

ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 7th February, 2019.

Present: Councillor V.J. Bailey (Chairman); Councillors Mrs. P. Drake, V.P. Driscoll, S.T. Edwards, G. John, N. Moore, A.R. Robertson, Ms. S. Sivagnanam and S.T. Wiliam.

729 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 10th January, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

730 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor G. John declared an interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 5 – Proposed Fees and Charges for 2019/20. The nature of the interest was that Councillor John had links with Llantwit Major Football Club and Llantwit Major Cricket Club. Councillor John had received prior dispensation from the Standards Committee to speak but not vote on reports relating to the interest.

731 FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT AND COMMITTEE REPORTING –

By the way of a Power Point presentation, the Operational Manager, Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance provided Members with an overview of the new Committee report template.

The Operational Manager began by outlining that the Well-being of Future Generations Act gave public bodies a legally binding common purpose of the seven national well-being goals for Wales. The Act detailed the ways in which the Local Authority should work with other public bodies to improve well-being across Wales.

The Operational Manager stated that the Act provided for better decision making by ensuring that public bodies took account of the longer term by helping to prevent problems occurring or getting worse. In addition, there was a need to take an integrated and collaborative approach and to consider and involve people of all ages.

The well-being goals and the five ways of working provided by the Act were designed to support the Council to deliver the sustainable development principle which was “Meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

In terms of embedding the Act into the work of the Council, the Operational Manager stated that the Council was an early adopted of the Act and the Corporate Plan had been designed to maximise the Council’s contribution to the national well-being goals and to embed the five ways of working into the Council’s work.

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The Operational Manager stated that the Council was now more integrated in how it delivered work and to reflect, this the Council had introduced outcome based Scrutiny, that was focused on progress against the outcome area rather than by department.

Members noted that embedding the Act required officers to ensure their work was grounded in the five ways of working and to ensure work was aligned to the Council's well-being objectives. It also required the Executive to ensure decisions were taken in accordance with the Act, importantly it also affected how Elected Members undertook their roles through the Scrutiny and Full Council, which required Members to have due regard for the Act and to scrutinise decisions in accordance with the five ways of working and that national well-being goals. In addition, the Act had informed the development and formed a key aspect of the Member Development Programme.

The Operational Manager stated that the Act placed an emphasis upon effective transparency and more specifically, on the communication of why decisions had been taken. Elected Members were able to channel their wide range of community intelligence into the decision making process. As such, through using the framework of the five ways of working, Members could ensure that proposals were in line with the sustainable development principles. These ensured that proposals were reflective of the long term needs of the Vale of Glamorgan which would also help prevent issues from escalating. Relevant services and organisations had to be involved in the development and implementation of proposals and the public, Third Sector and private partners had a role to play where possible. In addition, where possible, the Council would seek to involve the public in its work.

With regard to the new Committee report template, the Operational Manager stated that as Members could see from the agenda, to aid the decision making process, a new Committee report format had been agreed.

The new format report would improve the transparency, and would show how proposals were grounded in the five ways of working, aligned to the Council's Corporate Well-being Objectives, and through these objectives, to the seven national well-being goals for Wales.

The Operational Manager stated that many aspects of the old report format had been carried forward, however, there were some notable changes. These included an introductory table which gave an effective overview of the key aspects of the report and greater transparency for members of the public. The new section 5 provided a distinct place within the report for authors to evidence the five ways of working and the linkages to the Council's Corporate Well-being Objectives. The five ways of working and links made to the delivery of the Objectives would be reflected throughout the report, however, this section would provide Members with the detail needed to effectively scrutinise proposals through the framework of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Operational Manager outlined that to further aid Members in their duties, it was anticipated that the Future Generations Commissioner would publish a Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny which

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would provide a guide for Scrutiny questions through the five ways of working. This would be circulated to all Members when it was released.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the contents of the presentation be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Following the presentation which outlined the new Committee report template.

732 DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2019/2020 (REF) –

The Operational Manager, Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance presented the Cabinet reference which outlined proposed changes in service charges for functions managed by the Directorate of Environment and Housing for the financial year 2019/20.

Cabinet, on 4th February, 2019, had approved the fees and charges for the Directorate for 2019/20. The fees and charges recommended mainly recommended an inflationary increase of 3.2% rounded up to the nearest 10p. Cabinet was advised that some fees and charges had increased in addition to inflation to reflect the take up of services and the cost of delivery. A small number had remained the same but these were generally refundable deposits which had been left at rounded amounts such as £100.

The report outlined that there were some exceptions which included the following:

- The alternative approach proposed for areas such as King’s Square followed the principles contained within the Income Generation and Commercial Opportunities Strategy and was aimed at increasing commercial income;
- A new charge was proposed for replacement allotment keys of £16.60;
- Charges were recommended for bench or plaque dedications as there was an opportunity to significantly increase sales;
- It was recommended to increase the charges relating to commercial food waste collections due to higher collection and disposal costs;
- A new charge was proposed for a proof of address letter for street naming and numbering.

The Committee then debated the proposed fees and charges and the following questions or comments were raised.

Questions / Comments	Response
A Committee Member queried how some fees were rounded up and stated that it would be easier in some instances if fees were either rounded up or rounded down	Fees had been rounded up by a percentage increase but these would be rounded up to the nearest pound.

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to the nearest whole number.	
Clarification regarding the removal of charges for blue dog poo bags pack of 50.	The appendix needed to be clearer as the pack of 50 would no longer be available.
In relation to page 10 and fees to hire Jenner Park, a Committee Member queried whether half a pitch was correct.	Yes, it was possible to hire half a football pitch.
Had consideration been given to the charging of water at allotments?	Members were advised that this would be clarified but it was something that was being looked at for the longer term.
In relation to commercial waste, a Member queried how competitive were the Council's prices compared to private operators?	With regard to green waste, the cost to dispose was higher than to collect. For recycling, the Council was on par even with the proposed increase in the fees. For residual waste, the Council's fee was slightly above but most operators would weigh the amount to be collected and therefore would charge an excess.
Had there been an increase in regard to the filming on highways, resorts, car parks and parks and grounds?	The Operational Manager stated that there had been a significant increase and a large amount of funding had been secured for the Vale Council.
In relation to page 11, why had the charge for some services been removed for commercial operators?	It was found that commercial charging had been difficult to police so it had been decided for commercial operators to pay the same charge as residents.
With regard to the fees for renaming streets, why had the fee not been rounded up to the nearest whole number?	There was no reason why the fee could be increased to £3,000.
There appeared to be some typographical errors on pages 50 in relation to coastal car parks and the time of 0-7 hours.	This was an error and would be rectified.

The Chairman, in summarising some of the debate, stated that the Council should consider some charges that could be rounded up or down to the nearest whole number that would make it easier for residents and service users. In addition, the Committee had suggested that the fees for water at allotments should be looked at and there was a need for the Council to look at the breakdown of costs associated with allotments.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T where applicable the fees for 2019/20 should be either rounded up or rounded down to the nearest whole figure.

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(2) T H A T the Committee receive a further report outlining the long term management of allotments and the associated breakdown of costs.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) In order that payment of fees is made easier for residents and service users.

(2) So that the Committee can consider possible fees and costs associated with allotments.

733 CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING MID-YEAR REPORT (REF) –

Cabinet, on 7th January, 2019, had considered the update report which provided information on the work that had been undertaken in relation to corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children and adults who required specific Council services and to provide an overview of progress of the Corporate Safeguarding Group's working plan and other safeguarding activities taking place across the Local Authority. The report had been referred to the all of the Scrutiny Committees for their consideration.

The Operational Manager, Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance advised that this was a mid-year highlight report providing a summary of the activity by the Corporate Safeguarding Group. The Group was well attended by all the Directorates and met on a quarterly basis with standing agenda items including safer recruitment, Regional Safeguarding Board and a work plan.

In addition to Corporate Safeguarding arrangements, Part 7 of the Social Services and Well-being Act required there to be Regional Safeguarding Boards for Adults and Children. For the Vale of Glamorgan the region was the Cardiff and Vale area. The Operational Manager advised that the Vale of Glamorgan Council had good officer representation across all aspects of the Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board, both for adults and children. There were a number of successful development days for the Annual Report. During the year, the Safeguarding Boards had prioritised improving the approach to Children / Adult Practice Reviews, and reporting safeguarding performance.

Members noted that there remained effective leadership and response to areas of exploitation and professional allegations / abuse with designated lead roles for these areas of safeguarding activity. Exploitation was the focus for Safeguarding Week which included a programme of events and workshops across the region that brought professionals together. This was concluded on 16th November, 2018, with the Safeguarding Awards Evening at Cardiff Bay Police Station.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the work that had been undertaken to improve corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children and adults be noted.

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Reason for recommendation

To ensure that the Committee was aware of recent developments in corporate arrangements for safeguarding.

734 3RD QUARTER SCRUTINY DECISION TRACKING OF
RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATED WORK PROGRAMME SCHEDULE
2018/19 (MD) –

The Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer presented the report which advised Members of progress in relation to the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and confirmed the updated work programme schedule for the Scrutiny Committee for 2018/19.

Attached at Appendix A was the decision tracking of recommendations for the 3rd Quarter, October to December 2018, Appendix B was decision tracking relating to the 2nd Quarter, July to September 2018 and Appendix C was the 1st Quarter decision tracking for April to June 2018. An updated work programme schedule for 2018/19 was attached at Appendix D.

A Committee Member referred to the replacement of Victorian lamps in Penarth and asked whether the plan was to replace these with LED lights. The Member also queried whether this would include the complete piece of furniture. In addition, the Committee asked whether a cost benefit analysis had been undertaken which compared the cost of replacement of the units or leaving them as they were. In reply, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer stated that these queries would be passed on to the Operational Manager Engineering.

The Chairman also advised Members that an update on the Car Parking Strategy would be due during March or April and a special meeting of the Committee would be arranged to consider this report. Members agreed to the Committee meeting at an earlier start time, with the meeting structured in such a way that would suit the range of public speakers expected.

The Chairman also highlighted that a report on the Dinas Powys by-pass was expected during March.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the status of the actions listed in Appendices A to C of the report be noted and that the following actions be agreed as completed:

11 October 2018	
Min. No. 415 – Waste Management Update – Recommended (2) That the Committee receives an update on the initiative involving the loan of cameras from Natural Resources Wales in six months' time.	Added to work programme schedule. Completed
8 November 2018	
Min. No. 476 – Civil Parking Enforcement Update (DEH) – Recommended (2) That an audit of schools in the Vale of Glamorgan and the use of roadside double yellow lines be undertaken. (3) That a report on camera cars with comparative data of other Local Authorities be presented which also looks at how the camera cars would be utilised. (5) That a report on the financial breakdown of the Civil Parking Enforcement Unit be brought to the Committee.	(2) Added to work programme schedule. Completed (3) Added to work programme schedule. Completed (5) Added to work programme schedule. Completed
Min. No. 477 – 2nd Quarter Scrutiny Decision Tracking of Recommendations and Updated Work Programme Schedule 2018/19 (MD) – Recommended (1) That the updated work programme schedule attached at Appendix C to the report be uploaded to the Council's website.	Uploaded to the Council's website. Completed
06 December 2018	
Min. No. 569 – Initial Capital Programme Budget Proposals 2019/20 to 2023/24 and Capital Monitoring 2018/19 (DEH) – Recommended (1) That the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee pass on to Cabinet the Committee's recommendation that additional funding should be allocated for capital bid E1 Carriageway resurfacing / Surface treatments, with extra investment to come from the Council's General Reserve. (2) That the Corporate Performance	Referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 th December, 2018, which recommended that the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee be endorsed and reported to Cabinet for consideration. (Min. No. 602 refers) Cabinet, on 21 st January, 2019 resolved that the contents of the report be noted and passed to the Budget Working Group for consideration in concluding the budget proposals for 2019/20.

<p>and Resources Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider a future report outlining the use of Council Capital receipts and the land / property portfolio held by the Council, with consideration of how the Council's assets could be used.</p>	<p>(Min. No. C551 refers) Completed</p>
<p>Min. No. 570 – Initial Revenue Budget Proposals 2019/20 and Revised Budget 2018/19 (DEH) – Recommended (1) That Cabinet be advised of the Committee's view that cost pressure V1 and the waste recycling treatment contract should be fully funded to the value of £850k per annum and for this money to be allocated from the Council's General Fund Reserve. (2) That Cabinet and the Budget Working Group be advised of the Committee's view that serious consideration is given to the level of reserves held in the Council Fund Reserve before costs are passed onto residents in the form of increased Council Tax.</p>	<p>(Referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13th December, 2018, which recommended [3] That Cabinet be advised of the Committee's view that cost pressure V1 and the waste recycling treatment contract should be fully funded to the value of £850k per annum and for this money to be allocated from the Council's General Fund Reserve. [4] That Cabinet and the Budget Working Group be advised of the Committee's view that serious consideration is given to the level of reserves held in the Council Fund Reserve before costs are passed onto residents in the form of increased Council Tax. (Min. No. 601 refers)</p> <p>Cabinet, on 21st January, 2019 resolved that the contents of the report be noted and passed to the Budget Working Group for consideration in concluding the budget proposals for 2019/20. (Min. No. C552 refers) Completed</p>
<p>(3) That future Budget Proposal Reports include a detailed analysis of the previous year's funding and outturn position including information on the amounts allocated to fund cost pressures. (4) That future Revenue Reports include an analysis of the Council's approach in generating income and for estimates to be included of how much income would be generated.</p>	<p>(3) To be actioned for future Budget Proposal Reports. Completed</p> <p>(4) To be actioned for future Budget Proposal Reports. Completed</p>

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Min. No. 571 – Quarter 2 (2018/19) Performance Report: An Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous Vale (MD) – Recommended (3) That the Committee receives a report providing further information on recycling re-use shops that had been set up by other Local Authorities.	Added to work programme schedule. Completed
Min. No. 572 – Street Lighting Energy Reduction Strategy Update (DEH) – Recommended (2) That a further Street Lighting Energy Reduction Strategy Update be provided on completion of Phase 2, Option 3.	Added to work programme schedule. Completed
12 July 2018	
Min. No. 167 – Highway Resurfacing 3 Year Plan 2018 - 2021 (REF) – Recommended that the report be noted with the suggestion that the list be amended in the future from alphabetical to priority.	Confirmed with the Operational Manager Engineering, that the list already operates on a priority basis. At its meeting on 8 th November, Committee requested that clarification be sought with the Operational Manager Engineering as the list in question related to the use of micro asphalt and that the status of this recommendation be amended to “Ongoing”. (Min. No. 477 refers) Clarified with the Operational Manager that list operates on a “when required” basis. Completed

(2) T H A T the updated work programme schedule attached at Appendix D to the report be approved and uploaded to the Council’s website.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To maintain effective tracking of the Committee’s recommendations.
- (2) For information.