

scrutiny



A Report of: Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Annual Report 2014 – 2015

May 2015



City & County of Cardiff Council

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP



Councillor Paul Mitchell
(Chairperson)



Councillor Elizabeth Clark



Councillor Keith Hyde



Councillor Roderick McKerlich



Councillor Ralph Cook



Councillor Chris Lomax



Councillor Chris Davies



Councillor Sarah Merry

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

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**Councillor Paul Mitchell, Chairperson
Environmental Scrutiny Committee
May 2015**

INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Scrutiny Committee plays an important role in assessing service performance and informing service policy development across a range of Council services, including all aspects of transport, sustainability, and waste. This report presents the Committee's main activities during 2014/15. Between July 2014 and June 2015 the Committee scrutinised the following topics:

- **Inquiries** – Where the Committee had undertaken an examination of a topic over a period of time, resulting in a formal report to the Cabinet. During 2014/15 examples included:
 - Council's Infrastructure Business Model & Alternative Delivery Options;
 - Integrated Transport Hub – with Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee;
 - Cabinet Responses to reports titled *Control of Dangerous Dogs in Cardiff* and *Cycling in Cardiff Parks*.
- **Pre Decision Scrutiny** – This provides the Committee with an opportunity to evaluate and comment on policy proposals before they go to the Council's Cabinet. This gives the Cabinet the opportunity to know Scrutiny Members' views prior to making their decision. During 2014/15 examples included:
 - Waste Management Strategy & Collection Changes;
 - Regulatory Services Collaboration – Joint scrutiny meeting with Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee;
 - Transport Strategy (Cardiff Local Transport Plan 2015-2020);
 - Highways & Related Asset Investment Strategy;
 - Draft Budget & Corporate Plan.

- **Performance Monitoring** – Where the Committee has undertaken monitoring of the Council's performance. During 2014/15 examples included:
 - City Analyst – Procurement Update – Written Submission;
 - Moving Traffic Offences – Business Case;
 - Planning Service Redesign;
 - Quarterly Performance Monitoring;
 - Review of the 2014/15 Directorate Delivery Plans for the Environmental and the Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic and Transport Directorates, and a review of the part of the Sport, Leisure and Culture Directorate Delivery Plan 2014/15 relevant to the terms of reference of Committee.

- **Briefing Information** – Where the Committee receives information on a specific subject which has environmental implications to the Council and the City. During 2014/15 examples included:
 - The Future of Horse Management in Cardiff;
 - Organic Waste Treatment Procurement;
 - Energy Prospectus;
 - Cardiff Universities Student Community Plan;
 - Improving Scrutiny Project.

This report presents the highlights of the Committee's activities during 2014/15.

INQUIRIES

Council's Infrastructure Business Model and Alternative Delivery Options

This joint inquiry, undertaken in partnership with Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee (PRAP), was started by Members on 1 September 2014. The aim of the inquiry was to review the range of available alternative delivery models that could be used by the City of Cardiff Council to deliver a range of outdoor front line services. In doing so the inquiry focused on the potential range of services that could be delivered using alternative service delivery models and the range of operating models currently being considered by the City of Cardiff Council.

When evaluating alternative delivery options and the potential services to be included in the model, the inquiry explored a number of key factors including:

- Service delivery;
- Financial impact;
- Staffing impact;
- Legal impact;
- Deliverability and potential risk;
- Identification of a suitable priority based selection criteria that could be used to identify the most appropriate operating model for delivery of front line services;
- Strengths and weaknesses of each alternative delivery model;
- Lessons learnt from other local authorities on the implementation of alternative delivery models.

A total of 13 services have been nominated within the scope of the Infrastructure Business Model which was agreed at the 20 November 2014 Cabinet meeting; they were listed in a report titled 'Infrastructure Services – Alternative Delivery Model'.

A key part of the work of the task group has been to individually review how prepared each of the thirteen services are to transfer across to a new Infrastructure Business Model. The first part of this evidence section looked at each of the individual services and provided:

- A brief description of the service;
- A summary of the volume of work involved;
- Details on the statutory requirements of the service;
- A summary of the financial and budgetary position;
- Comment on any systems and resources issues;
- A description of existing and potential future income opportunities;
- Detail on the current benchmarking and performance management of the service.

It also reviewed the SWOT analysis undertaken for each of the services. In doing this it summarised the results by theme. SWOT analyses were carried out for each of the 'Fundamental Service Review Documents' completed.

The Members received evidence from a large number of witnesses across 10 meetings and three visits, and made 27 recommendations. The draft report is due to be received at the Environmental Committee on 19 May 2015. It also needs to be considered and approved by PRAP before being sent to the Cabinet. The Alternative Delivery Model Outline Business Case and Cabinet response to the inquiry are due at Cabinet in July 2015.

Cardiff's Integrated Transport Hub

During the 2014/15 Municipal Year, the Committee of Economy and Culture and Environmental Scrutiny Committee considered the development of an Integrated Transport Hub for Cardiff. The Environmental Scrutiny Committee looked at matters pertinent to the city's transport arrangements and the central bus interchange. Economy and Culture Committee considered a

number of reports on the regeneration of the Central Square area, during a period when the Council secured freehold and leasehold control of the Central Square Area. Both committees also participated in a joint Inquiry on the Local Development Plan, which evaluated economic and transportation arrangements for the city moving forward through the Plan period up to 2026.

The Council is required to identify an agreed and deliverable solution for a new bus interchange in time for the closure of the existing bus station on June 2015. It is anticipated that construction of the new facility will begin shortly after existing bus station closes. Interim arrangements for bus provision in Cardiff during the construction period have also been discussed.

At Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee's work programming forum meeting on 3 July 2014 Councillor Phil Bale requested the assistance of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee and Environmental Scrutiny Committee in helping assess options for the location of the bus interchange, and in managing related issues including the short term disruption likely to ensue during the demolition and re-build period. A Cabinet Report from July 2014 on the Central Square Developments affirmed that the Council remains fully committed to delivering a new modern bus interchange, adjacent to Cardiff Central Railway Station and preferably as part of an Integrated Transport Hub.

The two Committees agreed to set up a joint Inquiry into '*Cardiff Central Transport Hub*', and the Members of the Inquiry met stakeholders on Friday 12 December to consider the report '*Central Bus Interchange: Next Steps*', which was on the Cabinet's agenda for Monday 15 December. The comments and observations following this meeting are set out below:

- Members of the Inquiry felt that the plans for a new bus station had been development led rather than based on transport priorities. It appeared that, rather than designing the new facilities around the priorities for the transport network in the city, the Council has prioritised the development of

Central Square and the new bus station had been left to fit around the remaining space.

- Members expressed their concern with regard to the footprint allocated to the new bus interchange, and the capacity this left for an adequate number of bus stands. Members recommended that the designs for street layout and footpath routes surrounding the current bus station footprint were reviewed in order to provide the maximum space possible for the new bus interchange.
- Officers advised that a number of architects would be invited to provide high level designs for the bus station. The Committee recommended that the appointed architects were encouraged to be innovative with their proposals for maximising space for buses within the station; they also hoped to see options such as dynamic stands and layover options explored, allowing for increased bus capacity on a limited footprint.
- Members of the Inquiry felt that plans for the new bus interchange had not been future proofed. They were concerned that this facility would not be able to meet increased demand. Members felt that aspiration should be for a station with excess capacity, with room to meet increased demand rather than a solution that is a significant downsize from current capacity.
- At the first meeting of this Inquiry on Friday 28 November, Members were given assurances that comprehensive engagement had been undertaken with stakeholders in developing the plans for the new bus interchange. They were informed that this detail would be contained within the Cabinet report or appended papers. Having considered the Cabinet papers, Members were disappointed not to find this information included.
- Members questioned whether the station would be preferable north or south of the railway line. They felt that it was fortunate that public preference is for north of the rail lines, and a that preference for the south would have caused problems (including reputational damage) for the Council given that it isn't a truly viable proposition to deliver on.

Cabinet responses to reports titled *Control of Dangerous Dogs in Cardiff* and *Cycling in Cardiff Parks*

❖ Cabinet response to ‘*Control of Dangerous Dogs in Cardiff Report*’

Committee agreed on 5 September 2013 that a Joint Task and Finish Group involving Members from the Environmental Scrutiny Committee and the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee would undertake an inquiry to review the Control of Dangerous Dogs in Cardiff. The Inquiry terms of reference would review the potential impact that the currently developing *Anti-social Behaviour Crime & Policing Bill* would have on managing dangerous dogs in Cardiff and the implications this will have for Cardiff Council.

The draft report was presented to Environmental Scrutiny Committee for consideration on 10 December 2013 and the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee on 8 January 2014. It was endorsed and approved by both Committees. The inquiry reviewed and evaluated:

- Who holds the responsibility for managing dangerous dogs in Cardiff;
- The resources allocated to manage dangerous dogs in Cardiff;
- The current legislation used to manage dangerous dogs in Cardiff;
- The proposed legislation being created to manage dangerous dogs;
- The scale of the dangerous dogs problem in Cardiff;
- The merits of the recently shelved *Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill* compared against the *Anti-social Behaviour Crime & Policing Bill*;
- Best practice for dealing with dangerous dogs;
- Educational and partnership approaches for managing dangerous dogs.

The report made a number of recommendations which included:

- Proactively promoting free micro chipping to dog owners in Cardiff in line with the Welsh Government commitment to compulsory micro chipping;
- Publicly supporting the view that specific measures need to be available for dogs, rather than generic Community Protection Notices, and therefore apply pressure to the Welsh Government to reintroduce the *Control of*

Dogs (Wales) Bill should Home Office legislation not meet this requirement;

- Exploring the extension of public areas and parks where Public Space Protection Orders can be applied in relation to the control of dogs;
- Increase the number of responsible dog ownership community events held in Cardiff, focussed in areas known to have status dog ownership issues. These should be run in a partnership approach to include the police, charities and commercial organisations.

The Cabinet published their response to the report in a paper titled *Cabinet response to a joint report of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee and the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee entitled: "Control of Dangerous Dogs in Cardiff"* on 20 November 2014. From the 20 recommendations made in the report, 18 were accepted and two were partially accepted.

❖ **'Cabinet response to Cycling in Cardiff Parks Report'**

The report of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Inquiry on this subject was presented to Environmental Scrutiny Committee on 13th March 2012 and considered at the Executive Business Meeting on 5th April 2012. The terms of reference for the Inquiry were to explore the Council's approach to cycling in parks by obtaining an understanding of:

- The practicalities of cycling in Cardiff's parks;
- The application of byelaws which prohibit cycling in Cardiff's parks;
- Opposition to cycling in Cardiff's parks.

The report made a number of recommendations including:

- Repealing the current byelaw with respect to cycling in pleasure gardens and open spaces, and then replacing it with a new byelaw that provides a default position of responsible cycling being allowed in parks in Cardiff, except in certain designated areas;

- Consider designating some areas within a number of parks and green spaces in Cardiff as ‘cycle free’;
- Supporting the development of a citywide code of conduct for responsible use of shared pathways through parks and green spaces by all users, and to ensure that this code of conduct is given support so that it is effectively communicated across the city.

The Cabinet published their response to the report in a paper titled “Response to Environmental Scrutiny Committee report: Cycling in Cardiff’s Parks” on 12 June 2014. From the seven recommendations made in the report, five were accepted and two were partially accepted.

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PRE DECISION

Waste Management Strategy and Collection Changes and the Recycling Waste Strategy – Residual Waste Restricting Programme 2015

At the meeting on 7 October 2014 Members had the opportunity to scrutinise and comment on the consultation proposals for the Outline Waste Management Strategy 2015 – 18.

The Committee received a report summarising the Outline Waste Management Strategy. The report provided details of the background against which the Strategy was being drafted. Members were advised that the authority had to comply with a number of pieces of legislation in relation to waste collection performance and recycling. Following the item the main Member comments and observations were:

- That the Committee was very concerned at the very high recycling and compost targets set by the Welsh Government;
- That recycling targets could be achieved in the more affluent areas of Cardiff; however, they were completely unrealistic for the inner city areas.
- Members agreed that in theory the move to a kerbside sort strategy was a good idea; however, Cardiff is far from an ideal place to implement such an approach;
- Members noted that the introduction of smaller bins had managed to increase recycling rates in some local authority areas (for example, Monmouthshire), however, the Committee were not convinced that such a change would necessarily work in Cardiff;
- The Committee were very concerned that approximately a third of Cardiff's households were not effectively engaging in the recycling process;
- Members felt that having one standardised waste collection scheme for Cardiff was not the best way forward;

- Members were concerned that the Council no longer distributed the waste collection schedules to residents on a regular basis. They felt that it would be useful to put something in the *Capital Times* which would let all residents know when they could expect to have their waste collected.

After the Cabinet meeting on 9 October 2014 the draft Strategy was released for consultation. At the time of the October meeting it was anticipated that implementation of the Waste Management Strategy 2015-18 would begin in April 2015.

Recycling Waste Strategy & Residual Waste Restricting Programme 2015

Following on from the October 2014 item titled 'Waste Management Strategy & Collection Changes and the Recycling Waste Strategy – Residual Waste Restricting Programme 2015' the Committee received a further briefing on the 'Recycling Waste Strategy & Residual Waste Restricting Programme 2015' in March 2015. This provided Members with a summary of the Recycling Waste Strategy and Residual Waste Restricting Programme that was due to be considered at Cabinet on the 2nd April 2015. Following the item Committee's main comments and observations were:

- They were encouraged at the way that the Council had worked with 'Grangetown Community Concern' to develop a landlord waste information pack. They saw this as important information to support the management of domestic waste and increase recycling rates.
- They asked for details on the Swansea waste restricting approach which had delivered a 3% increase in their overall MSW recycling rate.
- They asked for confirmation as to who would be responsible for the cost of replacing the new wheelie bins if they were stolen or damaged, i.e. if the liability would fall on the Council or householder.
- The Committee asked for further detail on how the compliance with the new waste collection schedule would be monitored, for example, the role of waste collection operatives, the role of education and enforcement officers and the ICT system which will be used to record the data.

Regional Regulatory Services Collaboration – Joint scrutiny with CASSC

At their meeting on 29 July 2014 Members of the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee and the Environmental Scrutiny Committee met to jointly scrutinise and comment on progress being made to create a shared regulatory service between Bridgend, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Councils. The aim of the meeting was to allow Members the opportunity to make any comments on the report prior to it being presented to Cabinet and full Council.

In July 2013, the Cabinets of Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend Councils received a report proposing that a single shared service be created comprising the Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing functions of each Council under a single management structure. The project was identified as an opportunity for the Councils to create a new and innovative service on a regional basis that could deal with changing customer demands at a time of reduced levels of funding. Funding has been secured from the Welsh Government's Regional Collaboration Fund (RCF) to develop proposals for the project. The RCF aimed to encourage regional collaboration across public services by assisting with upfront costs which could otherwise be a barrier to joint projects.

Since July 2013, detailed work had been undertaken on developing the proposals for the shared Regulatory Service. A report was presented to scrutiny committees in each local authority prior to its consideration by Cabinet in September 2014. Following the meeting the Community and Adult Services and Environmental Scrutiny Committees made the following comment and observations:

- **Recommended Model** - The Committee recognised that the Council had to move in the direction of collaboration and, therefore, accepted that the best approach set out within the report was the 'collaborate and change' model.

- **Host Authority** – Members expressed their reservations about the case presented as a basis for the Vale of Glamorgan Council to be chosen as host authority. It was evident from the Atkins report that no firm decision could be recommended, and consideration of the pros and cons for each authority acting as host did not provide a substantial case for the Vale to be chosen. Members felt that the Cabinet should expect to receive a far more informative and robust case in order to convince them that services should be hosted in the Vale of Glamorgan Council and for Cardiff Council staff to be transferred accordingly.
- Members felt that the projected savings of approximately £1.4m across the three Councils per annum were not substantial enough to justify the significant reductions in the level of regulatory services being provided in Cardiff.
- The Joint Scrutiny Committee expressed its concern regarding the financial projections for costs and savings provided within the draft Cabinet and Atkins reports. They felt that these figures were vaguely indicative at best and relied on numerous assumptions.
- Members had concerns surrounding the harmonisation of various ICT systems used by each Council and felt that implementation issues in this area could undermine the anticipated savings from collaboration.

Transport Strategy (Cardiff Local Transport Plan 2015-2020)

At their meeting on 9 September 2014 Members were provided with the opportunity to scrutinise and comment on the content of the draft Cardiff Local Transport Plan 2015 – 20 prior to it being submitted to Cabinet and Council, and then sent to Welsh Government for approval in January 2015. Following the item Committee's main comments and observations were:

- Committee supported the work undertaken to develop the Plan, and that its structure could be used to push forward Cardiff's transport priorities.

- Members acknowledged that the Plan's format was not designed to provide a detailed summary of the city's major transport projects.
- The Committee asked that new major transport schemes proposed by the Council and Welsh Government were properly managed with a sensitive progression of schemes, proper consultation and reporting phases.
- Members felt that the Council should, in the absence of an adopted Local Development Plan, take every practical step to protect potential future rapid transport alignments. In doing this it should do all it can to protect property owners in and around the potential future routes.
- The Committee noted that it was very important to link the future Community Infrastructure Levy funding into the proposals made in the Local Transport Plan.

Highways and Related Asset Investment Strategy

At their meeting on 9th September 2014, Members received the draft Highway Asset Investment Strategy. This document aimed to define a strategic long term approach to Highway Maintenance funding; the document outlined a series of available long term service and funding options.

Between 2012 and 2015 Welsh Government supported circa £15m investment in the Highway asset via the LGBI (Local Government Borrowing Initiative) which ended in March 2015. A stipulation of being awarded this funding was to provide a 20 year maintenance regime for those elements improved by this investment. Following this investment period highway maintenance budgets reverted to internal Council capital funding. To address this it was felt that adopting a strategic long term approach to highway maintenance funding would enhance Cardiff's economy and improve the daily lives of its citizens. Following the item, the main Member comments and observations were:

- The overall replacement cost of the Highway Asset was somewhere in the region of £2.8 billion to £3 billion. Members were informed that the repair backlog on its own is £320 million, approximately a third of the Council's

gross annual expenditure. Despite receiving an explanation as to how the highway asset can be maintained, Members felt that further clarification was required about the level of investment actually required to maintain Cardiff's highway asset in a steady state.

- The Committee felt that the Council urgently needed to identify alternative funding sources to replace the loss of the Local Government Borrowing Initiative Funding.
- Members felt that there should be a review of street signs, and that signs that are no longer required should be recycled to generate an income.
- The Committee agreed that adopting a steady state funding approach was the best way forward for Cardiff in the current financial climate.
- The Committee was concerned that there was only a small budget to support the maintenance of major assets such as bridges in Cardiff. Members felt that the Council should review how it would deal with such a large failure and how this would be addressed financially.

Cabinet's Draft Budget Proposals and Corporate Plan

On 3 February 2015 Members considered the *Draft Corporate Plan 2015 – 2017* and *2015/16 Draft Budget Proposals*. Following scrutiny of these draft proposals Members made the following comments and observations:

- ❖ **ENV4 – Redesign of cleansing as part of Neighbourhood Services -**
The Committee were concerned at the scale of the £1.607 million saving required from in house modification and developing the Neighbourhood Services project. They felt that the Council should continue to push to increase income from fines for offences such as littering and dog fouling.
- ❖ **ENV5 – Revised Waste Strategy -** The Committee recognised the need for the Council to increase recycling rates and in particular reduce the amount of residual waste produced per household in Cardiff.

- ❖ **ENV6 – Waste Disposal interim contract & Prosiect Gwyrdd -**
Committee were satisfied that the £3.572 million saving produced from disposing of waste at the Viridor Energy From Waste facility was achievable.
- ❖ **ENV7 – Increasing control of the green bag and food liner provision and distribution -** The Committee were broadly supportive of this proposal and acknowledged that greater control of how green bags in Cardiff are distributed needed to be achieved. Members asked that consideration be given to taking a slightly different approach to the distribution of bags in high density property areas as restricting the access to bags in these areas could make the problem worse.
- ❖ **ENV10 – Waste Disposal – Stop Post Sort -** Members understood why the Council had stopped the post sort of materials at Household Waste Recycling Centres. They accepted the argument that the approach presented a risk in terms of achieving the 58% recycling targets.
- ❖ **ENV11 – Remaining two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) with reduced operating days and hours**
 - The Committee were unable to support the proposed £42,000 saving for reducing the opening times for the two Household Waste Recycling Centres.
 - They believed that the disruption caused by varying the hours of the two 'part time' sites would cause uncertainty and create additional costs for the Council.
- ❖ **Line 58 – New Capital Schemes – Restricting Residual Waste – Changing the current 240 litre bins to 140 litre bins -** Members agreed that swapping 240 litre bins for 140 litre bins could be an effective way of getting some people to increase their recycling.
- ❖ **Financial Pressures – Line 5 – Waste Strategy & Collection Changes -**
The Committee welcomed the additional £500,000 allocated to supporting the Waste Strategy changes during 2015/16. They also felt that additional

targeted systems and support should be directed at the low recycling performance areas.

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PERFORMANCE MONITORING

City Analyst – Procurement Update – Written Submission

On 9 September 2014 Members received a report updating Committee on the recent procurement exercise undertaken to engage a suitably qualified and competent contractor to provide Public Analyst and Analytical Services.

Members were advised that the procurement exercise was £72k per annum and was split into two distinct parts: Trading Standards Food Testing (£54k per annum) and Trading Standards Non-Food Testing (£18k per annum). The successful bidders were PASS Ltd and Minton, Treharne & Davis, respectively.

Members acknowledged the financial difficulties facing the Council, but expressed regret at the loss of in house expertise which had served Cardiff and neighbouring authorities so well for many years. The Committee feared that the budget reductions in this area could impact on the Council's ability to manage a food safety breach in future.

Moving Traffic Offences – Business Case

At their meeting on 11 November 2014, Councillor Ramesh Patel (Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Sustainability) and officers from the Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic and Transport Directorate explained the new powers for the enforcement of bus lanes and other moving traffic contraventions. After the presentation and Member questions the Committee raised the following points:

- They welcomed the introduction of powers for the enforcement of bus lanes and other moving traffic contraventions. They felt that this would help improve compliance with road traffic regulations and ultimately reduce traffic congestion at peak commuting times.

- They asked for a detailed breakdown of the revenue and capital costs for implementing the new scheme.

Planning Service Redesign

On 9 December 2014, Members had an opportunity to review the progress and impact of the Planning Service Redesign. The idea of a Planning Service Redesign was first highlighted to the Environmental Scrutiny Committee during an item titled 'Budget Briefing Report for the Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic and Transport Directorate' on 12 November 2013. Concerns were raised about certain aspects of planning performance which were addressed by the Director for Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic and Transport. Following the item the main Member comments and observations were:

- Members noted the progress that the Planning Service had made in a short period of time. This included a major service restructure; a significant increase in planning fee income and continued good performance against the main planning performance indicators.
- They noted that the Welsh Government is currently reviewing the fees that Welsh local authorities can apply to planning work, and commented that this could have a noticeable impact on levels of income generated.
- They commented that a reduction in Planning Service resources and a recent increase in the volume of planning applications could have a significant impact on quality assurance.
- It was noted that there had been a delay in developing new Statutory Planning Guidance for Houses of Multiple Occupation and Flats, and noted the impact that this might have.
- There was a debate on the best way for Members to engage in discussion around allocation of development based funding, for example, s106 funding and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Quarterly Performance Monitoring

❖ **Quarter 2 Environment & Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transport Directorates**

On 11 November 2014 Members considered an item titled *Environment & Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transport Directorates – Performance Report Quarter 2 (July to September) of 2014/15*. After the item Members made the following comments:

Environment Portfolio

- When discussing staff sickness levels for the Environment Directorate there was some concern around the projected outturn figure of 17.40 full time equivalent days per employee compared against the quarter one and two combined figure of 8.06 full time equivalent days. Members were of the opinion that as quarter three traditionally has the highest number of sick days it would be difficult to meet the forecast target when the Council was almost half way to achieving the target at the end of Quarter two.
- Some Members had been told by residents that there was a four week wait for the collection of bulky waste. They felt that this was an excessively long delay and asked officers to urgently look into the matter.
- There was concern as to whether the performance indicators used to measure some aspects of food hygiene were appropriate for the new priority based inspection regime that the Council has implemented. The achieved Quarter two figure was only 23% compared to a target of 50% and a 2013/14 outturn of 86%. The plan of targeting the high risk premises had been driven by financial constraints and meant that the lower risk premises were far less likely to receive an inspection. The Committee were of the view that the Council was measuring itself against a performance indicator which is clearly unattainable and therefore inappropriate.

Transport, Planning & Sustainability Portfolio

- Concern was raised over the window of opportunity to undertake joint pre-decision scrutiny with the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee around the development of the new Cardiff Central Transport Hub.
- Some Members of the Committee were concerned at the current difficulty in getting a Council Planning Enforcement Officer to undertake a property visit for a reported case. Members asked for confirmation of the resources currently available for planning enforcement, and for assurance that these are sufficient for a growing city like Cardiff.

❖ Quarter 3 Environment & Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transport Directorates

On 10 March 2015, Members considered *Environment & Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transport Directorates – Performance Report Quarter 3 (October to December) of 2014/15*. This enabled Members of the Committee to consider a range of current performance indicators relevant to the Environmental Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference. Following the item the main Member comments and observations were:

Environment Portfolio

- **WMT/009(b)** - The Committee were informed that a range of recycling initiatives was due to be delivered in Quarter four which should produce an outturn for the period of above 60%; this increase should be enough to help the Council reach its 52% recycling target for 2014/15. Members asked for a detailed summary of the work undertaken to produce this improvement, i.e. the actions taken, the costs of implementing the work and the savings generated by delivering this work.
- **STS/005(b)** – A Member noted that 'the performance indicator for the percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness' was missed by 4.67% in Quarter

three. It was acknowledged that the target of 90% has been missed since the 2014/15 street cleansing budget reduction.

Transport, Planning & Sustainability Portfolio

- The topic of the new bus station was raised at the meeting. Members were interested in the development process and in particular the interim arrangements which would shape bus travel in Cardiff while the bus station is being built. With this in mind the Committee were keen to undertake ongoing scrutiny of the bus station development.
- The Environmental Scrutiny Committee report titled *Problem & Nuisance Parking in Cardiff* recommended the implementation of the Car Cam system in Cardiff to primarily help reduce problem / dangerous parking in and around schools. The vehicle was purchased in December, however, for a number of reasons it was not operating on the streets. Members asked for an explanation for the delay and set out a timeline for introduction of the new vehicle.
- The base budget in the Quarter two performance report was stated as £29.903m; this rose to £30.018m for Quarter 3 creating an increase of £115,000. The Director for Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic and Transport was unsure of the exact reason for the variance. Members asked if any changes to the based budget (and associated savings) could be highlighted explained in each new quarterly performance report.
- During the meeting Members asked for a progress update on the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Houses of Multiple Occupancy & Flat Conversions.

Environment Directorate relevant to the Transport, Planning & Sustainability Portfolio

- The Committee agreed to add another item on the Energy Prospectus to their work programme before the end of 2015 with the main focus of the scrutiny to review the progress of the main energy capital projects.

- Members believed that the CYD Cymru collective energy switching programme had been very successful. They acknowledged that it had produced worthwhile savings for many people in Cardiff and has gained significant support as over 5,000 had signed up to the scheme. It was mentioned that Welsh Government had asked the Council to roll this out to other parts of Wales.

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BRIEFING INFORMATION

The Future of Horse Management in Cardiff

At their meeting on 8 July 2014 Members were presented with an update on the Council's approach for dealing with stray horses. The item reflected on the progress made since the publication of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee report titled *Stray Horses in Cardiff* (June 2005) and the most recent update of the Stray Horse Strategy.

At the meeting officers representing Regulatory & Supporting Services attended to deliver a presentation, provide a stray horses update and answer Member questions. Following the item the main Member comments and observations were:

- Members acknowledged that the issue of managing stray horses in Cardiff was a challenge and that the current approach was not sustainable in the current financial climate. They were supportive of the new proactive proposal to provide grazing land on licence to Gypsies and Travellers, however, felt that detailed consultation and development of the concept should take place before anything was implemented.
- Members stated that should the Council decide to take the grazing land licence proposal forward then it would be prudent to implement the initial phase as a trial.
- The Committee felt that the Council should approach a number of animal charities to establish if they would be willing to support the cost of chipping and providing a passport for all horses grazing on licenced land. It was suggested that some charities (for example the RSPCA) spend so much time and resource managing the problem that it could be in their interests to pay for the chipping and passport costs of each horse involved with the licenced grazing scheme.

Organic Waste Treatment Procurement

Members received an update on the Organic Waste Treatment Solution procurement at their meeting on the 7th October 2014. Specifically the report commented on the progress made to appoint a preferred bidder for the long-term Cardiff Organics Waste Treatment project; this consists of the provision of food waste, green waste treatment and recycling facilities for Cardiff. The report also considered the requirement for the procurement of an Interim Organic Waste Treatment solution for the period from April 2015 to the Service Commencement Date of Cardiff Organics Waste Treatment project.

Members were pleased with the progress made in procuring a partner for the Organic Waste Treatment Solution. They were particularly happy that the new gate fees would be significantly lower than the existing contract rates for dealing with organic waste.

Energy Prospectus

The meeting on 9 December 2014 provided Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise and comment on the proposals for developing Cardiff's Energy Prospectus. Cabinet Member Councillor Ramesh Patel and officers from the Environment Directorate were invited to attend to give a presentation and to answer Members' questions on the development of the Energy Prospectus. Discussion prompted some questions which were put in a letter to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability, including:

- Members thought that the development of an energy prospectus was a good way to clearly map out Cardiff's local energy generation opportunities and the impact that these projects have upon the city.
 - Is Cardiff doing enough to generate 15% of its energy through renewable sources by 2020?
 - If the Council should nominate energy sustainability / security as an economic priority?

- What stake should the Council take in terms of renewable energy production?
- If the Council needed to document its position on the relationship between risk and reward for evaluating renewable energy projects?
- As an organisation that spends £12m plus VAT per annum on energy is the Council in a position where it has to be proactive in achieving a reliable energy supply?
- Members stated that the Council should look into and review the case for creating an arms length energy production company. They felt that such a company could have the potential to help generate an ongoing income stream for the Council and support the energy security agenda for Cardiff and Wales.

Cardiff Universities Student Community Plan

At the meeting on 14 April 2015, Members of the Committee scrutinised the *Cardiff Student Community Partnership – 2015 to 2018 Action Plan*. The Plan set out a number of key actions to address a range of issues, including improving the quality and quantity of student accommodation across the city, promoting a clean, attractive and sustainable environment, reducing crime against students and encouraging neighbourliness and respect. Following the item, the main Member comments and observations were:

- That the diverse range of projects which the partnership had delivered had been excellent and that these had made a very positive impact on Cardiff's main student areas.
- Members asked for an update on any developments that might have taken place around the creation of a Cardiff student travel card.
- The Committee supported the good educational and communication initiatives being delivered, however, they acknowledged the need to apply enforcement action where necessary.

Improving Scrutiny Project

On 14 April 2015, Members welcomed the cover report and explanation of the *Improving Scrutiny Project*. They were happy to progress the exercise within the timescales suggested in the report. The Committee felt that the exercise should explore a wide range of options for delivering scrutiny in Cardiff; in particular the task group should consider:

- The comparative benefits of formal Committee meetings and task & finish groups. Members were of the view that Committee meetings were a good tool for reviewing and monitoring progress, while the task & finish groups were far better at looking in depth into a subject or problem.
- How best to achieve good agenda and time management, for example, should a time limit be placed on formal Committee meetings.
- That any scrutiny changes needed to reflect the changing political landscape, particularly as budgets are reducing and local authorities appear to be moving towards a commissioning model.
- That the Committee needs to improve how it monitors and reviews the implementation of recommendations.
- That the task & finish exercise needs to reflect and comment on the good work that has been delivered by the scrutiny team.
- That links into non scrutiny Committees needs to be improved; for example, the Audit Committee.

RECOMMENDED FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee receives regular work programme updates at which Members have the opportunity to consider items for inclusion on the work programme, and can also suggest any new issues which may be of interest to the Committee. The following issues are considered as suitable for inclusion in the 2015 - 16 work programme:

DRAFT

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