

Ref: RDB/RP/CW&MM/15.09.2020

19th October 2020

Councillors Michael Michael & Caro Wild,
5th Floor,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillors Michael & Wild,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 15th September 2020

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 15th September to discuss the item on 'Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate – Covid Update – Service Areas & Capital Programme'. The comments and observations made by Members on the areas relevant to your portfolio of responsibility are set out in this letter.

Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate – Covid Update – Service Areas & Capital Programme'

Members would like to thank yourselves and the officers from the Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate for the hard work and dedication shown during the Covid lockdown. Your efforts have meant that a large number of Council services have continued to function effectively, in what has been a very difficult time. In particular, the Committee would like thank:

- Staff dealing with burials and cremations in the Bereavement & Registration Service. They have had to manage a large increase in burials and cremations, at a time when social distancing has made dealing with bereavement more difficult than usual.
- Cabinet Members and officers within the Bereavement & Registration Service for delivering the new Sikh and Hindu scatter site next to the River Taff in Llandaff.
- The staff and volunteers at the Cardiff Dogs home who made sure that 25 of the dogs in Council care had temporary homes during the crisis. It is

particularly pleasing to note that 20 of these dogs have now found permanent homes.

E-Scooters - During the meeting some Members commented on the challenges and opportunities presented by the sudden growth in the number of E-scooters in the city. They note that other local authority areas are reviewing how best to manage the increasing in numbers of E-scooters, and that a series of pilots are taking place across the country. The Committee will monitor developments in this area closely.

Highways Resurfacing Programme – At the meeting Members asked how the development of the Highways Resurfacing Programme was progressing, and when it would be ready for scrutiny. They also noted that some of the schemes scheduled for the early part of 2020/21 had yet to be delivered because of the impact of the Covid crisis. I would be grateful if you could confirm when the Highways Resurfacing Programme will be available for scrutiny, and arrange for the officers involved to forward the necessary documents to the Principal Scrutiny Officer for the Committee.

Flexible Working – At the meeting a Member asked if the Council had any plans to permanently deliver a large number of roles through more flexible working arrangements, for example, increased homeworking. It was explained that this was being reviewed corporately, and that the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee was due to look into the matter in more detail at a future meeting. Members noted these developments, and agreed to monitor the progress.

Budget – Members were pleased that the Council had received financial support from the Welsh Government during the lockdown period, and that this had enabled the Directorate to balance its budget over the summer months. They are aware that significant financial pressures have been placed on services delivered by the Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate, and will monitor the budget position during the rest of this municipal year.

Castle Street Changes – During the meeting, Members asked about the temporary changes that had been introduced to Castle Street in the summer; the public response to the changes; the benefits it had produced; if traffic had been displaced by this scheme to other parts of the city, and when the changes to the street would return to normal. They were told that at present the changes to Castle Street were a temporary arrangement, but that Cabinet had asked officers to look the impact of the scheme and assess future options that might be considered in the street other than those currently proposed for the area. I would be grateful if you make any future Cabinet reports on proposed changes to Castle Street available for Scrutiny, and provide any supporting evidence that you might have to confirm that traffic movements from Castle Street have not been displaced in significant volume to other parts of Cardiff.

Bike Fleet & Cycle Parking – At the meeting a Member asked how the new 'Bike Fleet' scheme will operate in Cardiff (for example, number of bikes, locations of the bikes, how they will be stored), and for clarification on the methodology for allocating cycle parking across the city. I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with this information.

20mph Zones – Members explained that they were very supportive of 20mph zones in Cardiff, however, they felt that more speed enforcement was required in the areas to make them work properly. I would be grateful if you could confirm details of any recent conversations that you and officers have had with South Wales Police around better enforcement of 20mph zones, and the outcome of these conversations.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments, and we are happy to receive a joint response to the content of this letter.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ramesh Patel', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Ramesh Patel

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory - Director of Planning, Transport & Environment
- Davina Fiore - Director of Governance & Legal Services
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee