

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT)

MINUTES of a meeting held on 24th October, 2006.

Present: Councillor N.P. Hodges (Chairman); Councillors Ms. L. Burnett, P. Church, J. Clifford, Miss. J. Cole, R.F. Curtis, N.J. Gibbs, Mrs. V.M. Hartrey, G. John, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, Mrs. A.J. Moore, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe, E.T. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Also present: Councillors G.A. Cox and M.R. Harvey.

459 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE -

These were received from Councillors Mrs. A.J. Preston, W.C. Vaughan and S.T. Wiliam.

460 MINUTES -

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October, 2006 be approved as a correct record, subject to the reference to "employees" in the sentence commencing "it was explained that..." in the first paragraph of Minute no. 381 being amended to read "employers".

461 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -

No declarations were received.

462 TASK AND FINISH GROUP (RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT) -

The following report of a meeting held on 11th October, 2006 was submitted:

Present: Councillors R.F. Curtis, N.J. Gibbs, G. John, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe, E.T. Williams and S.T. Wiliam (in substitution for Councillor N.P. Hodges).

(a) Appointment of Chairman -

RESOLVED - T H A T Councillor S.T. Wiliam be appointed Chairman.

(b) Appointment of Vice-Chairman -

RESOLVED - T H A T Councillor N.J. Gibbs be appointed Vice-Chairman.

(c) Review of Recycling and Waste Management -

Arising from the recommendation made at the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) on 3rd October, 2006, the Task and Finish Group considered what would comprise a realistic scope for the Scrutiny Review.

In arriving at its decisions, the Task and Finish Group considered the following issues, although it was acknowledged that the list was not exhaustive:

- **Recycling and Composting Targets (WAG)** - Scrutiny of how the Council will achieve the WAG 2009/10 target of at least 40% recycling / composting, with a minimum of 15% composting (with only compost derived from source segregated materials counting) and 15% recycling.
- **Landfill Directive Targets (EU)** - Consideration of how the Council will meet the mandatory targets that have been set for the UK to reduce reliance on landfill.
- **Waste Minimisation** - Scrutiny of what the Council can do to encourage increased waste minimisation which would reduce the cost of waste collection and disposal, reduce the use of fuel and emission pollutants in transporting waste, reduce landfill and increase the awareness of residents on waste related issues.
- **Kerbside Collection** - Review of the levels of householder participation of collections in the current scheme and areas for improvement.
- **Bring Sites** - Scrutiny of the location, use and need for the existing 52 sites in the Vale where the public can take a range of materials for recycling, including: papers, cans, glass, plastics, textiles, foil and books.
- **Education and Awareness Raising (including schools)** - Review of current activities to raise awareness about waste issues including recycling and waste minimisation.
- **Kitchen Waste** - Consideration of levels of composting and collection of kitchen waste.
- **Green Waste** - Consideration of levels of composting and collection of green waste.
- **Commercial Waste** - Consideration of how commercial waste can be reduced or recycled.
- **Working in Partnership (with the Community)** - Scrutiny of opportunities for the Council to work with local businesses and the

voluntary sector within the Vale to reduce waste and improve recycling rates.

The Group, following discussions on the merits of the above issues,

RECOMMENDED -

(1) T H A T the Task and Finish Group Review of Recycling and Waste Management concentrate on the following issues:

- Recycling and composting targets;*
- Waste minimisation;*
- Education and Awareness raising (including schools).*

(2) T H A T the Review of Recycling and Waste Management be completed within a period of 3 months.

(3) T H A T the Review of Recycling and Waste Management be undertaken by a Task and Finish Group comprising the same membership as this Task and Finish Group, namely:

Councillors R.F. Curtis, N.J. Gibbs, N.P. Hodges, G. John, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe and E.T. Williams (or nominated substitute).

(4) T H A T officers commence preliminary work for the Review in advance of any decision by Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) and that Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) endorse this recommendation.

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the report be accepted and any necessary action taken.

463 SCRUTINY REVIEW: RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT (CHAIR - TFG) -

Having regard to the report of the Task and Finish Group (Recycling and Waste Management) as above and to that Group's recommendation that the review focus on

- recycling and composting targets
- waste minimisation
- education and awareness raising (including schools)

together with the Chairman's report and the appendix thereto,

it was

RECOMMENDED -

- (1) T H A T the focus and scope of the review be as appended to the report, the specific objectives and purpose of the review being
- to understand the current position in respect of the waste management and recycling/composting services in the Vale
 - to examine how the Council could help minimise the amount of waste generated in the Vale
 - to investigate ways of increasing recycling/composting rates to achieve the WAG 2009/10 target of at least 40% recycling/composting (with particular reference to composting which was the area where rates needed to improve the most)
 - to identify ways of increasing participation in recycling, particularly composting, and to minimise waste through education/awareness raising campaigns.
- (2) T H A T, as recommended at the initial meeting of the Task and Finish Group, the review itself be undertaken by that Group.
- (3) T H A T it be noted that the work of the Group would commence with “education and awareness raising” which would form the basis for a workshop to be held on a date to be arranged in the near future.

464 QUALITY AND PROVISION OF BUS SHELTERS (DEER) -

Councillor M.R. Wilson had requested consideration of the above in order to examine the quality of Council owned bus shelters, to discuss ways of improving them, and to evaluate existing provision and whether that was adequate. It was reported that the Council currently had 186 bus shelters located on bus routes across the Vale of Glamorgan with, in the St. Brides area, there being a number of Community Council shelters. Shelter construction ranged from timber, concrete block, brick, and steel to the latest stainless steel and toughened glass. Many of the shelters had been inherited from the former highway authorities in 1996 and were in varying condition. Following extensive negotiations with Adshel, 35 shelters - maintained by Adshel had been provided on the strategic bus routes, mostly on existing bus shelter sites with a small number of new provisions. Adshel, having met the company profile as being suitable for advertisements, had chosen the locations and each of the shelters would have been subject to and received advertisement consent. New shelters had been provided in the latter few years funded by external grant aid from, for example, the Welsh Assembly Government, although it was noted that there was no current grant aid available to enable new shelters to be provided and, in view of competing demands on the highway maintenance budget, that there were only limited funds available to provide new shelters to refurbish existing. Just £36,532 was allocated within the Highway Maintenance budget for repairs to bus shelters which was used for repairs, maintenance and new provision although that provision generally referred to the replacement of existing shelters. The cleansing of bus shelters was carried out by the Waste Management and Cleansing Division as part of the Street Care Initiative. It was accepted that it

was generally very difficult to find suitable locations for new bus shelters given that bus users wanted bus shelters to be provided but not directly outside their own properties.

The use of bus shelters as a meeting point for youths - which could cause annoyance to neighbours, was recognised and liaison with the police was carried out. In reality however, police priorities were not generally focused on such issues and it was suggested that Members pursue the matter through the PACT. Whilst accepting that bus shelters should be of a high standard to encourage the use of public transport, in practice it was recognised that such shelters were often frequented by youths and that the removal of, for example, a side panel to render the shelter less weatherproof assisted in discouraging such use. No incidents of youth annoyance had recently been reported to the Department, although Members themselves were aware that problems were occurring within the community. As regards vandalism (and the consequential costs to the Council), some information relating to graffiti removal could be made available although no specific data was currently collated which related directly to incidents of vandalism. Anecdotally, however, it was considered that the vast majority of damage to shelters was caused through vandalism and the suggestion made that an awareness raising campaign should be undertaken in secondary schools in an effort to effect a long-term culture change.

Following further discussion on the above and related matters, it was

RECOMMENDED -

- (1) T H A T the report be referred to the Scrutiny Committee (Community Wellbeing and Safety) and the Community Safety Partnership for information.
- (2) T H A T measures be immediately put in place to collect statistics in respect of incidents of vandalism (identifying bus shelters specifically) and associated costs and that a report on the same be made to this Committee in six months.

465 REVIEW OF VEHICLE ACCIDENTS IN THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN (DEER) -

Councillor M.R. Wilson had requested a review of vehicle accidents in the Vale of Glamorgan in order to examine the causes of those accidents and to assess what could be done to reduce them further. It was reported that the Highways and Traffic Group of the Engineering Design and Procurement Division of Visible Services dealt with traffic management matters in the Vale. That included reviewing the road traffic collision (RTC) data provided by the police and the fact that if the police believed that any lack of action or foresight on the part of the Council could have contributed to any collision, Council staff would be required to give account as if there were a criminal case to answer. Appended to the report were data comparing the number of personal injury collisions throughout the Vale over the last three years with data from other unitary authorities. It was accepted that RTCs could be

caused by any number of factors for which the highway authority was directly responsible for only a few. Appropriate action following an accident would depend on the cause and options available to a highway authority and could include the following

To address inappropriate speed

- introduce speed restrictions (require Traffic Regulation Orders and police support for enforcement)
- introduce 20 m.p.h. zones (near schools - must be self enforcing)
- introduce physical measures (humps, cushions, narrowings - not suitable on primary routes)
- install safety cameras (strict national criteria dictating site selection based on accident/speed records - approval required from the Department for Transport)

To address poor highway lighting

- undertake a lighting survey and consider augmenting the lighting as required

To address poor highway design

- undertake a safety audit and consider addressing issues raised as appropriate

To address inappropriate traffic management

- undertake a review of Traffic Regulation Orders and revise as appropriate (e.g. parking restrictions - which would need police support for enforcement)
- undertake a review of traffic signing and revise as appropriate

To address poor highway condition

- undertake a review and consider addressing the issues raised as appropriate

To improve pedestrian crossing facilities

- undertake user surveys to justify crossing provision and determine the most appropriate (zebra, pelican, toucan)
- should the site be near a school, encourage the school to prepare a Travel Plan (with officer assistance) to support a capital bid for Safe Routes to School (Transport Grant) funding

To improve use of accident data

- undertake route analyses and accident cluster analyses utilising the data provided and identify possible improvements based on the findings
- lack of resources currently prohibited the analyses described.

The Road Safety Team (Planning and Transportation Policy Division) also undertook education, training and publicity work. As well as “Vale-wide” initiatives, the Team also focussed on the specific geographical areas where there was evidence of collision site clusters or a general history of casualties in the area. Such interventions could include

Education

- child car seats
- driver behaviour
- pre-school and school groups

Training

- defensive and advanced training (aimed at all sections of the community but with specific schemes for the more vulnerable groups such as young drivers and mature drivers)
- motorcycle training
- cycle training for children and adults
- pre-driver training for schools
- Kerbcraft (a practical child pedestrian training scheme for 5-7 year olds)

Publicity

- new car seat regulations
- anti-drinking and driving campaigns.

Consideration then focussed on existing resources. The Highways and Traffic Group operational budget for 2006/07 amounted to £136k. of which £35k. was utilised to provide additional staff resources to respond to highway safety issues raised on a daily basis with the remainder being used to progress the highway safety schemes already prioritised and as indicated in an appendix to the report. It had to be noted that there was currently a backlog of other schemes valued in excess of £2m. awaiting funding. The operational budget had been augmented for the financial year 2006/07 by £95k. asset renewal funding which would be used to progress highway safety schemes already prioritised and as shown in a further appendix to the report. Following a successful bid for funds from the Safe Routes to School Transport Grant for 2006/07, £150k. was being used to progress schemes at St. Richard Gwyn School and Rhws Primary School. The Local Road Safety Grant allocation of £212k. for 2006/07 was also being utilised to progress highway safety schemes already prioritised. Current staffing difficulties compounded the above resource issues. Attention was drawn to the lack of qualified traffic engineers nationwide, particularly those with local government experience,

and the suggestion made that inducements would be required to attract appropriate applicants for the two permanent posts available. Partnership working with other Councils and the private sector already took place and was not, therefore, a solution to the current difficulties. The current staffing situation precluded the in-depth analyses of the data currently collected which was required prior to effective remedial action(s) being identified and progressed to fruition. The question then ensued particularly on ways of reducing speed and on the costs and criteria associated with the installation of pedestrian crossings, following which it was

RECOMMENDED -

- (1) T H A T Cabinet be requested to designate the two vacant Principal Engineer posts as hard-to-fill and implement appropriate measures to fill those posts.
- (2) T H A T, once filled, the necessary in-depth analyses be undertaken to progress any necessary remedial action identified.
- (3) T H A T, where feasible, further and more close collaboration take place with other Councils.

466 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING: 1ST APRIL, 2006 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2006 (DEER) -

The projected outturn for the 2006/07 Revenue Budget was for a deficit of £450k. for the Directorate which would be funded from anticipated savings identified in Policy Committee. Further details were contained within the report as to the reasons for the variances within certain profiled budgets and the steps being taken to address those variances where appropriate. As regards the Capital Programme, Cabinet was to be requested to approve amendments to the Capital Programme in respect of the following schemes:

- purchase of speed cameras - an increase of £49k.
- Article 33 Rural Regeneration - a reduction of £225k. in respect of the St. Athan Community Hall project as a consequence of the withdrawal of the grant offer
- purchase of defibrillators - an increase of £5k. for the purchase of additional defibrillators and other equipment as part of the Active for Life grant.

It was once again reported that the following schemes would not be completed on target namely, Penarth Headland Link and the access road to Dunraven Bay, Southerndown - a revised budget profile on which would be reported in the near future.

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the position with regard to the 2006/07 Revenue and Capital monitoring be noted.

467 DRAFT RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (DEER) -

Under the provisions of the Countryside and Rights and Way Act, the Council was required to produce a Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for the Vale of Glamorgan by November 2007 which set out the authority's intentions for the improvement and management of the Public Rights of Way network. The responses to the consultation on the initial Assessment document together with further investigations and discussions with the Local Access Forum had formed the basis of the draft ROWIP.

The draft ROWIP followed guidance given by the WAG and the Countryside Council of Wales and focused on three main themes namely, management; stakeholders; information, communication and promotion - for each of which aims had been derived to produce a series of proposed actions. The Statement of Action (Section 8 of the ROWIP) tabulated those actions, indicating priorities, programming and resource needs and, therefore, provided the strategic framework for future work on the Rights of Way network over the next 10 years. The production of the draft ROWIP would be met from within existing resources although it was noted that the eventual delivery of the proposals, including approval of a final statutory version in late 2008, would require considerable additional resourcing. In consultation with the Countryside Council for Wales, the WAG was currently considering that resourcing issue.

The Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum, having considered the draft ROWIP in depth, had generally welcomed the document, raising only minor queries. Subject to Cabinet approval, further widespread public consultation would be undertaken on the content of the document.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

RESOLVED - T H A T the draft ROWIP be commended and approved for consultation purposes.

468 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE TRAFFIC AND TOWN CENTRE TASK AND FINISH GROUPS (DLRS) -

The above Task and Finish Groups had been established on 3rd October, 2006 to facilitate the in-depth discussion and investigation of the following two Forward Work Programme items:

- dealing with the challenge of traffic
- town centre improvement and regeneration.

As agreed by this Committee on 3rd October, 2006 both Task and Finish Groups should have completed their work and submitted proposals for improved service delivery/policy development to Cabinet early in the new year. Given the very limited timescale, therefore, it was considered that the terms of reference and the intended outcomes should be clear and deliverable

within the timeframe agreed by the Committee, namely each Task and Finish Group to have completed its deliberations in time for the final report to be submitted to this Committee on 16th January, 2007.

Both car parking in the Vale (excepting Penarth) and the impact on traffic flows for the Vale as a consequence of the highway improvements at Baron's Court junction were suggested as potential topics in respect of the Traffic Task and Finish Group. No proposals were put forward in respect of the Town Centre Task and Finish Group.

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the Members of each Task and Finish Group meet to determine their respective terms of reference.