



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 23 September 2020 at 10.30 am at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Park, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

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 G Hughes
Councillor W Owen	Councillor M Diamond
Councillor A Fox	Councillor A Crimmings

Officers in attendance

Mr S Owen – Service Director Streetcare
Mr C Davies – Corporate Consultations Manager
Mr S Humphreys – Head of Legal Services
Mrs S Daniel – Senior Democratic Services Officer

The Chairman congratulated Mr Paul Mee on his recent promotion to Group Director Community and Children's Services. He also welcomed Mr Steve Owen, Service Director Streetcare to the Committee who was in attendance in place of Mr Nigel Wheeler

1 Declaration of Interest

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

2 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 27 February 2020 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

3 Pre-Scrutiny Of Proposed Extension And Variation To Rhondda Cynon Taf CBCs Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Orders

The Senior Democratic Services Officer presented the report to members which informed them of the outcomes of the recent public consultation to extend the two Public Spaces Protection Orders relating to dog controls in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The Service Director for Streetcare asked for feedback from members on the report and stated that any comments from the meeting would be taken into consideration when the Cabinet meet to consider the proposals.

A member asked about cemeteries that are run by Community Councils and if it was possible that they could be involved in the PSPO
The Service Director for Streetcare advised that the service area had already

worked with Town and Community Councils and though there aren't many who are responsible for cemeteries they could possibly be included in the PSPO. He added that no issues had been reported to them from Town and Community Councils so if members were aware of any he asked that they get in touch with him.

The Chairman asked if dog waste bags were freely available for residents throughout RCT and at what cost was this to the Authority for providing the service?

The Service Director Streetcare advised members that the Authority spends in the region of £25 – 30k per year on dog waste bags and is a gesture of good will to encourage residents to be responsible owners. He added that RCT were the only Authority that provides them free of charge. He advised however that due to the current pandemic the bags had not been distributed since April as they are not a priority and most facilities where they were distributed have been closed

The Chair asked if there was a law that allowed horse manure to be left on the streets. The Service Director Streetcare advised that this was not an offence

The Chairman asked what the annual tonnage of dog waste collected per annum was. The Service Director Streetcare responded that this was approximately 105 tonne per year.

The Chairman stated that the signs to warn dog owners to pick up their dog waste after them were very small and asked if the signs could be made bigger. The Service Director Streetcare stated that whilst the signs would need updating to reflect new dates the option to make the signs larger would be a costly exercise as signs would need larger posts and they were legible if you were close to them.

The Chairman stated that he would like to see the Authority engage with schools to educate future generations to clean up after their dogs and be responsible dog owners and for them to understand the impact on public health if dog waste is left behind. The Corporate Consultations Manager advised that this was to be explored as it was also mentioned in the consultations feedback. A member stated that he fully supported the order and there was large scale support from community also. He added that people needed to take personal responsibility and not rely on enforcement action from the Authority. He added that if you can't see a bin it is still not acceptable, nor a reasonable excuse to leave dog waste on the floor and urged residents to pick it up and take home. He asked officers if there could be some more publicity on where the bins are located such as a find your bin campaign and also if it was possible to make it easier to report a full bin

The Service Director Streetcare stated that there were lots of things the Authority would like to do electronically to make it easier for residents to report things in their area (not just dog bins) but this was still being looked at to ensure this way of reporting did not exclude residents who were unable to report things online. If residents do not currently have the means to report incidents online we are asking them to still call in to report or ask someone who has the means to report it electronically to do so on their behalf.

A member stated that his Community Council has over 30 dog bins that the Authority empties for them. He asked how many dog bins does the Authority

empty for other Community Council's and suggested that if the Authority charges them this could generate income to employ more enforcement officers.

The Service Director Streetcare advised that the number of bins the Authority empties for Community Councils was very small in comparison to the amount that RCT is responsible for. He added that the case is usual that Community Councils fund the capital costs for the bin and installation, and the Authority empties the waste as this is a small element for us when we are already out emptying bins. Some Community Councils have asked for a part time warden to patrol the areas for dog fouling purposes which they will contribute to the cost. He further added that the RCTCBC are currently working with Trivallis to fund a full time warden.

A member stated he was concerned to hear that the Authority are receiving 2000 calls per year reporting dog fouling issues. He stated that many play areas were constantly getting fouled as there was a lack of visits to these areas. He asked if as part of the recommendations that enforcement was going to be increased?

The Service Director Streetcare advised members that since lockdown at the end of March 2020 the Authority has not been out enforcing as the staff had been redeployed to essential services and were delivering food and supporting other services. Now the staff have returned to some normal duties. He stated that more enforcement officers were not the answer as the challenge was actually catching people in the act, he advised that the Authority needed local intelligence so they can have a more focused presence in patrolling those areas of concern.

A member asked about the working patterns of the enforcement officers and asked if they worked different patterns as people often walked their dogs early in the morning or later in the evening.

The Service Director Streetcare advised that the enforcement officers operate on a rota basis which covers early mornings and evenings when the normal rota is in place. He reiterated that local intelligence was needed as if they are aware of a problematic area then they can target and publicise that they are in the area.

The Cabinet Member thanked the officers for carrying out the consultations and noted the positive feedback from residents. She also thanked the Committee for the proactive work and their engagement with residents and officers

4 Chair's Review and Close

Thanked all members in public health and licensing over the last few months. He also thanked the bin men and crews for their continued hard work during the current pandemic.

5 Urgent Business

None

This meeting closed at 11.20am

**Cllr S Bradwick
Chairman**