

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2022

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

62 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Lancaster.

63 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

64 : EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded during consideration of the following item as it contains information of the kind described in paragraphs 14 and 21 of parts 4 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

65 : COASTAL RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME - FULL BUSINESS CASE & AWARD OF THE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT

Members received a confidential report and briefing regarding the Coastal Risk Management Programme.

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.

66 : THE CARDIFF ITS STRATEGY

Members received a report to aid scrutiny of the draft Cabinet report entitled 'Cardiff Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Strategy'. Members were advised that the strategy would be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 10 March 2022. Cabinet would be asked to consider approval of the following:

- Undertaking public consultation and engagement on the draft Cardiff ITS Strategy to inform its final framework.
- Approve the preparation for an outline business case which will include options for modernising the Council's Urban Traffic Control systems.
- Delegate authority to the Director of Planning, Transport and Environment, subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make minor amendments to, determine and approve the final form and content of the draft ITS Strategy and consultation questionnaire.

Members were advised that transport systems around the world are being transformed through the use of digital technology. From 2018 to 2020, the Council commissioned studies and published key documents supporting the need for investment in ITS. The key conclusions identified that transformational improvements are needed to ensure that the ITS provision in Cardiff can effectively deliver the City's ambitions.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Caro Wild, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport and officers from Strategic Planning and Environment Service area. The Cabinet Member was invited to make a brief statement. Members were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the topic. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members asked for the projected total cost of the implementation of the strategy and what sources of funding were available to deliver and maintain the service. Members were advised that there is no costed programme for the strategy. However, the various elements have a business case. For example, the Control Centre has options for its location, size, working with partners and the revenue needed to support those options, including Section 106 and Welsh Government grant funding. There were also opportunities to grant licences for use of the control room data that could bring in revenue.
- Members raised concerns that the total cost of the project was unknown. Members considered that not knowing the total cost of the project would jeopardise access to sources of funding. The Cabinet Member stated that at this stage the Cabinet was looking to undertake a consultation exercise on the ideas in the strategy before any business cases for the elements of the programme have been finalised. There is a need to consult the public on the wider ideas and engage with partners before predetermining business cases.
- Members asked whether live counting data from citizens could be incorporated into the Council's ITS in order to better understand traffic levels that genuinely affect communities. Officers accepted that there are new technologies that give citizens the ability to participate and there will be opportunities. However, the data produced at present is not accurate but there was potential that the technology could provide an accurate level of feedback in the future. It was accepted that there is some accurate journey time, speed, and traffic flow data available for a number of sites and the Council would look to make maximum use of that and other data sources.
- Members asked whether the ITS network was intended to support the move towards sustainable transport. Officers stated that ITS is focussed on making the network efficient for general traffic, including buses. It doesn't currently give priority to buses but there is an intention to do that as part of the smart corridor pilot. There is also an intention to establish whether ITS will improve the efficiency of signalling for pedestrian and cyclists.
- Members questioned how ITS would differ from other platforms in terms of its usefulness to residents. Officers advised a platform such as Google Maps allows users to input a starting location and a destination and calculates a journey time and distance depending on the mode of travel. It doesn't provide any information

regarding alternative modes of transport, carbon footprint and health benefits. The Council in partnership with Transport for Wales is investigating the possibility of providing an all-encompassing app that would allow people to plan their journeys better and allow for promotion of sustainable transport alternatives.

- Members considered that encouraging people to use sustainable transport options is reliant on those core services being available. Officers stated that 3,300 responses were received on the Bus Strategy consultation and the responses are being considered. The need for wider bus services is part of that consideration. The Welsh Government is also considering bus reform that may allow local authorities to have greater control over bus services.
- Members noted that between £1-2 billion is estimated to be needed to implement the changes necessary and funding arrangements will require further discussion. Members asked whether congestion charging was being considered. The Cabinet Members stated that cities around the UK are coming to the same conclusion and the UK government is also concerned at the drop in tax revenue as vehicles move from petrol/diesel to electric. The UK Government is looking at different forms of road user charging. The Council is looking at various options and the Welsh Government has undertaken work in the area, including producing the South East Wales Transport Commission – known as the Burns Report. Decisions on funding options were made openly and set out in the Transport White Paper, which has received backing from all parties.
- Members provided comment on a number of the questions contained in the proposed survey. Members raised concerns that the questions were phrased in such a way that respondents would be expected to provide an affirmative answer. Members were also concerned at the progress made towards providing integrated transport in the City. Officers accepted the point raised regarding the questions contained in the survey and welcomed any feedback from the Committee. Officers stated that an integrated ticketing trial between Cardiff and Newport will commence in 2023.
- Members raised concerns about the proposed consultation and in particular how the consultation aims to reach hard to reach groups.

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.

67 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

RESOLVED – That:

- (1) The Committee approved the draft Environmental Committee Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22
- (2) Members noted the Committee's achievements for inclusion in the Annual Report 2021/22;

The Committee noted the proposed way forward for collating the findings and recommendations to date of the Joint Task and Finish Group inquiry into the Replacement LDP Strategic Options.

68 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were received.

69 : WAY FORWARD

70 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next Environment Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 16 March 2022.

The meeting terminated at 7.00 pm