

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor J.D. James (Chair) (In-Person)

Councillors (In Person):

K. Davies, P. Cooper, N. Lewis, B.D.J. Phillips.

Councillors (Virtually):

S.M. Allen, T.A.J. Davies, T.M. Higgins, S. Godfrey-Coles.

Also in attendance (In Person):

Councillor E. Thomas, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services;

Also in attendance (Virtually):

Councillor A. Vaughan Owen, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability;

The following Officers were in attendance (In Person):

R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability;
J. Edwards, Business Improvement Manager;
S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways;
D.W. John, Environmental Services Manager;
T. Evans, Transport Planning - Strategy and Infrastructure;
M. Runeckles, Member Support Officer;
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator;
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

The following Officers were in attendance (Virtually):

M. Davies, Democratic Services Officer;

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP and remotely: 10:00am - 10:55am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

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

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

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. 2022/23 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered a report which provided Members with the progress on the Actions and Measures relevant to this scrutiny as at the end of Quarter 2 - 2022/23. The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability and Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services presented the actions within their respective portfolio's.

The following comments/queries were raised:-

- Reference was made to action number 15654 – 'Ensure CAMS system is developed for mobile reporting and train 30 volunteers to Improve public access to the Countryside'. It was asked if this had been successful and if many volunteers had come forward? The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that there had been a slight delay due to necessary IT system upgrades and confirmed that 30 individuals had volunteered.

In response to an additional query regarding the spread and locality of the volunteers in the County and if there was anything that Councillors could do to assist, the Head of Transportation and Highways confirmed that that the listed volunteers were spread across the County and stated that Councillors would have an opportunity to assist during the wider programme to recruit additional volunteers, information would be circulated to Councillors in due course.

- It was commented that the performance report included many acronyms and abbreviations which made it difficult to read and understand. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services acknowledged the comment.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the 2022/23 Quarter 4 Performance Report be received.

5. WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE

The Committee considered an update report on the Waste Strategy 2021-2025 and the service roll-out in January 2023, the strategy presented by the Cabinet Member for Waste, Transport and Infrastructure Services, provided a clear strategic objective of improving kerbside domestic waste collections and in turn increase recycling rates in Carmarthenshire. In addition, the report summarised the current waste management policies that were required to improve operational and strategic performance.

It was reported that the strategy provided a phased approach to service change with an interim solution to be delivered in 2022, with a longer-term service change to achieve the Blueprint collection methodology by 2024.

The report laid out information in regard to:

- The Interim position
- Integrated Impact Assessment
- Finance
- Circular Economy
- Next Steps
- Waste Policy

The Waste and Recycling Policy was appended to the report.

The following comments/queries were raised:-

- In respect of the properties that would not receive the glass collection service, it was asked if Councillors could receive a list of the properties affected? The Environmental Services Manager stated that a list by ward area would be available following completion of a piece of work which would include the reasons why the property would not be receiving the glass collection. The Cabinet Member for Waste, Transport and Infrastructure Services added that the reasons could include instances such as long, narrow lanes or unadopted roads.
- It was commented that incontinent pads could be perceived as those products issued via NHS/district nurses, therefore it was asked if incontinent pads such as the advertised brand 'Tena Lady/Men' was included in the classification of Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP's) for purple bags and if not, could this be made clearer? The Environmental Services Manager confirmed that any incontinent pads including the Tena brand would be classed as AHP's and could therefore be placed within the purple bag scheme and in view of the comment would consider including this within the communications messages.
- In response to a concern regarding missed collections, the Environmental Services Manager explained that in addition to residents reporting a missed collection via the Council website or telephone, residents were also encouraged to register to the SMS and e-mail service which provided reminder notifications of their kerbside collection service and other up to date collection information such as any disruptions to services due to vehicle breakdown or adverse weather collections.
- In commenting that residents had raised concerns regarding the 3 weekly black bag collections, it was asked if this service would be reviewed? The Environmental Services Manager stated that as with all services provided this service change would be subject to continuous scrutiny and review. However, any households finding difficulties with the 3 black bag limit was able to seek advice and support via the communications team and Hwb sites. Furthermore, Members were informed that almost 50% of the contents within black bags across Carmarthenshire was recyclable and removing the perishable items from black bags should eliminate health risk.

- In response to a concern raised regarding the potential increase in flytipping, the Environmental Services Manager stated that the Task and Finish Group would consider the impact of the service change as part of the current review of the management of flytipping in Carmarthenshire. However, it was highlighted that through robust enforcement and public engagement, it was hoped to reduce incidences of flytipping.
- In response to a comment regarding Hwb sites and staff having the correct knowledge to provide members of the public, the Environmental Services Manager explained as part of the service change, staff at Hwb sites attended a course provided by Resource Efficiency Wales and they are regularly briefed on the changes and where to obtain information. In addition, currently Waste Engagement Officers were available at Hwb sites one day a week until end of January 2023.

RESOLVED that the progress and delivery of the Waste Strategy 2021 be received and noted.

6. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The Committee considered a report which appended the Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Waste, Transport and Infrastructure Services presented the report informing Members that Cabinet at its meeting held on 6th December 2021 had approved the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy which set out a vision: "To develop and promote a network of electric charging points, that provides for and encourages future growth in EV use, and in doing so future proofs our transport network and contributes to local and global pollution reduction targets"

The following comments/queries were raised:-

- In recognising the amount of good work that had been input into the report, it was observed that the latest figures cited in the report included data, which was as far back as 2018, with a vision statement that cited the former Cabinet Member, yet the strategy indicated a 2022 strategy. It was commented that this may not portray to the public that the Council was moving forward. The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that the strategy appended to the report was the approved strategy which had been put in place in December 2021 with an intention to review every 3 years to keep abreast of the changes. In addition, the Transport Planning Officer - Strategy and Infrastructure explained that the Strategy was developed utilising 2020/21 funding.
- Reference was made to EV 4 - encourage the Use of EVs in Their Fleet and EV11 - Encourage Electric Car Clubs. It was commented that the report had limited intentions to strengthen the use of electric vehicles within the fleet and it was felt that the Council should be considering utilising schemes such as community car clubs to reduce the volume of cars on the roads.

The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that the fleet was complex matter in that any changes dependent on where each vehicle was in terms of the vehicle replacement cycle. It started with trialling vehicles within the refuse fleet which revealed some challenges around the travel range in terms of the deployed routes. In addition, there were wider challenges in that a number of vehicles were taken home whereby charging and reimbursement arrangements and the practical set-up charging a vehicle eg cables across pavements. However, in recognising the challenges members were informed that the Business Plan included an action to bring forward the fleet strategy in quarter 1 of 2023/24.

In terms of car club schemes [EV11], the Head of Transportation and Highways explained that a car club using an electric vehicle was currently in operation at Brechfa and other areas of the voluntary sector were in the process of developing schemes.

- It was suggested that the Council consider opting for a better time of use tariff which would equate to circa 10% of the running costs. The option of an overnight charging tariff could potentially transform future finances.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Carmarthenshire County Council – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy be received.

7. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee considered the list of forthcoming items to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting scheduled to take place on 23rd January, 2023 and was afforded the opportunity to request for any specific information that Members may wish to include within the reports.

In addition to the reports that were to be presented at the formal Scrutiny Committee on 23rd January 2023, Members noted the reports that would also be circulated to them outside of the formal Committee process for scrutiny.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items for the Committee meeting to be held on the 23rd January 2023 be agreed.

8. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 24TH NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 24th November, 2022 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE