

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held remotely via video-conferencing on Wednesday, 22nd September 2021

Present: Councillors Bryan Davies, Gethin Davies, Odwyn Davies, Keith Evans, Hag Harris, Lyndon Lloyd MBE, Dan Potter, John Roberts, Lynford Thomas and Ivor Williams.

Cabinet Members Present: Councillors Catherine Hughes, Gareth Lloyd, Catrin Miles, Ray Quant and Alun Williams

Councillor Euros Davies was also present.

10.00am – 12.50pm

1 Apologies

Councillors Marc Davies, Peter Davies, Elaine Evans, Maldwyn Lewis, Alun Lloyd-Jones and Mark Strong apologised for their inability to attend the meeting. Councillors Paul Hinge apologised for his inability to attend the meeting due to being on other Council business.

2 Disclosure of Personal / Prejudicial Interests (including Whipping declarations)

No declarations were received.

3 An explanation of the procedure for dealing with incidence of Fly Tipping

The Environmental Health Manager, Performance and Public Protection presented a report to the Committee, outlining the challenges presented by COVID-19 and prioritisation of work during this time. He outlined the legislative framework and enforcement relating to fly-tipping, the RIPA regulations with regards to CCT monitoring, and regulations in relation to land ownership and responsibility for dealing with fly-tipping on private land.

It was noted that the Council monitor hotspot locations (proactive enforcement), as well as investigating complaints received (reactive enforcement). It was noted that 375 incidents of fly-tipping were logged in 2020-2021 and that 106 incidents have been logged so far this year (from 1 April to 18th August 2021). In 2020-2021, 2 fixed penalty notices were issued resulting from proactive enforcement, with none following reactive enforcement, a reduction on previous years. One caution was issued in 2020-2021 due to proactive enforcement.

The report also outlines partnership working with 'Keep Wales Tidy', Caru Ceredigion as well as adjacent local Authorities

The following questions had been raised by Members:

- Members noted that concerns regarding fly-tipping have been raised via CLIC, however there has been a lack of response. They also asked that a copy of the matrix which outlines where the responsibility sits is shared with all Councillors. Officers noted that they would look into the matter and provide copies of the matrix.

- Members asked whether CCTV cameras could be placed on trunk roads and private land. Officers confirmed that there are no restrictions, subject to agreement with the land owner.
- Members asked whether greater use of technology could be made to monitor refuse left alongside skips, or if skips could be provided which have a side-opening as opposed to having to throw items over the top.
- Members noted that the Highways and Environmental Services will not remove fly-tipping until a member of the Public Protection team has inspected the content, and asked if the items could be relocated to Penrhos or Glanyrafon to be inspected. Officers noted that they are currently working with the Highways and Environmental Services team to review concerns such as the early presentation of waste, and that they will raise this matter with them.
- Members suggested that the Public Protection Team publicise information relating to fixed penalty notices in order educate and enhance greater awareness of this. Officer noted that they would look into this.
- Members suggested that the report is shared with Town and Community Councils, in order that they can contribute
- Members noted that several complaints are received in relation to lack of bins, however a lot of take-away businesses now use cardboard which fills the bins quicker than paper, asking whether anything could be done with regards to approaching businesses to supply their own bins. Officer noted that a 'Keep Wales Tidy' coordinator had been appointed recently and that they would ask her to share this message with other officers throughout Wales for consideration as a project.

Following questions by the Members of the Committee it was agreed to note the contents of the report.

4 **An overview of Public Protection Community Warden and Pest Control Services**

The Trading Standards & Licensing Manager, Performance and Public Protection presented a report to Committee, updating Scrutiny on the issues facing the Public Protection's Community Warden Service, in particular the pest control service.

It was noted that since March 2020 the community warden service had been operating with one Community Warden as opposed to two, prioritising complaints / requests based upon the public health risk.

From September 2021 this will return to two full-time officers. Data relating to number of requests logged each year since 2016. The statutory duty on the Authority was outlined, and it was noted that the authority will need to achieve accreditation under the SSIP scheme in order to resume joint sewer baiting work with Dŵr Cymru.

An outline was also provided of the Farm Pest Control Services offered by Ceredigion County Council, Dog Wardening and the Dog Fouling Enforcement Services, and it was noted that four temporary officers were appointed over the

summer using Welsh Government hardship funding to ensure that visitors visit Ceredigion safely and in a responsible manner.

In addition to acquiring SSIP accreditation, it was noted that the Service proposes to create a new Pest Control Policy setting out charges for various pest control services and a new safeguard for those on low income and vulnerable households, and that the Service plans to consider alternative ways of increasing dog fouling patrols / enforcement.

The following questions had been raised by Members:

- Members asked whether illegal tipping into drains was also a concern. Officers noted that it applied to fat and oils also, and that legislation was brought in circa 3 to 4 years banning the use of macerators.
- Members noted that they had been informed that a single officer did not have the right to lift a manhole cover by themselves and asked whether equipment could be provided to assist with this. Officer noted that manhole covers are the property of Dŵr Cymru, therefore Officer do not have the authority to lift these, and a SSIP accreditation is required in order to carry out such work.
- Members asked whether the increased dog attacks on sheep was a matter for this Service, noting that members of the public generally contact the Police for such matters
- Members asked whether Officer handling poisons are given regular health checks. Officers confirmed that this used to happen on a regular basis and that that this would resume shortly.
- Members asked regarding staffing resources. Officer noted that there are now two full-time members of staff, and that this would be reviewed following re-commencement of work with farms, wasps etc.
- Members asked about our rights in relation to dogs fouling on public footpaths. Officer noted that the challenge is to catch them in the act
- Members noted that they would like to see a report outlining a clear way forward with regards to rodent control, as opposed to report outlining the situation.

Following discussion it was agreed to:

Review the situation in 6 months, and that the Service provide a detailed report outlining the income generated, and a clear way forward in relation to dealing with the issues highlighted in the report.

5 Update on Wellbeing Centres and Developments in Lampeter Wellbeing Centre

The Corporate Manager, Porth Cymorth Cynnar presented a report to the Committee, which gave an update on the recent developments within the service. The Committee were informed that the Service had been reviewing progress made against the Ceredigion “Sport and Recreational Activity Strategy 2014-2020” in preparation for the development of a new plan, which is due to operate from 2022-2027. It was noted that an initial public engagement exercise was underway which will inform the development plan, forming the basis for the next stage of the consultation process.

Lampeter Leisure Centre will be the location of the Council's first Wellbeing Centre, providing an enhanced range of Through Age Services to the residents of Lampeter and mid county. Initially, Plascrug had been the intended first centre, however due to Plascrug being utilised as a field hospital, the Service were required to consider developing a Wellbeing Centre in another part of the county. On the 1st of December 2020, Cabinet approved the proposal to develop a Wellbeing Centre in Lampeter. The Service were eager to ensure that the funding was not lost and could be utilised at another location.

Indicative costing suggest that construction costs may be met by grant funding, although final costing will not be known until a tendering process has taken place. It is anticipated that building works will be completed by June / July 2022. The Leisure Centre will be closed during building works however positive discussions have been had with the University of Wales Trinity St David's regarding the joint use of their sporting facilities during this time.

The following questions had been raised by Members:

- Members noted that concern had been raised by the Lampeter Lions Netball team that the reduction to the size of the Hall from 4 to 3 badminton size courts was smaller than that of a full-size netball court. Officer noted that a letter had been sent to Lampeter Lions on Thursday inviting them to meet with the Cabinet Member, the Corporate Lead Officer and the Corporate Manager for Porth Cymorth Cynnar, however have not received a response, as yet. It was noted that the service have spoken to all the other clubs that use the Hall on a regular basis, and no other objections were received. It was noted that the Netball League meetings are held at Aberaeron and that the courts at Lampeter are used for practice only. Facilities for practice will continue to be provided in the hall. There are two further full-size outdoor courts available. Officer noted that the Council is in discussion with the University of Wales Trinity St David, Lampeter with regards to sharing their facilities whilst building work is carried out. The court provided by the University is larger, being 1 metre short of a standards netball court. It was noted that Wales Netball Association is also developing the sport to include Walking Netball, Seated Netball and Tiny Tots Netball, and the development of the Wellbeing Centres will facilitate greater use of the centre by all of the residents.
- Members asked whether there are any guidelines in relation to size of courts. Officers noted that the standard halls are 4 badminton size courts, however some halls are smaller, others larger. There is no legal stipulation in relation to this.
- Members asked whether it would be possible to build an extension to the side of the building as opposed to restructuring the internal layout. Officer noted that the grant stipulated can be used to adapt assets for wider community use, to widen the potential use of the asset in question, therefore this is not an option. It was noted that if the grant funding is not spent, it would be lost.
- Members noted that they welcomed the provision of a Wellbeing Centre, however they did not wish to see this happen, at the cost of losing the Sports Hall. They also highlighted the need to consult with the youth of

Ceredigion, as well as the elderly. Officer noted that a review carried out by 'Just Solutions' in 2018 noted that the building and provision at the time was not sustainable. At that time discussions had taken place in order to try and meet the needs of everyone including those of vulnerable people and families and it was decided that the Leisure Centres could be transformed into Wellbeing Centres to meet the needs of the residents in Ceredigion. The Wellbeing Centres are part of a wider strategy to improve the provision for people of all ages.

- Members noted that limited information had been provided regarding the proposed internal restructure. Officer noted that the development of the Wellbeing Centres are an integral part of the Thought Age and Wellbeing Programme and Strategy. The Strategy and the Action Plan was shared with Members in a Scrutiny meeting on Friday. The LA will be engaging with the community in order to raise their awareness of the Strategy and the Action Plan.
- The Cabinet Member noted that information regarding the funding and the location of the first Wellbeing Centre at Lampeter had been presented to Cabinet and that there had been no call-in at that time.
- Member noted that the focus of such developments tended to be around the 3 main towns in Ceredigion, and that areas such as Llandysul and Tregaron were losing out to these towns. Officer noted that outreach and pop-up provision would also be provided at other locations.
- Members asked whether the restructuring work would require planning permission, and whether the new planning regulations resulting from high levels of phosphates on the Teifi River Area of Special Conservation would restrict the development. It was recommended that a pre-planning application is submitted.
- Members asked whether the Service was in consultation with neighbouring authorities with regards to such provision. Officers confirmed that this was in place.

The Chair of the Committee noted that he would contact the Lions Netball team to advise them that the opportunity to discuss their concerns was still available to them.

RECOMMENDATION:

- To share information and receive the views of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Members agreed to recommend the following to Cabinet:

- The Committee respect that the decision regarding developing the Wellbeing Centres has been made by Cabinet.

The Committee does, however, recommend that all information provided by Officers to Cabinet Members is fully shared with relevant Members. The Committee also considers it important that information is also shared and views sought from all stakeholders when appropriate.

6 Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021

The Environmental Health Manager for Policy, Performance and Public Protection presented a report to the Committee, to inform Scrutiny of the new Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021 which came into force on the 10th September, and the additional requirement resulting thereof.

The new legislation may require many local establishments selling animals as pets for profit to require a licence, however dog breeders currently licensed under the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulation 2014 are exempt and will not require two licences. Conditions placed upon the licence optimises welfare standards, which also protects the consumer. The report further stipulates statutory guidance relating to requirements of the licence.

It was noted that this may lead to an additional workload for the Public Protection team, however as a result of recent work carried out by the team, compliance with licence conditions have improved across all licensed establishments. It was also highlighted that the implementation of “Lucy Law” will serve to improve the welfare standards that Ceredigion County Council seeks to maintain across all the animal industry sectors.

The following questions had been raised by Members:

- Members asked whether cross-bred dogs should be register with the Kennel Club, and whether the additional work would have an impact of staffing for the purpose of carrying out inspections. Officers noted that not all dog breeders would require registration, however if a pet has more than 3 litters a year, they may accidentally fall into this category. In such circumstances, Officers would be able to apply their judgement. Officers noted that they welcomed this legislation and that recent compliance work had led to improved standards across the County.

Following discussion it was agreed to note the report.

7 To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24.06.2021 and to consider any matters arising therefrom

It was AGREED to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 24 June 2021.

Confirmed at the meeting of the Committee held on xxxx 2021

Chairman: