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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting THURSDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2022, 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

10 **Correspondence Following the Committee Meeting** (Pages 3 - 12)

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Ref: Scrutiny/Env/08/12/2022

Date: 14 December 2022



Councillor Wild

Cabinet Member, Climate Change

Councillor Dan De'Ath

Cabinet Member, Transport & Strategic Planning

Dear Councillors Wild and De'Ath

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 8 December 2022

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee a sincere thank you for attending Committee to facilitate our consideration of the **Local Air Quality Monitoring Report**. Please also relay our thanks to the officers who attended the Committee meeting to support this item. Members agreed that I pass on the following observations. You will find our recommendations and requests, listed at the end of the letter.

Castle Street

Members noted that the report contained no specific information regarding the proposed options to address the long term issue of the air quality in Castle Street. Officers confirmed that assessment and modelling work is ongoing and any 'displacement' being taken into consideration. They also confirmed that a report will be considered by Cabinet early in 2023

Electric Taxis

The Committee noted that five disabled access electric taxis had been purchased with a Welsh Government grant, and further information regarding the locations and the success of the vehicles was requested. Officers were aware that there were issues with the scheme and that feedback from drivers indicates that leasing costs are high and that the lack of charging infrastructure is also a negative point. Officers also stated that Welsh Government had set up a task and finish group with key stakeholder to look at this issue regionally/nationally.

Particulate matter

The inclusion of data in relation to particulate matter was welcomed by members who asked if there were plans to make the data publicly available. Officers stated that they were working with contractors to ensure the validity and accuracy of the data before making 'real -time' data available, although they are seeking to make regular reports (monthly and/or quarterly) available on the Shared Regulatory Service website and the Cardiff Council website. This was seen as a positive move by the committee, who are looking forward to seeing the regular reports.

School Streets Project

In relation to the temporary closure of roads surrounding schools, Members asked if the impact in relation to children with disabilities had been taken into account in the decision-making process. The Cabinet Member was not aware but offered to seek clarification from Transport officers.

The committee also asked if schools not included in the School Streets project were being monitored. Officers confirmed that they were and that details were contained in the full report. They also noted that the installation of 'green walls' to improve air quality was being undertaken.

Members asked if the findings of the project are fed back to the schools and parents so that they can see the impact? Officers noted that they are looking to take forward with schools who will undertake the monitoring themselves

Roads

The Committee asked if other roads/streets have been identified as having air quality levels approaching the maximum permitted levels and what is /will be done to address them. Officers stated that following the resolution of Castle Street a city-wide action plan will be developed that will look at high risk streets should Welsh Government introduce lower values

For ease of reference, the requests detailed in this letter are:

- Further information on the success/impact and location of the five electric taxis purchased with the Welsh Government grant.
- Further details in relation to the impact of children with disabilities in access school when temporary road closures are in place.

No formal recommendations were made.

Once again thank you once more for attending Committee and for considering our comments and recommendations.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Owen Jones

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc: Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Andrew Gregory, Director for Planning, Transport & Environment

Helen Picton, Head of Shared Regulatory Services

Jason Bale, SRS, Operational Manager

Cllr Adrian Robson, Group Leader, Conservatives

Cllr Andrea Gibson, Group Leader, Common Ground

Cllr Rhys Taylor, Group Leader, Liberal Democrats

Chris Pyke, Audit Manager

Tim Gordon, Head of Communications and External Relations

Alison Taylor, Cabinet Support Officer

Jenny Goss, Cabinet Support Officer

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Date: 14 December 2022

Councillor Wild

Cabinet Member, Climate Change



Dear Councillor Wild

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 8 December 2022

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee a sincere thank you for attending Committee to facilitate our consideration of the **One Planet Cardiff**. Please also relay our thanks to the officers who attended the Committee meeting to support this item. Please be aware that I wrote to a number of interested and expert agencies and organisations asking for their comments and observations on the One Planet Cardiff Annual review which were referred to during the meeting and which I have attached for your information and consideration. Members agreed that I pass on the following observations. You will find our recommendations and requests, listed at the end of the letter. We have provided comments in each of the new activity areas used in the reporting framework.

Buildings

It was noted that there are some large developments being proposed, i.e. the replacement of a cycle track with a velodrome and a new conference centre to replace an existing one. Members commented that the production and use of concrete produces significant Carbon emissions and therefore, are carbon emissions taken into consideration in 'new' proposals and has retrofit /upgrading existing facilities been considered in a effort to minimise emissions?

Members asked why only one 'net zero' school was being built when we need to do significantly more to be carbon zero by 2030. Officers responded by clarifying that building a net zero school is more costly and therefore it was being used as a 'path finder' project to inform future developments, and to

resolve issues such as storage of energy from solar panels during the summer when the school is closed for a long period. It was also noted that Strategic Estates are looking at a plan to retrofit solar panels where appropriate and that as this technology is evolving quickly and some buildings may need site specific solutions.

The scale of the problem was also highlighted in an observation from the Welsh Government Energy Service and Local Partnership that:

*Cardiff Council has in the region of 240 buildings and the ambition is that these are net zero by 2030. Break this down and that is **only 11 days of effort per building** to commission, procure and install energy efficiency measures which will be a multi million pound programme.'*

The energy efficiency of some new developments was questioned and the response from officers clarified that these will have been approved historically and that the dialogue with developers is changing to reflect emerging needs and that Welsh Government will be expecting new developments to be near carbon zero. The need for Supplementary Planning Guidance to support the work being undertaken to achieve carbon zero was also highlighted. You also commented that the timing is right to raise this with the ongoing development of the RLDP and the preferred strategy being presented to Cabinet in January.

Mobility

Members asked for clarification regarding HR policies in relation to use of cars and officers stated that possibly demonstrating why walking/cycling/public transport were not viable solutions, although a through review is being undertaken to better understand the issues and the need in relation to Equality Impact Assessments.

The Committee asked for further information about the City Car Club, and were informed that the service had been recently recommissioned and that a wider regional network/service is being explored as are potential links to the Councils 'grey fleet' instead of pool cars based at Council buildings. It was

also noted that there are incentives to use public transport, and these are currently being reviewed.

The lack of a public electric vehicle charging infrastructure was also commented on by members. Officers stated that grants were available to the public to fit charging points on their garage/drive and that a programme is being developed to deliver 24 chargers in 12 areas across the region and work to identify locations is being undertaken, but 'destinations' are being considered.

Supply Chain & Procurement

The committee heard that this area of work is the most challenging producing 80% of the council's operational carbon impact. Members asked if "carbon emissions" will have a greater weighting than 'cost' in future tendering processes. Officers responded that carbon emissions will become an evaluation factor however they noted that the supply chain is not ready for large scale changes, but the council is working with suppliers to prepare them for these changes.

Problems in relation to supply of many items, due to demand or global issues, was noted. Officers informed members that Welsh Government are aware of supply issues facing all local authorities and are investigation 'national procurement to create greater buying power.

Recycling & Waste

The committee asked about the Cardiff Circular Economy Network project and how impact of the circular economy will be measured. Officers commented that this was subject to complex calculations, but was needed the public to 'buy the right things' initially, items that can be reused or repaired.

Members also asked what was being done in relation to single use plastic. Officers responded that the recycling strategy for Cardiff that was recently approved, does away with a significant number of the 'green bags' previously

used. They also noted that the Climate Emergency Board, will share good practice examples across organisations.

Renewable Energy

The Committee noted that should members of the public wish to investigate the installation of solar panels that it is not easy to find appropriate information. It also noted that in some areas of the city that it may not be possible to install them due to them being in designated conservation areas of the city, highlighting a potential conflict in policy.

Green Infrastructure & Adaptation

The Committee notes the declaration of the climate emergency by the Council in 2018 and the development and publication of the One Planet Cardiff strategy as a response in 2021. However, a nature emergency was also declared in 2021 and members asked what is being done to preserve the current biodiversity in the city. Officers stated that there are links and a lot was being done in relation to flood defences, Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS) and Coed Caerdydd, however, a decision was made to keep the two issues separate, despite them being linked, as carbon reduction is a complex issue.

Members asked if there was a mechanism in place to purchase land in order to plant more trees. Officers stated that the objective of Coed Caerdydd is the planting of trees on Council owned land, however, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board have offered land at the University of Wales Hospital site and stated they will also maintain stewardship of any trees planted. Officers also confirmed that there is insufficient land in Council ownership to meet the target of increasing the City's tree canopy by 25%.

Food

The Committee made no specific comments about Food, although please note the comments received from Sustainable Food, endorsed by the Committee.

Behaviour Change & Engagement

Members acknowledged that there is a significant challenge in addressing behaviour change in the public, officers cited that it can be achieved and gave smoking in public places as an example. They also stated that Welsh Government is developing a National Strategy that will pick a topic at a time to address, and that their overall strategy is to make the easiest choice the right choice, although acknowledging the current economic climate makes difficult choices even more difficult.

Reference was also made by the Committee to local authority climate plan scorecards [Cardiff Council Climate Plan Scorecards | Council Climate Scorecards](#) and the low score achieved by Cardiff in relation to 'Diversity and Inclusion' (0/5), although the average across all the plans scored in England and Wales is 1/5. However, it did score better in relation to 'Community, Engagement & Communications' (8/9), where the average score was 5/9

For ease of reference, the requests detailed in this letter are:

- Are carbon emissions taken into consideration in 'new' proposals and has retrofit /upgrading existing facilities been considered in an effort to minimise emissions?

No formal recommendations were made

Once again thank you once more for attending Committee and for considering our comments and recommendations.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Owen Jones

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc: Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Andrew Gregory, Director for Planning, Transport & Environment

Gareth Harcombe, Commercial Manager for Energy and Sustainability

Cllr Adrian Robson, Group Leader, Conservatives

Cllr Andrea Gibson, Group Leader, Common Ground

Cllr Rhys Taylor, Group Leader, Liberal Democrats

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