

# Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation

Cabinet – 14 April 2015

## RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE STREETSCENE SCRUTINY INQUIRY

<b>Purpose:</b>	To outline a response to the scrutiny recommendations and to present an action plan for agreement.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None.
<b>Reason for Decision:</b>	To comply with the requirements of the Council Constitution.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Legal Services, Financial Services.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) The response as outlined in the report and related action plan be agreed.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Stuart Davies
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Chris Allingham
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Sherrill Hopkins

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Streetscene Inquiry report was submitted to Cabinet on the 16 December 2014 after the Streetscene Scrutiny Inquiry Panel completed a detailed inquiry into improving Streetscene Services.
- 1.2 Having considered the contents of the scrutiny report, and specific recommendations made, advice to Cabinet on whether it should agree, or not agree, with each recommendation is detailed in this report.
- 1.3 Cabinet is also asked to consider, for each of the responses, any relevant policy commitments and any other relevant activity.

### 2.0 Response to Scrutiny Recommendations

#### Recommendation 1

Promotes the Welsh Government public toilet scheme and increases sign up from local businesses to make their toilets available for public use

<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> The Welsh Government community toilet scheme has been stopped however the Authority are looking at the feasibility providing a similar scheme as part of the overall Public toilet review.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> Investigate introduction of in house alternative to allow public use of private facilities.
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> Cllr Mark Child and myself are involved with the public toilet review which will consider the provision of facilities across the City and County.
Recommendation is <b>NOT AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 2</b>
As a minimum, the Cabinet Member maintains the current level of provision for the NEATs programme and identifies additional sources of funding to support the continuation and development of the NEATs programme
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> Explore collaborative and innovative ways in which local services can be financed and delivered most efficiently. (ref: 3.4)
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> There are no plans to cut the NEAT programme at present. However it will be necessary to review service provision across all areas in the future due to budget pressures.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> It is not possible to identify further funding in the current economic climate.
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> It is clear that there is strong support for the work of the NEAT teams
Recommendation is <b>PARTIALLY AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 3</b>
Promotes and encourages communities to take up the Winter Warden Scheme by reducing the bureaucratic burden on the communities and individuals who want to sign up to the scheme
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> Explore collaborative and innovative ways in which local services can be financed and delivered most efficiently. (ref: 3.4)
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> Service officers are not aware of any current issues with unnecessary bureaucracy with the scheme.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> The scheme is modelled on recommended best practice (National Winter Maintenance Review) therefore detailed feedback about the issues will be sought from Members and community representatives.
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> The winter warden scheme is a very positive initiative which should be encouraged and I would encourage any issues to be raised with officers.
Recommendation is <b>NOT AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 4</b>
Identifies and investigates “invest to save” opportunities and community development initiatives and provides support for this
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> Explore collaborative and innovative ways in which local services can be financed and delivered most efficiently. (ref: 3.4)
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> The service is always seeking opportunities to reduce costs and improve service levels e.g. the introduction of Brynmill Pod for closer working with the community.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> If Members have specific examples of opportunities these will be investigated accordingly.
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> Please discuss ideas and suggestions with officers
Recommendation is <b>PARTIALLY AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 5</b>
Report on the outcome of the APSE review
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> The APSE review has led to a review of operational arrangements. Approval for current proposal for Cleansing functions to join Waste & Parks is to be sought by end of March. If approved, revised structure could be implemented by July.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> The efficiency and effectiveness of the service of the operational service is being reviewed at present
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 6</b>
Ensures that all future planning applicants are made aware of the highway adoption process via a checklist and that they are aware of the implications
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> Officers were not aware that there were any difficulties with the awareness of applicants as to the highway adoption process. The policies and practices are generally consistent with all other authorities. However, work is underway to review information provided to planning applicants, and also information provided via the council's website.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> None
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> I would encourage members to raise any concerns about the processes with officers.
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 7</b>
Ensures that the highway adoption process is as efficient and economical as possible to meet the expectations of Swansea residents.
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> This process is currently the subject of a Systems Thinking review, which is specifically targeted at the customer and their experience of our service
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> none

<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b>
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>
<b>Recommendation 8</b>
Publicises and promotes the new Highways Asset Management Plan to councillors and residents groups and includes in it the pothole repair schedule and the highways and footways inspection timetable
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> The new Highway Asset Management Programme and Asset Management Plan will be publicised once complete. The 2015-16 Patch programme has been published and sent to members.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> With regard to the recommendation to publish inspection timetables, the hierarchy and frequency of inspections can be publicised but the dates themselves cannot be published simply as there are circa 6,000 streets on different routes, and frequency's, this information has not been put in the public domain due to concerns over misuse in relation to claims.  Pot Holes are not repaired to a schedule; it is a constantly changing categorised work list with between 400 - 600 defects being completed each month and between 400 and 800 defects being added to the work list.
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> I am pleased with the communication relating to the patch programme and the highway improvement schemes which keep the public and members well informed.
Recommendation is <b>PARTIALLY AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 9</b>
Extend the environmental enforcement scheme across Swansea and into district areas
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> This operation is already city wide with approximately 25-30% of staff time spent outside the city centre, Members can request visits but this needs to be intelligence lead – i.e. locations and times where the problems occur. A new tender will be issued early in the next financial year and the need to carry out a proportion of the enforcement outside the core will be included in the terms and conditions.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> none

**Cabinet Member Comments:** I am happy to see this positive initiative being rolled out to other areas of the City. It is important that members raise problems and concerns with officers.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

**Recommendation 10**

Closely monitor the environmental enforcement scheme to ensure it remains a cost neutral scheme

**Relevant Policy Commitments:** NA

**Action already being undertaken:** Monitoring is already in place, and it is predicted that there will be a surplus to the Authority of up to £30k for the first 12 months. This funding will be used to fund cleansing and education and communications around the issue of littering.

**New actions following from the recommendation:** none

**Cabinet Member Comments:** I am very pleased to see this positive being operated at no cost to the Council. It is particularly pleasing to have surplus income to reinvest in improving the environment.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

**Recommendation 11**

Takes steps via the Highways Inspection service to minimise the proliferation of street signage

**Relevant Policy Commitments:** NA

**Action already being undertaken:** Life expired signs are removed as a matter of course and wherever possible new signs are located on existing posts. Due to traffic regulation orders and regulations signage has to be located at precise positions for the TROs to be enforceable and therefore new signage will be required in some locations. Highways Inspections are focused on safety issues and this is a separate area of work/responsibility however dangerous or damaged signs would be reported and reviewed for replacement.

**New actions following from the recommendation:**

Inspectors will be asked to report empty sign posts to ensure these are assessed and either replaced or removed.

**Cabinet Member Comments:** If members have any specific concerns then please raise them with myself or with officers.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

<b>Recommendation 12</b>
Allocate resources to the Waste Management teams to enable them to clean up split bag residue:
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> Crews have been reminded of requirements to clear any spillage they create, and have been provided with small shovels and brushes.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> none
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> It is important that we monitor this issue to ensure that spillages are dealt with at source.
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 13</b>
Provide information to commercial waste customers on waste collection and recycling services provided by the Council
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> Ongoing – Separation of commercial food waste has increased by over 10 tonnes per week.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> none
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b>
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 14</b>
Ensure that agency provided refuse collectors receive the same training as Council employed refuse collectors
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> This is already in place
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> none
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> I am happy to assure members that all staff in the waste service receive the appropriate training.

Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 15</b>
Review how replacement refuse and recycling bags are supplied and where they are available with a view to reducing the cost of provision.
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> Refuse bags are no longer being provided, a trial of reusable pink bags is due next month, and a rationalisation of bag outlets is underway.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> none
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> The cost of provision of refuse and recycling bags is regularly reviewed by officers
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 16</b>
That the operational waste management team seek to minimise breakages and damage to food waste caddies provided to residents.
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> Crews are aware of the need to be careful with food caddies.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> All crews to be reminded of the need to replace caddies back carefully to avoid damage
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b>
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 17</b>
Consider the effectiveness to date of public information campaigns and education programmes designed to increase recycling of all household waste including food.
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA



<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> The service constantly reviews recycling rates and ways to increase recycling levels. The approaches within the service have led to significant improvements in recycling levels. A recent analysis of the contents of black bags is to be used to focus a new education campaign.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation: None</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> Any issues not covered above
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 18</b>
Enforce planning conditions for litter picking for fast food outlets and ensure that these planning conditions are contained in all new planning applications for food outlets
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b>
<b>New actions following from the recommendation:</b> This matter will be discussed with planning to see what improvements could be implemented. The use of Litter Control Notices has proved successful in other Authorities therefore their use (or the use of Public Space Protection Orders, which will replace them shortly) will be investigated.
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> I look forward to seeing what improvements can be introduced through reviewing best practice.
Recommendation is <b>AGREED</b>

<b>Recommendation 19</b>
Consider new ways of managing household waste generated by residential developments in the city centre which are efficient, effective and economical.
<b>Relevant Policy Commitments:</b> NA
<b>Action already being undertaken:</b> Crossovers between the domestic and commercial waste collections are already being used for this purpose. The service is constantly reviewing waste collection and management processes.
<b>New actions following from the recommendation: none</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Comments:</b> Any issues not covered above

Recommendation is **AGREED**

**Recommendation 20**

Increase the license fee for Houses of Multiple Occupation to reflect the scale and cost of the clean-up undertaken by the Council

**Relevant Policy Commitments:**

Target HMOs for improved standards of management and maintenance. (ref: 10.2)

**Action already being undertaken:** Current fees due to be increased however these fees can only be based on the actual cost of processing the application itself so there is no opportunity to charge in relation to our costs for cleansing/waste.

**New actions following from the recommendation: none**

**Cabinet Member Comments:** In view of the limitations of the fees which can be charged, our best approach is to consider further education and enforcement.

Recommendation is **NOT AGREED**

**Recommendation 21**

Produce a publicly available organisational chart for each area of Swansea with contact details for relevant officers

**Relevant Policy Commitments:** NA

**Action already being undertaken:** Map based chart available on line in relation to current operational set up in Neighbourhood working covering all cleansing and maintenance operations. This has previously been circulated to all members

**New actions following from the recommendation:** Following the operational review and likely changes to structure updated contact details will be circulated and posted online.

**Cabinet Member Comments:**

Recommendation is **PARTIALLY AGREED**

### 3.0 Equality and Engagement Implications

- 3.1 Where appropriate, any recommendations agreed will be subject to the Equality Impact Assessment process, including relevant engagement.

#### **4.0 Legal Implications**

- 4.1 The implications/opportunities of the Antisocial behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 will need to be considered in relation to any specific proposals related to recommendation 18

#### **5.0 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Whilst there are no immediate financial implications arising from this report, acceptance of this report could result in additional expenditure at a future time. Acceptance of the report does not mean that additional resources will be made available and it should be assumed that future spending needs will need to be contained within existing budget provision.
- 5.2 Recommendation 7 may have implication for maintenance costs if non-standard Highways are adopted.

**Background Papers:** Streetscene Scrutiny Report Dated 16/12/2014.

**Appendices:** Appendix A - Scrutiny Inquiry of Streetscene– Cabinet Action Plan.

## Scrutiny Inquiry of Streetscene– Cabinet Action Plan

Recommendation		Action already being undertaken	New Action Proposed	Timescale	Responsible Officer
1.	Promotes the Welsh Government public toilet scheme and increases sign up from local businesses to make their toilets available for public use	The Welsh Government community toilet scheme has been stopped however the Authority are looking at the feasibility providing a similar scheme as part of the overall Public toilet review.	Investigate introduction of in house alternative to allow public use of private facilities.	June 2015	B. Fenwick
2.	Maintain the current level of provision for the NEATs programme and identifies additional sources of funding to support the development of the NEATs programme	There are no plans to cut the NEAT programme at present. However it will be necessary to review service provision across all areas in the future due to budget pressures.	It is not possible to identify further funding in the current economic climate.	March 2016	B. Fenwick
3.	Promotes and encourages communities to take up the Winter Warden Scheme	Service officers are not aware of any current issues with unnecessary bureaucracy with the scheme.	The scheme is modelled on recommended best practice (National Winter Maintenance Review) therefore detailed feedback about the issues will be sought from Members and community representatives.	September 2016	B. Fenwick
4.	Identifies and investigates invest to save opportunities and community development initiatives and provides support for this	The service is always seeking opportunities to reduce costs and improve service levels e.g. the introduction of Brynmill Pod for closer working with the community.	If Members have specific examples of opportunities these will be investigated accordingly.	Ongoing	B. Fenwick

5.	Report on the outcome of the APSE review	The APSE review has led to a review of operational arrangements. Approval for current proposal for Cleansing functions to join Waste & Parks is to be sought by end of March. If approved, revised structure could be implemented by July.		Revised structure implemented by July if approved.	M. Nicholls
6.	Ensure that all future planning applicants are made aware of the highway adoption process via a checklist and that they are aware of the implications	Officers were not aware that there were any difficulties with the awareness of applicants as to the highway adoption process. The policies and practices are generally consistent with all other authorities. However, work is underway to review information provided to planning applicants, and also information provided via the council's website.	NONE	September 2015	M. Thomas
7.	Ensure that the highway adoption process is as efficient and economical as possible to meet the expectations of Swansea residents.	This process is currently the subject of a Systems Thinking review, which is specifically targeted at the customer and their experience of our service	NONE	September 2015	M. Thomas
8.	Publicises and promotes the new Highways Asset Management Plan to councillors and residents groups and includes in it the pothole repair schedule and the highways and footways inspection timetable	The new Highway Asset Management Programme and Asset Management Plan will be publicised once complete. The 2015-16 Patch programme has been published and sent to members.	With regard to the recommendation to publish inspection timetables, the hierarchy and frequency of inspections can be publicised but the dates themselves cannot be published simply as there are circa 6,000 streets on	June 2015	B. Fenwick

			<p>different routes, and frequency's, this information has not been put in the public domain due to concerns over misuse in relation to claims.</p> <p>Pot Holes are not repaired to a schedule; it is a constantly changing categorised work list with between 400 - 600 defects being completed each month and between 400 and 800 defects being added to the work list.</p>		
9.	Extend the environmental enforcement scheme across Swansea and into district areas	This operation is already city wide with approximately 25-30% of staff time spent outside the city centre, Members can request visits but this needs to be intelligence lead – i.e. locations and times where the problems occur. A new tender will be issued early in the next financial year and the need to carry out a proportion of the enforcement outside the core will be included in the terms and conditions.	NONE	June 2015	B. Fenwick
10.	Closely monitor the environmental enforcement scheme to ensure it remains a cost neutral scheme	Monitoring is already in place, and it is predicted that there will be a surplus to the Authority of up to £30k for the first 12 months. This funding will be used to fund cleansing	NONE	Ongoing	B. Fenwick

		and education and communications around the issue of littering.			
11.	Takes steps via the Highways Inspection service to minimise the proliferation of street signage	Life expired signs are removed as a matter of course and wherever possible new signs are located on existing posts. Due to traffic regulation orders and regulations signage has to be located at precise positions for the TROs to be enforceable and therefore new signage will be required in some locations. Highways Inspections are focused on safety issues and this is a separate area of work/responsibility however dangerous or damaged signs would be reported and reviewed for replacement.	Inspectors will be asked to report empty sign posts to ensure these are assessed and either replaced or removed.	Ongoing	B. Fenwick/R. Mulcahy
12	Allocate resources to the Waste Management teams to enable them to clean up split bag residue:	Crews have been reminded of requirements to clear any spillage they create, and have been provided with small shovels and brushes.	NONE.	Complete	C. Howells
13	Provide information to commercial waste customers on waste collection and recycling services provided by the Council	Ongoing – Separation of commercial food waste has increased by over 10 tonnes per week.	NONE	Complete	C. Howells
14	Ensure that agency provided refuse collectors receive the same training as Council employed refuse collectors	This is already in place	NONE	Complete	C. Howells
15	Review how replacement refuse and recycling bags are supplied and where	Refuse bags are no longer being provided, a trial of	NONE	Ongoing	C. Howells

	they are available with a view to reducing the cost of provision.	reusable pink bags is due next month, and a rationalisation of bag outlets is underway.			
16	Operational waste management team seek to minimise breakages and damage to food waste caddies provided to residents.	Crews are aware of the need to be careful with food caddies.	All crews to be reminded of the need to replace caddies back carefully to avoid damage	Complete	C. Howells
17	Consider the effectiveness to date of public information campaigns and education programmes designed to increase recycling of all household waste including food.	The service constantly reviews recycling rates and ways to increase recycling levels. The approaches within the service have led to significant improvements in recycling levels. A recent analysis of the contents of black bags is to be used to focus a new education campaign.	NONE	Complete/On going	C. Howells
18	Enforce planning conditions for litter picking for fast food outlets and ensure that these planning conditions are contained in all new planning applications for food outlets	This matter will be discussed with planning to see what improvements could be implemented. The use of Litter Control Notices has proved successful in other Authorities therefore their use (or the use of Public Space Protection Orders, which will replace them shortly) will be investigated.	I look forward to seeing what improvements can be introduced through reviewing best practice.	Ongoing	C. Howells
19	Considers new ways of managing household waste generated by residential developments in the city centre which are efficient, effective and economical.	Crossovers between the domestic and commercial waste collections are already being used for this purpose. The service is constantly reviewing waste collection and management processes.	NONE	Ongoing	C. Howells



20	Increase the license fee for Houses of Multiple Occupation to reflect the scale and cost of the clean-up undertaken by the Council	Current fees due to be increased however these fees can only be based on the actual cost of processing the application itself so there is no opportunity to charge in relation to our costs for cleansing/waste.	NONE	Complete	P. Livingstone
21	Produces a publicly available organisational chart for each area of Swansea with contact details for relevant officers	Map based chart available on line in relation to current operational set up in Neighbourhood working covering all cleansing and maintenance operations. This has previously been circulated to all members	Following the operational review and likely changes to structure updated contact details will be circulated and posted online.	Complete	B. Fenwick