

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 OCTOBER 2018

Present: Councillor Patel(Chairperson)
Councillors Derbyshire, Owen Jones, Jackie Parry, Owen, Wong
and Wood

31 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Hill-John, Lancaster, Michael and Wild.

32 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

33 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2018 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

34 : PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE - BUDGET BRIEFING

The Committee received a report providing a budget briefing for the Planning, Transport and Environment Directorate, including a progress update on how the Directorate is performing against its allocated budget and savings agreed for 2018/19; any financial pressures facing the Directorate; the scale of the proposed budget savings facing the Directorate in 2019/20; and the approach being taken to identify budget savings for 2019/20 and beyond.

The Directorate is responsible for managing 1,116 FTE staff who deliver a broad range of services. An overview of the services delivered and a summary of the expenditure and income for the services provided by the Directorate for 2017/18 was set out in the report.

Members were advised that the Environmental Scrutiny Committee considered the budget proposals for the Directorate on 14 February 2018. Proposed savings of £1.838 million would be put forward. A breakdown of those savings was set out in Table 2 in the report. In addition to the proposed savings, the budget setting process for 2018/19 included provision for financial pressures and financial resilience mechanism funding. The proposed savings of £1.838 million, financial pressures bid of £523,000 and financial resilience mechanism bid of £2.102 million were accepted at Budget Council on 22 February 2018.

The Month 4 Budget Monitoring report presented to Cabinet on 20 September 2018 highlighted a forecast overspend for the Directorate of £1.424 million for the year. Officers from the Directorate were asked to provide an update on the budget forecast for 2018/19; progress against achieving the 2018/19 budget savings; projected savings targets for 2019/20 and future years; and the process being followed to identify how savings will be achieved.

The Chairperson welcomed Andrew Gregory, Director of Planning, Transportation and Environment. The Director was invited to make a brief statement. Members were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the report. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members noted that Waste Management was responsible for a large part of the Directorate's overspend. Members asked whether the £1.4 million figure was after the contingency from the financial resilience mechanism had been taken into account. The Director stated that the figure was prior to the financial resilience mechanism being applied.
- Members asked for examples of any measures taken to improve attendance. Members were advised that the management of sickness is being carried out effectively and this can be evidenced. Managing long-term sickness is a complex issue in the Waste Management service area and the age of the workforce and the working environment must be considered. The Directorate is looking at the underlying issues and identifying individuals. A systematic corporate response is required.
- The Director confirmed that a review of the Waste Management service is being undertaken. There are 6 or 7 strands to the review and a report will be brought forward in due course. The review is already providing more robust data.
- The Committee asked how the Directorate intends to meet its £18 million budget savings target if it is already overspent this year. Members considered that sickness absence was identified as a problematic issue many years ago. Budgets were increasingly tight and the Directorate is likely to struggle to find savings and therefore a plan to address sickness absence is needed.
- Members noted the £322k overspend in Corporate Transport Services (CTS). The Environmental Scrutiny Committee identified that fleet vehicles were underused a number of years ago and the Committee was advised at the time that the authority was locked into contracts. Members asked for the Director to comment. The Director stated that a new management team, including a new Assistant Director, was in place. A fundamental review was taking place and this would form the basis of an action plan.
- Members asked the Director to comment on the lack of information regarding waste flows. The Director stated that this is measured at some processing points, such as by Viridor. At the MRF and HWRC it is not being measured. Tonnages are recorded but the paper-based system was not managed in terms of its accuracy. There was an urgent need to understand this data.
- Members asked how accurate the recycling figures provided to the Welsh Government were and whether the Welsh Government have verified the Council's waste collection figures. The Director stated that the figure provided to the Welsh Government represents the overall target for

recycling. There was a delay in gathering the information provided to Welsh Government and the authority was fined as a result. Whilst the global recycling figure may be known, there was still a need to understand the data.

- The Director was asked to comment on the income targets and the progression of commercial waste collection services. The Director stated that income from commercial waste collections service is growing, but growth is not as strong as anticipated.
- Members asked if the overspend position was likely to improve or get worse. The Director stated that the Month 6 position was worrying. An additional £500k expenditure had been incurred relating to the HWRC fraud case, and this is likely to increase to £700k to £800k by the end of the year.
- Members noted a £489k underspend in Highways. Members asked how much was drawn down from the parking reserve and what those funds were allocated for. The Director stated that approximately £400k had been drawn down from the parking reserve and it was spent on highways projects.
- Members asked for more information on the overpayments made to staff. The Director advised that a 'dip sample' indicated that a number of small overpayments were made on a number of occasions.
- Responding to a question regarding the progress of digitalisation in the Directorate, Members were advised that the roll out of route optimisation software was taking longer than planned to implement. There was also an urgent need to bring in software that will provide clear systemic data in CTS.
- Members asked whether the financial pressures relating to the resale markets for recyclables was likely to continue and what work was being undertaken to mitigate any risks. The Committee was advised that the Waste Strategy was being reviewed due to the volatility in the markets. Initiatives will be required to achieve a recycling target of 64%. Consideration is being given to changing the way in which waste is collected. This will feed into the review of the Waste Strategy.
- A Member asked the Director to comment on the Directorate's contingency planning in relation to 'Brexit'. The Director stated that the Directorate's primary focus was on budget, productivity, data and structures.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson write to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments.

35 : CARDIFF CYCLING PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received a report providing an update on the ongoing development of Cardiff's cycling programme. Members were asked to consider: why cycling is

important; current and projected trends; future development; infrastructure plans; partnership working; cycling challenges in Cardiff; and cycling related head lining actions in the Planning, Transport and Environment Directorate Delivery Plan 2018/19.

Members were advised that cycling is considered to be an important tool for managing the future growth of the city. The proportion of residents travelling to work by bike in 2017 was 16.5%, compared to 51.6% who travel by car. The proportion of residents travelling to work by bike has doubled since 2005. The Cardiff Bike Life 2018 survey indicated that 26% of Cardiff residents that do not currently cycle would like to and the Council believes that these residents would cycle if conditions for cycling could be improved.

Cardiff's population is expected to grow by 79,918 between 2006 and 2026 and the number of jobs in the city is expected to grow by 40,000. This means that the number of travel journeys will increase by 14%. In order to help meet this growth in demand and manage travel the Council has set a target of 50% of all trips to be made by sustainable modes by 2026. This objective is set out in the Local Development Plan as an essential tool to accommodate the levels of growth predicted in the city.

To help achieve these targets the Council hopes to double the number of cycle trips by 2026. This means that the network must be able to accommodate an additional 38,000 cycle trips every day. The Council has identified a number of infrastructure priorities to deliver these ambitions. A summary of each was set out the report.

The Chairperson welcomed Andrew Gregory Director and Matt Price, Section Leader, Transport Vision, Policy and Strategy. The Director made a brief statement. Matt Price was invited to deliver a presentation.

The Committee was invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members considered that it was often difficult to superimpose new cycling infrastructure onto existing roads. Members asked why, given these difficulties, there was no provision for cycling on the new Eastern Bay Link Road. The Director stated that the Eastern Bay Link Road was designed 4 or 5 years ago, prior to the publication of revised guidance. If the scheme was designed today then there would be an absolute expectation that cycling provision would be included. Members were surprised that the scheme was not redesigned. Officers advised that best practice is to provide cycle routes new to where people live. However, the Eastern Bay Link Road does include a shared route cyclists and pedestrians.
- Members asked where the growth in cycling journeys has come from. Officers stated that their impression was that the growth in cycling has come from car and bus travel but they would need to consult with colleagues to be certain. Members considered that some clarity on this issue was important as this information would be used to inform future decisions.

- A Member raised concerns that about the lack of a cycling superhighway in the northern suburbs, particularly in the Manor Way/North Road corridor. The Director stated that the consideration is being given to primary routes and secondary routes. The cost of providing a light segregated scheme is half that of a cycling superhighway. A light scheme is being progressed in Maes-y-Coed Road and the Taff Trail will also be upgraded.
- Officers were asked to provide a timeline for the Newport Road scheme. The Director indicated that funding was in place for part of the route and it was intended that as much as possible be delivered within the next 2½ years, starting in the City Centre and extending outwards. Works in the City Centre needs to be phased in order to minimise its impact on the City.
- In terms of the secondary routes, Members asked whether these would benefit from the implementation of new signage, particularly where they cross main routes, etc. Officers stated that if new infrastructure is provided then there is still a need to enable people to overcome whatever barriers there are that are preventing them using these routes. Traffic calming measures and clear signage will be key to this.
- Officers stated that network coverage will increase a opportunities present themselves. The network map illustrates the network at the start of the process and layers will be added building up greater density.
- Members asked what the current spend per head was on cycling provision and where the projected spend per head needed to be. Officers stated that spend was currently about £4 per head. The cycling lobby group is seeking £20 per head. The Council has pledged £6 million of 3 years for cycling superhighway provision. The network as a whole will require significant investment; in the region of £60 million.
- Officers were asked to explain the rationale and the criteria for developing the first cycling superhighway in Senghennydd Road. Officers stated that Senghennydd Road provided an opportunity in order to develop the first phase quickly. Cathays Terrace connects Stuttgart Strasse and Cathays Terrace in was the most obvious route in terms of practicality and location. The route would also provide people with an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the concept. Members were advised that evidence suggested that where cycling superhighways are developed local shops can see up to 15% growth in trade.
- Members asked whether cycling restrictions in parts of the city would be lifted, e.g. Queen Street. The Director stated that there would be different conditions in different areas and a large number of interests will need to be considered. A key element in the cycling network would be a segregated cycle loop around the City Centre.
- Members asked whether there was a budget allocation for cycle path maintenance. Officers confirmed that while capital funding has been

secured for the provision of cycling infrastructure, there is no separate budget for cycle path maintenance.

- Officers stated that they are on track to achieve the rollout of the 20mph scheme.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson write to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments.

36 : CORRESPONDENCE - VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update on correspondence received.

The Committee discussed PSPO consultation and the public interest in the subject demonstrated by the large number of responses received. The Committee considered that a special meeting should be held to scrutinise the matter. The Principal Scrutiny Officer was asked to look into potential dates. Members also discussed inviting ward members and members of the public to the meeting.

AGREED – That a special meeting of the Committee be arranged to scrutinise the PSPO consultation exercise.

37 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were presented.

38 : CLOSE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Environment Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 6 November 2018.

The meeting terminated at 7.00 pm