

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 NOVEMBER 2016

Present: County Councillor Mitchell(Chairperson)
County Councillors Clark, Hill-John, White and Darren Williams

32 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

33 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

34 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2016 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

35 : MANAGING LITTER IN CARDIFF

The Committee received a report providing an overview of how the Council manages litter in Cardiff and in particular, the various categories of litter; the resources available; the challenges of managing litter; litter management campaigns and the recent Local Environmental Audit and Management Systems (LEAMS) results. Members were advised that the majority of the Council's responsibilities in terms of managing litter are applied to public spaces, however, in some instances the Council has to also take responsibility for private land. The main functions for litter management are carried out by the Street Cleansing Service and Waste Enforcement.

The Street Cleansing Service provides a number of statutory tasks including street cleansing, public bin emptying and removal of fly-tipping on adopted highway areas across the city. The service carries out street cleansing for approximately 1088 km of carriageway and 1900 km of footway. It has responsibility for emptying approximately 1700 bins on a regular basis and in 2015/16 it dealt with 6,214 fly tipping incidents, of which 6,084 were cleared within 5 days. The service employs 159 FTE members of staff and has a net running cost of approximately £5.9 million per annum.

The Waste Enforcement service is responsible for the provision of waste management related education and the statutory enforcement activities relating to fly tipping along with non-statutory tasks such as the assessment of assisted lift requests and the enforcement of waste-related offences such as dog fouling and incorrect waste presentation. The service deals with approximately 1,200 service requests per month. A total of 27 FTE members of staff are employed as a net cost to the Council of £211,269.

The main types of litter were identified and set out in the report. These include sweets and food litter, dog fouling, chewing gum, smoking related litter, split bags, incorrectly presented bags and fly tipping. The main sources of litter are frequently

generated in or by high footfall areas; discarded from vehicles; takeaways and public houses; areas of transient populations; parks; private land or events.

The Council's approach for improving the environment uses the 'Three E's' i.e. Education, Engineering and Enforcement. Education and awareness is used to reduce littering and includes targeted campaigns and other preventative measures. Beyond the educational and awareness approach enforcement options are available to the Council.

The main litter challenges identified in Cardiff are:

- Raising awareness of litter issues across the City
- Dealing with dog fouling problems
- Flat – predominantly the presentation of litter for collection
- Litter in areas of transient populations – e.g. student areas
- Frontages
- Increasing active/eating on the go culture

The report included a summary of the performance indicators used to measure street cleanliness. There are:

- Use of bi-monthly Local Environmental Audit and Management Systems (LEAMS) surveys
- Two established performance indicators – the cleanliness and the percentage of highways to a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness

Appendix 3 of the report illustrated the results for the cleanliness index and the percentage of highways to a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness. Members were advised that the Local Government Data Unit Wales Report 2015/16 featured two key performance indicators which related to litter and cleanliness. These are 'The percentage of land of high or acceptable cleanliness' where Cardiff came 21st out of 22 Welsh Authorities and 'The Percentage of Reported Fly Tipping Cleared with 5 Working Days' where Cardiff came 4th out of 22 Welsh Authorities.

The report also provided details of the 'Love Where You Live' campaign, a city-wide initiative aimed at improving the standard of cleanliness in streets and neighbourhoods by engaging the support of citizens and asking them to get involved with the exercise. The five key elements of the campaign were listed as:

- Harnessing the Power of People
- Neighbourhood Cleaning
- Zero Tolerance Approach to Littering
- Raising Recycling Awareness
- Student Education

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Bob Derbyshire, Cabinet Member for the Environment; Andrew Gregory, Corporate Director and Matt Wakelam, Head of Infrastructure and Operations, to the meeting. Councillor Derbyshire was invited to make a brief statement. Councillor Derbyshire said that litter was an issue that affected everyone and on which everyone has a view. Councillor Derbyshire was pleased to present the authority's current strategy.

Matt Wakelam was invited to deliver a brief presentation. Members of the Committee were invited to comment, raise questions or seek clarification on the information provided. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Officers considered that, in terms of the performance indicator results for land of high or acceptable levels of cleanliness, Cardiff was different to the majority of Welsh Authorities, insofar as it was predominantly an urban environment.
- Members asked officers to clarify whether it was only possible to prosecute a resident for waste in the frontage of a property, if the resident responded to correspondence. Officers stated that Enforcement Officers were looking at best practice and initiatives in England, where it is possible to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for waste in frontages. Officers considered that the authority needed to lobby the Welsh Government with a view to bringing forward similar powers for Welsh Authorities. Processes have improved and officers now have access to Council Tax information, and as a result notification getting to the right people has improved. Also, in Council properties, where tenancy agreements are in place, the fact that a tenancy agreement may be at risk has proven to be an effective deterrent.
- Members asked for clarification on what items would be considered detrimental to the street scene if stored in the frontage of a property. Officers advised that waste bins, whilst unsightly, would not be considered detrimental.
- Officers stated that the Neighbourhood Services project has provided an opportunity for the service area to look at the street scene holistically and this has highlighted where the authority has powers to act, and whether those powers are not being used in an effective way. This has also served to inform planning developments in terms of the delivery of a high-quality environment. The Corporate Director advised that he would welcome an opportunity to advise the Committee of the synergies achieved at a future meeting.
- Members welcomed the collaboration undertaken between service areas aimed at improving the street scene. However, Members asked why Waste Management was not part of the project. Officers stated that Waste Management operatives are in any one location for approximately 15 minutes each week. However, the Neighbourhood Service provided services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Committee considered that if Waste Collection operatives had a broader range of responsibilities then they would also be able to contribute to the wider aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Service.
- Officer confirmed that the educational campaign targeting student properties which was piloted in Cathays recently would be rolled out into other wards. The allocation of resources was demand-led and the service area would respond to reports of litter, dog fouling, etc. This intelligence would be used to place resources in those areas where demand is highest. The Cabinet Member stated that in some wards with transient populations there were different challenges, such as language barriers. Members were reminded that Cardiff University had provided funding for two enforcement officer posts.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee’s behalf to the Cabinet Member to convey their comments and observations.

The Committee received a report providing an update on the developments within Neighbourhood Services since the decision to deliver services within the scope of the Infrastructure Services Project through a modified in-house model. Since the decision officers within the City Operations Directorate have been reshaping the services within the scope of Neighbourhood Services and developing a business plan to help deliver service improvements and achieve the required savings.

Members were advised that Neighbourhood Services formed part of the modified in-house approach which the Council has been developing over a number of years. The concept was the subject of a scrutiny task and finish exercise in December 2014. During the task and finish meeting Members were briefed on a new pilot for the South West area of Cardiff. The key elements of the pilot were set out in the report. The pilot was designed to deliver improvements across the areas in scope. The pilot aimed to address a number of issues, including:

- People – to reduce the number of people across direct and supported services. This would increase the range of tasks undertaken per employee to deliver these functions; to improve morale/attendance and to increase productivity.
- Quality – to publish the frequency and standard for services, to reduce customer complaints and repeat complaints.
- Cost – to reduce the resources used in delivering the services; to reduce the level of assets used to deliver the services, for example, vehicles, equipment, supply and buildings.
- Time – to reduce the frequency of services and remove duplication and systemic waste.

On 10 November 2015 the Environmental Scrutiny Committee received a report providing Members with an update on the work being undertaken to develop and deliver the Modified In-House Neighbourhood Services Project. Following that meeting a letter was sent to the Cabinet Member Environment setting out the comments and observations of the Committee. The report of 10 November 2015 and the Committee's letter were appended to the report.

The matter was subject to further scrutiny at a Joint Environment and Policy Review Scrutiny Committee that considered the full business case. The full business case made a recommendation to deliver services through a modified in-house approach but splitting services into two parts: Neighbourhood Services and Commercial Services. Neighbourhood Services were to be delivered from the City Operations Directorate and would include Street Cleansing, Parks, Waste Enforcement, Highways Operations, Highway Asset Management, Highway Engineering and Design and Delivery. The recommendations of the report were accepted by Cabinet on 16 June 2016.

Members were advised that since 16 June 2016 officers from City Operations have been developing the Neighbourhood Services model, initially by outlining the approach for developing the Neighbourhood Services Programme and its intended benefits.

Measuring the progress and performance of the programme was vital. The Neighbourhood Services team is in the process of developing a 'balanced scorecard' which translated the organisations mission and strategy into a comprehensive set of

performance measures that provide a framework for the strategic measurement and management system.

The Neighbourhood Services project aimed to deliver a high quality street scene to residents in Cardiff by aligning services to ensure cost effective and efficient working. By promoting a Neighbourhood Service approach, it was considered that improved collaborative working and engagement with Members, residents and community groups would result in clean, attractive and well-managed streets.

After a brief presentation by Matt Wakelam, Operational Manager, Members were invited to discuss, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Officers were asked to clarify how the balanced scorecard would be used to measure results from the customers' perspective. Members were advised that analysis of the number of complaints received, analysis of social media and general trends such as the number of volunteering hours etc, would provide insight into customer satisfaction levels.
- The Committee discussed the use of body camera footage for evidential purposes. The Cabinet Member advised that body cameras can only be used for health and safety reasons. It was not presently possible to use the footage for evidential purposes due to Data Protection Act requirements. The Cabinet Member indicated that he would like body camera footage to be used as this would give a better, fairer, indication of any offence committed.

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

37 : PERFORMANCE REPORTING - QUARTER 2 - 2016/17

The Committee received the City Operations Directorate Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring report 2016/17. The Committee also received the Economic Development Directorate Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring report 2016/17 for issues within the Commercial and Collaborative Service and to provide an update on the development of the new transport interchange.

The monitoring reports examined a number of performance areas including progress made against Performance Indicators, progress made against Corporate Priorities and Directorate Priorities and progress made against Key Challenges and Key Achievements. Appendix 3 to the report provided a range of Council-wide performance information which will help the Committee benchmark against the Council performance as a whole and other service areas. The document includes information on customer contact, staff costs, financial tracking information, sickness absence levels and performance

Members were advised that a number of key observations were identified in both the City Operations Directorate and the Economic Development Directorate reports. Those key observations were detailed in the report.

The Committee received a brief presentation from Andrew Gregory, Corporate Director. Members were asked to consider the information in the report and provide

their observations to support the Cabinet's consideration of the Quarter 2 Delivery and Performance Report 2016/17. The Committee's discussions are summarised as follows:

City Operations

- Members asked whether safety issues were taken into account when responding to street lighting failures. Officers advised that safety was the highest priority consideration. The roll out of the LED street lighting on all strategic routes will improve the Directorate response to street lighting failures as all faults are automatically reported to a central unit and the Street Lighting Team is, therefore, able to react immediately.
- Members asked whether sickness absence was impacting in the amount of agency spend. The Corporate Director stated that the impact would depend on the service area, as some services were not statutory. Members noted that in City Operations the agency spend was already over budget at £1.96 million. Members asked how the amount of agency spend was being controlled. The Corporate Director advised that he would provide the Committee with further detail in this regard. For instance, in Neighbourhood Services new teams had been established that are mainly agency staff and it was hoped that the staff in these teams would be made permanent in the near future.

Commercialisation and Collaboration

Pat McGrath was invited to deliver a brief presentation on the Commercialisation and Collaboration.

- The Committee and officers discussed the increased thresholds for higher quality and less contamination in the recyclable material markets and what the authority has been doing to meet the increased threshold.
- Members asked whether commercial food waste was also subject to higher quality thresholds. Officers stated that separating food waste from other waste remains a challenge and there was a requirement to educate food businesses in terms of contamination of food waste.

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

38 : ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FINDINGS OF THE SHORT TASK & FINISH EXERCISE TITLED 'TIDAL LAGOON'

On 4 October 2016 the Environmental Scrutiny Committee undertook a short task and finish exercise entitled 'Tidal Lagoon'. The Committee received a report providing background information about the inquiry which was supported by a series of comments and observations capture in letters to the Leader and Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability. Copies of the letters were appended to the report.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability addressed the Committee. Councillor Patel stated that the Tidal Lagoon project was a huge project

with a life expectancy of 120 years. The magnitude of the project was enormous. It was recognised that a project on this scale would be a huge commitment for elected members and staff. The Cabinet Member accepted the points raised in the letter in terms of additional resources being required to scrutinise a project of this magnitude.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

39 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next Environment Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to take place on 6 December 2016.

The meeting terminated at 8.00 pm

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