



STREETSCENE AND ENGINEERING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10.00 am FRIDAY, 5 APRIL 2019

COMMITTEE ROOMS A/B - NEATH CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest
2. Minutes of Previous Meetings (*Pages 3 - 12*)
3. To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board Agenda for pre-scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members).
4. Forward Work Programme 18/19 (*Pages 13 - 16*)
5. Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972

S.Phillips
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Friday, 29th March, 2019

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: Councillor S.M.Penry

**Vice
Chairperson:** Councillor S. ap Dafydd

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, N.J.E.Davies, R.Davies,
W.F.Griffiths, C.James, A.McGrath, J.Warman,
R.W.Wood, J.Hale and C.Galsworthy

Notes:

- (1) If Committee Members or non-Committee Members wish to have relevant items put on the agenda for future meetings, then please notify the Chief Executive/Chair eight days before the meeting.*
- (2) If non-Committee Members wish to attend for an item of interest, then prior notification needs to be given (by 12.00 noon on the day before the meeting). Non-Committee Members may speak but not vote, or move or second any motion.*
- (3) For pre scrutiny arrangements, the Chair will normally recommend forthcoming executive items for discussion/challenge. It is also open to Committee Members to request items to be raised - though Members are asked to be selective here in regard to important issues.*
- (4) The relevant Cabinet Board Members will also be invited to be present at the meeting for Scrutiny/ Consultation purposes.*
- (5) Would the Scrutiny Committee Members please bring the Cabinet Board papers with them to the meeting.*

STREETSCENE AND ENGINEERING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

10 December 2018

Chairperson: Councillor S.M.Penry

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S. ap Dafydd

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, N.J.E.Davies, W.F.Griffiths,
A.McGrath, R.W.Wood and J.Hale

Officers In Attendance J.Davies, D.Griffiths, M.Roberts and S Cook

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A. Wingrave and E.V.Latham

1. CONSULTATION ON ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE'S BUDGET AND DRAFT SAVINGS FOPR 2019/20

1.1 901 Parking Tariff Increase

Officers informed the committee of the proposed additional 30p charge to the parking tariff structure. Officers explained that the charge would only be applied from the third hour onwards and that it would not apply to the first two hours. Officers added it was estimated that this budget proposal would generate £30,000.

Members questioned why the charging tariff at the car parks in Pontardawe were different to the rest of the county borough, and were there plans to bring them all in line with each other. Members added that the first hour of parking was offered for free in the car parks in Pontardawe. Officers informed the committee that the arrangement in Pontardawe was a historic position, whereby the Chamber of Trade had previously put a case forward to the Council in order to attract customers to the town centre. Officers added that the current arrangement would be reviewed in future.

Members questioned what data was used when determining the cost modelling for the car parks. Officers stated that the cost modelling

was based on data for each car park and that usage was a key consideration. Officers reported that a spreadsheet had been set up which gave the projected figures based on the uplift entered into the relevant fields. Officers stated that a ten to thirty percent risk element had been applied to any future forecasts to take into account potential decreases in usage due to the increase in charges.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.2 902 Increased income from Neath Inspired or car park usage

Officers informed the committee that the Council were two years into the partnership agreement with Neath Inspired, which was aimed to increase footfall into the Neath town centre. Officers stated that the Council had offered subsidised parking initiatives to Neath Inspired such as the 'free after three' parking initiative, and for events such as the Neath Food and Drink Festival, Real Ale Festival and the Neath Great Guitar Gig, which Neath Inspired contributed to. Officers explained that the Council aimed to reduce the parking subsidy on 'free after three.'

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.3 903 Engineering & Transport Cost Saving

Officer informed the committee that there were two members of staff who had indicated that they wished to take early retirement, but were still awaiting their figures. Members questioned that with staff leaving and not being replaced, was this placing pressure on remaining team members. Officers stated that the volume of work was the issue with less resources available to carry out tasks; however this was an issue encountered across the entire directorate. Officers added that the capacity to respond swiftly had been affected, and that some tasks would have to take longer to be dealt with.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.4 904 - Highways Development Control

Officers explained that the way the department charged for staff time

would be altered to help absorb staff costs. Officers added that the Council would be charging for elements of the service that it was not currently charging for which would maximise income.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.5 905 - Car Parking Permits

Officers informed the committee that this matter had been previously considered by the committee at the meeting on the 19th October, and decision has been taken by Cabinet Board. Officers updated Members that around £400 had been generated from selling permits to parents at Alderman Davies Primary School so far, but the Police had not purchased any to date.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.6 906 - Staff & Member Parking Charges

Officers stated that the proposal was not technically an increase, as when the Workforce Agreement was in being staff agreed to a 50% freeze on pay rises in return for a reduction to staff parking permits from £16 to £12. Officers added that the agreement came to an end in April 2018, and that the proposal merely restores the price as it would have been if the agreement had not been put in place. Officers informed the committee that a car parking permit behind the barrier in Port Talbot Civic Centre costs £19 a month.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.7 907 - Road Safety & Business Performance

Officers informed the committee that there were two crossing sites that were no longer required; one was due to the introduction of a pelican crossing, and the other was no longer considered a safe route to school as a result of a review undertaken as part of the School Improvements Programme. Officers explained that the individuals affected were keen to retire, and the redundancy payment was considered minimal.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.8 918 - Pest Control

Officers explained that the cost of the service was currently too low, and that the Council needed to cover its costs as much as possible. Officers stated that the charge for the service was still more competitive than what was offered by businesses in the private sector. Officers added Pest Control is a non-statutory service.

Members queried how many staff were employed in the team. Officers stated that the function was shared with dealing with stray dogs and there are three Dog and Pest Enforcement Officers. Officers added that support could also be drawn from the Waste Enforcement Officers if required.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.9 919 – Cemeteries

Officers explained that the proposal aimed to reduce subsidy for cemetery services by charging a higher rate. Officers added that the proposed charge was benchmarked against other authorities' costs and was considered to be in line with what other authorities were charging.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.10 920 - Bowling Greens/sports fields

Officers informed the committee that following the asset transfer exercise carried out in previous years, there were 19 sites originally buying in maintenance services from the Council and this had now reduced to five. Officers added that the directorate could not justify bearing the staff costs to provide maintenance for five sites only, particularly when there were other organisations that could provide the service. With respect to the maintenance of sports fields, the cost needed to be increased to reduce the subsidy in order to protect statutory services.

Members commented that the Council should be encouraging citizens to participate in physical activity and that the proposal was depriving them of this facility. Officers stated that they saw no reason why any facilities would be lost as there were other cost effective

service providers, as evident from the number of clubs buying the Council service reducing from 19 to five. Officers reminded the committee that these grounds maintenance services were not a statutory requirement and that the Council needed to recover its costs as far as possible to protect statutory service areas.

1.11 921 - Greater cost recovery on Schools grounds maintenance income charges

Officers explained that the Environment Directorate were looking to recover costs for schools ground maintenance, and the proposed increase equated to £200 extra per school per annum on average.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

1.12 924 - Savings arising from the cessation of the Print Commissioning function

Officers informed the committee that this was a corporate saving initiative.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the budget proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

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STREETSCENE AND ENGINEERING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

11 January 2019

Chairperson: Councillor S.M.Penry

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S. ap Dafydd

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, N.J.E.Davies, R.Davies,
W.F.Griffiths, C.James, A.McGrath, J.Warman,
R.W.Wood and J.Hale

Officers In Attendance M.Roberts, D.Griffiths, J.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A.Wingrave and E.V.Latham

1. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

2. **DOG FOULING INFORMATION REPORT**

The Committee received information in relation to Dog Fouling as contained within the circulated report.

Officers reported that the Authority were performing satisfactorily in prosecuting offenders and officers were witnessing an increase of people cleaning up after their dogs. Officers stated that there were still individuals who were not compliant and there were still some areas in the county borough area that were proving problematic.

Members requested whether it was possible to receive a breakdown by ward area of persons prosecuted for dog fouling. Officers stated that this information would be made available to Members.

Members commented that they were pleased that the Public Spaces Protection Order was being upheld on Aberavon Beach. Members requested that officers inform Local Members when dog fouling bins were being installed in their area in order for them to have an input into the location of the bins. Officers apologised if there had been

isolated instances where dialogue had not taken place, as this was not the standard practice. Officers stated that this would be taken back and addressed.

Members requested for a location map of all dog fouling bins in the county borough area. Officers agreed to circulate this information.

Members commented that there was not enough signage informing the public of the penalty for not cleaning up dog fouling in the Gnoll Country Park; and raised concerns regarding the Council's ability to prosecute offenders if there was no adequate signage. Members added that the number of bins in the Gnoll Country Park were not sufficient, and that this was contributing to the problem. Officers stated they would look to provide more bins and signage in the park.

Members questioned whether it was possible to make a concerted effort in the Gnoll Country Park to prosecute offenders. Officers stated that it was difficult to enforce as this was resource intensive and the officers in question were also responsible for prosecuting offenders caught fly tipping.

Members queried whether woodland areas and parks could be prioritised for enforcement action. Officers stated an issue was that budgets for woodland parks were reduced in previous years as part of past Forward Financial Plans.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

3. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 18/19**

Members requested for the new arrangements at the recycling centres which were agreed under the new waste strategy to be reviewed in 12 months, amid concerns of potential traffic build up and disruption at the centres, particularly in Briton Ferry, due to the new process of checking and opening black refuse bags before disposing of waste. Members raised concerns that the opening hours were no longer sufficient either due to the new system, particularly during the summer months. Officers agreed to bring a report back in 12 months, but provided assurances that if there were any significant issues that they would be dealt with and reported back to the committee in the meantime. Officers added that they would carry out further publicity activities in order to remind members of the new process and expectations required of them before visiting the recycling centres. Officers added that City and County of Swansea had implemented a similar system, and despite experiencing a number of issues initially,

the process had now bedded in and was effective. Officers made a commitment that traffic issues would be dealt with at the Briton Ferry site if necessary.

Officers reported that the Japanese Knotweed report was not ready in time for the meeting, and that officers indicated that they would prefer to bring the report back to a meeting in June when the service had been operational for a year, and there was more meaningful information to report. The committee agreed for the item to be deferred to June.

The committee noted the work programme.

CHAIRPERSON

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**Streetscene and Engineering Scrutiny Committee
Forward Work Programme 2018/19**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Officer
21 May 2018	Forward Work Programme Workshop	Stacy Curran
25 May 2018		
6 July 2018- MOVED to 20 th July 2018	Community Transport/Information on Bus Services	Peter Jackson
7 September 2018		
19 October 2018		

30 November 2018	Parking Services Annual Report (incl. Traffic Warden data)	Steve Cook
11 January 2019	Dog Fouling Information Report	Mike Roberts
22 February 2019	Programme of Maintenance of Bus Shelters	Dave Griffiths/Mike Roberts
5 April 2019		
24 May 2019		

To be programmed in / information requested

- Fly Tipping – To be included in the Performance Reports on Cabinet Agenda
- Ownership of property – Council and Tai Tarian breakdown – In progress
- Customer Contact Centre Information Report
 - What systems
 - How to utilise
 - How to report
 - What is an emergency

To be programmed in for the next civic year

- Japanese Knotweed – Management and Treatment Annual Update (Nicola Pearce) – To be programmed in for June 2019
- Waste Strategy – Update on Recycling Centres (how the new changes have bedded in and opening hours)

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