

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16TH JANUARY 2017

PRESENT: Councillor A.P. Cooper (Chair)

Councillors:

A. Davies, D.C. Evans, D.B. Davies, J.A. Davies, P.M. Edwards, I.J. Jackson,
J.P. Jenkins, A.D.T. Speake and S.E. Thomas,

Councillor– E. G. Thomas Substitute for Councillor A. James
Councillor– J. M. Charles Substitute for Councillor W. J. Lemon
Councillor – J. D. James Substitute for Councillor W. G Thomas
Councillor – M. J. A. Lewis Substitute for Councillor D. E. Williams

Also in attendance:

Councillor H.A.L. Evans, Executive Board Member for Technical Services
Councillor D.M. Jenkins, Executive Board Member for Resources (Deputy Leader)
Councillor T.J. Jones, Executive Board Member for Environmental & Public Protection

The following Officers were in attendance:

R. Mullen, Director of Environment
S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways
R. Staines, Head of Housing and Public Protection
S.E. Watts, Public Health Services Manager
A. Rees, Principal Environmental Health Officer
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, 3 Spilman Street, Carmarthen - 10.00 - 11.10 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. James, W. J. Lemon,
W. G Thomas, D. E. Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

5. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting to be held on Friday, 3rd March, 2017 be noted.

6. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee noted the non-submission of the Council's Well-being objectives 2017/18 and the Street Lighting Update. It was requested that these reports be considered at the next meeting.

Resolved that:

12.1 The non-submission be noted.

12.2. The Council's Well-being objectives 2017/18 and the Street Lighting Update be presented at the next meeting.

7. UPDATE ON THE CURRENT AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

The Committee considered the Update on Current Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Carmarthenshire. The Committee noted that the Environment Act 1995 placed a duty on local authorities to assess and manage air quality in its area. This report provided the Committee with a detailed update of the levels of NO² specifically with in the town of Llandeilo and areas of Carmarthen and Llanelli which had experienced increasing levels of NO² over the last few years. It was noted that in relation to the provision of a new bypass for the Town of Llandeilo, a number of actions had been implemented and that the Welsh Government had recently released a statement to confirm that work would progress on the bypass in 2019.

The following issues were raised in relation to the report:

In response to a concern regarding to what was planned to help improve the flow of traffic in the Felinfoel area of Llanelli, the Head of Transportation & Highways informed the Committee that the flow of traffic and level of emissions had significantly improved following the changes to the road layout. The Head of Transportation and Highways also confirmed that actions to be included within an Air Quality Management Plan would be fully considered.

Reference was made to the fact that the appendices 1, 2 and 3 were not attached to the report. The Head of Housing and Public Protection apologised to the Committee for the oversight and stated that the report would be rescheduled for the next meeting along with the appendices for consideration.

It was commented that a new bypass would be a welcome improvement to the town of Llandeilo and improve the current traffic pollution problems.

Disappointment was expressed that Job's Well Road, College Road and Llansteffan Road remained outside the AQMA boundary. The Director of Environment reminded the Committee that the recommendations for the AQMA's had been previously considered and agreed by Council meeting held on the 11th May 2016.

A concern was raised regarding the impact the work of the new bypass would have on the residents of Llandeilo.

The Principal Environmental Health Officer informed the Committee that in accordance with legislative requirements, an Action Plan had been developed and was currently in the second year of phase 1, which would be reported shortly.

It was stated that residents of Llandeilo were 'pro the route' and that the new bypass seemed to be the only solution to the current air quality problem.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. CURRENT POSITION OF FOOD HYGIENE RATING IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

The Committee considered the report on the Current Position of Food Hygiene Rating in Carmarthenshire. The report in accordance with the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013, and in conjunction with the voluntary scheme which required food businesses to display their food hygiene ratings enabled consumers in Carmarthenshire make better informed choices about where they eat and buy food.

The following issues were raised in relation to the report:

A query was raised whether the same officers carried out inspections in the same premises. The Public Health Services Manager confirmed that officers carried out inspections in different areas.

Reference was made to the list of the 26 businesses who were broadly compliant but had failed to respond. In response to a query, regarding the 'period since last score' and frequency of inspections, the Head of Housing and Public Protection informed the Committee that an inspection programme was in place which was updated frequently. Furthermore, it was highlighted to the Committee that the list provided was as of the 29th December 2016. The Public Health Services Manager added that since the 29th December 2016, the hygiene rating for two of the premises had improved following a recent inspection. The inspection of Whitland Mart found an improvement to a rating of 4 and Ling Di Long in Ammanford had demonstrated a rating of more than 2.

A query was raised regarding the imminent risk factors which result in the closure of food businesses. The Head of Housing and Public Protection stated food businesses could only be closed down if there was found to be an 'imminent risk'. The report included examples of imminent risk including infestation of vermin or lack of hot water. However, the Committee was informed that there were many other factors of risk which would be considered during inspections.

In response to a query regarding Carmarthenshire's current poor performers, the Head of Housing and Public Protection stated that all 36 businesses who were not broadly compliant had been written to, had asked to confirm their plans on how they intended to improve their hygiene ratings.

It was asked, what would happen should an Inspecting Officer not be satisfied that a premises would obtain a minimum of a 3 rating? The Public Health Services Manager stated that if the Inspecting Officer was not satisfied that a premises would improve upon their current hygiene rating following reassessment, the premises would be given an improvement or remedial action notice and that prosecution could take place if notices had not been adhered to.

In response to a query, the Head of Housing and Public Protection stated that various public communication methods would be utilised as an influential tool to encourage premises who were not broadly compliant to improve their food hygiene ratings. Furthermore, it had been made clear to all businesses contacted, that the Authority would be make a public statement on those who appeared not to have any intention to become broadly compliant.

The Head of Housing and Public Protection emphasised that it was safe for the public to eat and purchase food from those premises who were found to be not broadly compliant.

It was asked, how Inspecting Officers deal with owners/staff of premises who speak a foreign language? The Head of Housing and Public Protection stated that Authority had a well-established procedure in place and when necessary the Language Line service was utilised.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

9. PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE AND ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

The Committee considered the Prioritisation Model for Highway Infrastructure and Road Safety Improvements report, which provided an outline of the revised criteria for the assessment and prioritisation of requests for highway infrastructure and road safety improvements. The Committee noted that the Executive Board at their meeting on the 14th November, 2011 approved the current criteria for assessment, selection and prioritisation of Road Safety Improvement and Footway Improvements funded from the Council's capital budget. The report highlighted that the demand for improvements was high and that currently there were 355 separate requests for highway infrastructure and road safety improvements.

The following issues were raised in relation to the report:

In response to a query regarding the number of schemes, the Head of Transportation & Highways informed the Committee that new requests were assessed on an annual basis with the overall list of requests being reviewed every 2 years. However, schemes that were already committed for delivery within the Programme would not be included in any review.

Following a query, the Head of Transportation & Highways clarified that 10% of any Capital Programme could be allocated to provide expedient low cost, high value measures to address high risk road safety issues or to reduce revenue costs from school transport costs. An example of which, could include a section of highway used for walking to school being upgraded with additional safety measures such as road markings, improved signage, safety fencing, surfacing or developing linking footways to create 'safe' walking routes.

In response to a comment regarding high risk sites following accidents resulting in a fatality, the Head of Transportation & Highways stated the Authority investigated accidents along with relevant partners and that this model would be used to assess interventions according to risk using the criteria set out in the model.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 16TH DECEMBER 2016

Reference was made to Minute 6, Update on the Situation Regarding the Kerosene Leak Incident at Nantycaws. It was asked if there was any further information on the matter. The Director of Environment stated that the Recovery Group was scheduled to meet early February 2017 and that no other issues had arisen to date.

A request was made to make an amendment to Minute 2, Declarations of Interest as follows:-

Amend the declaration from "Member of the Carmarthen & District Fishing Club" to read "Chairman of Carmarthen Amateur Angling Association".

Subject to the amendment being made it was,

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held on the 16th December 2016 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE