

## ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

**Members Present:**

**3 March 2016**

**Chairperson:** Councillor I.D.Williams

**Councillors:** M.Crowley, D.W.Davies, Mrs.R.Davies,  
C.Morgan and Mrs.A.Wingrave

**Officers In Attendance** Mr. S Cook, M.Roberts, D.Griffiths and N.Evans

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors E.V.Latham and Mrs.S.Miller

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1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR MEMBERS**

The following Member made a declaration of interest at the commencement of the meeting:

Councillor R Davies                      Report of the Head of Streetcare re:  
Available Grave Spaces as Godre'r  
Graig cemetery is in her ward.

2. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2016**

Noted by the Committee.

3. **TO RECEIVE THE SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

Members considered the Work Programme and were advised that at the next meeting information reports on enforcement activity and fees and charges will be presented along with a decision report concerning Gnoll Park.

The Committee noted the report.

4. **TO SCRUTINISE INFORMATION AND MONITORING ISSUES BEING REPORTED BY:**

(a) Parking Services Service Report Card

Members considered the service report card for the Parking Services Unit.

Members noted that the number of appeals were high and asked was there a general reason behind the appeals. Officers advised that it was generally for failing to display a ticket, failing to display a blue badge or putting a ticket or pass the wrong way round. For audit purposes the appeals have to be recorded in writing because a parking notice has been issued.

Members asked what were the reasons behind the sickness absence figures and were advised that it was due to four cases of long term sickness absence. Members were further advised that all cases were being managed in line with the revised long term sickness absence procedures.

Officers were asked how many man hours does it take to complete the service report card and they advised that the biggest time was spent collating and setting up the report card, once this had been done the report card is populated with the relevant data.

Members asked how was it determined whether an appeal should be accepted or otherwise. It was confirmed that each appeal was considered on its merits and within set guidelines, in the majority of cases first offences are waived under the adopted Council policies.

Members questioned whether there was any plans to increase the number of enforcement officers. It was confirmed that discussions had taken place in relation to the pressures particularly around schools due to a shortage of officers. Members noted that demand for the team has grown whilst the team has stayed the same size and moved to 7 day enforcement.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

5. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

i. Available Grave Spaces

Members considered a report in relation to the available grave spaces in Council owned cemeteries along with action being taken to maximise the spaces available.

Officers noted that there were 9 Council owned cemeteries that have at least a 10 year provision.

Members asked where the 500 plots would come from if Godre'r Graig was expanded. Officers stated that they would provide information outside of the meeting.

Members asked whether individuals could have a plot in any of the 9 cemeteries and it was confirmed that this was the case.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

ii. Proposed Traffic Orders Commercial Street and Station Road, Abergwynfi

Members considered the report for the proposed traffic order and were advised that the if accepted the decision would be for immediate implementation as opposed to following three days as highlighted in the report.

The reason behind the need for immediate implementation was because of problems with buses using the route. It was highlighted that if bus companies used smaller, more practical buses then there may be no need for this proposed order. Officers stated that they agreed with this sentiment but it was out of their hands.

Following scrutiny the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

iii. Combined Highways and Neighbourhood Works Programme 2016/2017

Members considered a report that sought approval for the highways and neighbourhood works to be undertaken in 2016/2017.

Officers stated that this was a regular report that is compiled following meetings with all Members and the Cabinet Member. It was further confirmed that when a Member is unable to attend the annual surgery meeting then every effort is made to speak directly with that Member. After the 3 day call in the Network and Programme Manager, Ian Carter, will write to each member confirming the work to be undertaken in their Ward.

Following scrutiny the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

iv. Environment and Highways Performance Indicators for Quarter 3 of 2015/2016

Members considered the performance information for the Environment Directorate.

Members noted that during 2014/2015 114 employees left the Directorate and asked what the figure was for the current year. Officers stated that it was currently around 70 for 2015/2016, but this figure could rise.

Members were concerned about the reduction in numbers particularly in visible services and officers stated that as part of the new business planning process there is a section that includes a workforce planning section that allows managers to understand any workforce issues.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

**CHAIRPERSON**