

Matter which the Chair has decided is urgent by reason of the need For the comments of the Scrutiny Committee to be considered by Cabinet prior to final submission to Welsh Government by 31st January 2022

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 24TH JANUARY, 2022

REFERENCE FROM ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 18TH JANUARY, 2022

“ ACTIVE TRAVEL – RESULTS OF CONSULTATION FOR THE ACTIVE TRAVEL NETWORK MAP UPDATE 2021 (REF) -

The reference from Cabinet on 20th December, 2021 was presented by the Group Manager Transport Services. This was to inform of the results of the public consultation on the Council's proposed Active Travel maps, which were submitted to Welsh Government for approval, and a 12-week public consultation on the proposals that took place between the 2nd August and 24th October 2021, from which 143 responses were received.

As part of that consultation, the Scrutiny Committee was presented with the proposals on the 21st September 2021. The Committee had provided a number of viewpoints which were noted by Cabinet. (Minute number C703 refers.)

Appendix B was a report compiled by Commonplace on the responses received through their portal. The platform was split across the designated localities, each containing a comment form. The areas with the greatest contributions were Penarth, Barry and Cowbridge. The areas with the lowest engagement were Llantwit Major, Rhoose and Sully. Officer comments to each individual and group were contained within Appendix B.

The Group Manager advised that following the public consultation, 3 amendments had been made to the maps since the Committee saw them last on 21st September 2021. These included:

- the addition of the route down to Llantwit Major Beach East.
- Aberthaw had now been included.
- Dingle Park in Penarth added.

It was outlined that these maps were basically a comprehensive plan for the future of Active Travel in the Vale, and only routes on these maps would be eligible for future Welsh Government Active Travel funding.

Welsh Government had been fully briefed throughout the process and had given positive feedback during their consultation. The maps had been submitted to Welsh Government just before 31st December 2021 deadline. However, there was a caveat

with the submission relating to the need for the maps to be considered by the Scrutiny Committee before they were given final sign off.

Councillor A.R Robertson commented that a lot of people had experienced issues when attempting to access the maps on the consultation portal. In reply, the Group Manager stated that the issues had been identified and flagged up with Welsh Government and PDF copies of the maps had been made available as an alternative.

Councillor Robertson also stated that he and residents of Dinas Powys were extremely keen and supportive for the progression of the Active Travel route between Dinas Powys and Barry.

Councillor M.J.G. Morgan raised a concern relating to the relatively low response rate when compared to the overall size of the population in the Vale. Councillor Morgan asked how this could be improved and called for the Council to find more ways to engage with the public, such as the sending out of leaflets as one alternative method. In reply, the Group Manager referred to engagement with schools and a message going out via mail to parents. This appeared successful, so maybe there were similar methods with alternative groups and organisations that could be utilised in the future.

Councillor S. Sivagnanam echoed the points made by Councillor Morgan regarding consultation, and she noted the comments received from the Tourist Board that it would have been helpful if they had been communicated with as a way to share and raise awareness of the consultation exercise.

Councillor Sivagnanam referred to concerns raised by residents of the Marina in Penarth stating that these had been looked at. In reply, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that they had been out on a number of occasions around the Marina and met a number of residents and a number of people that had interests in the area. The main issue was down to the success of the two cycle routes and the sheer number of people using them, particularly during Covid-19 but also during other times as part of leisure activities. Both of those routes had been flagged under this Active Travel network, but it was recognised that improvement work was needed. To satisfy the residents, the Council had erected signs asking cyclists to dismount where they shouldn't be traveling and to be respectful and courteous to pedestrians.

Councillor G. John commented on his support for an Active Travel route between Boverton and St. Athan, which could be possible in the future if further funding was available.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport, Councillor P.J. King, was then invited to speak and commented on the following:

- He too had some issues when initially accessing the maps, but these appeared to have been resolved after 3 or 4 days.

- In terms of the response rate to consultations, he highlighted that there possibly was a role for Councillors in advising their constituents that they were able to comment on a particular consultation being carried out.
- The success of projects to receive funding was based on the level of public support received during the consultation process.
- The Cardiff City Deal Region had been considering proposals for an Active Travel route from Newport, through Cardiff and linking into Dinas Powys. Therefore, this would be something that the Scrutiny Committee would be asked to consider in the future.
- Network Rail owned a considerable amount of land, which could be utilised for Active Travel.

In being asked to comment, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport referred to the Metro Project which was looking at all modes of transport in the South Wales area, including the Vale of Glamorgan. Therefore, the Active Travel project from Newport would be part of this study. This would be the subject of a future report to the Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair, Councillor B.E. Brooks, in closing the debate stated that the Committee had raised several good points and suggested for these to be referred to Cabinet. This was agreed by the Scrutiny Committee.

Subsequently it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T Cabinet be requested to consider the comments of the Scrutiny Committee made at the meeting held on 18th January 2022, prior to Cabinet approving final submission to Welsh Government. The comments of the Scrutiny Committee being:

- For further consideration to be given around how consultation exercises are conducted by the Council in order to attract the views of more members of the public. For example, by asking organisations such as the Tourist Board to help share consultations or by requesting the help and assistance of local Councillors to raise awareness.
- For future consideration to be given for an Active Travel route between Boverton and St. Athan.
- To highlight the Scrutiny Committee's and public support for the Active Travel route proposed between Dinas Powys and Barry.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.”