

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 MARCH 2018

Present: Councillor Patel(Chairperson)
Councillors Philippa Hill-John, Owen Jones, Lancaster, Lay,
Mackie, Wong and Wood

43 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Owen.

44 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations were received in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct and the Local Government Act 1972:

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| Councillor Patel | Item 7 | Non-Executive Board Member of Cardiff Bus |
| Councillor Lay | Item 7 | Non-Executive Board Member of Cardiff Bus |
| Councillor Mackie | Item 7 | Lives in Westgate Street which is discussed in the report |

45 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

46 : COASTAL RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The Committee was advised that the Cabinet is due to receive a report entitled 'Coastal Risk Management Programme' at its meeting on 15 March 2018. The report seeks to provide the Cabinet with a briefing on the current state of Cardiff's coastal defences and the Welsh Government's Coastal Risk Management Programme. Cabinet is asked to consider approving the Council's commitment to procuring a detailed design and construction of coastal defences valued at £11 million. The Committee received a draft copy of the Cabinet report at Appendix 1 of its report.

Members were asked to consider the Cabinet report. A summary of some of the key points in the report was included, as follows:

- The Mott MacDonald, Rover Way Foreshore Coastal Defence Assessment that was undertaken in 2009 concluded that the ad hoc defences in position along Rover Way were in a very poor condition and under established guidelines would not have a residual life beyond the short to medium term.
- A report undertaken by Atkins, Cardiff Council Coastal Erosion Risk Assessment, 2013, identified that the coastal erosion rates at Rover Way are comparable to the highest coastal erosion rates in Europe.

- Welsh Government Coastal Risk Management Programme (CRMP) made a commitment by making £150 million available for borrowing to assist local authorities to meet financial pressures – the fund can provide up to a 75% contribution to support coastal flood risk management projects.
- Cardiff Council was successful in obtaining 100% funding from Welsh Government for the development of an Outline Business Case.
- The Outline Business Case presents the business case and implementation plan for Cardiff Coastal Defences between Rover Way in the west and Lamby way in the east. The project aims to improve the existing coastal and fluvial defences to provide improved protection to people and property from coastal erosion and flood risk, and prevent the erosion of two decommissioned landfill sites – The Frag Tip and Lamby Way Tip.
- Details of predicted flood extents for a 0.5% AEP event in 2017, 2037, 2067 and 2117. Diagram 2 contained within the report provided a shortlist of options for each section in the study area.
- If nothing is done it is estimated that the area to the west of the River Rhymney will continue to erode, with approximately 30m of retreat predicted by 2036, 50m by 2067 and 170m by 2117, based on predicted erosion rates and taking into account predicted sea level rise.
- Under this Do Nothing Scenario 249 residential properties and 3 non-residential properties are currently at risk of flooding under a 0.5% AEP event, increasing to 1212 residential and 209 non-residential properties by 2117 with sea level rise.
- The coastal frontage of Lamby Way tip, to the immediate east of the River Rhymney, is predicted to continue to erode. This will lead to erosion of the Lamby Way tip and release of contaminated tip material into the Severn Estuary within 20 years, which would be likely to have significant environmental impacts on the estuary.

The key objectives for the project were described in Table 1 of Appendix 1 of the report. The key objectives are:

- Reduce and manage coastal flood risk to people and assets within part of south east Cardiff for the next 100 years, taking into account predicted future climate change.
- Manage erosion along the coast to reduce the risk of failing coastal flood defences and the release of contaminated landfill material into the Severn Estuary from Lamby Way Tip and the Rover Way Frag Tip, in the immediate future and over the next 100 years.
- To achieve wider benefits alongside coastal erosion and flood risk management, aligned with WG's Wellbeing Goals and with WG and CCC's vision for development and economic growth of the area.
- Implement a coastal flood and erosion risk management option which is affordable over the next 100 years.

- Protect existing features of nature conservation value and seek opportunities to improve biodiversity through the enhancements of existing habitats.
- Produce technically feasible and buildable engineering options.

Members were advised that 8 potential shortlist options for coastal defence schemes were considered. The report provided details of each of the schemes considered in Table 2 of Appendix 1. Based on assessments, Option 6 was selected as the preferred option.

The Welsh Government has grant funded the development of an outline business case which indicated that indicative costs for the scheme totalling approximately £11 million (£1 million design and £10 million construction). The Coastal Risk Management Programme assumes that the Welsh Government would support 75% of design and construction costs (£8.25 million) and the Council would fund the balance (£2.75 million).

The recommendations in the draft Cabinet report are:

- To procure the detailed design and construction of the coastal defences valued at £11 million. The funding is to be provided on a apportionment of 75% funded by Welsh Government and 25% by Cardiff Council.
- To commit to the 25% funding required to deliver the coastal defences in line with the Welsh Government Coastal Risk Management Programme.
- That a reassessment of the scheme is undertaken following the completion of the detailed design to confirm the financial implications of construction and viability.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Michael Michael, Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and Environment; Matt Wakelam, Operational Manager, Infrastructure and Operations; and Gary Brown, Operational Manager, Assets, Engineering and Operations. Councillor Michael was invited to make a statement.

Councillor Michael stated that the report due to be considered by the Cabinet has had a long gestation period. The Mott Macdonald report was first published in 2009 and it has taken from that report to get to the current position. Coastal erosion is a world-wide issue; approximately 65% of the world's population live on the coast. In Cardiff, there is a serious threat at the River Rhymney estuary that poses a threat to the Lamby Way landfill site and the Travellers site and the authority must be address the issue.

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

- Officer confirmed that the Welsh Government funding of £8.25 million is a one-off grant that does not need to be repaid.

- Members asked whether the 75%-25% split was a fixed ratio or whether additional costs would fall on the Council. The Cabinet Member stated that the Cabinet were being asked to move to the design stage only. The ratio would remain constant. Officers confirmed that during discussions with the Welsh Government all parties were aware that the cost base could potentially change and that formed part of the agreement as we move forward.
- Members noted that a number of the options were similar and asked why option 6 was selected as the preferred option. Officers considered that the scheme needs to be sympathetic to the environment, although some hard engineering was unavoidable.
- Officers were asked to explain the environmental impact of not acting, particularly the implications for Lamby Way landfill site. An officer stated that not acting would put Lamby Way landfill site at risk from coastal erosion. The result would be contamination of the estuary. The cost of removing the landfill site is cost prohibitive and, therefore, this option was not considered. Damage was already occurring and there was an urgent need to act to protect not only the two landfill sites, but also the Travellers Site and the Welsh Water Treatment works.
- Members supported the inclusion of the coastal path in the design. Officers indicated that the Welsh Government is funding aspects to protect the coastal area and coastal path improvements will need meet Welsh Government criteria in this respect.
- Members asked whether consideration was being given to expand the scheme beyond the River Rhymney estuary. The Committee was advised that the Cardiff Bay Barrage would protect the rest of the City and the Rhymney River estuary was the only area being considered. The lifespan of the scheme is estimated to be 100 years.
- Members asked whether the scheme would result in erosion further along the coastline and whether there had been studies on how the scheme would affect other locations. Officers stated that the Welsh Government project covers the entire coastline and there will be options to protect areas such as Wentloog.
- The Committee requested further details of the costings for each option being considered and the rationale used to evaluate each option. Officers stated that the evaluation considered costs and environmental impact. The Welsh Government representatives were privy to this information and the preferred option was agreed by Welsh Government also. Members of the Committee considered that the information used to evaluate the various options would have been useful.
- Officers indicated that the design phase for the project would be approximately 1 year and the construction phase would be 2 years. There are no realistic mitigation measures that can be taken in the short-term. However, during construction efforts will be made to concentrate efforts on high-risk areas.
- The Committee discussed the possibility of letting the river erode the coastline in order to create an ox-bow lake. Officers stated that this would affect Lamby Way landfill site and there would be costs to moving that part of the landfill site. The

Roath Brook Defence scheme could also potentially be affected and Natural Resources Wales would have a view on that. Officers felt that it was not feasible to change the dynamics of the river and sheet piling was considered to be the only option at this location, as this would protect the landfill site and it would not change the dynamics of the river.

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

47 : RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - 2018 TO 2021

RESOLVED – That consideration of this item be deferred.

48 : NEW BURIAL SPACE

The Committee received a report providing Members with a briefing on the provision of new burial space in the City. Members were advised that the Cabinet was to receive a report entitled 'New Burial Space' is due to be received by the Cabinet on 15 March 2018. The report seeks Cabinet approval to develop an area of existing Council-owned land north of the M4 for new cemetery space.

The number of cremations has increased in recent years but burial is still the preferred option for many people. The statistics in Cardiff mirror the national picture, that is 70/30 in favour of cremation. Cardiff currently carries out 1,350 burials per year, 800 of which are full size graves, and 550 are burials of cremated remains. In Cardiff burials require approximately 0.5 acres of land per year.

Members were advised that a number of sites have been considered by officers. It has been a challenging task to meet all the key criteria, such as ground suitability and an accessible location. Work to consider burial land to cover the east of the city is continuing.

The preferred location covers an area of 12.5 acres in total and is less than 650 metres from the existing cemetery at Thornhill. Therefore, it provides the benefit of being able to be managed from the current site and ensure that operational costs are not significantly increased. Capital costs are also significantly lower as there is no need to construct offices, staff facilities and plant machinery storage. The site would provide burial space for approximately 5,500 new graves, which would be sufficient for 25 years at the current rate, with a further 4,000 graves held in reserve.

Members were advised that the site is currently subject to a business farm tenancy lease which has 18 years to run. The leaseholder operates the site for grazing. The tenant is open to discussions to find a mutually beneficial outcome.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

49 : CONSIDERATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE DRAFT REPORT TITLED 'IMPROVING CARDIFF'S AIR QUALITY - TASK & FINISH EXERCISE'

The following declarations of interest were declared in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct:

Councillor Mackie

As a resident of Westgate Street

Councillor Lay

Non-Executive Board Member of Cardiff Bus

Councillor Patel

Non-Executive Board Member of Cardiff Bus

The Principal Scrutiny Officer tabled the draft recommendations from the Environmental Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish report 'Improving Cardiff's Air Quality'. The Committee discussed each of the recommendations in turn and Members were asked to comment and provide feedback.

A Member noted that during the recent heavy snowfall there were 3 days when road traffic was very light. Members asked whether there was any data on air quality available for this period, as it was likely to provide strong evidence to support a number of the recommendations in the report. The Committee considered that it would be worthwhile investigating whether any supporting evidence was available.

The Committee noted that 81,800 commuters come into the city each day and Members agreed that the authority cannot address the issue on its own. Members questioned whether it would be possible to incentivise commuters not to bring their cars into Cardiff. Members agreed that the Metro project would assist but at present there were few viable alternatives in place.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer advised that Members would have another opportunity to further review the recommendations in the report at the April meeting of the Committee.

50 : WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee discussed the draft work programme and in particular the April and May meetings. Members expressed concerns that if either agenda was too overcrowded then the Committee would be unable to give due consideration to the agenda items.

Members agreed to consider the draft Waste Management Strategy, District Heat Network and the recommendations of the Task and Finish Inquiry into Air Quality at the April meeting. The work programme for the May meeting was unchanged.

The Committee also discussed options for the forthcoming Task and Finish Inquiry on Litter and Flytipping.

51 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next Environment Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 17 April 2018.

The meeting terminated at 6.45 pm

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