

ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

17 December 2015

Chairperson: Councillor I.D.Williams

Vice Chairperson: Councillor A.J.Siddley

Councillors: D.W.Davies, Mrs.R.Davies, S.K.Hunt and E.E.Jones

Officers In Attendance M.Roberts, S. Owen, M. Llewellyn and N.Evans

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors E.V.Latham and P.D.Richards

1. **PRE SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

i. Highway Asset Management Plan

Members considered an update report on the ongoing development of the Highway Asset Management Plan.

Members were advised that this was a 3 year document but it is also fluid so that any problems can be included and addressed. Officers stated that they consider all products when undertaking any works contained within the plan. One of the most cost effective ways of resurfacing was to have a layer of tar which seals the surface which stops the rain and frost causing any further damage. Then a layer of chippings is added which provides skid resistance.

Members raised concerns in relation to the works of contractors on behalf of utility companies and the fact that on occasions the reinstatement works were sub standard. Officers stated that once

works have been completed they undertake random samples of the reinstatement works and have found a failure rate of 84%. Members were advised that where a failure is found the utility company is fined and the works are redone to the required standard.

Members stated they wished to include a note within the plan concerning congestion on the local road network caused by traffic conditions at Sunnycroft and Baglan roundabouts for which the Welsh Government are responsible.

Following scrutiny the committee were supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

ii. Flood Risk Management Plan 2015 – 2021

Members considered a report on the Council's draft Flood Risk Management Plan that had been produced as part of fulfilling the Council's role as a Lead Local Flood Authority.

Officers stated that the plan covered surface water and normal watercourses and not the sea or rivers. This was a live document and another plan would be presented for agreement in five years.

Members noted that the Welsh Government had recently announced additional funding for flood management and asked whether the Council could access this funding. Officers stated that the Council had submitted expressions of interest and officers were working on feasibility studies.

Following scrutiny the committee were supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet board.

iii. Missed Bin Policy

Members considered a report that sought approval to adopt a policy in relation to 'missed' waste collections.

Officers advised that the document before Members was the current standard customer practice that was now being documented in line with the Digital by Design policy of the Council. The document had been developed through consultation with waste collection staff and officers from the contact centre.

Members raised concern that the policy before them would be in contradiction to the side waste policy that was due before committee at a later date. Members felt that where a collection was missed and residents had to keep it for another two weeks this could result in the resident having excess side waste which may result in non-collection.

Members stated that if it was the Council's fault that a collection was missed then we should not expect the residents to keep their rubbish and we should collect. Officers advised that every effort is made to collect waste following a missed collection and the number of times in a year that it was not possible is extremely low.

Members asked about Friday collections and what happens when these are missed. Officers confirmed that as there were collections on Saturday for commercial waste and these are used to collect the missed residential waste so does not cost the Council any additional money from overtime payments.

Members stated that they were not comfortable with supporting a policy as they felt that it would remove the flexibility and could leave the Council vulnerable to potential problems. The Cabinet Member suggested that the word policy be changed to guidelines. Members welcomed this suggestion.

Following scrutiny the Committee stated that they would accept the recommendation to be considered by the Cabinet Board if the Missed Bin Policy was renamed the Missed Bin Guidelines.

CHAIRPERSON