



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

SCRUTINY : **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES,** **PLANNING AND** **COUNTRYSIDE MEETING**

MONDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 2018

PRESENT: Councillors D Sammon (Chair)
D Jones (Vice-Chair)

Councillors R Braithwaite, M Colbran, K Gibbs and C T Jones

Cooptees:

R Holdaway (Public), J McCarthy (Public) and E Scriven (Youth Forum Representative)

Officers:

C Evans (Chief Officer (Neighbourhood Services)), D Chaffe (Highways Officer), C Ridout (Street Lighting), M Campbell (Energy Officer) and M Purnell (Performance)

M Hemmings (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
766	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Thomas.
767	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No Declarations of Interest were made.

768

Highways & Street Lighting – Performance Update

The Chair thanked Darren Chaffe for his hospitality during the visit to the offices in Abercynon earlier in the day and acknowledged that whilst answers to questions were provided during the visit, for the benefit of those who did not attend, similar questions may arise again.

Darren Chaffe referred Committee to the report and in particular made reference to:

- relocation of the Highways Department to Abercynon in May 2017
- efficiencies/reduction in Depot costs
- collaborative working
- winter maintenance

The following questions/observations were raised by Committee and responded to in detail by the Officers:-

- Do we have enough salt reserves to see us through the winter
- What is a hot box
- What have been the costs associated with moving to Abercynon
- Is there a cost to the sharing of vehicles with RCTCBC
- Do RCTCBC undertake work in MTCBC area
- How many Highways Inspectors should be on duty at any one time and how many do we actually have
- What are the problems with Mayrise System and when will they be resolved
- How does the standard priorities for street lighting work effectively
- What are the minimum standards for street lighting
- Would we be involved where dimming of lights take place
- In comparison to roads in poor condition, how are we ranked with regard to roads in a good condition
- How many lights still need to be changed to the LED system and how long will take
- Is it cheaper to replace LED lights
- Would it be possible to employ a second street lighting engineer under a time contract until such a time as the lighting system has been completed
- Has a calculation been made with regard to performance and part time hours of officers
- Are the number of claims rising and what are the reasons
- Due to continuous budget cuts and available manpower, how do you envisage working to a good standard in the future
- What criteria needs to be met to be on the Gritting Programme
- Have street lighting engineering apprenticeships been considered
- With regard to potholes and refilling of grit bins, do we rely on residents to advise us or are they checked/inspected
- Who gets priority of vehicles in the event of a

		<p>whiteout and are there enough vehicles and staff to cover both County Boroughs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many vehicles do we have to deal with gritting in Merthyr Tydfil • What do you mean by ‘temporarily stored’ in relation to the storage of salt • Why are we not delivering a more efficient highway service as promised <p>Ethan Scrivens left the meeting at 3.28 pm and returned at 3.31 pm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification sought whether we should see a rise in performance indicators now that the Mayrise system is working • How have staff numbers changed over the years • How are reported potholes investigated/what is the criteria for them to be repaired <p>Darren Chaffe extended a further invite to visit the Abercynon Depot.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The content of the report be noted.</p>
769	Update on Carbon & Energy Management Activities	<p>Mick Campbell referred Committee to the report and in particular to the following points:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment/funding of posts • Energy Audits • Ways of maximising savings/possible solar farm • Employee culture of energy efficiency • Personal office heaters • Draft carbon management plan • Setting targets/reduction targets • Carbon reduction commitment <p>The following questions/observations were raised by Committee and were responded to in detail by the Officers:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of Technical Energy Officer post/temporary nature of position /timeframe on appointment • Invitation to British Gas to attend Committee to explain/sort out the energy bills • Has the introduction of LED lights put us at a disadvantage regarding our carbon footprint • What were the reasons for not reporting emissions under the CRC scheme <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The content of the report be noted.</p>
770	Scrutiny Referrals,	The Chair agreed to liaise with Howard Jones to invite a

	Feedback and Follow up Actions	<p>member of British Gas to attend Committee, failing that, for questions to be sent to British Gas for a response to Committee, with the potential for it to also be dealt with by Audit Committee.</p> <p>A member made a referral for the operation of waste services, recycling and litter picking which is on the agenda for 9 April meeting.</p> <p>The Chair advised that an update from the task and finish group regarding overspend at Brandy Bridge and Pontygwaith Bridge should be available for the next Committee.</p>
771	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	<p>The Chair and the Committee reflected on the items discussed at the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair suggested future visits to service areas may be a good idea if questions on particular areas of work were being raised and that co-optee members also be invited to attend.</p>
772	Forward Work Programme	<p>The Chair advised the item operation of waste services, recycling and litter picking will be discussed at the 9th April 2018 meeting.</p> <p>Also Drugaid Cymru in conjunction with Social Services and Councillor Bill Smith to report back to Committee.</p>
773	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	<p>The Chair advised that there was no other business deemed urgent.</p>