

STREETSCENE AND ENGINEERING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

30 November 2018

Chairperson: Councillor S.M.Penry

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S. ap Dafydd

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

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

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

Observers E.Bradfield

1. Parking Services Annual Parking Report 2017/18

The Committee received information in relation to the Parking Services Annual Parking Report 2017/18 as contained within the circulated report.

Officers informed the committee that the total balance stated on page 15 of the Parking Services Annual Report 2017/2018 was incorrect, and should read as a deficit of £32,225.

Members queried whether there were any plans to reduce expenditure for car parks. Officers stated that the current staffing levels for enforcement officers was still necessary. Members questioned whether the service was likely to return to profit in the following year. Officers explained that the service had made a large capital investment in the Neath multi-storey car park in the current financial year, and that was a contributing factor to the high expenditure.

Members queried how the budget had been spent during the current financial year. Officers stated that the money had been spent on maintaining car parks and pay and display machines.

Members commented that enforcement appeared to be working well as figures for contravening traffic orders were relatively low. Officers stated that there were ten enforcement officers currently employed across the county borough. Officers reported that in 1999 the Authority had issued around 25,000 parking tickets, but this had now reduced to 12,000 which demonstrated that compliance levels were relatively high.

Members queried whether it was possible to expand enforcement to other areas, particularly as the town centres were proving to be compliant. Officers stated that expanding enforcement to wider areas would require additional officers and further investment in the service.

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

2. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following items:

Cabinet Board Proposals

2.1 Key Performance Indicators 2018/2019 – Quarter 2 Performance (1st April 2018 – 30th September 2018)

The Committee received information in relation to Key Performance Indicators 2018/2019 – Quarter 2 Performance (1st April 2018 – 30th September 2018) as contained within the circulated report.

Members praised officers for achieving a good level of performance during difficult financial times.

Members referred to page 18 regarding the number of complaints upheld, and queried what the nature of the complaints were. Officers explained that they did not have the information to hand. Members requested for the information to be circulated to the committee. Officers agreed to circulate the information to members via e-mail.

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

2.2 Highway Maintenance - New code of practice

The Committee received information in relation to Highway maintenance and new code of practice as contained within the

circulated report.

Officers informed the committee that the new code of practice was focused on a risk based approach to maintaining road networks. Officers explained that an all-Wales response to the new Code was being developed via CCS Wales and, for example, going forward the number of inspections required for individual roads would likely be linked to usage. Officers stated that the Authority's current practice for maintaining road networks had been externally audited relatively recently and taking account current performance and claim repudiation rate it would be reasonable to continue with current arrangements until all-Wales guidelines were finalised. Members praised officers for their work in maintaining the road network to a good standard during difficult financial times. Officers informed members that the service area had been intentionally protected during budget proposals.

Members queried whether officers were looking at using alternative materials to fill pot holes, as the current materials being used were not always durable. Officers stated that where materials were deteriorating within a short period of time there were usually underlying drainage problems. Officers added that they were looking at pot holes which were repeatedly causing issues in order to attempt to identify other factors which were causing the problems.

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

3. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

The committee received a sample map identifying Council and Tai Tarian owned land and property as requested by members previously. Officers informed the committee that maps could be provided for each ward in the county borough; however the information held by the Authority for Tai Tarian land was only up to date as far 2011 at the point at which the housing stock was transferred out of Council ownership. The committee confirmed that it was satisfied with the map, and requested for the maps to be circulated via e-mail to the relevant ward members when they were available.

The committee referred to the item on the work programme regarding the location map of drainage systems affected by Tree Preservation Orders, and requested for the item to be removed as this was a local issue that should be taken up with the relevant officer.

The committee noted the work programme.

CHAIRPERSON