

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 JULY 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 15 July 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor Veronica Gay (Chair)

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Glenys Diskin, Cindy Hinds, Ray Hughes, Joe Johnson, Brian Lloyd, Nancy Matthews, Ann Minshull, and Paul Shotton

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Clive Carver (for Hilary Isherwood)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Chris Dolphin and Colin Legg

CONTRIBUTORS: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment, Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure, Chief Officer (Planning and Environment), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), and Highway Network Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator, and Committee Officer.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 June 2015 were submitted.

Matters arising

Councillor Clive Carver referred to his comments on page 9, and emphasised the importance of white lines and speed limits.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

17. VEHICLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM POLICY

The Highway Network Manager introduced a report to seek the Committee's recommendation to Cabinet for the approval of the proposed Vehicle Management System Policy for all fleet vehicles operated by the

Authority. He provided background information and referred to the key considerations as detailed in the report and advised that a copy of the Vehicle Management System Policy was appended to the report for consideration.

The Chair invited Members to raise questions.

The Highway Network Manager responded to the queries raised concerning driver identification and the use of driver fobs and the 3 month “settling in” period.

In response to a question concerning responsibility for maintenance of vehicles, the Highway Network Manager confirmed that vehicle maintenance remained in-house.

The Chair asked why 25% of vehicles were not going to be tracked. The Highway Network Manager explained that 25% was the current position and that it was aimed to achieve 100% tracking moving forward. He commented that it was a requirement of the service area to justify usage of the vehicle.

In response to the further comments and questions raised around tracking and monitoring of vehicle use the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) outlined the purpose and benefits of the GPS Vehicle Management System (VMS) in terms of the health and safety protection of employees during their work and maximising the justification and efficiency of vehicle use.

RESOLVED:

That Environment and Overview Scrutiny recommends the Vehicle Management System Policy (Appendix 1) to Cabinet for approval.

18. YEAR END CHIEF OFFICER PERFORMANCE REPORTS

The Chief Officer (Planning and Environment) introduced the 2014/15 Year End Service Performance Report for Planning and Environment. He explained that this was the first Chief Officer Year End report following the development of the Planning and Environment portfolio in June 2014. He gave a performance overview and reported on areas of positive performance and areas where there was a concern. He also reported on the performance indicators which were appended to the report and drew attention to the data concerning planning applications, planning appeals, and enforcement.

Councillor Paul Shotton expressed his appreciation on the extinguishment from the Rights of Way network of the Golftyn and Wepre Park areas within his Ward.

The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) introduced the 2014/15 Year End Service Performance Report for Transport and Streetscene.

He provided a performance overview and referred to the areas of positive performance which were detailed in the report. He also referred to the key performance indicators appended to the report which were used to manage services and the operational risk detail for those risks currently assessed as high.

Members were invited to raise questions.

In response to a concern raised by Councillor Ray Hughes regarding streetlighting the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) explained that all the sites where lighting applied had been identified and discussions had been held with the North Wales police last week. Members would be invited to comment on risk assessments prior to the scheme being approved. Councillor Nancy Matthews raised concerns around the time taken to replace or repair damaged columns. The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) asked for details to be provided outside the meeting with regard to the columns concern so that he could investigate further.

Councillor Hughes raised the issue of dog fouling. The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) advised that officer enforcement teams proactively addressed the problem which was caused by irresponsible dog owners and fixed penalty notices were issued as appropriate. The Lead Member advised that the increase in the number of enforcement officers and a zero tolerance approach should have a positive impact, along with improved intelligence gathering and the targeting of resources at areas of most concern. In response to a question concerning how many owners had been taken to Court the Chief Officer said he could provide that information following the meeting. The Chair referred to the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and the OWL Alert Scheme and suggested that the Authority considered establishing links to such community schemes. It was agreed that details of the OWL Alert scheme would be circulated to all Members. The Chair also asked for information on Paws on Patrol to be circulated to Members of the Committee. The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) agreed to circulate a report entitled 'How clean are our streets' to Members of the Committee for information.

Councillor Joe Johnson referred to a spray used in some areas to highlight dog fouling and the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) confirmed the background to the initiative.

Councillor Joe Johnson congratulated the Chief Officer and his team on the much improved road network along the coastal corridor with the synchronisation of traffic controls. He also referred to the subject of recycling and asked if there was provision for 'white goods' and other household or gardening items which were still in working order to be recycled rather than destroyed. The Cabinet Member for Environment and the Chief Officer commented on the procedure for recycling items of household equipment and referred to engagement with the social enterprise market and other local registered charities.

In response to a query from Councillor Carver concerning contact points, the Chief Officer advised that the preferred route for day to day enquiries was via the Contact Centre, where calls were logged and an audit trail provided if necessary.

A question was raised regarding the allocation of work to employees. The Chief Officer gave an assurance that planning meetings were held the day before to plan and agree the work schedules for the following day and to ensure that employees were trained and capable of doing the task assigned to them.

Councillor Brian Lloyd raised a concern relating to broken kerbs and pavements and asked how this problem was identified and reported. The Chief Officer explained that the local supervisor routinely checked every road and footpath to monitor its condition and identify any need for repairs to be undertaken.

Councillor Haydn Bateman sought further information on the maintenance policy of cycle routes. The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) advised that some funding had been made available jointly with Planning and Environment for the maintenance of prescribed cycle paths.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the reports be noted: and
- (b) That feedback be provided to the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee who are responsible for the overview and monitoring of performance.

19. YEAR END IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORTS

Members were asked to consider the 2014/15 Year End Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members were advised that the following Improvement Plan sub-priority reports were appended to the report:

- Traffic and Road Management
- Transport Infrastructure and Services
- Carbon Control and Reduction

Councillor Paul Shotton asked what benefits were being achieved as a result of the 'meet and greet' system which had been implemented at recycling centres. The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) advised that performance had been disappointing at some sites. The Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Public Protection explained that the introduction of a chargehand on each of the sites was not yet in place but he anticipated an improvement in performance in the future as a result. He also advised that Cabinet had asked for the situation to be closely monitored.

Councillor Nancy Matthews referred to page 75 of the report and referred to public feedback on implementation of physical Traffic Calming measures on the High Street, Bagillt. She commented that public feedback in the press had not been positive to the measures but that this had not been recorded in the report. The Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) explained that comments had been made in the press indicating that the Authority was not following process, and he gave an assurance that due process had been diligently applied.

The Chair advised that correspondence had been received from Mark Isherwood AM regarding the Bagillt speed bumps issue and she had suggested that a report be requested on the consultation process undertaken prior to the introduction of traffic calming measures and Traffic Regulation Orders so that members of the Committee could consider the robustness of the processes currently used across Flintshire.

The Chair asked the Committee to decide whether it wished to add the item to the Forward Work Programme for future consideration or not. During discussion it was agreed that a briefing paper be requested from the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) outlining the consultation process undertaken.

RESOLVED:

That a briefing note be prepared for the Committee outlining the consultation process.

20. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00am and ended at 11.45am)

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Chair