



STREETSCENE AND ENGINEERING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10.00 am FRIDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2019

COMMITTEE ROOMS A/B - NEATH CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 3 - 6*)
3. Forward Work Programme 19/20 (*Pages 7 - 8*)
4. To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board Agenda for pre-scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members).
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

Thursday, 17 October 2019

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: Councillor S.M.Penry

**Vice
Chairperson:** Councillor R.W.Wood

Councillors: S. ap Dafydd, A.R.Aubrey, C.Galsworthy,
J.Hurley, D.Keogh, A.McGrath, W.F.Griffiths,
R.Davies, J.Hale and S.A.Knoyle

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:

20 September 2019

Chairperson: Councillor S.M.Penry

Vice Chairperson: Councillor R.W.Wood

Councillors: S.ap Dafydd, A.R.Aubrey, C.Galsworthy,
D.Keogh, A.McGrath, W.F.Griffiths and
R.Davies

Officers In Attendance D.Griffiths, N.Thomas, A.Lewis, N.Jones and
T.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors R.G.Jones and E.V.Latham

1. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July, 2019, be approved.

2. **WINTER SERVICE OPERATIONS**

The circulated report provided an update, as requested by Scrutiny Committee Members, on the ongoing preparation to ensure the successful delivery of winter service operations, in readiness for the 2019-20 winter season.

Members noted that although gritting routes had been reduced in previous years due to budget pressures, the current fleet of gritting vehicles were ready for the start of the winter season, and the stockpiles of grit were full. The updated, on board computer equipment continued to provide useful data, such as the areas treated and spread rates.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

3. **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following Cabinet Board items:

Ash Dieback

The circulated Cabinet Board report contained information on the potential future environmental and financial impact of Chalara Ash Dieback disease which was currently affecting a large number of trees on both Council and private land.

Members queried whether the reference to playgrounds in the report referred also to playgrounds owned and managed by Town/Community Councils. Officers confirmed that the figures in the report only related to Council owned playgrounds. It would be for land owners to manage the trees on their land. However the action plan would include how the Council would be cascading information on the disease to other land owners. This would include Town and Community Councils.

It was also noted that where land was leased from the Council, then the terms of the individual lease would determine who would be responsible for any trees on that land.

Queries were raised on the transportation and reuse of the dead wood. It was confirmed that as the Ash Dieback disease was now so widespread, the transportation of the felled material was not subject to restrictions. This meant that the wood could also be used in small scale projects and in log burners and so on. It was anticipated, however, that there would not be much resale value in the wood due to the volume of trees needing to be cut down, and the majority of the wood would be recycled.

Members noted that although Biomass Plants used wood to create energy, ash trees would not be suitable in all cases, as the process was designed to take straight trees such as conifers which were easier to manage with their processes.

Replanting the felled trees with other species, for visual and biodiversity purposes would be included in the action plan, and ongoing meetings had been arranged concerning woodland management.

Due to the scale of the operation, contractors may be used in addition to Council staff to cut down and dispose of the trees.

The following areas were also discussed:

- Larch tree disease,
- Rhododendrons,
- Funding of the project,
- Highway safety.

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

Memorial Testing

The circulated report contained a proposed memorial testing policy which would formalise current procedures and provide a clear and consistent approach to the inspection of memorials within all cemeteries managed by the authority.

Members discussed how often the inspections would take place, and noted this would be every five years, although if a memorial was deemed to be safe, but in need of ongoing observation, then the follow up inspections would be more frequent. It was noted that the laying down of headstones would be a last resort, and headstones would be staked or pocketed (placed in a deeper hole) wherever possible.

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

Christmas Parking 2019

Members noted that in previous years where free Christmas parking in the weeks leading up to Christmas had been offered, footfall had increased in the town centres – by 11% in Port Talbot, for example. Although it was difficult to get quantifiable information from local traders, they felt that there was a benefit from the free parking.

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

4. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

CHAIRPERSON

**Streetscene and Engineering Scrutiny Committee
Forward Work Programme 2019/20**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Officer
25 th October 2019		
6 th December 2019	Recycling Performance Presentation - by new Graduate in Wales	Mike Roberts
	2 nd Quarter Performance Report	Mike Roberts
17 th January 2020	Fly Tipping-update and monitoring report.	Mike Roberts
	Pest Control- update and monitoring report.	Mike Roberts
28 th February 2020	Japanese Knotweed- Management and Treatment Annual Update.	Nicola Pearce
	Road Safety Strategy	Joy Smith
24 th April 2020	Cymmer Improvement Scheme - Presentation	Dave Griffiths
	CCTV Enforcement Vehicle – First Years Data	Steve Cook

	Select List Review	Hasan Hasan
	Virtual Permit	Steve Cook
5 th June 2020	Parking Services Annual Update Report including (Traffic Warden data.)	Steve Cook