

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 APRIL 2016

Present: County Councillor Mitchell(Chairperson)
County Councillors Aubrey, Keith Jones, Lomax, White and
Darren Williams

73 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clark and Hill-John.

74 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

75 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2016 was approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

76 : DRAFT DIRECTORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2016-2018: CITY OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE

Members received a report providing background information on the City Operations Directorate Service Delivery Plan for 2016-18. The Committee was requested to consider the Service Delivery Plan, and any comments they may wish to pass on to the relevant Director and Cabinet Member, so that the final plan can be informed by the views of the Committee.

The Committee was asked to consider scrutiny of the following:

- The Directorate's contribution to the Council Corporate Plan 2016-18 via the commitments detailed in the Action Plan
- The milestones and timescales for delivering the commitments in 2016-17
- The resources it has to deliver these commitments in 2016-17
- The Directorate's key achievements during 2015/16

The Directorate Delivery Plan identified the directorate's core achievements from 2015/16 and the key aspirations for 2016/17. Those relevant to the Committee's terms of reference were set out in the report.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Ramesh Patel, Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability and Andrew Gregory, Corporate Director, to the meeting. Andrew Gregory was invited to deliver a [presentation](#) on the Strategic Planning, Highway and Traffic and Transportation aspects of the City Operations Directorate Delivery Plan.

The Committee was invited to comment, raise questions or seek clarification on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members asked why the age profile bands for the service had changed. The 16-19 years band (which had performed poorly) was replaced by a band from 16-24 years. Members asked how many members of staff are employed between the ages of 16 and 19. The officer was uncertain why the age profile had changed and agreed to address this with the Performance Team. The Committee was advised that the Directorate had specific priorities in terms of staff development. A key element to achieving this was by offering apprenticeships. The Cabinet Member stated that it was important to note that over 50% of the workforce is 45+ years. The skills possessed by those staff will be lost over time and it was important to replace those skills.
- Members noted that 17 of 1424 members of staff were defined as Welsh speakers. Officers were asked to confirm that the Directorate is meeting the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. Members were also disappointed that only 3.4% of staff are recorded as BME when the equivalent figure for Cardiff as a whole was 14%. The officer stated that the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards were being addressed through corporate initiatives. The Cabinet Member stated that a proportion of staff do not wish to disclose their ethnicity.
- Officers were asked to comment on the efforts made to reduce sickness absence in the Highways team from 12 days to 4 days. Members were advised that this result was achieved through a team effort. The Highways team was restructured and reshaped and this had helped. An Action Plan, based on an open approach to addressing sickness absence, was agreed and delivered. Officers suggested that plaudits should be given to the teams within Highways for achieving such a reduction in sickness absence levels.
- The Committee requested an update on the street-lighting dimming project. Members were advised that the initial feedback received suggested that the project had been very successful. LED lighting was providing a brighter, clearer light and saving energy.
- Responding to a question regarding a Radyr to Coryton rail link, the officer stated that the authority was lobbying the Welsh Government for a light rail link between Radyr and Coryton as part of the Metro project. Discussions regarding the mode of transport were ongoing. It was ultimately a Welsh Government decision. The authority is moving forward with a network of interchanges on the radial bus routes within the City. The former Waungron Road HWRC site formed part of those plans, as did possible interchanges at UHW and Cardiff East Park and Ride.
- Members requested that the Highways Asset Strategy be brought before the Committee for pre-decision Scrutiny prior to the strategy being presented to the Cabinet for approval in June/July.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Bob Derbyshire, Cabinet Member for the Environment and Jane Cherrington, Operational Manager, Strategy and Enforcement. Jane Cherrington was invited to deliver a [presentation](#) on the Environment aspects of the City Operations Directorate Delivery Plan.

The Committee was invited to comment, raise questions or seek clarification on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members requested an update on the progress of the Infrastructure ADM decision. The Cabinet Member advised that a report would be brought to a Joint PRAP and Environment Scrutiny Committee in May prior to the Cabinet meeting on 19 May 2016. A further report would be presented at the May meeting of the Council if the Cabinet decides that a wholly owned company is the preferred option.
- Members requested clarification of what a 'Sustainable Food City' would entail. The officers stated that a Sustainable Food City initiative would potentially cut across a number of directorates would aim to minimise food waste, increase home composting, encourage people to grow their own food, re-use waste land or common land, encourage people to shop locally, etc.
- The Cabinet Member confirmed that the construction of the anaerobic digestion facility was on course and the facility would open on time in due course.
- Responding to a question from the Committee, officers confirmed that PSCO's would still be able to issue fines for littering offences.
- Officers explained the procedure by which bottom ash is processed prior to a proportion of the tonnage of that bottom ash being added to the recycling target figure.
- Members asked whether the potential percentage gains, in terms of the recycling target, from a re-use facility could be estimated.
- The Committee asked what options were being looked at to secure burial land and the requirements for other operational land and whether discussions were taking place with developers with a view to securing such land. The Cabinet Member stated that appraisals were currently being made on land that is within Council ownership. However, the options appraisals were at an early stage and the authority would be closer to identifying the land in question in 12 months. Officers advised that the need to identify burial land had been identified as a 'red risk'. There were likely to be sensitivities around any decision. An undertaking was given that any technical assessment would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee to be scrutinised.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson writes on behalf of the Committee to the Cabinet Members to convey the Committee's comments and observations.

77 : WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee discussed the Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal year. Members were keen to support the co-opting of representatives from the 'rivers groups' to participate in the Task and Finish Inquiry into Cardiff's Rivers. It was agreed that the Principal Scrutiny Officer draft terms of reference for the Task and Finish Inquiry and that these be brought back to the Committee for approval. Members also requested that the Task and Finish Inquiry be broadened and that

consideration be given to users of other bodies of water within the City, such as Roath Park Lake and Llanishen Reservoir.

The Committee discussed agenda items for the May and June meetings of the Scrutiny Committee. Members were asked to note that the Joint Scrutiny Committee with PRAP looking at the Infrastructure ADM would be held on 12 May 2016.

78 : CORRESPONDENCE

The Committee received copies of correspondence sent and received in relation to matters previously scrutinised by this Committee.

79 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next Environment Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to take place on 17 May 2016.

The meeting terminated at 6.00 pm