

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 NOVEMBER 2021

Present: Councillor Patel(Chairperson)
Councillors Derbyshire, Owen Jones, Lancaster, Parkhill, Owen,
Sandrey and Wong

26 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Parry.

27 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Owen Jones and Sandrey declared personal interests as Non-Executive Directors of Cardiff Bus.

28 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

29 : LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT - CARDIFF COUNCIL AIR QUALITY ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2021

Members were advised that they have the opportunity to consider and provide comment on the report to Cabinet regarding Cardiff Council's Local Air Quality Annual Progress Report, which is scheduled to be presented to Cabinet at their meeting on 18 November 2021.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Michael Michael, Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and Environment; Cllr Susan Elsmore, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing; Andrew Gregory – Director of Planning, Transport & Environment and Jason Bale – Programme Manager - Clean Air Cardiff to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited Cabinet Members and Officers to make statements, after which Members were invited to ask questions and make comments/observations on the information contained in their papers.

Member asked about the air quality in Castle Street since its reopening and Officers explained that in agreement with Welsh Government this would be looked at on a quarterly basis and measures implemented if needed.

Members referred to the retrofit of Electric Buses and asked for an update on charging points. Officers explained that the infrastructure was in place at the Sloper Road depot, where the buses would be charged overnight and would last for the whole of the following day.

A discussion took place around Electric Vehicles and the infrastructure needed to support the growing use of them. Members noted that the difficulty in installing charging points in certain areas such as in terraced streets and considered that

issues such as these needed to be resolved in order for Electric Vehicle use to increase significantly. The Cabinet Member explained that technology was changing rapidly, and it was important to take a measured approach, to not invest in technology that would soon be out of date, and to ensure that the approach taken around infrastructure was sustainable. However, there are and would continue to be charging points in car parks around the City.

Members made reference to 'Next Bike' and were interested to know whether, prior to the recent issues of vandalism and theft, the scheme had been successful. Officers considered the scheme was a success in terms of its ridership compared to other cities. Members were keen to see data on whether the scheme had decreased car use and what impact it had had on bus use during the scheme and since the suspension of the scheme.

Members welcomed the pilot project and were pleased to note that 50 extra Air Quality Monitors would be available. Members requested that these be installed outside schools that have no Active Travel Plans in place. Officers agreed that this would be a good idea.

Referring to the Schools Street Project, Members wondered if the roads around the schools that been temporarily closed, had actually displaced traffic and the resulting air pollution to other areas. Officers did not have the data to confirm this.

Members asked how Cardiff compared to other Cities in terms of levels of air pollution. The Cabinet Member referred to the Greener Cities Report whereby Cardiff is cited as the third greenest City. Members asked to see the report and were interested to see how Cardiff compared to the other Core Cities.

Members asked about the impact on air quality of the Castle Street closure and the resulting displacement of traffic to the surrounding streets. Officers advised that a detailed analysis had been undertaken on this which had informed the decision to re-open Castle Street. Members asked to see this detailed analysis.

Discussing TelRam data, Members considered that this data could assist the Council when it undertakes reviews such as Castle Street air quality monitoring going forward.

Members queried the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide recorded at the non-automatic monitoring sites in Cardiff. Officers stated that these levels were due to the pandemic and restrictions being in place meaning there were fewer cars on the road. Officers added that the October and November data had not yet been included in the figures.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee to convey any comments, observations and recommendations made during the way forward.

30 : SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE APPROVAL BODY (SAB) - ADOPTION AND FUTURE MAINTENANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE (SUDS) FEATURES

Members were advised that this item provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider and provide comment on the draft report to Cabinet regarding the Council's responsibility as the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body for the Adoption and future maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems Features which is due to be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 18 November 2021.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Michael Michael, Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and Environment and Andrew Gregory – Director of Planning, Transport & Environment to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member and Officer to make statements, after which Members were invited to ask questions and make comments/observations on the information contained in their papers.

Members were concerned over whether there were enough resources for the SuDS scheme going forward. Officers agreed that the service area would need to grow and be developed as schemes progress; it would expand in line with demand and eventually there would be a Street Scene SuDS Maintenance Team, with apprenticeships and in house training. Members expressed concerns over the timescale involved with growing a team and developing apprenticeships with such a fast-moving scheme.

Members wondered whether it would be possible to enforce maintenance of SuDS features on older developments. Officers explained that the legislation only related to new developments, but it was now a key priority for developers and the Council has powers to refuse adoption if the SuDS are not up to the required standards.

Members referred to the Developer contributions and asked if these would be ringfenced. Officers explained that the contribution would be specifically for the maintenance of the SuDS at that development site.

Members asked about smaller Developments and Officers explained that where they work with smaller Developers, they offer advice, a pre-application service and can carry out inspections. They have saved smaller Developers lots of money by working with them and have received lots of positive feedback.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee to convey any comments, observations and recommendations made during the way forward.

31 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Members were advised that this item asks the Committee to consider and approve the draft Terms of Reference and approach for the Joint Task and Finish Group's inquiry into the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Strategic Options.

All five Scrutiny Committees had received a copy of this to note and it was brought to Committee for Approval.

RESOLVED: To agree the approach for the RLDP Joint Task and Finish Group inquiry into the Strategic Options and approve the draft Terms of Reference.

32 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

33 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next Environment Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 7 December 2021.

34 : CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

The meeting terminated at 6.05 pm