



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

GWŶS I GYFARFOD O'R CYNGOR

C.Hanagan
Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf
Y Pafiliynau
Parc Hen Lofa'r Cambrian
Cwm Clydach CF40 2XX

Dolen gyswllt: Sarah Daniel - Senior Democratic Services Officer (07385 085 169)

**DYMA WŶS I CHI i gyfarfod o PWYLLGOR CRAFFU - CYNNAL
GWASANAETHAU CYHOEDDUS, CYMUNEDAU A FFYNIANT yn cael ei
gynnal yn Virtual ar DYDD IAU, 18FED MAWRTH, 2021 am 5.00 PM.**

Caiff Aelodau nad ydyn nhw'n aelodau o'r pwyllgor ac aelodau o'r cyhoedd gyfrannu yn y cyfarfod ar faterion y cyfarfod er bydd y cais yn ôl doethineb y Cadeirydd. Gofynnwn i chi roi gwybod i Wasanaethau Democrataidd erbyn Dydd Mawrth, 16 Mawrth 2021 trwy ddefnyddio'r manylion cyswllt uchod, gan gynnwys rhoi gwybod a fyddwch chi'n siarad Cymraeg neu Saesneg.

AGENDA

Tudalennau

1. DATGAN BUDDIANT

Derbyn datganiadau o fuddiannau personol gan Gyngorwyr, yn unol â gofynion Cod Ymddygiad y Cyngor.

Nodwch:

1. Mae gofyn i Aelodau ddatgan rhif a phwnc yr agendwm mae eu buddiant yn ymwneud ag ef a mynegi natur y buddiant personol hwnnw; a
2. Lle bo Aelodau'n ymneilltuo o'r cyfarfod o ganlyniad i ddatgelu buddiant sy'n rhagfarnu, rhaid iddyn nhw roi gwybod i'r Cadeirydd pan fyddan nhw'n gadael.

2. COFNODION

Derbyn cofnodion cyfarfod blaenorol y Pwyllgor Craffu – Cynnal Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus, Cymunedau a Ffyniant a gafodd ei gynnal ar 11 Chwefror 2021.

3. YR WYBODAETH DDIWEDDARAF AM Y GORCHYMYN DIOGELU
MANNAU CYHOEDDUS 7 - 14
4. PARTNERIAETH GORFODI PARCIO 15 - 20
5. NEWIDIADAU I GASGLIADAU GWASTRAFF GWYRDD
6. **ADOLYGIAD Y CADEIRYDD**
Adlewyrchu ar y cyfarfod a'r camau gweithredu i'w dwyn ymlaen
7. **YMCHWIL A CHRAFFU**

Mae modd manteisio ar y cyfleuster ymchwil a chraffu, sy'n cael ei gyflawni gan Swyddog Ymchwil a Chraffu Aelodau'r Cyngor er mwyn helpu'r Aelodau i ymgymryd â'u cyfrifoldebau o ran craffu a'u gwaith ehangach. Mae gwaith o'r fath yn atgyfnerthu rhaglenni gwaith y Pwyllgorau Craffu er mwyn sicrhau bod pynciau sy'n seiliedig ar dystiolaeth yn cael eu trafod. Os oes gyda chi unrhyw ymholiadau ynghylch gwaith ymchwil, e-bostiwch: Craffu@rctcbc.gov.uk
8. **DOLENNI YMGYNGHORI**
Gwybodaeth mewn perthynas ag [ymgyngoriadau](#) perthnasol i'w hystyried gan y Pwyllgor.
9. **BUSNES BRYS**
Trafod unrhyw faterion sydd, yn ôl doethineb y Cadeirydd, yn faterion brys yng ngoleuni amgylchiadau arbennig.

Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu

Cylchreliad:-

(Y Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol Y Cynghorydd S Bradwick a
Y Cynghorydd T Williams – Cadeirydd ac Is-gadeirydd, yn y drefn honno)

Y Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol:

Y Cynghorydd M Weaver, Y Cynghorydd G Stacey, Y Cynghorydd A Chapman,
Y Cynghorydd Owen-Jones, Y Cynghorydd W Treeby, Y Cynghorydd D Grehan,
Y Cynghorydd E George, Y Cynghorydd W Owen, Y Cynghorydd S Pickering,
Y Cynghorydd A Fox and Y Cynghorydd G Holmes

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 5.00 pm at the Virtual.

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

Councillor S Bradwick (Chair)

Councillor T Williams	Councillor M Weaver
Councillor G Stacey	Councillor A Chapman
Councillor D Owen-Jones	Councillor W Treeby
Councillor E George	Councillor S Pickering
Councillor A Fox	Councillor G Holmes

Officers in attendance

Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr D Batten - Head of Leisure, Parks and Countryside
Louise Davies - Director Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Mr S Humphreys, Head of Legal Services
Sarah Daniel – Senior Democratic Services Officer

20 Declaration of Interest

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

21 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 14th January 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting; subject to the inclusion of Cllr Wayne Owen to be added to the attendance list.

22 Forward Work Programme

The Senior Democratic Services presented the report to members which detailed their work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. She advised that members should note that the Forward Work Programme remained flexible and was subject to change taking into consideration the pressures on the service area during any given time.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to the current work programme attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

23 Impact of Covid-19 on Operations of Parks and Countryside

He informed Members however that this year there were 28 play areas on the programme for development this year with a further 9 for next year.

Members were advised that during the pandemic, the Countryside Team were inundated with queries and complaints from residents in relation to Japanese Knotweed Rights. This was most likely attributed to the public being restricted to their gardens. Over 300 sites in RCT were treated as part of the Knotweed programme. In addition, there had been 13 legal claims against the council in relation to Knotweed, compared with zero last year.

The Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services All services have unfortunately seen a number of staff absent at various times due to Covid related issues with staff either shielding, isolating or symptomatic so the team have had to prioritise work accordingly.

These services however have continued to operate in line with Covid restrictions with a targeted approach to a particular problem affecting trees, namely Ash die-back. General maintenance of trees overhanging highways and street lighting has been undertaken. Tree surveys were also ongoing to identify trees of poor health or condition growing upon public open spaces. Emergency works and responding to requests and complaints have continued with approximately 150 requests/month for trees and allotments

A member asked how many complaints had been received on footpaths being obstructed and asked what was being done about barbed wire on footpaths.

The Group Director replied that he couldn't give an exact figure but it was into three figures. He added that most complaints related to unilateral land owners closing off land during COVID. He added that the Authority didn't own much of the land though, especially where barbed wire complaints were concerned. There was also no legislation in place to allow the Authority to remove barbed wire from a footpath.

A Member asked if the Authority were taking enforcement action against the offenders. The Head of Legal Services advised that there was no restriction, unless it was causing a nuisance to a Highway.

A member asked if the Authority were taking action against those that were obstructing footpaths as this was particularly problematic in the Taff area with people illegally blocking them.

The Group Director responded that 10 warning letters had recently been issued. He added that we do try to avoid taking legal action in the first instance as this is quite a resource pressure and have lengthy timescales and have found that communication is the best approach in the first instance. If this doesn't work, rangers would go out and remove obstructions and we would then pursue legal action if the obstructions were put back

A member asked if there were reports of parks being used by the public when they were closed under Covid restrictions.

The Group Director advised that there were a number of people using them when they were closed and we had a number of reports of individuals using them, as well as the use of Sports clubs opening. He advised that the Authority reacted accordingly when reports were received.

The Chairman asked what the timescale for completion of allotments in Abercynon was and if there was a waiting list for these.

The Group Director replied that there was a waiting list for the plots once they were completed. The funding was agreed two weeks ago and it was hoped that officers would be on site shortly with a vision to complete sometime in March.

A member was concerned at the long waiting list for allotments and noted the current wait for plots was over 400. He asked how we could accommodate this and does the Authority have a plan to purchase any further land as he stated that residents found this activity therapeutic, particularly during the Pandemic.

The Group Director replied that the Authority were not currently looking for any new plots, however this is something that the Climate Change Committee would be looking at. The Chairman advised that there were many private allotments that have plots free and recommended that the Authority work with the private owners to reduce wait times. He added that the Authority could also work with the allotment owners to collect their green waste and therefore increase our recycling figures.

A member asked what the Council strategy was for replacing trees infected with Ash Dieback. The Group Director stated that the Authority were currently reviewing the processes for these. He advised that eventually we would lose the majority of ash trees as it was becoming a more and more serious issue. The wider part of the strategy would be to allow new trees to be planted to replace them.

A Member asked what happens to the felled trees. The Head of Leisure, Parks and Countryside stated that there was no re-sale value associated with them so they were shredded to rot down. He added that contractors who do the work can also take it away. The member asked that members be informed if the trees were cut down and left at the site so they could warn residents of potential hazards.

A Member stated that she had been approached by residents to ask if they were able to undertake litter picks in their local area but was concerned about the potential of large gatherings. The Director Public Health and Protection Services stated that these unfortunately were not encouraged at this time under Covid regulations, whilst the intention was positive it would be a breach of regulations.

24 Consultation Links

The Senior Democratic Services Officer advised members of a consultation on litter and flytipping that was currently open and being undertaken by Welsh Government should they wish to take part in the consultation. The Chair added that he had already contributed and encouraged members to take part.

25 Urgent Business

A Member advised the Committee that he had received a letter from a resident commenting positively on the recycling measures and the street cleansing, especially during inclement weather and the global pandemic, the letter commended the team and thanked them for keeping the streets of RCT clean.

The Chairman informed members that it was raised in a recent Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee that a particular ward wasn't clean. He clarified that at this time, this is because officers were having to undertake other

priorities during the pandemic. as well as continuing with their day jobs. The Group Director added that the service area had maintained the service from day 1 of the pandemic and supported areas as best they were able to during COVID whilst contending with staff self-isolating and being redeployed to essential and critical services.

Members agreed with the comments mentioned and commended the teams for their continued efforts throughout the pandemic.

Recycling figures

The Group Director updated members on the recycling figures for first 9 months of the year and was pleased to inform members that they had achieved just over 69% for recycling which was the highest figure the Authority had ever had. He added that 70% is the target for 2024/25. He further advised that flood damaged areas were included in these figures and if it wasn't for the Flood damage, we probably would have gone over 70%

Member raised query regarding rodents in wards and asked what we used to treat the sewers.

The Director Public Health and Protection advised that the Authority undertakes the sewer bating contract on behalf of Welsh Water which was a fixed contract fixed for a number of years. She advised that the Authority were proactive but lead by intelligence. She added that the pest control treatment programme does vary each year but stated we rely on people reporting so we can have a focussed approach.

**Cllr S Bradwick
Chairman**



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

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

18th MARCH 2021

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

Agenda Item No: 3

**STREETCARE
ENFORCEMENT
UPDATE**

Author: Alistair Critchlow – Parking Services and Enforcement Manager

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee with update of the work of the Council's Streetcare Enforcement department.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Receive an update on the work of the Council's Streetcare Enforcement department from the Parking Services and Enforcement Manager accordingly.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The management of municipal waste forms one of the Council's key priorities. It aims to reduce residual waste sent to landfill and increase the overall recycling rate of the Council to meet strict targets set by Welsh Government.

3.2 Alongside general domestic waste and recycling management, Streetcare Services also enforce Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) in relation to certain day to day environmental crimes/offences via its Streetcare Enforcement department, including: -

- Litter dropping
- Dog Fouling / control, (Public Space Protection Orders – PSPO)
- Fly Tipping
- Industrial / Commercial waste

3.3 FPNs are created by way of an invoice raised on the Council’s Sundry Debtors system, using information gathered by Enforcement Officers. Payments can be made online, at any One4All Centre, as well as via telephone.

3.4 Responsibility for the recovery of non-payment of a FPNs lies with the Council’s Debt Management section and if no payment is received, (within the prescribed 28 days), cases are escalated to the Legal Services Department for legal proceedings to commence.

4. UPDATE / CURRENT POSITION

4.1 2020/21 has been a year of considerable disruption to the core work of the Streetcare Enforcement team, as can be seen from the table below, which shows that, until very recently, numbers of FPNs issued have generally been very low over the course of the year, albeit due to a number of mitigating factors.

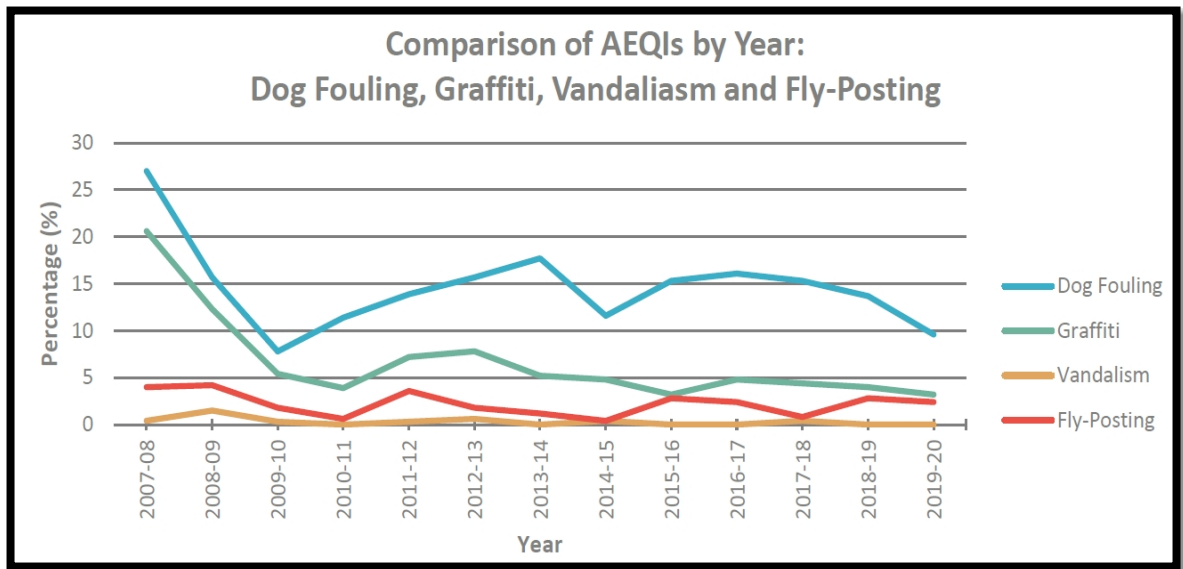
Month / Area	Litter	PSPO	Waste	Fly Tipping
Apr-20	0	0	0	3
May-20	0	8	0	0
Jun-20	0	40	0	0
Jul-20	1	41	1	0
Aug-20	6	40	5	0
Sep-20	4	30	8	5
Oct-20	22	23	7	9
Nov-20	25	12	7	3
Dec-20	13	15	6	4
Jan-21	13	18	2	1
Feb-21	46	74	14	3

4.2 When Storm Dennis hit in February 2020, the Streetcare Enforcement team were immediately re-deployed to help the flood victims. Initially, the team helped residents clear flood damaged furniture and belongings from their homes, and this was followed by assisting with the distribution of food parcels to those affected.

- 4.3 However, when the team were still assisting with food parcel distribution, the first period of “lock-down” associated with the COVID-19 pandemic began. At this point the issuing of FPNs was put on hold indefinitely, as the team were deployed to ensuring that the public were able to continue recycling by distributing bags to individual households.
- 4.4 It was not until May 2020 that a small number of the team went back to issuing FPNs for breaches of PSPOs, (dog fouling and control), due to an influx of complaints from the public about the amount of dogs on sports pitches, (largely due to the effect of “lockdown”).
- 4.5 As the year has progressed thereafter, the team have, at various junctures, been drafted in to support the Facilities Cleaning team in cleaning schools and offices ahead of building re-openings, assisted the Public Health and Protection team monitor town centre business compliance with COVID regulations such as face-mask wearing, provision of hand sanitiser and maintenance of social distancing requirements, and also helped to marshal traffic and parking at COVID testing centres.
- 4.6 The year has also seen the Council take litter enforcement duties in-house, (from 3GS), and enter into a Service Level Agreement, (SLA), with Trivallis for the provision and management of an Environmental Enforcement Service concentrating on estates managed by them.

5. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS, (PSPO)

- 5.1 Following consultation with residents, the Council introduced a PSPO enforcing new dog fouling rules in the County Borough in 2017.
- 5.2 The Order states that:
- Dog owners **MUST** clean up their dogs’ mess immediately and dispose of it properly.
 - Dog owners **MUST** carry means to pick up dog mess (e.g. bags) at all times.
 - Dog owners **MUST** follow a direction from an authorised officer to put a dog on a lead.
 - Dogs are **BANNED** from all schools, children’s play areas and marked sports pitches maintained by the Council.
 - Dogs **MUST** be kept on a lead at all times in Council maintained cemeteries.
- 5.3 The PSPO also includes an increased fine of £100, and there is also a separate PSPO pertaining to Aberdare Park only, which requires that dogs must be kept on leads at all times in the park.
- 5.4 A recent Local Environmental Audit and Management System, (LEAMS) report produced by Keep Wales Tidy shows that the percentage of dog fouling breaches continues to drop from 2018-19 onwards, (please see graph below).



5.5 It is also worth noting that whilst some 207 FPNs were issued for PSPO misdemeanours from 2018-19 to 2019-20, a further 311 have been issued in 2020-21 alone, which is indicative of the Council's enforcement operations having a positive impact on this matter and compares with the LEAMS data above.

6 FLY TIPPING

6.1 Since enforcement activities started back in earnest in the summer of 2020, we have invited 117 people in for interview in connection with fly tipping allegations and evidence.

6.2 Of these cases, 49 are currently being investigated further, 14 were issued with FPNs and a further 14 are scheduled to attend Court in the next few weeks.

6.3 Additionally, there are presently 7 cases in Court now awaiting verdicts.

7 FUTURE PLANS AND EFFICIENCIES

7.1 Looking ahead to 2021/22, following an internal review of existing working practices, changes will soon be introduced with regards to the deployment of enforcement staff leading to more efficient ways of working and, hopefully, greater coverage.

7.2 Work will continue with Trivallis, whereby a member of the RCT Streetcare Enforcement team has been exclusively tasked with investigating and enforcing issues such as the dumping of waste, contamination of recycling, and littering, plus assisting Trivallis neighbourhood managers with the promotion of their educational messages around recycling and littering.

- 7.3 Additionally, as of 1st March 2021, the law around smoking in certain settings in Wales has changed. The new legislation means that it is now illegal to smoke in hospital grounds, schools' grounds and public playgrounds, as well as outdoor day care and child-minding settings. Moreover, as there is scope to warrant other officers, aside from those in Public Health and Protection, to help enforce the updated law, it may well be that the Streetcare Enforcement team are utilised accordingly.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no negative or adverse equality or diversity implications associated with this report.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 There are no consultation implications aligned to this report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 10.1 With respect to the Trivallis SLA, Trivallis fund the post of the Officer exclusively undertaking work on their estates, (albeit they remain employed by the Council).
- 10.2 Any income generated following the issue of FPNs by the Officer on the Trivallis estates is split equally between the Council and Trivallis.
- 10.3 Income generated by the Council, through the issuing of FPNs for litter dropping, breaches of PSPOs and fly-tipping for the first 11 full months of 2020/21 currently stands at approximately £60k.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 11.1 Offences associated with the following Statutory Legislation can be enforced by Officers in the Streetcare Enforcement department:
- Section 33 Environmental Protection Act 1990 under powers provided by Section 33ZB, to include small scale Fly Tipping.
 - Section 34 Environmental Protection Act 1990 under powers provided by Section 34A, to include Duty of Care (Waste) Offence.
 - Section 87 Environmental Protection Act, 1990 under powers provided by Section 88, to include the dropping of litter, chewing gum, cigarette butts.
 - Section 67 Anti-Social Crime and Policing Act 2014 under powers provided by Section 68 to include offences under Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough

Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2017 (to be amended with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2020), i.e. dog fouling.

- The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, (2005).

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

- 12.1 The enforcement actions of the Streetcare Enforcement department can be seen to contribute the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities with respect to the theme of "place": creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work by making Rhondda Cynon Taf's local environment clean and attractive.
- 12.2 This report has considered the potential long-term impact of continued enforcement action against those who litter, breach PSPOs by failing to control or be responsible for their dogs, fly-tip or contaminate their waste. Whilst the Council continues to raise awareness of the problems associated with such actions and will always help to educate and inform local residents accordingly, enforcement action is considered to be an essential tool in helping to ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations.
- 12.3 In engaging with Trivallis and helping them to raise awareness of the problems caused by indiscriminate littering or the contamination of waste across their residential estates, and ultimately provide an enforcement service as well, the Council can be seen to be collaborating with others to consider the needs of all residents.
- 12.4 Streetcare enforcement services help to promote good practices across our communities with regards to respecting our public spaces, keeping local environments clean and attractive, as well as understanding the importance of disposing of household waste correctly. The maintenance, and where necessary, the enforcement of such practices, will likely lead to healthier lifestyles.
- 12.5 A partnership between public service agencies who share common aspirations, aims and a vision to deliver clean and attractive neighbourhoods for local residents will help support the delivery of a Wales of cohesive communities, a prosperous Wales and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 The Council's Streetcare Enforcement department undertakes valuable work in the fight against environmental crimes, such as littering, fly-tipping, the abuse of our public spaces and the problems caused by the contamination of household waste.
- 13.2 The Council has adopted a "zero tolerance" approach to all environmental crimes

and offences, with the majority of FPNs issued relating to litter dropping and dog fouling.

- 13.3 2020/21 has been an extremely challenging year for many residents across RCT with several communities devastated by unprecedented flooding and then having lives lost and others put on hold as result of the onset of the COVID pandemic. However, throughout the year the Streetcare Enforcement team has helped residents from across the Borough by assisting with clearing-up flood damage, delivering food parcels, recycling bags, cleaning schools and assisting at COVID testing centres.
- 13.4 Nevertheless and notwithstanding any of the additional duties undertaken by Enforcement Officers during the past year, in the first 11 months, (April 2020 – February 2021), in excess of 500 FPNs have been issued for various environmental offences with approximately £60k in associated revenue being generated.
- 13.5 Looking ahead, collaborative work continues with Trivallis, operational efficiencies will, it is hoped, lead to better coverage and enhanced enforcement across RCT and Enforcement Officers are to potentially become involved in helping to enforce new legislation with respect to the banning of smoking in public places.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

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

18th MARCH 2021

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

Agenda Item No: 4

**SOUTH WALES PARKING GROUP
(SWPG) UPDATE**

Author: Alistair Critchlow – Parking Services and Enforcement Manager

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee with update of the work of the South Wales Parking Group (SWPG).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the previous report which was presented to the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on the 27th February 2020, (accessed [here](#)), and receive an update on the work of the South Wales Parking Group (SWPG) from the Parking Services and Enforcement Manager accordingly.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The SWPG, a regional collaboration for the processing of Penalty Charge Notices, (PCNs), issued for civil parking contraventions, consists of the following 7 Local Authorities: -

- Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC
 - Merthyr Tydfil CBC
 - Caerphilly CBC
 - Monmouthshire CC
 - Newport CC
 - Torfaen CBC
 - Blaenau Gwent CBC
- 3.2. RCT is the lead Authority of the Group and, under Service Level Agreements, (SLA), with all Authorities, undertakes the processing of all PCNs issued in RCT and across the Group's area after the point of issue. *Note: each individual Local Authority conducts its own civil parking enforcement operations.

4. UPDATE / CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The SWPG has adapted well to the challenging working environment posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The work of the SWPG has continued throughout the pandemic with excellent standards of work being maintained.
- 4.2 At the start of 2020/21, we were finalising our plans and investment in a hybrid mail solution whereby day-to-day printing, packing and mailing tasks are undertaken by a centralised print unit, with the SWPG being a pilot area. The timing of this development, occurring as it did alongside the on-set of the pandemic, proved crucial in maintaining the work of the SWPG as the transition was made to flexible home-working.
- 4.4 The adoption of hybrid mail has further improved processing efficiency, reducing costs and allowing staff greater time to focus on responding to an increasing volume of incoming correspondence generated as a result ongoing civil parking enforcement operations.
- 4.4 To complement the advance in processing efficiency, the physical base of the SWPG has moved from Sardis House, Pontypridd, to Ty Glantaf, Treforest Industrial Estate. In making this move, the Parking Enforcement and Streetcare Enforcement teams are now joined under one roof.
- 4.5 There is a great deal of synergy between these two areas, and indeed with others as well such as Streetcare Cleansing and Waste Services too, so the office move can be seen to have further enhanced the business efficiency of not just the SWPG, but the wider Streetcare function as well.
- 4.5 In April 2020, Newport CC commenced their own mobile camera enforcement operations, (the third such vehicle within the Group bearing in mind we already operates two such vehicles ourselves). Under the auspices of an enhanced SLA, RCT duly undertakes the processing of evidence gathered by the Newport vehicle and generates PCNs accordingly.

- 4.6 Between 1st April 2020 and 28th February 2021, (the 11 full months of 2020/21 to date), SWPG staff have processed, (challenges, representations, appeals and payments), over 35,000 PCNs across the Group whilst maintaining compliance with legislative timescales, DVLA processes, and key performance indicators.

5. FUTURE PLANS

- 5.1 Looking ahead to 2021/22: the SWPG client portfolio will continue to be enhanced as Merthyr Tydfil CBC plan to operate a mobile camera enforcement vehicle, (for which RCT will duly undertake the back-office processing of evidence gathered by it), and aspirations remain for The Vale of Glamorgan CBC to join the Group as well).
- 5.2 Furthermore, the Welsh Government, (WG), as part of a suite of transport measures assisting the creation of public spaces aiming to help to promote people's health and well-being, have set out their vision for solving the problems caused by pavement parking, which will see likely the adoption of pavement parking as a civil parking contravention.
- 5.3 A Working Group has been set-up by the WG to agree a strategic approach to this new area of civil parking enforcement, establish guiding principles and support Local Authorities with clear, workable and detailed guidance, as they adopt new enforcement powers accordingly, which will likely come into operation from July 2022.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no negative or adverse equality or diversity implications associated with this report.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There are no consultation implications aligned to this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 A detailed financial analysis of the administrative tasks undertaken with respect to the processing of PCNs has helped to inform a SLA offer to all participating Local Authorities. The operation of the SLAs are kept under review, but all costs are expected to continue to be met by the additional income generated.
- 8.2 A centralised arrangement of this type has led to a reduction in administrative costs. For example, following negotiations with suppliers, the cost of procuring the requisite software licences and consumables has been significantly reduced.

- 8.4 Income received from other Local Authorities over the course of the past year from SWPG processing functions has, in the light of the impact of the COVID pandemic, exceeded expectations, with approximately £120k generated in the first 11 full months of 2020/21.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA 2004): The Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions prescribes that back-office PCN processing functions can be contracted out, (albeit decisions with regard to formal representations cannot).
- 9.2 Local Authorities have a duty to tackle dangerous parking and the TMA 2004 duly confers responsibilities upon Local Authorities with Civil Enforcement Area status to enforce civil parking contraventions accordingly.

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

- 10.1 A regional collaboration to efficiently process PCN helps to deliver a greater consistency of parking enforcement practices across the region and, as such, can be seen to contribute the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities with respect to the theme of "place": creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work by making Rhondda Cynon Taf's local environment clean and attractive.
- 10.2 This report has considered the potential long-term impact of collaborating with other Local Authorities to provide a more sustainable PCN processing function, with a clear responsibility for the Council to guide and inform other Local Authorities as to their own policies and procedures to help ensure fair standards of parking enforcement across a wide area.
- 10.3 With the aim of balancing the business needs of all Local Authorities, whilst helping to alleviate the problems caused by inconsiderate and dangerous parking practices, the Council can be seen to be collaborating with others to consider the needs of all users of the Highway.
- 10.4 The civil parking enforcement service helps to improve traffic flow and road safety, improve public transport reliability and reduce parking problems in town centres, residential areas, outside our schools, etc. The creation of safe walking environments outside schools is also likely to lead to healthier lifestyles.
- 10.5 A partnership between a number of Local Authorities across south-east Wales, which shares common aspirations, best practice and consistency of service provision, will help support the delivery of a Wales of cohesive communities, a prosperous Wales and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The CPE Service ensures that Traffic Regulation Orders are better enforced, which maintains the highways in a condition that are free of vehicles which would otherwise be restricting the traffic flow and thus the highways would be better able to undertake their primary purpose of the unrestricted passage of vehicles in a safe manner.
- 11.2 The SWPG consists of 7 Local Authorities all with their own civil parking enforcement operations, with RCT undertaking back-office PCN processing duties on their collective behalf, thus positioning itself as a regional parking ticket processing hub.
- 11.3 The SWPG team have coped admirably with the challenges brought about by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, moving offices and adjusting to a more flexible home-working routine with further business efficiencies being achieved.
- 11.4 In the year to date, RCT has processed, (challenges, representations, appeals and payments), over 35,000 PCNs and received approximately £120k in associated processing charges under the terms of the SWPG SLAs.
- 11.5 Going forward, the SWPG will be enhanced still further by the addition of a mobile camera enforcement vehicle in Merthyr Tydfil CBC and the Council will work with all SWPG partners to prepare to best meet the inevitable challenges resulting from the WGs aspirations to tackle pavement parking.

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