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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting TUESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2016, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

9 **Correspondence Following the Committee Meeting** *(Pages 1 - 10)*

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Ref: RDB/PM/BD/04.10.16

25 October 2016

Councillor Bob Derbyshire,
Cabinet Member for the Environment,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Derbyshire,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 4 October 2016

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and the officers from the Commercial & Collaboration Service for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 4 October 2016. As you are aware the meeting considered an item titled 'Recycling & Waste Restricting Programme – One Year Update'. The comments and observations made by Members following this item are set out in this letter.

Recycling & Waste Restricting Programme – One Year Update

- A Member who recently visited a household waste recycling centre in Bridgend noted that the site used a large board to show the percentage of recycling achieved from materials presented at the site. The board illustrated that the household waste recycling centre was achieving an 85% recycling rate and acted as a reminder to staff and the public of the importance of achieving high recycling rates. He also noted that staff seemed very motivated towards achieving the recycling goal as they were quick to offer advice as to where the materials from his vehicle should be placed.

The Committee ask that you consider introducing such boards at sites in Cardiff as they could raise awareness of the need to maximise recycling rates and act as a reminder to staff and the public of the targets which need to be achieved.

- At the meeting there was much discussion about achieving the 58% recycling target during 2015/16 and the impact that the inclusion of recycling fly ash had on the overall total. After some discussion it was acknowledged that the overall recycling percentage was made up of a series of collection inputs (for example, food waste, fly ash, commercial waste, comingled recycling and household waste recycling centres) and that these all contributed to the overall 58% figure. Members were told that the definition of what was accepted for inclusion in the overall recycling calculation tended to change each year and that the challenges facing each category constantly varied. The conclusion was that no two years were the same making direct year to year comparison very difficult.

During the way forward Members agreed that the Committee should receive a breakdown of waste collection inputs into the waste stream for each of the waste collection input streams; this should include the overall tonnage collected, the percentage recycling from the stream actually achieved and the unique challenges facing each stream from year to year. This data would give the Committee a greater insight into areas which are performing well and help identify where improvements could be made. As a starting point the Committee would like this data for the financial year 2015/16.

- A Member explained that she had recently been made aware of a new scheme for dealing with waste on property frontages and asked for more information about the scheme. She was advised that this was a Neighbourhood Services project and that they would be best placed to provide an update on this new scheme. The Committee is due to receive an item titled 'Neighbourhood Services – Member Update' at their meeting in November.

I would ask that the presentation for this item briefly addresses the new scheme for dealing with waste on property frontages and in particular references how the scheme can be accessed and the educational work taking place to support improvements in this area.

- When you responded to my letter following the meeting on the 17 May you provided a table which set out a breakdown of recycling by material type for 2015/16.

I would be grateful if you could provide the same information for 2014/15.

- The letter produced after the meeting on the 17 May 2016 had a paragraph which stated:

The subsequent Chair's letter dated 29 May 2015 said that, "The Assistant Director for the Environment explained that a fly capture report could easily be produced for Cardiff and then confirmed that they could be produced on a Ward by Ward basis". As a result this information was subsequently provided for each Ward and month for 2014/15 (excluding one month - April 2014) in Cllr Derbyshire's letter of 15 September 2015. At the meeting a Member suggested that the definitions for fly-tipping and misrepresented waste might have changed and that the information available was no longer as freely available when compared to May 2015.

The fly capture information for April 2014 has yet to be provided; I would be grateful if you could arrange for this information to be made available to the Committee.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the requests made in bold in this letter.

Regards,



Councillor Paul Mitchell
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

Tara King – Assistant Director for Commercial & Collaboration Services

Jane Cherrington – Operational Manager, Strategy & Enforcement

Matt Wakelam – Operational Manager, Infrastructure & Operations

Paul Keeping – Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services

Davina Fiore – Director for Governance & Legal Services

Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Ref: RDB/PM/RP/04.10.16

25 October 2016

Councillor Ramesh Patel,
Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Sustainability,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Patel,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 4 October 2016

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and the officers from City Operations for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 4 October 2016. As you are aware the meeting considered an item titled 'Pavement & Footway Maintenance in Cardiff'. The comments and observations made by Members following this item are set out in this letter.

Pavement & Footway Maintenance in Cardiff

- During the way forward Members agreed that the best long term approach for pavement and footway maintenance in Cardiff was to take a steady state funding approach. This echoed the comments made about maintenance of the overall highway asset in May 2016. The letter sent to you after the meeting in May 2016 has been attached to this letter as **Appendix 1**.
- Members noted the importance of a well maintained highway asset for Cardiff and in particular emphasised the need for good quality carriageways and pavements. **Whilst acknowledging the difficult financial position that the Council faces they ask that you continue to look for additional capital funds to support further improvements to the overall highway asset.**

- The subject of parking across paving slabs and pennant stone was raised during the meeting. Members were concerned about the damage that such irresponsible parking causes and the financial impact that this has on the highway maintenance budget. **I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with a summary of the costs created by this problem for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16.**
- Members are aware of the damage that trees cause to pavements and footways across Cardiff. **I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with a summary of the costs that tree damage caused to pavements and footways during the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16.**

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the requests made in this letter.

Regards,



Councillor Paul Mitchell
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

Andrew Gregory - Director for City Operations
Matt Wakelam – Operational Manager, Infrastructure & Operations
Gary Brown – Operational Manager, Assets, Engineering & Operations
Andrew Greener – Team Leader, Assets, City Operations
Paul Keeping – Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services
Davina Fiore – Director for Governance & Legal Services
Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Ref: RDB/PM/RP/17.05.16

24 June 2016

Councillor Ramesh Patel
Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Sustainability
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff CF10 4UW



Dear Councillor Patel

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 17 May 2016

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 17 May 2016. As you are aware the meeting considered items titled 'City Operations – Quarter 4 Performance' and 'Highway Asset Investment Strategy'. The comments and observations made by Members following these items are set out in this letter.

City Operations – Quarter 4 Performance

- Members would like to congratulate the City Operations Directorate for delivering a budget surplus of £3,000 during the financial year 2015/16. They feel that this is an excellent achievement in the current financial climate. The Committee did, however, note the comments made by the Director for City Operations on the varied performance across the City Operations Directorate as a whole. For example, he mentioned that certain parts of Waste Services still had sickness rates in excess of 18 days per person per annum.

With this in mind I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with the sickness, budget and savings details on a service by service basis for all of the City Operations Directorate for 2015/16. This I feel will provide the Committee with a greater insight into the stronger and weaker

performing parts of the City Operations Directorate, which will in turn help inform how we identify items for future scrutiny. Please note that the letter to the Cabinet Member for the Environment also asks for this information.

- At the meeting the Director for City Operations once again explained that performance indicators PLA/004 (a) (percentage of major planning applications determined during the year within 13 weeks) and PLA/004 (c) (percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within eight weeks) were once again rated “Red” and “Amber” respectively. The Committee were mindful that significant improvements had previously been promised for Quarter 4 2015/16 and Quarter 1 2016/17. They note that the Director for City Operations is confident of turning both of these indicators to “Green” in time for the Quarter 1 Performance report for 2016/17, and will therefore monitor progress with interest.
- During the meeting there was some concern around the extent to which planning enforcement is carried out in Cardiff, with particular reference to the frequency with which demolition work is carried out against illegal buildings that have been determined for demolition. Reference was made to the letter sent to you after your visit to Environmental Scrutiny Committee on 19 May 2015, which asked for “details on the quantity of illegal buildings determined for demolition by planning enforcement and the number that have actually been demolished for 2013/14 and 2014/15”. In reply you explained that “16 had been determined for demolition, but 7 were subsequently removed.”

I would be grateful if you could confirm in writing how many of the nine properties still on the list have actually been demolished, and the current status of the properties which have not been demolished.

- At the meeting there was some concern around the public availability of planning application documents. A Member was of the opinion that it was no longer possible for the public to view hard copies of planning applications at sites like City Hall, and the Council does not currently

accept planning objections by email or in any other written format. It was felt that if this were the case then the process could discriminate against certain groups, for example, older people. The Director for City Operations has agreed to look into the matter, therefore, I would be grateful if his findings could be confirmed in your reply to this letter.

Highway Asset Investment Strategy

- The Environmental Scrutiny Committee would like to endorse the recommendation made in the Cabinet report to implement a steady state approach to the management of the Highway Asset in Cardiff. Members felt that this longer term planning approach was the most sensible option currently available to the Council. This position is consistent with the conclusions the Committee made in September 2014 when they reviewed an earlier version of the Highway Asset Investment Strategy.
- A Member questioned when work would begin on the Greener Grangetown project and you explained that work was due to start imminently. I would be grateful if you could provide a detailed timeline to include when the work would begin, and when it is anticipated that it will be completed.
- Members felt that the implementation of 20 mph zones in Cardiff had been a positive thing, particularly as the lower speed limit reduces the chance of serious injury in a road traffic accident or collision. The Committee are also keen to gain a better understanding of the benefits of the 20mph speed limits in terms of preserving the quality of the Highway Asset and reducing general maintenance requirements. For example, Members were of the view that the reduced need to brake or accelerate would place less pressure on the actual highway asset, resulting in a longer deterioration period. I would be interested in finding out if any cost benefit analysis has been carried out which reflects the financial impact of implementing 20mph

zones on the Highway Asset. If you have access to a report of this type I would be grateful if you could share this with the Committee.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the requests made in this letter.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. D. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Councillor Paul Mitchell
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

Andrew Gregory, Director for City Operations
Tara King, Assistant Director for City Operations
Matthew Wakelam – Operational Manager, Infrastructure & Operations
James Clemence – Head of Planning
Simon Gilbert – Operational Manager, Development Management (Strategic & Place Making)
Paul Carter – Head of Transport
Paul Keeping – Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services
David Marr – Interim Monitoring Officer
Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Michael Michael, Chair of Cardiff's Planning Committee