



**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

COMMITTEE SUMMONS

C Hanagan
Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
The Pavilions
Cambrian Park
Clydach Vale CF40 2XX

Meeting Contact: Mrs S Daniel - Senior Democratic Services Officer

YOU ARE SUMMONED to a meeting of **PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held virtually on **THURSDAY, 14TH JANUARY, 2021** at **5.00 PM**.

Non Committee Members and Members of the public may request the facility to address the Committee at their meetings on the business listed although facilitation of this request is at the discretion of the Chair. It is kindly asked that such notification is made to Democratic Services by Tuesday, 12 January 2021 on the contact details listed above, including stipulating whether the address will be in Welsh or English.

AGENDA

**Page
No's**

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest: and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

2. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Community Committee held on 12th November 2020

3. **IMPACT OF COVID19 ON COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRES** 9 - 12
4. **BRYN PICA WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY** 13 - 16
5. **CHAIR'S REVIEW AND CLOSE**
To reflect on the meeting and actions to be taken forward.
6. **CONSULTATION LINKS**
Information is provided in respect of relevant [consultations](#) for consideration by the Committee.
7. **URGENT BUSINESS**
To consider any items, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Circulation:-

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
(County Borough Councillor S Bradwick and County Borough Councillor T Williams respectively)

County Borough Councillors:
Councillor M Weaver, Councillor G Stacey, Councillor A Chapman,
Councillor D Owen-Jones, Councillor W Treeby, Councillor D Grehan,
Councillor E George, Councillor W Owen, Councillor S Pickering, Councillor A Fox,
Councillor M Diamond and Councillor G Holmes

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday, 12 November 2020 at 5.00 pm at the Virtual.

County Borough Councillors - Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-

Cllr S Bradwick – Chairman, Cllr T Williams – Vice Chair, Cllr M Weaver, Cllr G Stacey, Cllr W Treeby, Cllr A Chapman, Cllr D Owen-Jones, Cllr D Grehan, Cllr M Diamond, Cllr E George, Cllr S Pickering, Cllr A Fox, Cllr G Holmes

Officers in attendance

Mr Steve Owen – Service Director
Mr Simon Humphreys – Head of Legal Services
Mrs Sarah Daniel – Senior Democratic Services Officer

6 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr W Owens and Cllr A Crimmings

7 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

8 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 23rd September 2020 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

9 Forward Work Programme

The Senior Democratic Services Officer presented the report to members and provided members the opportunity to comment on the draft Forward Work Programme and put forward any items for discussion at future meetings. She reminded members that the Forward Work Programme would remain flexible and could be reviewed by members at regular intervals. She added that consideration would also be given to officers priorities whilst continuing to work through the current global pandemic.

A member asked if consideration to an item on Flytipping could be included on the Forward Work Programme. The Senior Democratic Services Officer stated that this would be considered under the Enforcement item due in March 2021

A member stated that he had some ideas for the Forward Work programme and would discuss with the Chairman and forward to the Senior Democratic Services officer in due course.

REOSLVED: Members noted the recommendations in 2.1-2.3 of the report.

10 Impact of Covid 19 on Recycling and Residual Waste in RCT

The Service Director Streetcare introduced the report to members on the recycling performance for the first 6 months of 2020/2 during the COVID 19 period. He advised members that the target for recycling was set at 64% by Welsh Government and that failure to achieve these targets could result in substantial fines. He added that they were currently working towards the future targets and were performing extremely well and were well on track to achieve the targets ahead of time as long as they continue to push hard, even under the current circumstances.

The Chairman asked how COVID19 had impacted on the Streetcare teams in terms of staff being off sick or self-isolating and also how the team coped with staff being redeployed to other business critical service areas. He also asked about the cleaning regime of the vehicles between uses to reduce the spread of infection.

The Service Director advised that during the initial stages of lockdown it was a challenge as there were large number of staff that were shielding and the service also had to collapse other services that were deemed non-essential at the time. He advised that the recycling centres were closed during the lockdown so they redeployed staff to these other services. He added that green waste was also suspended. Street cleansing operatives were transferred to waste teams to assist with collections.

The Service Director advised that collections returned to normal in June. Grass cutting was suspended for the first month which was also a challenge for the service area. He advised members that enforcement teams were used predominately to distribute recycling bags and enhanced cleaning of schools. In response to how the teams were cleansing the vehicles he advised that due to social distancing restrictions staff were reduced to two per cab so another support vehicle had to follow to provide support. The support vehicles were sought from fleet services. The driver of the vehicle was responsible for sanitising the vehicle throughout the day using an antiviral spray that was provided. A dedicated person at each of the depots would ensure all work areas were and continue to be sanitised. Other rules enforced were staff wearing masks, social distancing and if anyone displayed symptoms they were to remain home.

A member stated that all the officers achieved excellent work during the pandemic, and all went over and above and all the teams should be commended.

A member referred to the figure achieved of 68.3% of recycling and asked how much down this was from last year. The Service Director state that this was down just over ½% on last year

A member asked about the grass cutting schedule and the costs associated with the cutting.

The Service Director stated that the grass cutting schedule starts at the end of March, however, this year it was delayed until the end of May. He advised that within his service area sat highways, cemeteries, playgrounds and sports pitches and the cutting resumed at various stages based on priorities. The costs associated with cutting were approximately £600k per annum. He added that the regime worked far better where the team utilise more experienced staff and employ agency grass cutters to accompany them. This way of working had

reduced resources and had been more effective and efficient with permanent teams managing agency staff. In response to a question he advised that the service area employs around 50 staff but this varies depending on the time of year.

A member stated that he had been approached by residents to say they can't access recycling bags as they had not been distributed in the usual places. He asked if there was high demand as many of his residents had resorted to putting recycling in residual waste bags and was concerned this would impact on targets.

The Service Director stated that this area had been impacted by the current pandemic. Some usual distribution points had been closed during the pandemic and so other distribution points were being used more than usual. He added that residents were able to order more recycling bags online, however the surge in demand for this had increased during lockdown periods so the service area were struggling to cope with demand. He added that it was also difficult to manage people taking more than what they needed and also misusing the bags. He advised the Committee that they had considered a mass distribution but then there was a concern that many of these would be wasted as not everyone needed more supplies. He advised that if the bags were ordered online that the delivery should be made within the fortnight. He reassured members that this team were striving to improve in this area and they were constantly looking at ways they could improve their performance and make the service more efficient.

A member asked about staff at Bryn Pica and if staff were still employed as pickers at the site as they were at previous sites.

The Service Director Streetcare stated that the previous plant was predominately hand sorted, but still had some automated processes such as magnets, he advised that the normal shift had around 30 hand pickers and was a very outdated plant which is why investment was made for the state of the art plant which has digital sorting processes and cameras to sort items. He added that there were approximately 10 members of staff still needed for certain parts of the process but it was more efficient now with one shift than two shifts previously. He advised members that the product needed to be a high standard of quality with minimal contamination to achieve a better rate for the product.

A member asked when the public request a delivery of recycling bag online, who delivers them? The Service Director stated that there are dedicated staff members who deliver these but in recent month's collection crews have had to be called upon to support due to high demand. He added that usually collection crews carry little stock on the vehicles for any ad-hoc requests they receive.

A member asked if the products that are taken to CRC's are included in the overall recycling figures for WG targets? The Service Director Streetcare stated that the figures included all of the waste from the CRC including plastic, wood, metal and waste from the compactor skips.

A Member paid tribute to the Streetcare team and stated they had been superb during the lockdown with collections consistently on time in his area. He asked if the agency staff used for the annual grass cutting were redeployed to another team during the lockdown period. The Service Director stated they were not redeployed as this would not be usual practice to do so with agency staff.

A member sought clarification around the contamination of recycling products.

and asked what determined a product to be contaminated?

The Service Director Streetcare stated that he was referring to items that were put in recycling that had not been cleaned and emptied first; or where products were put in the wrong recycling bags. He added that there was an A to Z guide online that residents could download to ensure when they dispose of recycling they do so properly.

A member stated that he was concerned about Welsh Government raising the targets for recycling. He asked how we could target those who do not recycle at all and encourage them to contribute so the Authority can hit the targets and ultimately not face substantial fines. The Service Director stated that the Authority focuses their attention on the people who do recycle, who could do more. He added that they could spend a lot of time and effort targeting a small minority who are not interested in recycling but it is better use of resources to target those who do care about the environment and who do want to do more. That being said, he added that the Authority has started to issue penalties to residents who do not recycle or put more than their allocation of residual waste out. Wales overall are excellent at recycling and Welsh Government are only increasing the targets as they feel it is achievable and there is more scope to improve.

A member was concerned about residents who do not have access to the internet and how they could request more recycling bags. The Service Director advised that in addition to requesting the bags online residents could access more bags at over 160 distribution points throughout the Local Authority area. He recommended that where possible family members and neighbours support those residents who were unable to access online services. He advised that the way in which the bags were distributed now and in the future is monitored closely so changes to the service can be adapted where necessary

A member queried the upper level behind Llantrisant recycling centre and what they do at the centre. The Service Director responded that this was a contractor that recycles for the authority and also has his own business, drying out wood mainly.

A Member asked if the Authority were able to publically share through social media platforms when the Authority has issued enforcement penalties to raise awareness that the Authority is issuing fines and so this could act as a deterrent to potential offenders. The Service Director responded that they do raise awareness with the press team when such cases arose but they had to be careful with the information that was shared to protect identities.

Update in 6 months.

11 Chair's Review and Close

The Chair thanked the Service Director in attendance and asked that the Committees thanks are sent to all of the teams involved for their continued hard work and commitment during the lockdown period and beyond.

He asked that the Committee receive an update on the service area in 6 months' time.

12 Urgent Business

None

**Cllr S Bradwick
Chairman**

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY,
COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

14TH JANUARY 2021

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF
PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND
FRONTLINE SERVICES.**

Agenda Item No: 3

**REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF COVID
19 ON COMMUNITY RECYCLING
CENTRES**

Author: Nigel Wheeler

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on the impact on the Community Recycling Centres during Covid 19 period.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report:
- 2.2 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any further matters.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This Council as did all councils in Wales had to close the Community Recycling Centres due to the initial lockdown and then the subsequent firebreak. As these closures were taking place at the same time as many businesses were under lockdown, it meant many residents were at home having clear outs or undertaking DIY to their properties which resulted in many being unable to dispose of unwanted goods at the Centres.

4. UPDATE /ISSUES ENCOUNTERED/ CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 RCT Council incrementally year on year has improved its recycling figure, this year has seen us battle with the impact of Covid 19 which had the potential to greatly affect the services performance, this is due to a number of factors in particular the closure of the Community Recycling Centres due to Covid restrictions, together with the legislation stating that travelling to them would be classed as a non-essential journey.
- 4.2 These changes affected all Councils and not only our Council, but the closure of the CRC's. The ceasing of enforcement were real concerns as both had the potential to have a significant impact on our recycling figures.
- 4.2.1 As stated in 4.1, due to the lockdown more residents were at home undertaking house and garden tidy ups and the closure of the CRC's had some unintended consequences.
- 4.2.2 The sites reopened on the 22nd May 2020, many councils adopted a booking system, but we didn't as it was felt it could slow down the operation of them. We set out a number of rules which the users had to comply to in order for us to comply with the Covid legislation:
- Only 5 vehicles on site at one time
 - No large vans or high sided vehicles
 - Time limit of 10mins
 - Only one person to leave the vehicle
 - All material had to be able to be handled by one person
 - Staff were there only to direct residents not to assist
 - Social distancing to be adhered to at all time
 - If in a queue residents were not to leave their vehicle
 - Anyone abusive to staff would be refused entry/asked to leave
 - Proof of residency
 - Compliance with Covid legislation
- 4.2.3 The sites were extremely busy on reopening, but nearly every resident was respectful to our staff and complied with the rules, due to this, within a few days the sites were within reason working efficiently.
- 4.2.4 The legislation changed slightly in the recent lockdown and the CRC's were deemed essential and have remained open whilst there has been a slight tweak in the legislation allowing a journey to the site being now not classed as non-essential. This decision has been received really well by the general public and sites are operating in line with the guidance.

4.2.4 In addition to the points mentioned in above, we have seen a significant increase in residual waste levels and a higher proportion of contamination in the recycling with no real reason for this except more residents are at home, despite this, the new MRF at Bryn Pica has been able to deal with the contamination levels and still producing a high level of quality recycle.

4.2.5 The table below shows our performance during the first 6 months of this financial year. These figures are subject to ratification by Waste date flow and any change will be minimal.

4.2.6

	Q1 2020/21	Q2 2020/21	Total For 2020/21
Dry Reuse	0.24	271.41	271.65
Dry Recycling	15,629.22	20,561.97	36,191.19
Composting	5,937.24	6,430.90	12,368.14
Total municipal waste	32,508.95	38,923.83	71,432.78
WMT 10(iv) - Dry reuse rate	0.00%	0.70%	0.38%
WMT 10(v) - Dry recycling rate	48.08%	52.83%	50.66%
WMT 10(vi) - Composting rate	18.26%	16.52%	17.31%
WMT 09b reuse, recycling and composting rate	66.34%	70.05%	68.36%

4.2.7 For the record the performance highlighted in the table, shows that we have achieved the target set out by Welsh Government whilst only being down .0.56% on this time last year which when you take into account the pandemic it puts in a good position to be able to maintain this for the remainder of the year, thus avoiding any fines.

4.2.8 It should also be noted that last year's figures at this point were the highest ever achieved by this Council and to be so close to them on what we have encountered is testament to the resilience of our staff and our collection processes.

4.2.9 The next target for this Council is the 2024/2025 target of 70% so if we can maintain this performance and improve slightly we are well on course to achieve this considerably earlier than we need to. It is clear that provision of the new MRF at Bryn Pica has gone a long way in helping us maintain our performance .

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no Equality or Diversity implications aligned to this report

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 There are no Consultation implications aligned to this report

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are Financial implications in failing to achieve the statutory targets.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no Legal Implications aligned to this report

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

9.1 The recycling processes we adopted align itself to the Corporate Plan and Corporate Priorities.

9.2 This clearly is linked with the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, helping to create a resilient Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 RCT Council are proud of its recycling services and prides itself being at the forefront of continuous improvement in this area.

10.2 This is highlighted with the Eco Park plans and the development of the new Material Recycling Facility at Bryn Pica.



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY,
COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

14TH JANUARY, 2021

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF
PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND
FRONTLINE SERVICES.**

Agenda Item No: 4

REPORT ON BRYN PICA ECO PARK

Author: Nigel Wheeler

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on the potential new development at Bryn Pica and present the Proposed Strategic Business Case.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the content of the presentation:
- 2.2 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any further matters.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf Council has continued to expand the range of waste management services at Bryn Pica Waste site, Aberdare. The site is the home of the Tomorrows Valley Food Waste Treatment Plant (AD Plant) and a Materials Recycling Facility (among other services). It's location on the junction of the A470

and A465 (Heads of Valley) is strategically important for waste management services throughout South East Wales and as such it is designated within RCT's Local Development Plan.

- 3.2 Working with a number of partners, including various department of Welsh Government (Waste and Resource Efficiency Division, Innovation Team and Better Jobs Team) RCT Council has continued to support the development of the Eco Park on a large vacant plot adjacent to the site. The strategic aim of the project is to attract and develop commercial activities that can assist Welsh Councils in delivering high quality materials to the circular economy. The site benefits from access to renewable energy in the form of electricity and waste heat from biogas. Utilisation of this energy at the site provides cost saving opportunities for waste processing and has the potential to encourage the development of resilient business models in the sector.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Outline planning permission for the Eco Park was granted by RCT Council in Dec-18 and works are progressing to clear the site ready for development.
- 4.2 Outline plans for the Eco Park include:
- 4.2.1 Development 6,000 m² of commercial / industrial indoor floor space within 4 light industrial units.
- 4.2.2 Options for expansion of a 5th Industrial unit as the scheme develops.
- 4.2.3 Provision of an external operational / storage space.
- 4.2.4 Electrical and Heat Off-Take connections to Tomorrows Valley Waste Treatment Plant.
- 4.2.5 Offices, welfare and educational facilities.
- 4.2.6 Targeting 60 new jobs in the circular economy across the Eco Park Scheme.
- 4.3 The presentation will set out the strategic case for the proposed investment associated with the proposed Bryn Pica Eco Park. The scheme is strongly aligned with the requirement of Welsh Government's Future Generation Act 2015, particularly in respect of the emphasis on sustainable living and the provision of good quality local employment opportunities.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no Equality or Diversity implications aligned to this report

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 There are no Consultation implications aligned to this report

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 At this stage, the Council or Cabinet is not being asked to make any new financial decisions in respect of the Eco Park. The financial modelling assumptions are part of the Strategic Business Plan submission to Welsh Government and further reports will follow if this scheme progresses

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no Legal Implications aligned to this report

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

9.1 The Strategic Business Case aligns itself to the Corporate Plan and Corporate Priorities.

9.2 This clearly is linked with the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, helping to create a resilient Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 RCT Council are proud of its recycling services and prides itself being at the forefront of continuous improvement in this area.

10.2 This is highlighted with the Eco Park plans and the development of the new Material Recycling Facility at Bryn Pica.

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