

## Cabinet Member Briefing Note (Environment & Transportation) – April 2016

### Waste Management

Recycling performance has gone from strength to strength over recent years, from being in the bottom 3 in Wales in 2012/13 with 49% (well short of the 52% target) to 10<sup>th</sup> in Wales in 2014/15 with 56.5%. Unverified performance for last year is 57.5%, meeting the new 58% recycling target. This performance is even more commendable considering Swansea has all the factors that make a high recycling performance more difficult – 2 universities with a large student population, a high proportion of flat and terraced properties, and a large commercial sector. The recycling target increases again to 64% in 2019/20.

Financially Swansea is considered to be the 4<sup>th</sup> most cost effective service in Wales. Performance has been improved through ongoing promotion of recycling, the 3 bag limit, sorting activities, partnering with the private sector, and increased food & cardboard recycling from our commercial customers.

The commissioning review is due to be presented to Cabinet in May or June, with the main focus being on prevention of recyclable materials being disposed of in black bags or residual skips at the Household Waste Recycling Centres. This will both increase recycling performance and minimise the cost of landfill tax to achieve budget savings. Compositional analysis has shown that black bags at the kerbside are still half full of recyclables, and at HWRCs are nearly ¾ full of recyclables.

The main risks to the service are loss of experienced staff, reducing Welsh Government Grant, ageing fleet, volatile recyclables market, reducing internal budgets, increasing recycling targets.

### Parks & Cleansing

The Parks Service has been successful in retaining 6 Green Flag Awards for the following sites:

- Victoria Park
- Cwmdonkin Park
- Brynmill Park
- Llewellyn Parc
- Botanical Gardens
- Clyne Gardens

The Parks Service increased their provision of wildflower sites across the City from 31,000m<sup>2</sup> to over 45,000m<sup>2</sup> projected for 2016 season, these sites are across the whole City including main arterial routes into Swansea such as Fabian Way.

We successfully increased the sale of Hanging Baskets for 2015 season by over 20% on comparison to previous year

During 2014/15 we launched our Knotweed Service and received over 170 orders for work to the sum of £44k.

Working alongside our colleagues in Culture & Tourism we actively work in partnership with in excess of 30 Friends of Parks Groups to encourage, sustain and develop each individual Friends Group and Park.

The Cleansing Service continue to target a weekly cleanse for every street in Swansea, by mechanical and manual means, removal of all dog foul and have dealt with in excess of 8,000 service requests.

Parks and Cleansing Commissioning Review has just commenced and we held the Stage 1 process in April, discussions will continue to ensuring collaboration of service to seek Best Value.

### Highways and Transportation

The Highways and Transportation service is a diverse service providing a large number of frontline services. The service is responsible for maintaining 1100kms of roads, 1500kms of footway, 28,000 street lights, 216 bridges and structures and 39,000 drainage assets. The estimated value of the highway assets is in excess of £1.3billion and the current estimated backlog of highway maintenance is estimated at around £130 million. The condition of the principle roads is in the upper quartile (currently around 2 of 22 in Wales). The service has robust maintenance policies and approaches which means that the Council has a very good success rate in defending 3<sup>rd</sup> party claims. The service is currently undergoing a commissioning review which will be looking at the entire service including interdependencies.

The service is responsible for;

- Highways Maintenance (including planned, reactive and winter maintenance)
- Out of hours emergency service 24/7
- Flood management (land drainage and costal defence)
- Bridge and structures maintenance
- Highway and capital Improvements
- Traffic and Road Safety
- Telematics and transport modelling
- Parking
- Highway development control
- Construction works for highway improvements
- Street lighting
- Transportation functions
- Marina and Tawe Barrage
- Fleet management and maintenance

Further detail on some of the service areas:

Transportation - The transportation group manages transport policy and strategy, the public transport network, home to school transport, community transport, cycling and concessionary passes. The Council spends more than £7m per annum on home to school transport. A key facility is Swansea bus station which is a very well used facility and is cost neutral to the Council as the departure charges and letting incomes cover the operating costs. There are more than 37,000 people passing through the bus station every day and 100 buses an hour use the facilities. The transport team are part of the wider proposals to develop and integrated transport unit (ITU) for the Council which was approved at the Budget and Performance Review Group at the end of 2015 and will be implemented over the next 12 months.

Marina - We have a high quality Marina offer with 550 fully serviced pontoon berths. The income from the Marina provides valuable income to the authority which maintains the marina assets and helps fund the maintenance of the Tawe Barrage as well as the aeration on the river Tawe. The key challenge for the Marina is to maximise income levels through maintaining high occupancy levels and ensuring the appropriate levels of investment in the Marina infrastructure and Barrage. A long

term asset management plan is currently being developed for the Tawe Barrage to ensure that long term funding requirements are identified.

Fleet Management & Maintenance - The size of the City and County of Swansea fleet is approximately 750 vehicles, broadly comprising;

- 160 Operator's licenced vehicles (over 3500kg) that include refuse & recycling collection, heavy tippers, tankers & hook-loaders
- 400 light commercial vans and tippers
- 35 pool cars, 12 electric cars, 55 welfare buses (social services)
- 90 others including 4x4s, tractors, road sweepers, minibuses etc.

The fleet covers approximately 6 million miles per year and uses around 1.8 million litres of fuel (at a cost of £1.7million). There are 22 mechanics in the workshops. The service undertakes around 1,200 taxi roadworthiness tests every year. The Central Transport Unit (CTU) is currently rated as 'Green' by the DVSA operator compliance scoring mechanism (highest rating). The CTU activities have recently been subject to an external review (as part of the depot rationalisation review) and the recommendations are currently being implemented.

Parking Services - Parking services are responsible for the car parks, the park and ride facilities and Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) activities. The service has a turnover of approximately £5 million and generates an overall surplus in the region of £800k. There are three key aims for the service;

- Economic viability ensuring availability and turnover of spaces for shoppers or visitors
- Safety – effective and consistent enforcement discourages parking which could compromise road safety
- Congestion –effective management/enforcement of parking will deter indiscriminate parking which causes tailbacks and queues

Parking services operates 65 public car parks in the City and County area and these provide 6,850 parking spaces. The service has undertaken a review last year as part of a detailed report for the Budget and Performance Review Group and the recommendations which were supported by members are currently being implemented.

### **Recent Changes**

There have been many changes across the service recently including;

- Reductions in staffing levels (particularly for management and admin functions)
- Process efficiency improvements through systems thinking approaches across the service
- Increased incomes from fees and sponsorship across the service
- Implementation of energy efficiency measures i.e. LED street lights
- implementing technology e.g. bus lane enforcement cameras, pay on foot parking, parking machine management, trackers on vehicles, improved telematics systems for junction efficiency, mobile technology for operatives, body cameras for parking staff

### Key Challenges/Objectives

- Developing the commissioning review and responding to its outcomes
- Assisting with the regeneration of the City Centre
- Delivering the efficiencies and improvements from Sustainable Swansea
- Securing funding to improve the networks from WG and other sources
- Mitigating the potential impacts of developments (in particular the LDP)
- Continued effective management with limited resources
- Meet the requirements of the new Active Travel Act
- Improving customer satisfaction
- Deliver the reviews of parking services and the Integrated Transport Unit.