



County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2000

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2000

CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting TUESDAY, 6 JULY 2021, 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

11 **Correspondence following the Committee Meeting**(Pages 3 - 20)

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Ref: AH/RP/MM/07.21

13 July 2021

Councillor Caro Wild
Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Wild,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 6 July 2021

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you and officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 6 July 2021 for pre-decision scrutiny of the report to Cabinet on the Bus Strategy. The comments and observations made by Members are set out in this letter.

Members note that the report to Cabinet seeks approval for public consultation and engagement to develop a bus strategy for Cardiff. The report is clear that there is no consultation and engagement plan at the moment and that delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning, Transport and Environment, Andrew Gregory, to finalise and implement this.

At the meeting, Members sought to understand how existing and potential bus users would be engaged and consulted with, as it is key that their voices are heard when developing the bus strategy. Members note that conversations have been held with Bus Users Cymru and that you are considering whether there is a need for a specific Cardiff bus users group. Members welcome and support this idea, which would bring parity for bus users with other transport groups, such as cyclists. A Cardiff-specific group would help ensure bus users' voices inform decisions and would help mobilise demand for bus infrastructure. Members highlight the need to involve bus operators in establishing this group, as they know their passengers and

customers and can assist in ensuring the bus user group is representative. A further benefit in establishing this group is that it would help establish links with community leaders and thus help the Council to access hard to reach groups, ensuring their voices are heard and helping to boost their usage of bus services.

Members are clear it is critical that the engagement and consultation process is designed to be accessible and inclusive to all the communities of Cardiff. Thought needs to be given to ensure that all communities with protected characteristics are encouraged and supported to engage and participate to inform a strategy for a bus service that, demographically, many of these communities rely on. Members are surprised and disappointed that this work was not evidenced in the report to Cabinet or in answers to Members questions at Committee. This is a fundamental and basic requirement of all Council consultation. However, given that the engagement and consultation plan is not available yet, Members wish to check retrospectively that it is fit for purpose. Therefore, **Members request** evidence is provided, as part of the papers for Committee, on the accessibility and inclusivity of the engagement and consultation process, when we scrutinise the results of this process and the proposed Bus Strategy.

Members understand the substance of engagement and consultation will focus on the nine 'big moves' detailed in the report to Cabinet. At the meeting, Members explored which of these are within the sole control of the Council. We note that the majority depend on the bus operators, Transport for Wales and Welsh Government for funding and implementation and are not within the remit or control of the Council. Members understand that it is important for the Council to set out a vision and aspirations, for partners to gather around and to demonstrate a joined-up approach, which in itself gives the Council more leverage. However, Members are concerned that the consultation may give the public the impression that the Council is in control of the 'big moves' whereas the only one within our gift is the prioritisation of bus lane infrastructure. Members wonder whether it may be worthwhile being clearer about this and making bus lane infrastructure the front and centre of the bus strategy, as this is an area on which we can deliver.

Members wished to understand the quality of the conversations with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and bus operators regarding the way forward in Cardiff. Members were pleased to hear that conversations are constructive and positive, with the Bus Emergency Scheme² providing the context for this. Members note that, if the landscape moved towards franchising, additional legislation would be required.

Members explored how to encourage and support more people to use buses in Cardiff, discussing journey time, public transport routes, the new bus interchange and school transport.

With regard to journey time, Members recognise the need to reduce journey times and that this is a win/win for bus users and bus operators, as margins improve and can be reinvested into service provision or used to reduce fares. Members note the Council has a clear role to play in supporting this, by installing infrastructure such as bus gates, bus lanes, smart junctions etc.

With regard to public transport routes, Members emphasised the need to have public and active travel routes in place and operational as people move into the new LDP housing sites, so that they inform and shape residents' transport habits from the start. **Member request** information on whether public and active travel routes will be available before/as the new LDP sites become occupied and **also request** information on how residents in the new LDP sites are being told about public and active transport routes in their areas.

During the way forward, Members discussed whether 14 stands in the new bus interchange provide sufficient capacity. Members note the argument that it will be sufficient capacity as there will be hubs to enable orbital routes and change-overs. However, Members are unclear whether all these hubs will be operational when the bus interchange goes live in 2023. In your response to this letter, **Members request** clarification regarding when all the hubs for orbital routes and change-overs will be operational. In addition, Members are unclear whether bus operators have agreed to use the interchange and/ or hubs and understand there is some uncertainty regarding the charges that will apply to bus operators for usage. In your

response to this letter, **Members request** that you clarify what discussion there has been with bus operators regarding the charges that will apply for usage of the interchange and hubs and whether it has been established what the bus companies are going to do regarding using the interchange and hubs.

With regard to school transport, Members note that conversations are ongoing about commercial capacity to provide this service.

Finally, Members thank you for ensuring this report was available for pre-decision scrutiny. Members are clear that they wish to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the further report to Cabinet on the outcome of consultation and on the proposed Bus Strategy for Cardiff.

To recap, this letter contains the following requests:

Requests

1. Evidence is provided, as part of the papers for Committee, on the accessibility and inclusivity of the engagement and consultation process, when we scrutinise the results of this process and the proposed Bus Strategy.
2. Information on whether public and active travel routes will be available before/as the new LDP sites become occupied
3. Information on how residents in the new LDP sites are being told about public and active transport routes in their areas.
4. Clarification regarding when all the hubs for orbital routes and change-overs will be operational.
5. Clarification on what discussion there has been with bus operators regarding the charges that will apply for usage of the interchange and hubs and whether it has been established what the bus companies are going to do regarding using the interchange and hubs.

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

Regards,

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Ramesh Patel' and the second is a cursive signature, likely of the sender.

Councillor Ramesh Patel
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory, Director of Planning, Transport & Environment
- Jason Dixon, Operational Manager,
- Lili Thompson, Cabinet Office
- Imelda Seymour, Director of Planning, Transport & Environment's Office
- Tim Gordon, Head of Communications
- Graham Porter, Members Services
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee.

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Ref: Scrutiny/Env/06.07.2021

Date: 14 July 2021

Councillor Caro Wild
Cabinet Member, Strategic Planning & Transport
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Wild

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 6 July 2021

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee a sincere thank you for sharing the organisation's Active Travel Network plans for pre-decision scrutiny. Please also relay my thanks to the officers who attended the Committee meeting to support this item. Members agreed that I pass on the following observations to inform Cabinet discussion. You will find our requests for further information listed at the end of the letter.

Funding

The Committee notes that the Council is fully committed to developing the Active Travel Map, despite the challenge that funding the routes depends on outside bodies. We are concerned that there is a risk of non-completion of schemes should funding not materialise and are therefore keen to establish what plans are in place to mitigate against this. We note that the Council has set aside £10m within the Capital Programme, that there will be section 106 agreement monies available, and that the Council has a good track record in terms of securing Welsh Government approval of schemes. We are, however, seeking confirmation that £10m will be sufficient Capital funding to ensure the proposed schemes progress.

Consultation

The Committee considers that progress to date to consult on the proposed Active Travel map is disappointing. We note at this point you have used the *Commonplace* tool to inform the proposals and whilst there was a good geographical spread of responses this tool appears to favour those familiar with online lobbying. We consider this risks the over influence of small organised groups. You explained that a 12 week consultation will be launched in due course. You suggested you have a broad plan to engage with hard to reach communities and unresponsive areas, but that it needs more detail and you will be happy to bring it back to this committee for comment. This is particularly disappointing given that the Council would usually consult first. We **request** confirmation of your timelines for commencing consultation and details of how you will ensure that hard to reach groups are consulted, and we request that you return to committee on this matter.

Route Selection

Members note the long list of Active Travel Schemes required to deliver the map and note that the key priority is to create the skeleton of a connected strategic network of routes that prioritises schools. We welcome your offer to work through the proposal in greater detail with members, and **request** that you follow through on this offer.

The Committee enquired why busy routes are often chosen for Active Travel. We note that design and technical possibilities are a factor and once again there are still opportunities for adjustment and change. We once again **request** that Members are a part of ongoing discussions.

Members specifically referred to two of the planned Cycle-routes; the *Maes-y-Coed* route, which we consider too short and does not link 2 routes therefore may not be considered a part of the network; and *Twyn-y-Parc Road* – where we note proposals will impact on householders and there will need to be conversations and compensated facilities to assist residents and the disabled to park outside their homes.

Map detail

The Committee sought clarification as to the characteristics of an Active Travel route, and also interpretation of map detail. We note that:

- Broken lines are aspirational walking routes where technical work is required;
- Solid lines represent an existing route that has been audited using a Welsh Government design guidance tool;
- Walking routes are developed by widening footways and providing more crossing points;
- Existing segregated cycle lanes don't appear to have been included.

We also note that any existing routes older than 5 years have not been included in the audit, the proposals will require finer joining up with school routes, and there is a team in place dedicated to working with schools to address behaviour change around home-school travel routes marked as 'possibilities'.

Underrepresentation

Overall Members considered the Active Travel Map very impressive. However we wish to draw attention to the EIS and the underrepresentation of certain groups. We consider it important that BAME communities are represented, and remind you that elected members can assist in accessing these communities. We note that the plan to mitigate against underrepresentation in use of Active Travel routes is underway and whilst not there yet, work is ongoing to understand the barriers that prevent certain groups using facilities through Next bike.

Finally, Members wish to suggest that green man pedestrian crossings on the Active Travel routes should favour pedestrians over vehicles. We were therefore pleased to hear that settings will be reviewed scheme by scheme, and also across the whole network, to ensure junctions are connected.

Requests following this scrutiny.

- Confirmation of timelines for commencing consultation;
- Details of how you will ensure that hard to reach groups are consulted.
- That you work through the proposed list of Active Travel Schemes required to deliver the map in greater detail with members
- That Members are a part of ongoing discussions on the routes chosen for Active Travel, given that there are still opportunities for adjustment and change.
- That you continue engaging with the Committee as the proposals for Active Travel Routes develop.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the content of this letter.

Regards,



COUNCILLOR RAMESH PATEL

CHAIRPERSON ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc: Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Andrew Gregory, Director for Planning, Transport & Environment

Matthew Price, Team Leader, Transport Vision, Policy & Strategy

Imelda Seymour, Director of Planning, Transport & Environment's Office

Tim Gordon, Head of Communications

Graham Porter, Members Services

Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager

Lili Thompson, Cabinet Office

Ref: AH/RP/MM/07.21

13 July 2021

Councillor Michael Michael,
Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Michael,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 6 July 2021

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you, Councillor Weaver and officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 6 July 2021 to discuss the recent changes in Waste Collections Services and proposed improvements. The comments and observations made by Members are set out in this letter.

Our previous scrutiny of the proposed changes to Waste Collections means Members are aware of the reasons cited for needing to change the service, including the need to improve the service to customers, to collect waste earlier in the day to improve street scene and to become a more efficient and effective service.

Members queried whether the timing of these changes was sensible, given the Covid-19 pandemic and additional pressures this has caused on Council service provision. We note the response that, given key planning and preparation had taken place and, critically, staff had been consulted on proposed changes to shift patterns, everything was in place for service change and it was felt better to go ahead rather than leave staff unsure of their future working patterns.

Members thank officers for providing comprehensive data on collections and for providing an update on what has been achieved. Members note that, apart from missed collections, waste is off the streets earlier every day leading to better street scene. Members also note 50% less overtime is being paid, which is better all-

round for staff and customers, and that the budget not spent will either be re-invested in the recycling service or be put forward as a future saving. Finally, Members note that vehicles are being repaired more swiftly, making the service more efficient.

However, the data provided, coupled with Members' own experiences and feedback from residents in our wards, demonstrates that there have been teething problems, particularly for residents, with missed collections and a poor interface between the digital information and C2C. It was reassuring to see this acknowledged in the briefing provided to Members and to hear officers explain how they proposed to drive improvement further in some of these areas.

In terms of missed collections, Members heard the following:

- That the new digital App makes it easier to report missed collections and that officers felt this may have led to more reports
- That the impact of Covid-19 has increased short-term absences, which are difficult to fill quickly, as training is required before being able to work around the heavy machinery required for waste collections. This has resulted in crews being redirected from garden waste collections, to ensure other waste is collected, affecting garden waste collection rates
- That the national shortage in qualified drivers is affecting service delivery in Cardiff and that the Council is implementing a loader-driver role to provide an in-house solution.
- That there is a new stand-alone collection round for larger communal bins for blocks of flats. This may have caused confusion amongst collection staff who thought they did not have to collect the smaller bins provided for flats. This has been addressed with staff and sensors are to be fitted on the larger bins to inform collection frequency.

Members note the above. In order to test whether the digital App has led to more reports of missed collections, **Members request** a breakdown of the routes used by those reporting missed collections since the new 4-day collection system was introduced i.e. how many reports were made via the App and how many via C2C

and/ or other routes? For comparison, please provide the same information for a similar period in 2019.

With regard to the new collection round for larger communal bins, Members were not aware of this and understand that residents have not been informed of this change. Therefore, **Members recommend** that a letter be sent to each affected household and to the relevant ward councillors, as soon as possible, to inform them of the change in collection service. This will keep them up-to-date with service provision and prevent any concerns these residents may have when they see other waste collection occurring in their area and their bins not being emptied at the same time.

In terms of the interface between the digital information and C2C, Members heard officers acknowledge the need to improve the level of information available to C2C staff, so that residents receive the same information whether they access the Council via the App or C2C. However, Members are aware that there are also issues with reports to C2C not resulting in action being taken to resolve the issue reported. Members own experiences are that problems are reported to C2C but these reports do not result in action being taken. Members are concerned that, if this continues, it will undermine confidence in residents in using C2C. The operation of C2C and its interface with other Council services falls under the remit of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee and I shall be bringing this concern to the attention of its Chair, Councillor Walker, to request that they consider looking into this further. Finally, Members note the aspiration to provide a facility on the App that allows residents to track collection vehicles 'live'. In your response to this letter, **Members request** that you please inform Members how long it will be before this is available to residents.

Members were pleased to hear witnesses acknowledge the need for further improvements for specific waste collections including garden waste, assisted lifts and hygiene waste. With regard to garden waste collections, Members note that there has been increased tonnage overall, because more people are gardening during the pandemic lockdowns, and that tonnage varies weekly. Members also note that garden waste crews have been diverted onto other collections to backfill

short-term absences and ensure these collections take place, but that this results in Friday collections being worse due to the build-up of missed collections across the week.

For hygiene waste collections, Members highlighted routes in some parts of North Cardiff (some parts of Llanishen, Lisvane and Rhiwbina) where collections have not taken for 72 hours after they were due. Members note officers' response that hygiene waste vehicles are having in-cab technology fitted that will optimise routes and provide collection data, which, along with resolution of some glitches in software, should result in a better service.

In terms of Assisted Lifts, Members note the briefing provided, as part of the committee papers, mentions the need to improve these but does not provide any details of how this will be achieved. In the response to this letter, **Members request** that information be provided on the proposed improvement actions to be taken re Assisted Lifts and the timescales for these actions to be implemented.

Members were pleased to hear recognition of the need to improve and co-ordinate cleansing, education and enforcement services. Members note the proposed restructure of these teams will be area-based, focused on dense areas where the teams can respond to concerns raised by residents and ward councillors, with the aim of preventing re-occurrence. Members are aware of issues in some areas where householders are using street bins to dispose of household rubbish; this needs addressing as part of a holistic approach to education, enforcement and cleansing.

During the discussion on the restructure of cleansing, education and enforcement, the Director of Economic Development, Neil Hanratty, commented on proposals to introduce an am and pm shift, with staff then being available to be diverted to pick up missed collections. In our way forward discussion, Members commented that this seemed to be moving the 2-shift system from waste collection crews to cleansing teams. Members wondered first, how long this would be needed given the drive to reduce missed collections and secondly, did this proposal undermine the arguments put forward to move to a single shift system for waste collection

crews. In your response to this letter, **Members request** further information on the rationale for this proposed change.

Finally, Members appreciate and accept your offer to return in the Autumn with a progress update. **Members request** a full update with information provided, in time to go out with our committee papers, on the following:

- Missed collections overall
- Hygiene waste collections
- Assisted Lifts
- Improvement actions taken and proposed to address issues with waste collections.

Members are also clear that they wish to scrutinise the following when these are available for scrutiny:

- Proposed changes to garden waste collections
- Proposed changes to cleansing, education and enforcement services
- Proposed recycling model – noting that 30% recycling currently goes to the Energy from Waste plant due to customer contamination.

Members request that officers keep in touch with Scrutiny Services on the availability of these items and advise of appropriate timings for scrutiny.

To recap, this letter contains the following recommendation and requests:

Recommendation

1. That a letter be sent to each household affected by the change in collection service for larger communal bins at flats, and to the relevant ward councillors, as soon as possible, to inform them of the change in collection service.

Requests

1. A breakdown of the routes used to report missed collections, in 2019 and since the new 4-day collection system was introduced i.e. how many reports were made via the App and how many via C2C and/ or other routes.
2. An answer on how long it will be before the App allows residents to track waste collection vehicles 'live'.

3. The proposed improvement actions to be taken re Assisted Lifts and the timescales for these actions to be implemented.
4. Further information on the rationale for the proposed change to a 2-shift system for cleansing teams and how long it is anticipated this will be needed.
5. That officers keep in touch with Scrutiny Services to advise re timing and availability of the following items for scrutiny: garden waste collection changes; restructure of cleansing, education and enforcement teams; and the proposed recycling model.
6. That a full update is provided in time to go out with committee papers for the meeting in Autumn, to include information on: missed collections overall; hygiene waste collections; assisted lifts; improvement actions taken and proposed to address issues with waste collections.

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

Regards,



Councillor Ramesh Patel
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Cllr Chris Weaver, Cabinet Member – Finance, Modernisation & Performance
- Paul Orders, Chief Executive
- Neil Hanratty, Director of Economic Development
- Matt Wakelam, Assistant Director Street Scene
- Graham Harris, Head of Recycling & Neighbourhood Services
- Heather Warren, Cabinet Office
- Alison Taylor, Cabinet Office
- Rhian Jones, Chief Executive's Office
- Clair James, Director of Economic Development's Office
- Tim Gordon, Head of Communications
- Graham Porter, Members Services
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee.
- Cllr David Walker, Chair Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

My Ref: SPHTT/100388
Your Ref: CM46117

Date: 29th July 2021



Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088
www.caerdydd.gov.uk
County Hall
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2087
www.cardiff.gov.uk

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

Dear Cllr Patel

Environmental Scrutiny Committee 06.07.21: Bus Strategy

Thank you for your letter of the 13th July 2021, following the Environmental Scrutiny meeting held on the 6th July 2020. Please find below information as requested.

1. Evidence is provided, as part of the papers for Committee, on the accessibility and inclusivity of the engagement and consultation process, when we scrutinise the results of this process and the proposed Bus Strategy.

Response –

Officers will work with Cardiff Research centre to ensure that the consultation will be accessible to all communities of Cardiff, including those with protected characteristics. We are particularly interested in capturing the views of bus users and will work closely with bus operators and Bus Users Cymru to do this.

2. Information on whether public and active travel routes will be available before/as the new LDP sites become occupied

Response –

Public transport and Active Travel routes in the new LDP sites are dependent on section 106 developer contributions, and these are triggered as the developments are built out. Whilst ideally these would be put in place as soon as the development commenced the s106 agreements are a process of negotiation between the developer and officers, and compromise solutions must be arrived at.

3. Information on how residents in the new LDP sites are being told about public and active transport routes in their areas.

Response –

The developers are obliged to have travel plans in place for the developments, which include provision of information packs concerning public transport and Active Travel, and usually an offer of free or discounted public transport trips for a defined period. These are provided to residents as they move into the developments.

4. Clarification regarding when all the hubs for orbital routes and change-overs will be operational.

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.



Response –

The city centre stops near to the new Central Interchange will continue to be available for services which will not use the Interchange. The intention is that they will be integrated with the Interchange in terms of electronic information and wayfinding. The Central Interchange will be operated by TfW, who will be responsible for stand allocation and charging policy. There will be no charges for use of on-street stops, neither is it intended that operators will be charged for using any of the hubs set up by the Council at Waungron, UHW or Cardiff East Park and Ride. It is expected that (subject to Planning Approval) the Waungron Interchange will be operational by early 2023, however given the current Covid situation it is not possible to say when a UHW Interchange might be operational.

5. Clarification on what discussion there has been with bus operators regarding the charges that will apply for usage of the interchange and hubs and whether it has been established what the bus companies are going to do regarding using the interchange and hubs.

Response -

Under the current regulatory regime it is not possible to require commercially operated bus services to use these, or any other facilities, but the Council will work with operators and TfW to ensure that maximum benefit for all partners and the public is derived from the use of these facilities.

I trust the above is of assistance. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or my officers direct.

Yours Sincerely



Cynghorydd / Councillor Caro Wild
Aelod Cabinet dros Gynllunio Strategol a Thrafnidiaeth
Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport