

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 MARCH 2020

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

1 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

2 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2020 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

4 : QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTERS 1 & 2, 2019/20

The Committee received a report providing Members with an opportunity to review the performance reports relevant to the terms of reference for the Committee for Quarter 1 (April to June 2019) and Quarter 2 (July to September 2019). Members were asked to note that Waste Management transferred to the People and Communities Directorate in August 2019.

Members were advised that Council agreed the Corporate Plan 2019-22 in February 2019. The Corporate Plan set out the Council's Well-Being objectives, key priorities and key performance indicators. The performance management framework includes the production of a quarterly production of the Delivering Capital Ambition Performance Report 2019-20 for Cabinet. The sections of the performance report relevant to the Committee were referenced in the cover report.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Michael Michael, Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and the Environment; Sarah McGill, Corporate Director; Andrew Gregory, Director and Matt Wakelam, Assistant Director to the meeting. The officers were invited to deliver a presentation on the Q1 and Q2 performance reports.

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

- Members asked for additional information regarding the proposals for active travel plans in schools. Members were advised that the authority is aiming to introduce active travel plans for walking and cycling in all schools. This will require investment in cycling infrastructure, such as cycle racks. New schools will be fully compliant with standards. There will also be links to segregated cycle routes and other cycling provision.

- Members noted that the Welsh Government's recycling target was unlikely to be met. Members asked what the likely financial penalty would be based on current projections and whether, or not, Welsh Government would enforce it. Officers stated that a recommendation would be given to the Minister by civil servants and the Minister would decide whether to apply the penalty. The Council is working with Welsh Government and WRAP to achieve a 70% recycling rate in the longer term. Welsh Government will form their own view but at the moment the Council is working with Welsh Government and other key partners to attempt to deliver 64% recycling. Members were asked to note that 30% of the city's housing stock are apartments with no facilities for segregating recycling. In terms of any liabilities, the Council is able to demonstrate it knows why recycling targets are not being achieved. For instance, the impact of trade waste on the recycling target is -1.7%.
- Members asked when the new bus station would be operational. Members also noted that 46.6% of journeys are non-car journeys. Members also asked whether officers were confident the 50/50 modal shift would be achieved. Officers advised that the bus station would be operational mid-2022, subject to contract negotiations. In terms of modal shift, the delivery of fundamental improvements such as cycling superhighways and new bus stations will provide a 'step change'.
- Members noted that the target for active travel plans in schools was 40%. Members asked how the target was arrived at and whether there are set criteria for acceptable active travel plans for schools, such as the banning of dropping off points directly outside schools. Members also asked whether additional funding has been identified in order to bring existing schools up to standard. The Director stated that this would depend on the nature of the plan brought forward by the schools. There is a degree of individuality. A pilot banned vehicles from the front of the school. If that proves successful then it may be rolled out wider. Funding may be bid for as part of Local Transport Fund bids.
- Members sought to clarify the results for measuring street cleanliness. A Councillor stated that in his ward suffers from nuisance caused by seagulls opening refuse sacks during Q1 Apr – Jun. He was surprised, therefore, that street cleanliness improves in Q1 from Q3. Officers stated that streets are inspected at 3 month, 6 month and 12 month intervals depending on footfall. A number of factors can affect cleanliness including the weather and staff sickness levels.
- Members noted that the number of flytipping reports responded to within timescales is higher in Q1. Officers stated that the percentage represents the number of flytipping incidents cleared or enforced within timescales and it doesn't represent the actual figure of flytipping incidents reported.
- Officers agreed to provide updated figures regarding the current and projected staff sickness levels within the directorate.
- The Committee supported more ambitious targets for the number of missed collections, perhaps in terms of the total number of households affected or the total tonnage.

- Members asked whether the increase in enforcement actions was as a result of better reporting or due to an increase in violations. The Assistant Director advised that new technology now identifies where waste is presented after waste operatives have visited a street. The staff in the 'pink sticker' team will try to educate and encourage residents to change their behaviour before moving to enforcement action.
- Members asked how much flexibility operatives are permitted to exercise in terms of the application of the 'pink stickers' scheme. A Member recalled an incident whereby their garden waste bin would not be collected because somebody had put a drink can in there. The Assistant Director stated that over 200 staff have been trained. They have been made aware of the passing litter issue. A pink sticker should not be issued in those circumstances. The pink stickers should only be used where there is substantial contamination.
- Members noted that Cardiff was ranked 16th in Wales in terms of food hygiene inspections. The Committee asked how Cardiff compared to Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend. The Assistant Director stated that Cardiff has considerable higher turnover of new businesses and demand exceeds that of the other authorities. The Cabinet Member stated that there is huge disparity in terms of numbers of food businesses.
- Officers confirmed that business continuity plans will be instigated in the event of a coronavirus outbreak. The plans are being reviewed and discussions are ongoing with union colleagues.

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

5 : CABINET RESPONSE - ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT TITLED 'LITTER & FLY TIPPING IN CARDIFF'

The Committee undertook a task and finish inquiry entitled 'Litter and Fly Tipping in Cardiff'. The report was presented to Cabinet on 13 June 2019 and a full response was agreed by the Cabinet on 10 October 2019. The Committee received a report on the Cabinet's response to the task and finish inquiry report.

The task and finish report made a series of key findings and a total of 68 recommendations. Of those recommendations 57 were accepted, 10 were partially accepted and one was rejected. The key findings and recommendations were based on 11 themes, details of which were set out in the report.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Michael Michael, Cabinet Member for Recycling, Clean Streets and Environment; Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People and Communities; and Matt Wakelam, Assistant Director Street Scene to the meeting.

The Chairperson opened the debate on this item. Members were invited to comment, raise questions or seek clarification on the report. The discussion is summarised as follows:

- Members requested further clarification of plans to introduce a dedicated Enforcement Team. Members were advised that Enforcement Officers are able to enforce a range of issues from the small scale, such as littering and chewing gum to the larger scale such as building waste and companies not having a waste contract in place. The focus would be how to train other officers across service areas to enforce littering fixed penalties in order to get a more holistic approach and to allow Waste Officers more capacity to attend to more serious issues and use the available resources more efficiently. The Enforcement Team would be made up from a combination of existing staff, such as caretakers and housing enforcement officers.
- Officers advised that the service area is working in partnership with the Welsh Government to tackle problem littering from cars and other vehicles. At present, if people litter from vehicles the Council can write to the registered keeper. However, if the registered keeper fails to respond then there is nothing further the authority can do. Officers recognised that littering from cars is a significant issue in Cardiff. Members were asked to note that clearing litter from high speed routes is dangerous and staff who are asked to perform this duty are put at risk. New legislation was introduced in England to address this particular problem. It is anticipated that the Welsh Government will follow suit as discussion papers have been drafted. Members asked whether the Council has made representations in support of the proposal. Officers stated that a letter of support has been sent but it may be time for a more formal representations to be made from by the Leader or Cabinet.
- The Committee welcomed the Cabinet's acceptance of recommendations relating to volunteering. Officers were asked to estimate how long it would take to implement the recommendations. Officers advised that an action plan is being developed and that detail would be included. However, some of the recommendations have already been delivered.
- Officers advised that the authority is seeking to establish an overarching group aimed at supporting smaller, local groups of volunteers. The joint groups would meet quarterly in order to provide a forum to share ideas and discuss best practice. Members were asked to note that the 'love where you live' campaign was not just concerned with litter picking. The Welsh Government has put forward funding for green spaces for which Community Councils can apply. Officers would like to see more businesses involved in the 'love where you live' campaign.
- The Cabinet Member publicly wished to thank the members of the Cardiff Rivers Group and other volunteers for their efforts, particularly in relation to their help in the restoration of Bute Park following the recent flooding. Officers confirmed that a permanent volunteer co-ordinators post will be established.
- Members requested that officers provide further clarity in terms of those recommendations that are partially accepted. The Assistant Director stated that

the Action Plan would provide clarity.

- Members considered that, in terms of reskilling/training, it would be useful if Parks Staff were given enforcement powers to prevent household waste from being dumped in parks bins.
- A Member asked whether more could be done to promote the 'Cardiff App' to existing and new residents in the city. For example, the app could be promoted on the Council Tax letters that are currently being sent to every household. The Assistant Director stated that more facilities are being added to the app and the digital systems to support the app are in place. All data received from the app is pooled and once a problem is reported via the app it will be dealt with.
- Referring to recommendations 27, 28 and 30 – Members suggested whether litter bins could have a QR code on them which could be scanned via the Cardiff app and reported as being full. Officers welcomed the idea. Members also asked whether litter bins in all areas of the city could have separate containers for recyclables.
- Members asked whether temporary recycling facilities in blocks of flats was feasible. The Cabinet Member stated that this has been trailed but it resulted in too much contamination. It was recognised that such temporary facilities need to be provided in managed spaces, such as hubs.
- Members asked whether any progress has been made regarding the proposed move to a rolling 4-day working week; whether there has been any consultation with the unions and whether there is support for the proposal in principal. The Assistant Director advised that a report will be coming forward in the near future regarding the approach to be taken and the report will be presented to the Committee. The Cabinet Member stated that the proposals will be with the agreement of all stakeholders and will modernise the service for the betterment of the city.

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

6 : MEMBER BRIEFING NOTE: FIREWORKS

The Committee received a briefing paper on fireworks, the challenges they present and suggested actions for better management of those issues. The report provided Members with an opportunity to determine if the topic should be included on the Committee's forward work programme.

The Committee considered that the Council has limited powers regarding fireworks. The only obvious options available to the Council are to restrict use on Council land and promotional opportunities. Members asked for confirmation of the extent to which these powers were being applied, and suggested that we might seek clarification.

The Committee decided to monitor this issue and provide a further update at a future meeting.

7 : MEMBER BRIEFING NOTE: CARDIFF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
FULL REVIEW - CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TABLED AT COUNCIL MEETING OF 28TH NOVEMBER 2019

The Committee received a briefing paper providing an opportunity to review the contents of the Cabinet report entitled 'Cardiff Local Development Plan Full Review – consideration of Amendments Tabled at Council Meeting on 28 November 2019'.

Members considered that the key element of the report in terms of scrutiny was the cross-committee arrangements for scrutiny of the issue. Members agreed that matter should be discussed at the Scrutiny Chairs Forum.

8 : ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME
2019/20

The Committee discussed the Work Programme 2019/20. The Principal Scrutiny Officer advised that the Cabinet will receive the 'One Planet Cardiff' report on 2 April 2020. The report will set out the Council's priorities in response to the climate emergency. The report is 'red' rated and would provide enough content for useful scrutiny.

The Committee agreed to hold an additional meeting on 1 April 2020.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer asked whether Members have any particular areas or issues of focus for the 2020/21 work programme. Members were invited to email suggestions to the Principal Scrutiny Officer.

9 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None

10 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next Environment Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 1 April 2020.

The meeting terminated at 6.35 pm