



Council – 26 October 2017

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Cllrs Peter Black, Mary Jones & Chris Holley</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member comment on the council's policy of not accepting soft plastic for recycling, will he also tell Council what the current collection rate is for kerbside plastics and what happens to plastic waste collected.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Services</p> <p>The Council is unable to collect film or flimsy plastic mixed with plastic bottles, tubs, trays, pots etc. as UK plastic reproprocessors have advised that they are only prepared to accept loose plastics with as little film as possible as they consider the film to be a contaminant. We are in discussions with a new reproprocessor who make take film or flimsy plastics as long as it is separate from plastic bottles, tubs etc., so we are trialling a skip for film at Llansamlet Household Waste Recycling Centre.</p> <p>For the first 6 months of this year we have collected an average of 365 tonnes of plastic per month from the kerbside. Bagged plastics are currently processed in Turkey, although we have sent higher quality, loose plastics from the re-useable bags to Pembrokeshire and Northampton for trials.</p>
2	<p>Cllrs Mike Day, Mary Jones & Gareth Sullivan.</p> <p>How much has been spent on supply staff (teachers, tutors, support staff, etc) for each of the years 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17? Can the Cabinet Member tell Council whether all schools use the service provided by New Directions.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Schools purchase their supply cover from their salaries budget in their individual delegated bank accounts and therefore the total amount spent is not available at a central level. The New Directions contract is monitored quarterly and from their records not all schools use New Directions. Schools do not have to use New Directions but if they use another provider they must undertake all of the relevant checks and seek four written quotes if their annual spend is predicted to exceed £5,000.</p>
3	<p>Cllrs Jeff Jones, Mary Jones & Peter Black</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member give an indication when the library review is going to be available for scrutiny.</p>

	<p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism & Major Projects</p> <p>The previous 'Library Review' took the form of several iterations between August 2014 and November 2015. Initially a standard review of operational procedures and systems, as occurs across the services on a regular basis, and secondly a review of the service in light of austerity and budget pressures faced in 2015/16. This iteration was included as a section of the Cultural Services Commissioning Review, but due to the complexity and cross cutting nature of Libraries, across 17 sites, it was subsequently removed so that it could be informed by the outcomes of other reviews of services in community settings. As various efficiencies had already been identified within the service, around the book fund; opening hours; staffing structures, to achieve savings, these were implemented as part of annual business planning, budget setting and delivery. Libraries are now included in the wider cross cutting review of 'Services in the Community' and the team will contribute to this as it develops.</p>
4	<p>Cllrs Irene Mann & Peter May</p> <p>In the document presented to the last council meeting "The First 100 Days and Beyond", targeting HMOs for improved standards of management and maintenance has been identified as a future initiative.</p> <p>What particular improvements in standards are being sought.</p> <p>What is the plan and timescale for delivering these improvements.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Housing Energy & Building Services</p> <p>The Council has always strived to ensure good management standards and maintenance of HMOs. We continue to inspect HMOs in Swansea and to seek out and improve any new properties identified to ensure properties are safe to live in. There's always room for improvement however and we are currently paying particular attention to matters around waste for example. This work is underway now to coincide with the new academic year at the Universities, will remain ongoing for as long as is required and will be reviewed again at the end of 2017/18 summer term. We continue to work across the Council, with partners and landlords themselves to ensure HMOs fulfil their important role in the housing market but do not adversely impact on neighbourhoods.</p>
5	<p>Cllrs Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Sue Jones</p> <p>It is understood that the Citizen Card will hold personal information of the cardholder. How safe will this information be and how easy will it be for the cardholder to access and amend if required.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation & Business Operations</p> <p>The Citizen Card links to the Council's new approach to digital services. It was established within the Digital Strategy that the council would seek to provide a single digital identity to access all council services, bringing</p>

Swansea in line with other Welsh local authorities. The aim for this was to make it easier to interact with the council and to reduce demand on services by providing citizens and visitors with information that was relevant to them without them having to search for it.

Several principles were agreed early on during the initial planning for an identity service:

- Hold the minimum of personally identifiable information needed to complete the task
- Give individuals complete control over their personal information and how that information is used, including the right to be forgotten
- Further information captured about an individual while transacting with the authority would be deleted when it had no further use
- The underlying technology platform must employ the latest security and threat prevention, encryption at all stages of any transaction and be able to operate independently of any proprietary technology

These principles are specified based not only on the Authority's desire to be an ethical custodian of sensitive personal information, but to ensure compliance with the upcoming General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The objective of creating a single digital identity pre-dates the Citizen Card by more than a year and has been extensively researched and designed. For a Citizen Card to work it would need to be linked to a digital identity so that an individual's identity and residential status can be confirmed, creating an obvious synergy between the two projects.

The Citizen Card would link to the individual's record, but would contain no personally identifiable information itself.

6 Cllrs Mike Day, Mary Jones & Wendy Fitzgerald

Highways Maintenance Programme - 2015-2020

Will the Cabinet Member give an update on any changes that have been made to the programme published on the Council's website or are planned for the remainder of the programme? Can the Cabinet Member indicate, for the schemes that have been completed, how much has been spent by ward on the schemes.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Services

The programme published on the Website will not normally change with the exception of schemes that may be moved in terms of year due to clashes with statutory undertakers for example. It is anticipated that all schemes identified in the 2015-20 programme will be completed by the end of the programme.

I have asked Officers to update the programme to show completion to dates. This work will take several weeks to compile and once complete this will be posted on the Webpages. For details on the spend in your Ward, the Planned Maintenance team can be contacted directly.

In addition following a recent review it has been agreed to publish a list to

	<p>show what additional work over and above the published programme has carried out through the additional £1m investment.</p>
7	<p>Cllrs Wendy Fitzgerald, Kevin Griffiths & Gareth Sullivan</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member confirm that the terms of the Section 106 Schedule 6 Planning Agreement, signed by all relevant parties for the Mynydd y Gwair Wind Power Station on Mynydd y Gwair, were intended to ensure that the four counties in the Swansea Bay City Region gained economic benefit from this development rather than main contractors from outside this area.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm that this Agreement has not been amended to include economic gain for an area within a hundred kilometres radius of the Swansea Bay City Region, as recently published by Innogy.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member advise what steps will be taken, by joint action with our partner counties, to ensure Innogy complies with the terms of the 106 Agreement.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Culture Tourism & Major Projects</p> <p>The Social Benefit Terms within Schedule 6 of the Section 106 Planning Obligation has the following defined terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Businesses – Businesses employing people in Wales • Local People – People living within the Swansea Bay City Region • Local Services and Suppliers – Services originally in Wales or using Welsh products <p>The terms of the Agreement have not been amended since it was completed on 7 March, 2014.</p> <p>The Developer is required to use reasonable endeavours to use Local Services and Supplies where appropriate materials, facilities, skills, relevant expertise and technical specialisation are available and commercially acceptable. The Developer shall use reasonable endeavours to recruit Local People and use Local Businesses as employee's contractors and sub-contractors at the stage of tendering for work and contracts associated with the construction of the development provided appropriate materials, facilities, skills, relevant expertise and technical specialisation is available and commercially acceptable. The Developer shall use reasonable endeavours within any contract to ensure there is a commitment to ensure that Local People and Local Businesses are given the opportunity for employment. The Developer was also required to continue their programme of supply-chain events throughout Wales and also to engage with the Council in respect of employment initiatives to promote employment of Local People.</p> <p>Innogy (formerly RWE) sought to engage with the local business community at an early stage in the process to make sure local businesses / suppliers were aware of the opportunities of the contracts available for the Wind farm and a number of supply chain events were arranged. Dawnus were appointed as the Tier 1 contractor to carry out the civils works, who are a Swansea based contractor employing local people, and who have also used a number of local suppliers/ sub-contractors in respect of the access road construction. Innogy have now indicated that following a competitive tender process, Farrans Construction has been appointed as the Tier 2 civil contractor (i.e. to</p>

	<p>construct the wind turbine bases / access road etc.). Whilst Farrans are a Belfast based company they employ a large percentage of people living in Wales. Senvion have been awarded the contract for the supply and delivery of the 16 wind turbines.</p> <p>Within the terms of the Section 106 Planning Obligation, Innogy are not obliged to award the contract to a Wales based business if it does not satisfy their 'relevant expertise and technical specialist's is available and commercially acceptable' requirements. It is therefore considered that Innogy have used reasonable endeavours to use local services / supplies/ recruit local people / use local businesses and as such there is no breach of the Planning Obligation.</p>
8	<p>Cllrs Irene Mann & Peter May Paperless Resident parking permits.</p> <p>When answering our question in June it was mentioned that vehicle recognition technology would replace the time-consuming practice of manual input of registration details by enforcement officers.</p> <p>We have had several observations from residents that parking enforcement officers are still manually entering registration numbers into their machines to check permits.</p> <p>Please can a progress update be provided as to when parking enforcement officers will be able to use vehicle recognition technology to check whether a car has a valid permit.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Services</p> <p>Automatic Number Plate Recognition has previously been trialled using hand held devices from our current back office management software and hard ware supplier. During the demonstration, involving the Civil Enforcement Manager and Civil Enforcement Officers, the system was very slow and laborious; it was still quicker to input the Vehicle Registration Marks of each vehicle manually.</p> <p>Once the technology improves we will revisit the system and consider all options going forward.</p>
9	<p>Cllr Will Thomas</p> <p>We would like to bring the Cabinet's attention to the poor state of the children's play area at Underhill Park which is in desperate need of an upgrade. The park is in a popular and central location in Mumbles and parents across the area have raised issue with its current condition. It is worth noting that it is actually unsafe and, unfortunately, a child recently cut their leg on a nail at the park.</p> <p>I would be grateful if the Cabinet could commit the necessary funding to ensure that this play area is updated and brought up to a safe standard for children in our wards to enjoy.</p>

	<p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism & Major Projects</p> <p>During the latest inspection the playground has been deemed RED on the RAG list and a number of items of wooden play equipment need to be removed. The items that need to be replaced are 1 infant multiplay unit (approx. cost £8 to £10k), 1 set of infant swings (approx. cost £3 to £5k) and 1 junior multiplay unit (approx. cost £12 to £20k), although unfortunately Parks Services do not have a budget to replace this equipment. Alternative sources of funding will continue to be explored.</p>
10	<p>Cllrs Lyndon Jones, Myles Langstone & Linda Tyler-Lloyd.</p> <p>There is huge support for a cycle path / walkway from Murton in the Bishopston Ward to the Mayals. There is no pavement connecting these two communities, so walkers and cyclists have to use the very busy road, which can be particularly dangerous. In the report to the last full council about the first 100 days, it said that it was one of the aims of the Council to increase access to safe cycling and walking. A wider scheme including this project, was turned down a few years ago by the Welsh Assembly Government. Does the Council have any plans itself or with grant funding from elsewhere, to give the green light to this project, or is it just an aspiration.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Services</p> <p>The support for the path is understood and the Council applied for funding to develop and deliver the scheme through the Safe Routes to Communities Fund in February 2017, but this was sadly rejected by the Welsh Government on this occasion. The Council has done some preliminary work to consider the practicalities of delivering the path, and there is a reasonable understanding on the likely costs and feasibility, but the scheme would need a good deal more design to work it up to a stage from which it can be delivered.</p> <p>The main challenges to the delivery of the scheme are as follows:</p> <p>Land Ownership: The land adjacent to the B4436 as it crosses the Clyne Common, is not owned by the Council. The Council has not yet undertaken land ownership searches and it is therefore not possible as yet to determine how many land owners might be involved in the delivery of the scheme. This element is therefore largely unknown and further design would be required to look into this matter.</p> <p>Common Land: This is a substantial issue and one that can be fraught with difficulty. The Common Land Act can be quite unwieldy and the timescales involved in this one element are very difficult to determine. Essentially following a period of consultation with local residents and Commoners, the Council could make an application to the Welsh Government's Planning Inspectorate to exchange land to allow for the delivery of the scheme. This process can take between 12 to 18 months to complete, and its outcome is fairly unpredictable. This is obviously a reasonable resource implication, and again it is difficult to justify this when we are currently unable to fund even the design element.</p>

Funding: In light of the current restrictions on transport capital infrastructure spending, the Council is not able to fund the preliminary development of these scheme. Similarly, the grant funding pots that the Council ordinarily relies upon are also now being either severely reduced or removed altogether. I am sure that there will be opportunities to bid for funding in future years, but projects such as this are difficult to secure funding for because they cannot be delivered in a single calendar year (as the grants run year-to-year and expect to see a tangible product at the conclusion of the grant). In the first instance, the Engineers within the Highways & Transportation Team would be pleased to undertake the preliminary assessments it allow the scheme to progress if funding could be identified to support this.

The Council's current position is therefore to seek funding to deliver the scheme as the opportunity arises. It is therefore unlikely that we will next have opportunity to seek funding for the scheme until early-2018.

Part B – No Supplementaries

11 Cllrs Mike Day, Chris Holley & Mary Jones

Will the Cabinet member tell Council how much sickness costs are for all Council services in each of the years 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17? Can the Cabinet Member break down the costs into direct sick pay given to employees by service, and the cost of cover and replacement staff and/or overtime payments made to cover sickness absences.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation & Business Operations

Years	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
People	£ 3,271,751.91	£ 3,138,577.67	£ 2,951,559.43
Place	£ 2,209,559.59	£ 2,146,113.36	£ 2,644,176.21
Resources	£ 569,952.80	£ 484,578.17	£ 727,871.72
Total Sick Pay	£ 6,051,264.30	£ 5,769,269.20	£ 6,323,607.36

The Payroll system does not record overtime worked to cover sickness absences separately from overtime worked for other reasons. New functionality is in the process of being developed by the digital services team so the Council can analyse this data in future. However, it is Council policy that overtime should only be used when there is a need to meet immediate service requirements. Any overtime must have prior authorisation by the line manager. Overtime is worked for various reasons including, to cover for absences, operational reasons, special events, emergencies, increase in work, catch up following bank holidays etc.

<p>12</p>	<p>Cllrs Mike Day, Jeff Jones & Linda James</p> <p>How much has the change to the Council's logo cost, including all design, printing and costs of any wastage through disposing of old stationery.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation & Business Operations</p> <p>The recent changes to the council logo were carried out internally by the DesignPrint team as a refresh rather than a redesign. It was fitted around the team's daily work and therefore did not incur additional costs over and above business as usual.</p> <p>Environmental and cost impacts were considered as part of this project. The Council is introducing the logo onto items such as stationery, signage, uniforms etc, only when they need to be renewed or replaced, therefore no wastage or disposal costs will be incurred. In addition, this means introduction of the new logo will be phased over time.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Cllrs Mary Jones, Jeff Jones & Graham Thomas</p> <p>Following a number of complaints about the removal of the grass from the rotunda outside the Guildhall will the Cabinet Member tell Council if the grass is going to be re-instated.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Services</p> <p>Following the planting of the wildflowers last season, the area will be returned to grass, and smaller areas around the Guildhall considered for wildflowers next season.</p>