



Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM40778

Dyddiad / Date: 26th February 2019

Councillor Ramesh Patel
Chairperson
Environmental Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Annwyl/Dear Ramesh

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 4th December 2018

Thank you for your letter dated 7th January 2019 in relation to the Environmental Scrutiny Committee held on 4th December 2018. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you.

For clarity, I have produced this response in the same order as the questions were asked in your letter:

Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate – Quarter 1 & 2 Performance Reports 2018/19

Sickness - Members are very concerned at the ongoing high sickness rates within key services in the Directorate. In recent years they have repeated been told that managers are dealing with high sickness rates by closely following the Council's Sickness & Absence Policy, however, the problem persists and is actually getting worse. The Committee would like to know what is actually happening when the Council's Sickness Absence Policy is being correctly applied and why this action is not delivering the necessary improvements to sickness rates. The Committee would also like you to provide details of additional actions that the Council is able to apply, over and above the existing Council Sickness Absence Policy that might help the Directorate reduce sickness rates.

ATEBWCH I / PLEASE REPLY TO :

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GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



The Directorate is actively following the Council's Sickness Absence Policy and is working closely with the nominated HR contact officer in relation to all long term cases. A Sickness Absence Improvement Plan has been developed to supplement the Policy.

The following key actions are in place:

- 78% of all managers have completed the revised e-learning module on sickness procedures.
- Return to Work and Stage Interviews are monitored and managers informed of any non-compliance.
- Monthly statistical reports are sent to all managers, including missed return to work interviews and missed stage interviews.
- Sickness Absence is a regular item on the Management Team Agenda.
- HR Contact Officer is holding regular weekly meetings with areas that have high Long Term Sickness absence cases.
- HR Contact Officer is meeting with Director and Assistant Director monthly to review long term sickness cases.

The Directorate is also promoting the following health initiatives:

- Physiotherapy pilot being undertaken for all staff.
- Videos in communal areas displaying various techniques/exercises which can be undertaken on a daily basis.
- On-site massage service provided by Harmony Holistics.
- Weekly physiotherapy sessions. (Individual assessments and group sessions focusing on reducing sickness levels).
- Welfare Officer based on site. (Provision of counselling service)
- Occupational Health Visitor on site. (Facilitates audio tests, drivers' medicals).
- Regular Health & Wellbeing fayres (Including Diabetes testing & awareness, smoking cessation, blood pressure testing, prostate & ovarian cancer awareness).
- Prayer and Reflection Room
- Cycle racks and showers in main buildings.
- Drying room to dry wet clothes.
- Handcream/suncream/provision of bottled water for operational staff during hot weather

Recycling & Waste Management Services

The Committee would like to receive a paving report in April 2019 that sets out the full details of the restructure and the benefits that it will deliver.

I can confirm that I will be in a position to let the Committee have a paving report in April 2019 that sets out the full details of the restructure and the benefits that it will deliver.

Recycling - Members were told that the Council would need to identify an additional 20,000 tonnes of recycling to achieve the statutory Welsh Government recycling target of 64% by 2019/20. I would be grateful if you could provide a summary of where you anticipate that the additional

recycling will come from (by stream and material type), and in particular set out how much of this might come from Household Waste Recycling Centres.

The council is required to identify an additional 20,000 tonnes of recycling to move from 58% recycling to the required 2024/25 target of 70%. The key areas are from the residual household waste. The full details are outlined in the Waste Strategy 2018.

The key areas being targeted for recycling performance are as follows:

Household Waste (+6,000 tonnes)

- Recover additional recycling by increasing performance from 64% to 70%.
- 1,000 tonnes could be achieved from recycling hygiene waste.
- An additional 500 tonnes could be achieved from recycling textiles at the kerbside.
- More people could be supported to recycle more items
- Further reuse and sorting of bulky items.

Performance improvement will be primarily driven by education and influencing habits of residents to recycle correctly and as much as possible. Household kerbside collections, bulky, hygiene and bring sites.

Household Waste: Recycling Centres (+5,000 tonnes)

- Moving to 80% recycling of current materials by ensuring residents recycle as much as possible at the HWRCs.
- Pursuing new market opportunities for PVC windows could yield additional tonnages for recycling.

Street Litter, cleansing and fly-tipping (+1,000 tonnes)

Contributes a smaller proportion of the whole waste stream, but even small changes in recycling could yield a small increase in overall recycling performance.

Street Sweepings (+280 tonnes)

Reducing the contamination as the sweepings are collected.

Commercial Waste Collections (+6,000 tonnes)

Based on the compositional analysis there is a large proportion of recycling available in the commercial waste streams. Of the current level of Commercial Waste collected, approximately 29% is recycled. If this was increased to 58%, approx. 6,000 more tonnes could be recycled. However, balancing this with market growth and income will mean a slower timeline to improve recycling in this area. The commercial service is now targeting new single stream collections and skip collection services to improve recycling.

Secondary recycling (+ 3,000 tonnes)

There are secondary opportunities to remove more recycling from residual streams. By sorting through residual skips and other residual streams such as fly-tipping, further tonnage can be recovered for recycling.

General comments

Cardiff Council is embracing Environment Act Regulations to promote and support landfill bans and separate recycling collections. Key to this is the work with Welsh Government on recycling infrastructure for difficult materials, deposit schemes and re-use.

Fly Tipping

A Member who had recently spent time job shadowing the Fly Tipping Removal Team explained that staff were currently not able to remove asbestos from fly tipped locations. They found this very frustrating as it slowed work down and the cost of bringing in specialist contractors was a very expensive. They felt that if specialist training was provided then they would be able to deal with any fly tipped asbestos quickly and remove the cost of employing external contractors. The Committee would be grateful if you could confirm if the option of training Council staff to deal with asbestos removal has been costed against using external contractors. If such a costing exercise has taken place then could you please provide details.

In terms of undertaking the removal of asbestos ourselves, I can confirm that this was investigated, but it was found that the business case was not viable as there was no scope for the removal, storage and disposal (via incineration) of this waste.

The removal of asbestos requires specialist training and equipment. It was found that it would be more cost effective to hire in a private contractor than to procure the training and equipment required to undertake this task in-house.

Agency Staff v Full Time Staff

During the meeting a Member asked how many agency staff have continuously worked for services delivered by the Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate for more than four years. I would be grateful if you could confirm how many agency staff have been continuously for this period, and assurance that when possible long term agency staff are offered permanent positions with the Council.

As at 18/2/19, 65 Agency workers have continuously worked for services delivered by the Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate for more than four years.

PTE currently have 21 vacancies posts which we are progressing and these opportunities will be made available for agency workers, along with other council employees, through the normal recruitment processes in line with the commitment made in Capital Ambition.

Glass Bottle Trial

On the whole Members were pleased with the roll out of the glass bottle trial. The trial has been delivered smoothly, very few complaints have been

received and the increase in income per tonne of glass collected was very encouraging. The only issue identified by Members about the scheme was that the order process for additional blue glass caddies was complicated. The Committee asks that you revisit the order process to see if it can be simplified.

Thank you for your feedback on the glass pilot. The current caddy ordering system does follow the same process as the wheeled bins and food caddies, as the containers require a bespoke label attached before delivery. This helps with ownership by the resident, collection processes and also any potential enforcement activities. The customer ordering system is being developed with the digital team to allow on line ordering via the Council's app. This will make the process simpler, quicker and easier for a resident to request a new caddy.

Technology Roll Out

At the meeting there was some conversation around the roll out of technology to drive efficiencies and how this might contribute to future savings. The Director for Planning, Transport & Environment agreed to provide the Committee with an update of the various pieces of technology currently being rolled out by the Directorate to help improve front line services, for example, Bartec and Civica Tranman. It would be appreciated if this update is made available with the reply to this letter.

The Bartec System (incab) has been fitted to all the collection vehicles and all operatives have been trained on its use. The system allows the operatives to record contamination issues, blocked access, confirm assisted lift collections and check they have completed all their work for the shift. The full software integration is linked to the corporate app build, so is expected to be operational by early summer. In the meantime the crews and supervisors are familiarising themselves with the software and the benefits it will bring.

The Starraq DOME Software offers an end-to-end solution to capture, verify and process highway and environmental offences such as littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling. From the Starraq system using the handheld mobile devices officer on street can issue FPNs for any environmental or highway offences.

It has allowed automation of the processing of notices for 'duty of care' and 'failure to produce waste documents' and has dramatically reduced the time it takes to generate court files. Officers are able to spend more time on street educating and enforcing, as there is no double handling of data. The system has been operational since July 2018 and is constantly evolving and improving its functionality.

In conjunction with the roll out to officers the Starraq Software has also been developed to provide a customer facing portal This easy permit application for the public allows them to create an online account to apply, renew and pay for highways permits, licences and services and upload documentation to support applications. It provides the ability to purchase different types and multiple permits at the same time and the customer is able to view existing permits and their expiry dates and the status of ongoing applications. This has reduced the

amount of manual repetitive tasks and customer calls and enabled the processing of more permits with fewer staff. It has also resulted in an increase in the number of applications.

I trust the above is of assistance. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely



Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Michael Michael
Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment
Aelod Cabinet dros Strydoedd Glân, Ailgylchu a'r Amgylchedd