

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The Committee received the 2023/24 Council's Annual Report for approval. The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability in introduced the report to the Committee.

The following observations and queries were raised in regard to the report:-

- A number of observations were highlighted which were to be commended eg the reduction of carbon emissions by over a third, actions on renewable energy, new build schools and the Towy Cycle Path.
- In reference to statement 'increasing our renewable energy', it was requested that future reports include additional details to include specific site names and scales of deployment to demonstrate where renewable energy has been increased. The Cabinet Member stated that a report on renewable energy was due to be presented at the next Scrutiny meeting in November which would be an opportunity to include the specifics.
- A number of suggestions were provided in regard to the solar panel materials and the increase the promotion and communication of the many projects that the Council is developing would be a significant benefit in demonstrating that this Council is acting on climate change. Officers noted the suggestions.
- Reference was made to Action 16286 - Review the current vehicle fleet strategy with a view to utilising the most suitable and low emissions vehicle technology (including electric or other power sources) over the coming years. It was concerning to note the 'other power sources' as it was felt that there were no other power sources to draw from. The Cabinet Member stated that a report on the transition to ULEV would be soon presented to the Committee where an in-depth discussion on this topic would be welcomed.
- Reference was made to page 103 of the report – Circular Economy in practice. It was asked, what was the cost to divert 4 tonnes of nappies? In regard to the circular economy, the Cabinet Member offered a presentation on what is meant by circular economy and the work that had been achieved to date in regard to contributing to the circular economy. The reuse of the fibres of nappies was a result of the work of a local company who had found a way of reutilising the fibres of the nappies which would otherwise have gone to landfill. In terms of cost, the Head of Environmental Infrastructure explained that there were no increase in the cost of using the fibres of used nappies compared to using virgin material from abroad or other recycled materials.

- Reference was made to 107 of the report – Highway maintenance. Clarification was sought on who reports the statement that the number of customers reported surface defects and potholes had increased by 175%. The Head of Environmental Infrastructure stated that it was difficult to ascertain if there was a compounding effect in terms of increased reporting or multiple reporting. It was however, explained that the recording system does classify multiple entries of a defect as a single report. Furthermore, it was confirmed that there had been a significant increase in the reporting of potholes.
- Council houses with no solar panels – additional cost for those renting with no solar panels compared to those who have solar panels. The Head of Housing and Public Protection agreed that this was an interesting question and further consideration would be required as investments in the use of new technology increases.
- Reference to Local Places for Nature outlined on page 81 of the report. It was raised that more trees were needed to be planted throughout the County and more work should be done in liaising with Town and Community Councils to encourage more planting. The Cabinet Member reminded the Committee that the Tree Strategy was scheduled in the Committee's Forward Work Plan to be presented at the next meeting in November.

unanimously Resolved to recommend to cabinet that th Council's Annual Report 2023/24 be approved.

5. 2024/25 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee received the Performance Report for quarter 1 of the 2024/25 year for consideration. The report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability outlined the progress of the Actions and Measures within the remit of this Committee that are linked to the Corporate Strategy and the Well-being Objectives.

The following observations and queries were raised in regard to the report:-

- Reference was made to Action 17499 on page 2 of the report. Concern was expressed with the progress update provided '*Routine works are not currently being prioritised given a lack of resource.*' The Cabinet Member explained that this action was related to the work on the Shoreline Management Plan and reassured Members that Currently, operational coastal work was being prioritised with high risk areas including the issues in Ferryside and Llansteffan pre and reactive work arising from post storms and high tides. Conversations about flooding continued to take place in regard flooding mitigation. The Head of Place and Sustainability confirmed that they had successfully recruited 3 additional members to the team. The Flood Defence and Coastal Protection Manager explained that when the team was at full complement of staff a proactive work approach had taken place to assess defences which had allowed the team to reprioritise and refocus for the year ahead with the resources that were available. The department would seek more sustainable ways of how work was prioritised and carried out in the future. Continuous work was being undertaken to seek out grants and funding opportunities.

It was asked what proactive work was being undertaken in regard to informing the public and businesses where to locate sandbags and floodgates should they require them. The Flood Defence and Coastal Protection Manager stated that there was extensive information on flooding matters provided on the Council's website. In response to comments raised in relation to public information the Flood Defence and Coastal Protection Manager confirmed that a series of communications had been planned to take place this month by way of social media and press releases.

- Reference was made to the comment made in response to measure PPN/001i – 'Ongoing reactive investigations and proactive work to address the sale of illicit vapes and the underage sale of vapes has required resources to be redirected from routine inspections. Strong concern was raised regarding the increase of illicit vaping and underage use. To enable the Committee to gain a full insight of the extent of the issue and the work that was being undertaken to tackle illicit and underage vaping, it was proposed that a report on this subject be added to the Committee's Forward Work Plan. This was duly seconded.

Resolved that:

5.1 the Quarter 1 Performance Report for 2024/25 be received

5.2 a report providing information on the work of reactive investigations and proactive work that takes place to address the sale of illicit vapes and the underage sale of vapes, be added to the Committee's Forward Work Plan.

6. REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT 2023/24

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Outturn Report 2023/24 in respect of the Place & Infrastructure and Public Protection Services falling within its remit. It noted that, overall, the services reported a £832k overspend.

The following observations and queries were raised in regard to the report:-

- Reference was made to Appendix B appended to the report where it was observed that the pool cars remained underutilised. The Business Improvement Manager stated that following the pilot that was in place to increase the use of the pool cars, it was hoped that the figures would signify an increase in the Q3 report.
- Reference was made to Appendix D appended to the report. An update was sought on the introduction of the second camera enforcement vehicle and its use outside schools. The Head of Environmental Infrastructure reported that it was now fully operational and that being utilised in locations where it was most needed including safer streets around schools.
- A number of questions were raised in relation to the following updates where officers responded to accordingly:-
- Appendix D(i) – Cleansing.
Currently looking at ways to reduce costs by digitisation

- Appendix D(ix) – Parking Services
Congratulations was expressed to the team for all their hard work. Cabinet Member for Resources emphasised that whilst car parks generate revenue, it is not cost neutral.
- Appendix D(ii) – Road Safety and Traffic Management / Road Closures
It was raised that road closures are being put in place on minor fixes causing large diversions where traffic lights should suffice. The Head of Environmental Infrastructure stated that he would look into this matter further and arrange to monitor utility companies closely.

UNANIMOUSLY Resolved that the Revenue Budget Outturn Report for 2023/24 be received.

7. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2024/25

The Committee considered the 2024/25 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring reports for the Place & Infrastructure and Public Protection Services falling within its remit. The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report which provided the latest budgetary position as at 30th June 2024.

UNANIMOUSLY Resolved that the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for 2024/25 be received.

8. PARKING STRATEGY REVIEW

The Committee received a report on the proposed parking Strategy Review. The purpose of the report was to advise Scrutiny Committee on the forthcoming review of Carmarthenshire's Parking Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability introduced the report to the Committee in the absence of the Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services.

The following observations and queries were raised in regard to the report:-

- It was felt that parking on double yellow lines, particularly in the evenings was an increasing issue which needed to be prioritised. A query was raised on how enforcement on parking on double yellow lines was managed? It was further suggested that the Council could work in partnership with Dyfed Powys Police to provide PCSO's with enforcement powers.

The Cabinet Member for Resources informed the Committee that Dyfed Powys Police are currently looking to provide PCSO's the powers to enforce parking offences.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability explained that whilst enforcement would be included in the report the main emphasis would be in relation to car parking charges. The Committee welcomed the review in order to consider new businesses, footfall and the economic situation that communities are facing.

- It was asked if consideration would be given to the parking areas for HGV's? The Head of Environmental Infrastructure stated that this could be included and form part of the Parking Strategy Review.

Resolved that the Parking Strategy Review be received

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Chair informed the Committee that the Business Plans would be duly included onto the Forward Work Plan.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items for the Committee meeting to be held on the 20th November 2024 be agreed.

CHAIR

DATE