's Well-being Objectives Well-being Objective 3 - Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe, and prosperous (Prosperous Communities) and the thematic priority: Decarbonisation & Nature Emergency (including 'addressing the issues that are driving a decline in our biodiversity and support nature recovery'). It would also contribute to the Public Service Board's Well-being Plan for Carmarthenshire.

<p>A prosperous Wales</p>	<p>Pollinators are good for our economy. The value of pollination to agriculture in the UK is estimated at £690 million. If we were to pollinate crops by hand it would cost £1.8 billion - making our food bills a lot higher than they are now. Worldwide the honeybee population alone is worth £30 billion.</p> <p>Natural Resources Wales / Love pollinators</p> <p>The European Honey Bee is the major managed pollinator available for field and outdoor crops. In 2021 in Carmarthenshire there were approximately 700 apiaries (a place where bee hives are kept) made up of an estimated 3000 hives. Based on average honey production per hive in Carmarthenshire in 2021 of 19 kg/hive this would equal honey production of approximately 57 tonnes, with an estimated value of £456K (pers. comm. Regional Bee Inspector).</p>
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<p><i>A resilient Wales</i></p>	<p>Diverse natural habitats with healthy populations of pollinating insects will help our natural environment be more resilient to change and continue to provide vital pollinator services for us.</p>
<p><i>A healthier Wales</i></p>	<p>Natural resources make a significant contribution to the physical health and mental well-being of people in Wales. Access to nature and greenspace has positive impacts on physical and mental health.</p>
<p><i>A more equal Wales</i></p>	<p>Equal access to ecosystems providing cultural services contribute to equality in Wales. Local access to good-quality green space will benefit all our citizens.</p>
<p><i>A Wales of cohesive communities</i></p>	<p>Involving communities in the management of their local parks and woodlands has been shown to improve community cohesion and reduce anti-social behaviour.</p>
<p><i>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Our diverse habitats and the range of species within them have contributed to a landscape in Carmarthenshire that has played a significant role in the development of a distinct culture such as locally specific art and literature and distinctive Welsh place names</p>
<p><i>A globally responsible Wales</i></p>	<p>The environment supplies all our material resources, but we must ensure that we use only our fair share.</p>

- Carmarthenshire County Council’s Environment Act Forward Plan 2023–2025
- Carmarthenshire County Council Cabinet Vision Statement 2022–27
- The declaration by the Welsh Government and CCC of both a Climate and Nature Emergency, and the role our habitats in mitigating climate change and delivering opportunities for Nature Recovery.
- It will contribute to the [Council’s Transformation Strategy 2022-27](#) and be a mechanism to implement a programme to deliver the transition to Net Zero by 2030 and address the Nature Emergency. Key objectives include:
 - Support the identification and delivery of carbon savings and nature enhancement at both a corporate and service level.
 - To act as champions for decarbonisation and the enhancement of biodiversity within plans programmes, projects and other interventions designed in service areas.
 - Identify opportunities for carbon savings through service design, development and delivery.

2.1.4. Although this Strategy is for the Council, it could easily be adopted by the Public Service Board, Community Councils and strategic partnership developments being taken forward by

the Council. The council is committed to leadership in this areas and will work collaboratively to share its learning and best practice to support other public sector organisations to adopt a similar approach

2.2. Current management

▪ Carmarthenshire local context – To be Completed

2.2.1. Most of the Council's grass cutting arrangements are based on historic maintenance levels but are not defined by a specific policy or legislative requirement. Amenity grass is cut every (TBC) between **March and November**. The majority of grass in urban areas is cut to this frequency for aesthetic reasons.

2.2.2. The Grounds Maintenance team act as 'Contractors' and have Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with 'clients', e.g. Housing, Property, and Education where currently the following prescription is offered:

Cut grass 15mm – 30mm to all amenity areas leaving the cuttings lay. Prior to mowing the site is to be cleared of all litter, glass, tins, stones, animal faeces and other debris which will be disposed of to an approved disposal site.

2.2.3. In total Grounds Maintenance cut approximately x (TBC) /Ha of grass within the county, including:

- all the housing areas across the county,
- 66 schools (half of all schools in the county),
- all county run car parks and industrial estates, most run public buildings (e.g., Parc Dewi Sant, etc.)
- parks (NB some community councils now have responsibility for parks but may use CCC for management if they do not have their own teams/contactors),and
- some works for Highways.

2.2.4. Grounds have a range of machinery to undertake grass cutting. In 2021 the Conservation Section applied to WG for grant funding under the Local Places for Nature grant for the purchase of ride on and tractor led cut and collect machines to add versatility to the grass cutting service that Grounds delivery and to help deliver a project to manage a small number of sites across the CCC estate for pollinators to try to demonstrate the potential for managing sites differently and the logistics of doing so.

2.2.5. In 2023 WG, under the same grant, approved the purchase of two additional ride on cut and collect machines so that all the Grounds depots have one, plus trailers for facilitate transport across the estate.

3. The new policy approach

3.1. Strategic Objectives

3.1.1. It is recognised that regularly mown grassland is required for sports pitches and heavily used areas but elsewhere there is the potential for a variety of management to benefit both biodiversity and residents/users. In managing our grassland areas for biodiversity and, in particular, for pollinators for we will consider an appropriate approach to grassland management based around two schedules to optimise the benefits of grassland management.

3.1.2. Nectar cut



Nectar Cut areas where slightly higher grass height is desired, allowing short flowering plants to flower and set seed.

- Designated sites will be cut on a **6-week** cycle, allowing short-flowering plants to complete their full flowering cycle and increasing the nectar available to insects.
- Cut height: blade set to a height allow which allows low-growing plants in flower to pass under blades – 2.5-5 cm.
- Maintain a ‘managed’ look next to paths by mowing a **1-m swathe** of short grass alongside any path edge.
- The management means that some flowering species will still be cut but, over the season, it will still be a net gain for pollinators.
- **Arisings** will be collected to reduce the nutrient content of the soil. This will encourage flowering plants and discourage lush grass.
- Arisings **either** removed from site to a green waste site or preferably left as habitat piles *if* suitable locations can be found on site.



(From Dorset CC)

3.1.3. Meadow Cut

- Agreed sites/areas to be managed as a meadow – and cut twice a year in March/April and August/September.
- Maintain a ‘managed’ look next to paths by mowing a **1-m swathe** of short grass alongside any path edge.
- If necessary/appropriate paths cut through the site.
- The collection of the cuttings is an essential part of the process. It removes nutrients, lowers the soil fertility and prevents a ‘thatch’ of dead grass inhibiting wildflower seed growth. Over time, the percentage of grass decreases and the percentage of wildflowers will increase.



Meadow management - Llandybie

- Visibility splays and swathes alongside paths and roads will continue to be cut more regularly.

- Even grassland that initially has few wildflowers can diversify over time with biodiversity management, when the grass is cut and collected.
- In some cases not all the wildflower grass needs to be cut and collected each year. Staggered biennial cutting can ensure even better pollinating insect habitat and that some wildflower seeds are available to seed eating birds as winter food.
- Sites will be managed as normal between September and March.
- Signs will be erected at sites:



3.1.4. We will continue to cut the following areas more regularly as Amenity cuts:

- all sports fields
- edges to our paths and cycles ways and desire lines
- paths within nectar and meadow areas, ensuring these areas remain accessible to people, and enabling them to enjoy these areas and the nature they support
- areas that are technically unsuitable for a nectar or meadow cut due to issues such as slope, and drainage.

3.1.5. In making these changes we will also:

- stop cutting grass beneath the canopy of trees, unless paths cross these areas (as above)



3.2. Implementation

3.2.1. In order to support the implementation of the amenity grassland management for pollinators, an assessment of the grassland estate across the county under the various council portfolios is needed. This will help identify the appropriate grassland management regime for each site to allow the development of costing reports, quantitative reporting, and alignment with the landscape management digital transformation programme. Funding has been sought, and obtained, from WG's Local Places for Nature Grant to facilitate with the geomapping of the existing assets and develop (internal) client-based land ownership details to allow the development of site-specific tailored Biodiversity plans for each client/site. This will provide a seamless transition of data sets with the digital transformation programme, allow quantitative reporting mechanism to establish the change and benefit in land management whilst allowing the workstreams to be delivered on the ground with the aid of mobile devices for accurate recording of data set.

3.2.2. To successfully implement the *Policy* for Pollinators, individual departments within the the Council that have amenity grassland will need to work with Grounds Maintenance and the Conservation Section to:

- identify sites where there are no over-riding health and safety constraints to changed grassland management.
- for housing sites, ensure changes in grass and grass-verge management are communicated to and broadly supported by council tenants.
- choose sites that grounds maintenance agree can be managed in the suggested way.
- ensure sites have necessary 'eco-pile' composting capacity or can be taken to a local green waste site.

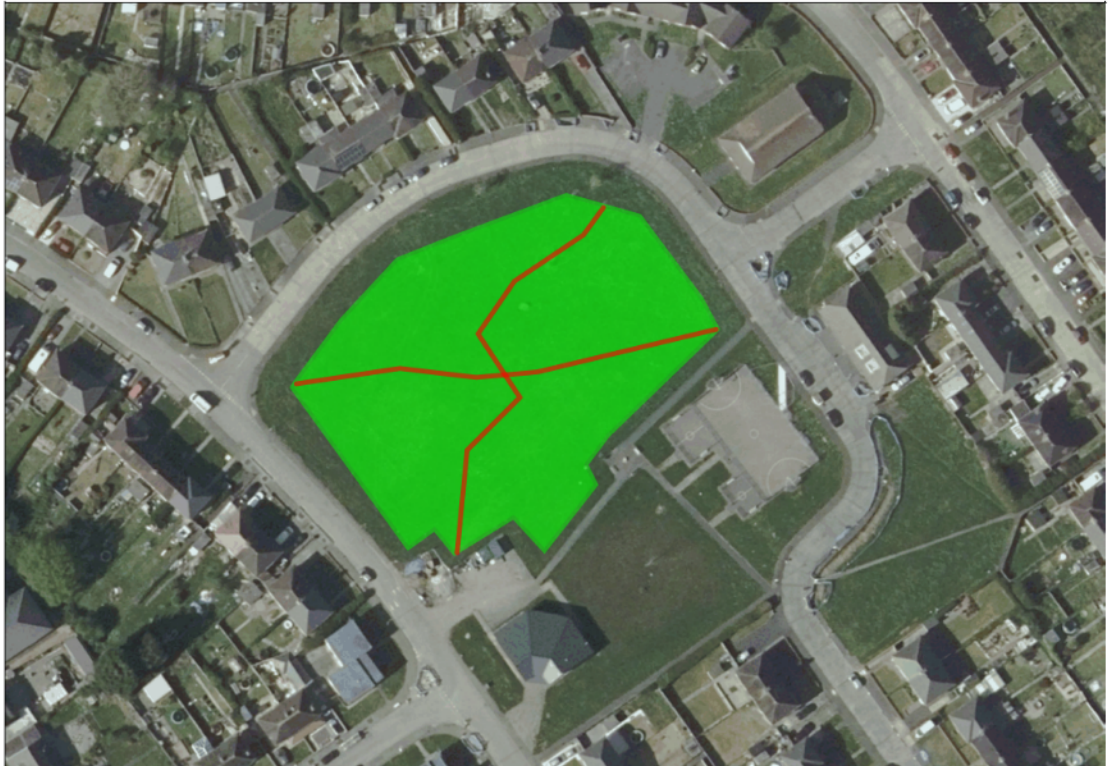
Case Study

The large area of green space at Heol Gwili Field, Llanelli was suggested by the CCC housing officer 'Large site - opportunity to use parts with footpaths through. Tenants and the local Councillor were contacted. A 'Nectar Cut' was introduced (cut and collect every 6 weeks). Arisings were taken to Nant-y-caws waste site as there was nowhere to leave them on site.



Heol Gwili Field, Llanelli SA14 9HF

Green area - Nectar cut. Cut 3m swathe alongside path edges.
Cut paths through grass - following existing 'desire lines'.
Arisings removed - if no place to safely leave on site.



0 10 20 30m

Graddfa Scale 1:750

Canol y Map Map Centre [253460.9,200301.8]

Dyddiad Date 21/03/2023

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Management taking place at Heol Gwili fields

3.3. Engagement

3.3.1. The Council should:

- ensure that the Council's web site includes relevant information on how the Council is managing land for pollinators (including a section with FAQ) and links providing information for others who would like to.
- explain what we are doing and why to communities. Ask communities to identify areas for management for pollinators in their area.
- champion the future for pollinators to encourage community and partnership working on pollinator projects.
- seek to work with other local authorities who are already taking action for pollinators in Wales and learn from their experience.
- undertake or work in partnership on community engagement and outreach.
- undertake or work in partnership to liaise with schools.
- ensure other strategic projects, e.g. the Pentre Awel in Llanelli adopt the principle of the plan.

3.3.2. For the successful implementation of this Policy and the delivery of actions that will support pollinators the Council has produced an action plan (**Appendix 1**) to embed this management across our estate with the expectation that 'clients' will seek to incorporate management of land under their control for pollinators via a Nectar or Meadow cut of areas under their control.

3.4. Training

To be completed.

4. Implementation and Monitoring

4.1. Resources

- 4.1.1. It is important to appreciate that the approach to management of grassland for pollinators is not about abandonment or saving money. Active management is required for native wildflowers and their pollinators to thrive.
- 4.1.2. There can be a cost to cut *and* collection and disposal of the cut grass if it cannot be left as habitat piles on site. This is particularly relevant to housing sites.
- 4.1.3. Disposal of waste – if it has to be taken to a green waste site there will be a cost
- 4.1.4. Composting facilities – creation of new composting facilities at CCC-owned sites should be considered to take green waste (grass cutting and hedge clippings, prunings, etc.) as this might reduce the cost of taking arisings to green waste sites and provide a local source of peat-free compost/soil improver.
- 4.1.5. To enable the delivery of this policy, we must ensure that we have the right equipment in the right places to offer this service to all those responsible for CCC land.
- 4.1.6. Funding has been applied for in 2021/22 and 2023/24, and obtained, under the WG Local Places for Nature grant for three ride-on cut and collect machinery and one cut and collect machine that is pulled behind a tractor.
- 4.1.7. A draft cost comparison has been provided in **Appendix 2**

4.2. Monitoring and reporting

- 4.2.1. The service areas that can deliver the Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on the CCC Estate' should include these actions in their Divisional/ Departmental Business Plans and report on them.
- 4.2.2. Elements of the Plan will be included in CCC's Environment Act Forward Plans – these plans run for 3 years, e.g. Jan 2023 to Dec 2025. The actions in this plan are formally reported to Welsh Government at the end of the 3-year period.
- 4.2.3. The strategy falls within the cabinet member portfolio for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability. It will also impact on the Cabinet members with responsibility for Housing, Education, Property (any department with responsibility for amenity grassland) etc and Grounds Maintenance.

As machinery has been grant funded by WG's Local Places for Nature funding then regular reporting will be required by WG.

APPENDIX 1. DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CCC'S AMENITY GRASSLAND

Dept Plan Ref #	Actions	MEASURES and MILESTONES	By Who? Responsible Officer	By When
Purpose: to increase the area and extent of wildflower-rich grassland habitat managed by the Council on amenity grassland.				
ACTIONS FOR THE Managing Grassland for Pollinators on the CCC Estate				
1	SURVEY. Assessment of the grassland estate across the county under the various council portfolios is needed. This will help identify the appropriate grassland management regime for each site to allow the development of costing reports, quantitative reporting, and alignment with the landscape management digital transformation programme.	TBC	Gary Baxter Grounds Maintenance	TBC
2	SURVEY. Develop a simple tool to assess the species richness of the grasslands the Council manages to inform/prioritize future management and monitor change	Tool developed and piloted with colleagues.	Isabel Macho Rural Conservation	TBC
3	RAISING AWARENESS: Ensure that the Council's web site includes relevant information on best practice managing areas for pollinators with links to providing information for others who would like to do the same.	Updates web pages incl. links to FAQs	Isabel Macho Rural Conservation	TBC

4	RAISING AWARENESS: Produce FAQ on for the public on the policy for amenity grassland management to be given to customer care officers and to put on the CCC website.	Updates web pages incl. links to FAQs	Isabel Macho Rural Conservation/D Gary Baxter Ground Maintenance	TBC
5	RAISING AWARENESS Ask the public/councillors to suggest sites where cutting could be reasonably reduced	Engage with Cabinet members for Housing and Education, Grounds Maintenance etc	TBC	TBC
6	RAISING AWARENESS/ MANAGEMENT: Take part in Plantlife's No Mow May campaign at selected CCC sites and promote to PSB/T&CCs/Schools.	TBC	TBC	TBC
7	SLA – Grounds Maintenance to update SLA to reflect new management options – with costings	TBC	TBC	TBC
8	MANAGEMENT: Grounds maintenance to identify sites/areas within larger sites under their control that will be managed for pollinators with using a NECTAR and/or MEADOW CUT These will have prepared simple cutting plans and signs.	TBC	Place & Sustainability (Grounds Maintenance)	TBC
9	MANAGEMENT: Identify land around Council buildings which (considering other constraints) that will be managed for pollinators with using a NECTAR and/or MEADOW CUT These will have prepared simple cutting plans and signs.	TBC	Property	TBC
9	MANAGEMENT: Identify land in Council Property portfolio which (considering other constraints) that	TBC	Property	TBC

	will be managed for pollinators with using a NECTAR and/or MEADOW CUT These will have prepared simple cutting plans and signs.			
10	MANAGEMENT: Housing (in consultation with residents) to identify suitable sites that have areas that could be managed for pollinators using a NECTAR and/or MEADOW CUT These will have prepared simple cutting plans and signs.	TBC	TBC	TBC
11	MANAGEMENT: Sheltered Complexes (in consultation with residents) to identify suitable sites that have areas that could be managed for pollinators using a NECTAR and/or MEADOW CUT These will have prepared simple cutting plans and signs.	TBC	TBC	TBC
12	MANAGEMENT: Day Care (in consultation with residents) to identify suitable sites that have areas that could be managed for pollinators using a NECTAR and/or MEADOW CUT These will have prepared simple cutting plans/signs.	TBC	TBC	TBC
13	MANAGEMENT Composting sites – assess feasibility of increasing the number of composting sites in the county to reduce need to take green waste to Nantycaws and use compost internally.	TBC	TBC	TBC

Appendix 2. Cost comparison **TBC**

To help provide an understanding of the financial implications of the change of management practices here is an example of one area looking at a comparison of cutting a site to the following options:

Amenity cut (every 2 weeks and grass left on the ground)

Nectar cut (every 6 weeks) – cut and collected:

- (a) Left on site as habitat piles
- (b) Taken to a green waste site

Meadow cut (twice a year – spring and late summer) – cut and collected

- (a) Left on site as habitat piles
- (b) Taken to a green waste site

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD OCTOBER 2023

REFERRAL FROM COMMUNITY, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – JUNE 2023

Scrutiny Committee is asked to:-

To consider and respond to a referral from the Community, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee made in connection to the Generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the County.

Reasons:

The Community, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 29th June 2023 made a referral requesting that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and the generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the County.

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: -

Cllr. Aled Vaughan Owen - Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability

<p>Directorate: Chief Executive's</p>	<p>Designations:</p>	<p>Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:</p>
<p>Name of Head of Service: Linda Rees Jones</p>	<p>Head of Administration & Law</p>	<p>01267 224010 lrjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report Author: Janine Owen</p>	<p>Democratic Services Officer</p>	<p>JanineOwen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk Tel: 01267 226030</p>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD OCTOBER 2023

REFERRAL FROM
COMMUNITY, HOMES AND REGENERATION
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – JUNE 2023

The Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider the attached referral from the Community, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

Agenda Item:

Conservation Area Appraisals - Update

Date: 29th June 2023 (Minute 5)

Issue: Request to scrutinise the broader issue of energy efficiency and the generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the County.

At its meeting on the 29th June 2023, the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered the Conservation Area Appraisals - Update. Following discussion, the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee unanimously resolved that:

“that the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government (as resolved in minute 4 of the meeting of the Committee held on the 5th April 2023) but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the County’s historic housing stock.”

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

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE	YES
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Minutes – Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 29th June 2023

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SCRUTINY REFERRALS TO CABINET, CABINET MEMBER(S) & OTHER SCRUTINY COMMITTEES	
Scrutiny Committee making the referral	Communities, Homes and Regeneration
Date of meeting where referral was agreed and minute No.	29th June 2023 Minute Number 5 (CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS – UPDATE)
Details of the referral. (What is Scrutiny asking for?)	<p>The Committee is being requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and the generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the County.</p> <p><u>Committee resolution:</u> “UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government (as resolved in minute 4 of the meeting of the Committee held on the 5th April 2023) but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the County’s historic housing stock.</p>

Scrutiny Procedure Rule 23 (SPR23) – Referrals category: -		
a	Is the Committee recommending that existing policy should be amended?	NO
b	Is the Committee recommending that a new policy is introduced?	NO
c	Is the Committee drawing attention to new areas of risk?	NO
Provide further information to support the referral: -		
<u>Minute 5 of the Communities Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee 29th June 2023</u>		
<p>The Committee was reminded that at its meeting held on the 5th April 2023 (Minute 4 refers) it had considered a report on the extension of 10 Conservation Areas within Carmarthenshire and had resolved to approach the Welsh Government on the issue of restricting the installation of Solar Panels on the front elevation of roofs in Conservation Areas. Subsequent thereto, a meeting had been held on the 15th June between the Chair of the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee met with the Local Authority’s Built Heritage team, Rhodri Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability, Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability, and Councillor Russel Sparkes to discuss the above issues and how it could be ensured old housing stock was better adapted to help the Council meet its Zero Carbon targets, which, included installing Solar panels on protected buildings.</p>		

*Delete as appropriate

Following that discussion, it was proposed the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government on this issue, contrary to the Committees earlier recommendation, but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the county.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government (as resolved in minute 4 of the meeting of the Committee held on the 5th April 2023) but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the County’s historic housing stock.

Does the referral comply with SPR 23? If not, what outcome does Scrutiny hope to achieve?	NO*
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Provide further information to support the request and how this can be achieved within existing resources?

The Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee recognised that current Welsh Government Policies on Conservation Areas conflicted with its target of achieving zero carbon emissions, which could impact adversely on residents within conservation areas who wished to install solar panels on their properties. While it noted solar panel installation was one option available to home owners to reduce their carbon footprint, with other options being available such as insulation or new windows, it felt the broader issue of energy efficiency and the generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the county required examination by the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee.

Relevant Implications: -		
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a	Policy & Equalities	YES
b	Legal and Risk Management	NO
c	Finance, Procurement, ICT and Physical Assets	NO
d	Staffing/HR	NO

Provide further information: -
Policy and Equalities – None at this stage. However, any decision arising from the Committees consideration may result in the need for a review to be undertaken of any relevant planning policies and/or Supplementary Planning Guidance

*Delete as appropriate

Is the Scrutiny Chair prepared to present further evidence in support, at request?	YES
Relevant Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder	Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen
Scrutiny Support Officer/Departmental Support	Kevin Thomas

Detailed report attached?	No	
Any appendices attached to the report?	Yes	<p>Appendix A – Minutes of the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee 29th June 2023.</p> <p>Appendix B - Appendix B – Minutes of the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee 5th April 2023</p>
List of background papers used in the preparation of this report (Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information)	Title of document	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection

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**COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

WEDNESDAY, 5 APRIL 2023

4. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

The Committee considered a report on appraisals undertaken on the following 10 conservations areas within Carmarthenshire and the proposed amendments to their boundaries, where applicable. The report detailed the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken between the 24th June and 26th August 2022, and outlined the next steps and future stages towards the adoption of the appraisals and their outcomes. It was also noted the appraisals had been undertaken in accordance with the Council's legal duties under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

- Carmarthen Town,
- Priory Street, Carmarthen
- Lammas Street, Carmarthen
- Picton Terrace, Carmarthen
- Laugharne,
- St Clears,
- Kidwelly,
- Llanelli,
- Llandeilo
- Newcastle Emlyn.

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

- Reference was made to the 27 Conservation Areas within Carmarthenshire, many of which had not been reviewed since their creation, some as long ago as the 1970's. It was confirmed the lack of any subsequent reviews had been recognised, hence the undertaking of the above 10 appraisals. Whilst the delay in the reviews was part attributed to a resourcing issue, it was noted that as staffing levels within the unit were now up to full complement, appraisals of the remaining 17 areas would be undertaken in-house as part of the Unit's future work programme.
- Reference was made to the elements within the report relating to excessive street furniture within some of the conservation areas, for example in Llanelli, and clarification sought on whether they would be removed retrospectively following the report's adoption. It was noted that whilst the conservation areas had not been reviewed for a significant period, any consideration on the removal of street furniture would need to be undertaken as part of an examination of the public realm as a whole and being seen as an opportunity on how best to preserve and enhance the street scene while having regard to its conservation. That could include, for example, regeneration proposals and developing a blueprint for street furniture and tree planting.

- A point was raised regarding the appraisal consultations and how residents would be advised their properties were situated within a conservation area.

The Committee was advised that extensive consultations had been undertaken with the public on the appraisals which included holding events, online webinars, pre-consultation questionnaire and via the 'Have your say' portal on the Council's website. With regard to engaging with the public following the report's adoption the Head of Place and Infrastructure advised the department could look at how that could best be achieved, for example holding workshops.

- Reference was made to existing provisions preventing the erection of solar dishes on the front of properties within conservation areas, Clarification was sought on whether the same criteria would be applied on the installation of solar panels to reduce carbon emissions and help achieve net zero carbon.

The Senior Built Heritage Officer advised there were planning policies in place in relation to solar panels from the Welsh Government Guidance, and specific advice was also included on the Council's Planning Portal. Should homeowners within a conservation area wish to erect solar panels on their home, they would need to apply for planning consent and each application would be considered on its own merit having regard to planning policies and any potential impact the development may have on the character of the area. Additionally, while solar panel installation was one avenue available to homeowners to achieving carbon reductions, there were other options available which the department could advise upon e.g. insulation or new windows, with each building having to be assessed individually on which package of measures would best achieve that reduction. It was also confirmed that if solar panels had been installed on a property prior to its inclusion within a revised conservation boundary their removal would not be required.

In response to the above, a comment was made on legislation relating to conservation areas and its conflict with the Welsh Government's target of achieving zero carbon emissions. It was felt the Committee should write to the Welsh Government in that regard requesting it give consideration on how it could best support both preserving and saving the environment.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- 4.1 that the Conservation Area Appraisals Report be approved.**
- 4.2 That a letter be sent from the Chair to the Welsh Government to highlight the challenges and contradictions between conservation areas and the climate emergency and that it considers how it can best support in both preserving and saving the environment.**

**COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 2023

5. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS - UPDATE

The Committee was reminded that at its meeting held on the 5th April 2023 (Minute 4 refers) it had considered a report on the extension of 10 Conservation Areas within Carmarthenshire and had resolved to approach the Welsh Government on the issue of restricting the installation of Solar Panels on the front elevation of roofs in Conservation Areas. Subsequent thereto, a meeting had been held on the 15th June between the Chair of the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee met with the Local Authority's Built Heritage team, Rhodri Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability, Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability, and Councillor Russel Sparkes to discuss the above issues and how it could be ensured old housing stock was better adapted to help the Council meet its Zero Carbon targets, which, included installing Solar panels on protected buildings.

Following that discussion, it was proposed the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government on this issue, contrary to the Committees earlier recommendation, but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the historic housing stock of the county.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Council do not now approach the Welsh Government (as resolved in minute 4 of the meeting of the Committee held on the 5th April 2023) but that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee be requested to look at the broader issue of energy efficiency and generation of energy in relation to the County's historic housing stock.

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PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD OCTOBER 2023

FORTHCOMING ITEMS

To consider and comment on the following:

To note the forthcoming items to be considered at the next meeting of the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee to be held on the 23rd November, 2023.

Reason:

The Council's Constitution requires Scrutiny Committees, at the commencement of each municipal year, to develop and publish a Forward Work Programme which identifies the issues and reports which will be considered at meetings during the course of the year.

Cabinet Member Portfolio Holders:

Cllr Alun Lenny (Resources)

Cllr. Edward Thomas (Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services)

Report Author:	Designation:	Tel No. / E-Mail Address:
Janine Owen	Democratic Services Officer	01267 224030 JanineOwen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD OCTOBER 2023

FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Council's Constitution requires Scrutiny Committees, at the commencement of each municipal year, to develop and publish a Forward Work Plan which identifies the issues and reports to be considered at meetings during the course of the year. When formulating the Forward Work Programme the Scrutiny Committee took into consideration those items included on the Cabinet's Forward Work Plan.

The list of forthcoming items attached includes those items which are scheduled in the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee's Forward Work Plan to be considered at the next meeting, to be held on 23rd November, 2023.

Scrutiny Committee members, as part of their role are required to regularly refer to the Cabinet Forward Plan in order to identify any future pre-decision reports, within the scrutiny remit for inclusion onto the Committee's FWP.

Council/Cabinet Forward Plan can be viewed by clicking [HERE](#)

REPORT
ATTACHED?

YES:

- List of Forthcoming Items – 23rd November 2023;
- Items circulated to the Committee by e-mail – July 2023
- Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Forward Work Plan as of October 2023

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

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE / CONSULTED	YES
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Title of Document	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Cabinet Forward Plan	https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=17&RP=131

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FORTHCOMING ITEMS for next meeting to be held on 23rd November 2023

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.

Proposed Agenda Item	Background	Reason for report	Cabinet Member
Highways Asset Management Plan Annual Statement update	The report provides an annual update as set out within the Highway Asset Management Plan adopted by Council in July 2018 and includes an overview of the highway network.	Members of the Scrutiny Committee requested the opportunity to scrutinise this item as the highway network affects all residents in Carmarthenshire.	Cllr Edward Thomas
Local Toilet Strategy	Cabinet approval will be sought to undertake a formal public consultation exercise with respect to the draft Local Toilets Strategy in line with statutory requirements.	<i>Pre-decision report</i> Scrutiny Members requested that this item be included onto the Committee's Forward Work Plan. To provide the Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise the report.	Cllr Edward Thomas – Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services
Performance Monitoring Report Q2	Authorities are under a general duty to make arrangements to monitor performance. Through Performance Monitoring we can demonstrate to citizens, members and regulators how performance is managed, and what appropriate interventions are implemented.	Members of the Scrutiny Committee requested the opportunity to scrutinise this item as part of the scrutiny role.	Cllr Philip Hughes - Cabinet Member for Organisation & Workforce
Budget Monitoring Report (April – August 2023)	This is a standard bi-monthly budget report covering the revenue and capital budgets for Waste & Environmental Services, Highways & Transportation, Property and Public Protection Services which fall within the remit of the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee.	To enable members to exercise their scrutiny role	Cllr Alun Lenny – Cabinet Member for Resources

Items to be circulated under a separate cover to Scrutiny Committee members
(as agreed at the Committee's Forward Work Programme development session on 13th June 2023)

In accordance with the Committee's Forward Work Programme, there are no reports to be circulated under a separate cover.

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Items circulated to the Committee under separate cover since the last meeting held on 21st July 2023

(in accordance with the Committee's Forward Work Programme)

In line with the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Committee's decision to receive and scrutinise reports outside of the formal committee process, the following reports were forwarded to all members of the Scrutiny Committee by e-mail on 28th July 2023:

1.	ADRODDIAD MONITRO CYLLIDEB CYFALAF A REFENIW 2022/23 REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23
2.	ADRODDIAD BLYNYDDOL DRAFFT CYNGOR SIR GÂR AR GYFER 2022-23 CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/23

[Cliciwch yma i weld pecyn addrodiad](#)

[Click here to view the report pack](#)

The Committee had no observation/comments/queries in relation to the above reports.

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Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee - Forward Work Plan 2023/24

21 st July 2023	3 rd October 2023	23 rd November 2023	14 th December 2023	30 th January 2024	11 th March 2024	22 nd April 2024
Forward Work Programme 2023/24	A Strategic Plan for Managing Our Land for Pollinators in Carmarthenshire	Highways Asset Management Plan Annual Statement update	Planning Enforcement	Budget Monitoring Report (April – October 2023)	Equestrian Strategy	Budget Monitoring Report (April – December 2023)
Task and Finish Group Report on the Management of Fly-tipping in Carmarthenshire.	Waste Strategy Update	Budget Monitoring Report (April – August 2023)	Pest Control	Budget consultation		Public Rights of Way
PS&CC Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2022/2023	Bulky Waste Review	Local Toilet Strategy	Electric Fleet	Flood Risk Management Plan-2		
Free Parking	Referral from Corporate Resources and Performance Scrutiny Committee	Performance Monitoring Report Q2	PSPO (alcohol and drug related ASB and crime)	Environment Act Forward Plan – (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)		
PSPO (prevention dog fouling)						
Scrutiny Committee Members to scrutinise the following reports via e-mail – as agreed by at the FWP development session on 13th June 2023 Forthcoming Items to include scrutiny queries and feedback at the next meeting.						
Budget Monitoring Report (April 2022- Feb 2023)	Shoreline Management Plan-2; an update on its Delivery.					
Council Annual Report 2022-23	Budget Monitoring Report (April to June 2023) & 2022/23 Outturn report					

PS&CC Scrutiny Member – Focussed Development Sessions/Site Visits:-

The Committee has requested for the following focused development sessions to take place following each of the scheduled formal Committee meetings (unless otherwise notified).

Cwm Environmental Ltd (Site Visit) – 30/6/2023

PSPO Toolkit – 23/11/2023

TASK & FINISH REVIEW:

The Committee at its meeting on 2nd July 2021 unanimously resolved that its Task and Finish arrangements for 2021-22-23 would be as follows:

- 1) *Review on the Fly tipping within Carmarthenshire
- 2) Review on Dog Breeding in Carmarthenshire.

Update: The Task and Finish Group at its first meeting on 8th September, 2021 received an update from the Director of Environment on internal matters that had arisen since the Scrutiny Committee agreement on its Task and Finish arrangements and the endorsement of the review planning and scoping document in July. Considering the information received, the Group unanimously agreed to defer the review on Flytipping to 2022 following the Election process. The Committee at its meeting on 25th November 2021 received and noted a report from the Task and Finish Group which outlined the reasons for the deferral. A revised Planning and Scoping Document was considered and a group was formulated at the Committee meeting held on 24th November 2022.

**This decision supersedes the Committee's decision made at its meeting held on 15th November 2019 – “unanimously resolved that dog breeding in Carmarthenshire be the subject for Committee's next Task and Finish review in 2021”.*

The Task and Finish review on flytipping has been endorsed by the Committee at its meeting on 21st July 2023 and is currently being forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 JULY 2023

PRESENT: Councillor K. Madge (Chair) (In Person)

Councillors (In Person):

J.D. James; K. Davies; T.A.J. Davies; N. Lewis;
B.D.J. Phillips; G.B. Thomas; S. Godfrey-Coles.

Councillors (Virtually):

S.M. Allen; T.M. Higgins;
Councillor D. Cundy - Substitute for Councillor P. Cooper;
Councillor R. Sparks - Substitute for Councillor C. Evans.

Also in attendance (In Person):

Councillor A. Vaughan Owen, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability;
Councillor E. Thomas, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services;

Also Present (In Person):

S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways;
D.W. John, Interim Head of Waste and Environment;
L. Jenkins, Cabinet Member Support Officer;
L. Davies, Simultaneous Translator;
R. Morris, Member Support Officer;
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present (Virtually):

S.E. Watts, Environmental Protection Manager
M. Runeckles, Members Support Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP and remotely: 2:00pm - 3:35pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND OTHER MATTERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Cooper and C. Evans.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee wished Mr Stephen Pilliner, Head of Transportation and Highways best wishes in his upcoming retirement in September. Gratitude was expressed to Mr Pilliner for his dedication and hard work over the years within the Council and his invaluable support to the Scrutiny Committee.

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

There were no declarations of interest.
There were no declarations of any prohibited party whips.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Committee received its Annual Report on the work undertaken during the 2022/23 municipal year. It was noted that the report had been prepared in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution and provided an overview of the work programme and key issues addressed, whilst also incorporating any issues referred to, or from, the Cabinet, Task and Finish reviews and development sessions.

The former Chair of the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee presented the report and provided an overview of the Committee's work programme together with the key issues that was considered during the year. An expression of gratitude was provided to Committee members for their work and commitment throughout the year and to officers for their invaluable assistance and support.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2022/23 be received.

5. FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR 2023/24

The Committee, in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Council's constitution, considered its draft Forward Work Plan for 2023/24.

The Committee, at its informal Forward Work Plan development session on 13th June, 2023 began the process of formulating the forward work plan for 2023/24. The outcome of the development session was now presented to the Committee in the Forward Work Plan for confirmation.

Members developed the Committee's Forward Work Plan considering the issues and any subjects of concern within the remit of the Place, Sustainability & Climate Change Scrutiny Committee, managing each agenda by way of the Gateway Methodology.

In addition, throughout the year Members noted that they would be considering the Cabinet's Forward Work Plan to identify pre-decision reports they wish to place on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Forward Work Plan for 2023/24 be endorsed.

6. TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT - REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT OF FLYTIPPING IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

The Committee received a report of the Task & Finish Group it had established on 24th November 2022, to review the Management of Flytipping in Carmarthenshire.

The Chair of the Task and Finish Group explained that the recommendations contained within the report had been formulated by the Group following the consideration of a range of evidence, over a series of meetings held between December 2022 and June 2023.

It was reported that the Group, in line with the scope of the review, considered and evaluated the current internal processes, operational issues, and partnership arrangements of fly-tipping on public and private land and sought to maximise the effectiveness of the resources available.

Information was gathered on the issues in relation to fly tipping on both private and public land and as part of the process to make sure there were clear findings and recommendations. The following areas were identified as areas of focus under a strategic approach:

- Current approach to data systems and recording.
- Approach to education and prevention.
- Management arrangements and joint working.
- Enforcement approach; and at
- Communication and publicity.

The Chair of the Task and Finish Group took the opportunity to thank all the organisations, individuals and officers who engaged with and assisted the Group. Their time and commitment provided an invaluable insight into local issues regarding fly tipping and what was currently being achieved as well as what potentially could be done.

The following query was raised on the report:

- In response to a query regarding the provision of CCTV, the Head of Waste and Environment explained that in terms of CCTV capability, whilst there were a number of units currently in operation across the county, the issue in increasing the provision lay in the capability and capacity to deploy the units. The Task and Finish Group considered the use of CCTV and as the evidence highlighted, the use of CCTV was a valuable commodity in the prevention of fly tipping and evidence gathering for a potential prosecution. In order to tackle fly tipping, the Task and Finish Group had recommended that as part of a fly tipping strategy the use of CCTV units be increased in a strategic manner across the County which would be achieved by way of a robust action plan.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received and referred to Cabinet for its consideration.

7. UPDATE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) FOR CARMARTHESHIRE DOG ORDERS

The Committee received a report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability, which provided an update for the consideration of additional public space protection order (PSPO) for Carmarthenshire Dog Orders.

The Committee, at its meeting on the 24th November, 2022 recommended to introduce a County wide ban of dog's entering a marked up sports pitch and the introduction a Fixed Penalty Notice for the offence of not having the means of cleaning up after their dog. It was highlighted to members, that Legal Advice had stated that any PSPO needed to be evidence based, and a proportionate response to the problems which were occurring. From a legal perspective it was deemed that insufficient evidence had been received to date to sufficiently demonstrate that the introduction of a County Wide PSPO to address this problem was proportionate.

In light of this, the report provided Committee Members with an update and the options available to the Authority based upon legal advice given. The report included information and provided the proportionality of the proposed approach to Public Space Protection Orders for dog fouling on sports pitches. The Committee was asked to review the following recommended options as provided in the report in terms of tackle Dog Related Anti-Social Behaviour issues.

- The Authority to draft a standard proforma and toolkit for sports groups / town and community councils to support for community action.
- Provide evidence template to capture the nature and extent of the problem in specific locations to support additional orders that may be appropriate on a site-by-site basis.
- Introduction a Fixed Penalty Notice for the offence of not having the means of cleaning up after their dog in public spaces.

The following comments/queries were raised in regard to the report:

- It was commented that due to the lack of signage, it was difficult for the public to be aware of where the PSPO's were in force and therefore it was suggested to introduce more signage which should be achieved by working jointly with Town and Community Councils.
- It was commented that PCSO's within Dyfed Powys Police Force should be given the powers to enforce the law of the PSPO as they do in other forces in Wales.

- In reference to the number of complaints received, it was observed that the number stated within the report seemed very low considering that Members representing Community Councils receive a high volume of complaints regarding dog fouling. It was therefore highlighted that incidents of dog fouling and complaints thereof were not formally being reported to the County Council.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability in agreement with the point raised, stated that Council Members both Town/Community and Authority tend to just deal with dog fouling matters, excluding the extra step to report it to the Authority. This results in the Authority not gaining the much-needed local intelligence and evidence required to manage the issue. In acknowledging this, it was reported that during the engagement process with communities, it was important to demonstrate clearly what the process entailed. This would enable enforcement officers to be deployed based on local intelligence received. In addition, in reference to the comment raised earlier regarding signage, the Cabinet Member explained that the toolkit would be designed to assist Town and Community Councils with a generic signage which can be adapted to suit the needs of the area and suit a more local perspective.

- In response to a query raised in regard to devolving the enforcement powers to Town and Community Councils, the Cabinet Member explained that whilst the enforcement powers would have to remain with the Authority, the data collecting would derive from the Town and Community Councils which would provide vital information in enabling the Authority to direct the limited resources to identified hotspot areas. The recommended option of developing a toolkit would empower Sports Groups and Town and Community Councils to gather sufficient evidence in order to support the work of Enforcement Officers.
- In recognition of the vast rural areas within Carmarthenshire, it was asked how the challenge of directing resources was overcome? The Cabinet Member explained that at present, the Authority employed 8 Enforcement Officers to cover the whole area of Carmarthenshire and therefore the receipt of local intelligence from the public and local Councils would play a significant role in directing and prioritising resources effectively to the areas in need of attention.
- It was proposed that upon completion, the toolkit be made available to the Scrutiny Committee for comment. This was duly seconded. The Cabinet Member welcomed the Committee's interest in receiving the toolkit and would ensure that it was made available for comment prior to it going live.
- In response to an earlier comment regarding PCSO's, it was raised that PSCO's currently have the powers to enforce in the case of a breach of a PSPO, however it appeared that this was not the priority. It was suggested that the Cabinet Member contacts the Police Constable and/or Commissioner for their comment and report back to the Committee.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 7.1 the report be received;**
- 7.2 the Cabinet note and consider the comments raised by the Committee in its consideration of the recommended options in respect of tackling Dog related Anti-Social Behaviour Issues as stated in the report.**
- 7.3 that the draft standard proforma and toolkit for sports groups / town and community councils as recommended in the report be shared with the Committee for comment.**

8. FREE PARKING REVIEW

The Committee received a report on the Free Parking Review for consideration. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure in presenting the report stated that the Council had supported town centres with the provision of free parking schemes for several years and that there were two schemes in currently in operation. The first scheme provided town centres with five free parking days were annum to support events in towns, the second scheme as introduce at the end of 2018 and provides towns with free parking periods for set hours and days of the week.

The report provided members with comprehensive information and graphical data that considered the impact of the schemes from both an output and revenue perspective.

Following the consideration of the report, the Committee was asked to consider the 5 options as detailed within the report.

The following comments/queries were raised in regard to the report:

- The report was commended for its comprehensive information and inclusion and use of 7 years of robust data. However, it was raised that it would be beneficial to have had sight of the data/evidence in support of the statement – ‘Carparks serve extremely important environmental, economic and social objective that include... stimulate sustainable travel’.

In addition, it was raised that the data within the report did not bear any evidence that free car parking made any difference in footfall within the town centres.

Furthermore, it was commented that free car parking would go against the objective of working towards the objective of more sustainable travel and encourage drivers to use their vehicles above other modes of transportation such as public transport or cycle.

An opinion was aired that option 2 would not be supported, however options 4 and/or 5 was favoured.

- A concern was expressed in regard to option 5. Considering the current cost of living crises, the removal of free carparking would have a detrimental impact upon businesses.
- In response to a query raised regarding who would determine the budget allocation as cited within option 4, the Head of Transportation and Highways clarified that the allocation took place following the receipt of the funding in 2008. Furthermore, reference was made to the graphs within the report which signified different levels of parking activity within towns in terms of ticket sales.

The proportion of sales and revenue relative to each town together with consultation with the Town and Community Council determined the level of budget allocated.

It was strongly expressed that it was important to encourage footfall as far as possible in order to support businesses in towns and therefore free parking must remain an option.

- In acknowledging that town centres experiencing financially challenging times, concern was raised that the increase in charges by 5%, together with the proposed reduction of free parking would have a detrimental impact on both customers and traders. Based on the current statistics within the report, an opinion was expressed that the preference would be to remain as status quo.
- It was commented that the report was data rich and included tracking and the influence of the parking. In addition, it was raised that the Council should be congratulated for recognising the current cost of living crises and that the options provided for consideration were sensitive to the needs of the residents of Carmarthenshire. However, in context, it was emphasised that Members had recently took part in the budget review looking at saving £55k by closing St Clears Leisure Centre. The figures cited in this report appeared to be below target where an income of £817k was expected. In light of this, concern was raised in regard to the provision of free parking, particularly option 2, which would require an additional expenditure of circa £400k to provide the free parking.
- The importance of striking a balance between travel behaviour and encouraging people into the town centres was aired and therefore option 4 was the preferred option.
- It was expressed that Constituents would be grateful to save money on car parking during this current cost of living crises. However, in regard to events, it was highlighted that in any case large events would attract many people which would be an opportunity to raise the revenue from the carparks.

- In highlighting that the average spend of the parking term per year equated to less than £1 per week which was not unreasonable, it was important to consider the of loss of revenue for the local Authority, which was almost £250k with a total net loss of income £409k. Looking at these figures would enable a viable budget revenue. Concern was raised in relation to the loss of businesses within the towns due to many factors including post-pandemic and the increase of internet shopping. Seeking opportunities to bring resources and money back into Carmarthenshire should be of utmost importance.
- Reference was made to the poor air quality areas within Carmarthenshire. In recognition of the need to improve the air quality, it was raised that at the very least, the Authority needed to discourage the light use of vehicles and develop policies that encourage active travel, public transport with the choice of using a vehicle being a last resort on a daily basis.

It was proposed that:

Options 4 & 5 as detailed within the report be recommended to Cabinet for consideration. The proposal was duly seconded.

The following amendment was thereupon proposed and seconded:

“That option 4 only as stated within the report be recommended to Cabinet for consideration.”

Following a vote, the amendment fell and the substantive motion was voted upon, following which it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET that options 4 and 5 as detailed in the report be considered.

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 3rd October, 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items for the Committee meeting to be held on the 3rd October 2023 be agreed.

10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 15TH MAY 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 15th May, 2023 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE