

Mae'r cofnodion hyn yn amodol ar gymeradwyaeth yng nghyfarfod priodol nesaf y Pwyllgor

These Minutes are subject to approval at the next appropriate meeting of the Committee.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, on Thursday, 27th of September 2018

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor S. A. Bradwick – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

A. Chapman	D. Owen-Jones
G. Stacey	S. Pickering
W. Owen	E. Stephens
E. George	M. Weaver
D. Grehan	
G. Hughes	

Officers

Mr N. Wheeler – Director Highways & Streetcare Services

Ms N. Jones – Waste Services Strategic & Ops Officer

Mr S. Humphreys – Head of Legal, Planning & Environment

Mr J Spanswick – Parks & Countryside Manager

Mr J Bragg – Countryside & Rights of Way Officer

J. Nicholls – Senior Democratic Services Officer

7. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair introduced the officers in attendance and welcomed them to his committee.

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillor T. Williams, W. Treeby, M. Diamond and M Fidler Jones.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED -In accordance with the Code of Conduct, there were no personal declarations of interests made, pertaining to the agenda.

10. MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee held on the 28th June 2018 subject to it being noted that discussions ensued around the facilities the new mobile libraries would have such as Wi-Fi, which was welcomed by Committee, and that a point of concern was raised in respect of too few visits of the Council's mobile library to some communities, which is a service highly valued by many residents.

11. MATTERS ARISING

Minute No. 7 – The Chair also noted that arrangements were being made for the Director of Wales, Planning Inspectorate to attend the Council and speak to Members.

The Chair also confirmed that appropriate training would be provided to all Members of the Council to facilitate their understanding of the planning process.

Minute No. 8 –It was confirmed that a list of officer's roles and responsibilities for the Highways & Streetcare Service area would be circulated following the meeting.

Minute No. 9- The Chair confirmed that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) has now been referred to the Finance & Performance Committee.

12. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Committee received the report of the Director Public Health, Protection and Community Services, which outlined the background of the draft 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan' (ROWIP). In December 2017, Members resolved that a formal review of 'Out & About; the Rights of Way Improvement Plan' for Rhondda Cynnon Taff was necessary and that the committee would pre-scrutinise the review and feed back to Cabinet.

The Parks & Countryside Manger gave the Committee a summary of where we are and this was followed by a Power Point presentation by the Countryside & Rights of Way Officer on the draft ROWIP. The introduction to the presentation provided the legal background for preparing the plan. A summary was given of the

assessment undertaken in 2017 and Members were informed that the conclusion of the assessment was to prepare a revised plan.

The Countryside & Rights of Way Officer provided the background to the Statement of Action and identified the key themes for action under each of the six objectives.

The objectives were outlined as follows;

- Promote outdoor countryside activity for health, regeneration, tourism and recreation.
- Walking and cycling as transport options.
- Protect the access resource
- Improve provision for walkers, cyclists, horse riders, off road vehicles and users with mobility and sensory disabilities.
- Involving local communities and voluntary organisations in the development, promotion and use of access opportunities
- Develop a more efficient management system for statutory Rights of Way work, including the Definitive Map.

Members were informed that the consultation period closed on the 17th September 2018 and advised that the responses are still being analysed and, together with the observations of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee, will inform the final plan to be presented to Cabinet by the end of the year.

In conclusion, the Countryside & Rights of Way Officer advised Members that the ROWIP will help the Council improve the network of public footpaths throughout the County Borough. He reminded Members that the plan will promote the rights of way to access outdoor activity for health, regeneration, tourism and recreation. Members were asked to make a recommendation that the draft plan is put before Cabinet so that a revised ROWIP may be approved within the specified time.

Following the presentation, the Committee discussed the information and questioned the Parks & Countryside Manger and Countryside & Rights of Way Officer.

In response to a query regarding the Penrhys Pilgrimage from Llandaff Cathedral passing through the County Borough to Penrhys, the Countryside & Rights of Way Officer advised that the Council have not been formally approached to be partners in the venture, but that the Council have assisted and will continue to assist where they can.

A Member asked if there would be a provision to improve access for horse riders even though the activity was identified as a minority concern in the 2017 assessment. Members were advised that whilst provisions would be put in place during the Plan period, the money would have to be spent where the priorities are.

A query was raised in relation to public pathways and if provisions had been made within the Plan. Members were advised that there were already provisions in place.

A Member commented that the focus seems to be on public paths rather than public parks of the County Borough. The Countryside & Rights of Way Officer advised that any open spaces can be looked at and they are looking at all access opportunities.

The Chair sought clarification as to who would be the point of contact for the public to adopt a path. Members were advised that the Adopt a Path scheme had been set up in 2012 and the process involves a simple application form submitted to the Council.

The Chair also queried by how much the Welsh Government had cut funding and what was the total budget available. The Chair was advised that funding had been cut by £37,000 this financial year, and that the total allocation received from the Welsh Government was originally around £50,000. The Parks and Countryside Manager advised members that the Countryside Section is made up of 7 officers, 2 senior rangers and 3 operatives, but that only 2 officers manage the Rights of Way function.

The Chair emphasised that education was a big factor and queried how they interact with schools in the County Borough. The Countryside & Rights of Way Officer advised that the Countryside Section undertakes small-scale initiatives, which involves going into schools and encouraging teachers and children to use the public paths to look at wildlife. They will also be there to support and advise schools.

Further discussions ensued and a Member commented that it was important that people in the County Borough were encouraged to be more active. The Member asked if there are any specific plans to encourage people to use the paths more often. The Countryside & Rights of Way Officer advised that resources are there for people to do more walking and that this would be beneficial to people in the County Borough. Members were advised that they are also working closely with leisure and tourism, and that the Council is working with neighbouring authorities to encourage more residents and visitors to use the Taff Trail. A Member spoke positively about the hard work that had been done with Ynysybwl Regeneration Partnership's paths and trails working group.

The Chair then requested that Maps are brought back so that the committee knows where all the routes are.

A Member queried whether a marketing campaign will be done to highlight the right of way areas. The Officer confirmed that there will be a rights of way promotion. The Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services commented that the Council's tourism sector has been focusing on this and that they are making Maps available interactively.

A Member asked how we could get the routes more widely known to residents of Rhondda Cynnon Taff. Members were advised that social media will be a big focus for promoting the routes and a Member commented that it would be great to increase tourism in the County Borough.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED** to;

- Recommend the report to Cabinet subject to consideration being given to funding and the inclusion of bilingual links on social media to interactive Maps.

13. PRESENTATION FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETCARE SERVICES.

Following an introduction by the Director of Highways & Streetcare Services, the Committee received a presentation from the Waste Services Strategic & Ops Officer in respect of Communal Area Recycling.

It was reported that a Communal bin collection point is a place not managed by the Council but an agreed place to pick up rubbish from several properties and there are hundreds in RCT. The main concerns are lack of ownership and the inability of officers to identify culprits of contamination. They also become a magnet for fly tipping, health and safety issues and pests. Enforcement becomes almost impossible and results in a loss of recyclable material, which affects council targets. Members were shown pictures from Rhydyfelin, Trallwn, Edmonstown, Tonypany, Aberaman and Hendreforgan of community recycling areas to illustrate the issues faced by the Council.

The Director of Highways and Streetcare Services said this relates to social housing and back lanes as well as unadopted roads. Members were advised that it's one of the most emotive things that they deal with. It was noted that communal areas have become more of a problem since the 4th of June 2018 when the Council imposed the one wheelie bin or two black bag limits.

The Director proposed that Members consider establishing a working group to look at the issues and valued Members' input and local knowledge. He added that should Members' agree there would be a possibility of introducing a service level agreement with landlords, who are not showing responsibilities for the problem.

The Director advised Members that it is a major problem for all Councils and therefore it is also important that the Working Group will have input from crew members and Landlords.

The Chair commented that every Member has this problem in their ward and advised that he fully supports the proposal to set up a Working Group and he noted that RCT could be the first Council in Wales to address this and could potentially lead the way for other Councils.

A Member noted that landlords should be doing more to look after their residents and that this is a particular problem with some social housing across the County Borough

Discussions ensued and a Member commented that landlords need to provide an area to put black bags. The Director advised that in communal areas, they could look at issuing fines to some landlords if they refuse to work with the Council on this issue.

A number of concerns were raised in relation to communal waste issues facing the Council. It was agreed that there is a need to find out who the culprits are and a

Member questioned whether the use of CCTV would be appropriate. It was agreed that there should be responsibility on landlords to work with the Council on this issue.

The Director advised the committee that the Welsh Government want the Council to recycle more and the Council tackle this by making the recycling process easier and by fining residents if they do not recycle. However; it was emphasised that communal waste is different as they cannot find proof of ownership. The Director advised Members that he has spoken to Magistrates on this issue and that in terms of enforcement the Council is achieving its targets. The Director emphasised that the Council may need to target specific areas and trial different ideas and that this is something for the Working Group to look at in more detail.

It was agreed that Members of the Working Group would go out on a round with the recycling teams so that Members can see the process first hand. It was noted that if Members visit the education centre then they will get a good understanding of the issues involved.

A Member queried whether the Council were experiencing any issues with local businesses. The Director advised that the problems were mainly with fast food outlets.

Following discussion Members **RESOLVED**;

- To set up a Working Group to consider Communal Area Recycling Strategy which will target all areas including schools and businesses; and
- That Members email the Senior Democratic Services Officer if they wish to be a part of the Working Group.

14. JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS & STREETCARE SERVICES AND DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES.

The committee received a report outlining the background information and issues for consideration in relation to the development of infrastructure to support low carbon vehicle/ ultra-low emission vehicle ownership.

In February 2018, a Notice of Motion, calling for a Scrutiny Working Group to consider options to develop Low Carbon Vehicle (LCV) infrastructure in RCT was approved by Full Council. This was necessary to enable the development of a policy, which will improve the infrastructure required to support low carbon vehicle/ultra low emission vehicle ownership in RCT.

The UK Government plans to ban the sale of petrol and diesel only combustible engine cars from 2040. The development of infrastructure to support low carbon vehicle/ ultra low emission vehicle ownership in RCT would complement the Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; the Environment Act (Wales) 2016 and; the Council's commitments as a member of the UK100.

The Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services advised Members that officers have been undertaking research regarding LCV infrastructure

and requirements to identify the associated issues. Due to the complexity of the issues involved this has taken a number of months.

Members were advised that section four of the report provides a picture of LCV in the County Borough and provides details of the funding available. Section five provides a list of key considerations that the Working Group will need to consider. The Service Director advised that a key issue in RCT is that there is a high volume of houses with no off road parking and cables cannot run across footways and highways to plug into vehicles as they would be deemed an obstruction to the highway.

Members were advised that Wales is behind the rest of the UK in terms of infrastructure. The Working Group will be an opportunity to lead Wales in the right direction.

The Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services suggested that there is an opportunity to refer the development of infrastructure to support low carbon vehicle ownership to the Future Generations (Wales) Commissioner Office working group for it to progress the matter. The working group will work through the review utilising the new scrutiny toolkit, which will embrace the wellbeing goals and five ways of working within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

The Chair agreed with the proposal to refer the matter to the Future Generations (Wales) Committee but emphasised that the overall ownership will stay with the Public Service Delivery Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee and that they would have input into the work and have the opportunity to agree the outcome.

A Member queried whether the roads would need digging up to create charging points. The Director advised that this is unlikely and that in all probability vehicles will be charged at supermarkets in much the same way that we fuel up for diesel and petrol vehicles. There could be charging points in Council car parks and leisure centres and this is something that will be looked at. Members were advised that apps tend to be used to access charge points.

A Member asked how many Council employees are using Low Carbon Vehicles and queried if the Council could be doing more to support them. Members were advised that there were 145 ULEVs registered in Rhondda Cynon Taf as at the end of Quarter 1 2018. We do not have details of the number of employees with low carbon vehicles though two out of forty four vehicles leased through the Council's salary sacrifice scheme are ULEVs.

Following discussion Members **RESOLVED:-**

1. To refer the matter to the Future Generations (Wales) Commissioners Office; and
2. That the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee has input into the collaborative project and has the opportunity to agree the final outcome.

15. URGENT BUSINESS

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services presented the urgent report and asked Members to consider setting up a Working Group to deal with the Notice of Motion in respect of Community Snow Wardens, which was supported by Full Council held on the 19th September 2018.

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services advised Members that the matter will need to be progressed swiftly, therefore the Working Group will need to be set up immediately so that any recommendations can be implemented in advance of this winter. Members were advised to email the Senior Democratic Officer if they want to be a part of the Working Group (which it was advised would be held during the day as a better use of Officer time and to prevent any clash with the Council's Committee schedule).

A Member queried if the Council will be providing insurance for any falls or slips by volunteers. The Director advised that issues such as insurance liability and DBS checks will be looked at by the Working Group.

Members **RESOLVED** to:

- Establish a Working Group to consider the content of the Notice of Motion; and
- To receive a report from the Director of Highways and Streetcare Services at its inaugural meeting, outlining how the policy could be implemented

The meeting closed at 6.40pm

Chair
S. A. Bradwick