

# ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNICAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July, 2011

- PRESENT:** Councillor Keith Evans – Chair
- Councillors Lewis Davies, Raymond Jones, R.L. Owen,  
Eric Roberts, Selwyn Williams.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Head of Service (Planning & Public Protection),  
Chief Engineer (Operational)(CJE),  
Planning Manager (Policy) (Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint  
Planning Policy)(ND),  
Communications Officer (GJ),  
Scrutiny Link & Support Officer (GBH),  
Committee Officer (MEH).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors W.T. Hughes, Rhian Medi.
- ALSO PRESENT:** Mr. Alex Aldridge - Commissioner
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### 1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

### 2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June, 2011 were confirmed.

### 3 HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted – report by the Head of Service (Highways & Waste Management) in relation to the Highways Asset Management Plan.

The Chief Engineer (Operational) reported that the Welsh Government required all highway authorities to produce a Highway Asset Management Plan. It is considered that future Welsh Government funding may well have to be allocated on a prioritisation of needs basis which can only be justified by the document. The County Surveyor's Society consisting of all 22 Welsh Authorities worked collaboratively and commissioned 'EXP' Consultants to assist in the production of the Plan.

To manage the highway network in a cost effective manner it is imperative for the authority to full appreciate the extent of its assets and their condition, in order to prioritise maintenance work as cost effectively as possible. The assets consist of some 1,200km highway network. The total gross replacement cost of this asset is £815 million which makes Anglesey's highway infrastructure its largest asset. Various surveys have been undertaken to ascertain an inventory of the asset as well as their condition. The Welsh Government have in recent years commissioned a full scanner survey of the principal roads as well as part survey of the minor roads.

The authority has recently completed an asset inventory survey which has confirmed details for signs, gullies and pavements etc. The Lighting and Bridges sections have a full inventory and condition surveys for their assets. Risk assessment is a primary concern to all authorities and as such the budgets are targeted to minimising such risks. Regular highway inspections are undertaken to ensure that the network is safe for the highway user with any serious defects made safe within prescribed timescales. The development of the Highway Asset Management Plan will

allow the authority to prepare a forward work programme based on asset condition and to justify prioritisation within agreed service levels.

Matters raised :-

- The Chair raised the issue of funding and whether the Officer considered that the current budget available to sustain highway maintenance was sufficient. The Chief Engineer commented that the Welsh Assembly National Survey over recent years for both the Class one network as well as the combined Class 2 and 3 Network for Anglesey were confirming an overall deteriorating condition. With the current budget allocation for carriageway structural/surfacing work estimated to be in the region of an annual £2 million below what is required to sustain a steady state situation. The more recent severe winters resulting in substantial frost damage to the network, especially the minor roads.
- The A5025 was given priority in respect of road surfacing post reorganisation in 1996 and questions were raised if this road was given precedence within the Management Plan. The Chief Engineer responded that the class one network is given priority to ensure the safety of road users using high speed roads and as such minimise the risk of any corporate manslaughter charges if a serious road accident occurs. He further noted that due to financial constraints rural roads can only be locally repaired.
- Members expressed their appreciation to the work done by the Community Gangs who carry out emergency works around the Island. The Chief Engineer responded that the Community Gangs were introduced 5 years ago and are designated into different parts of the Island. They are required to complete emergency works on roads etc., within 24 hours.
- Due to the downgrading of the A5, questions were raised if all the lighting needed to be lit up along the route. The Chief Engineer responded that the Lighting Section were investigating the feasibility of automatically switching off some unessential lighting units between 1 a.m., and 5 a.m., with sections of the A5 being included in the process.
- Questions raised that there is no mention within the Management Plan to the possible new road network if Wylfa B is approved in the future. The Chief Engineer responded that potential localised improvements along the A5025 from Valley to Cemaes were part of the current ongoing discussions between the Authority and the developers of Wylfa B. The developer would be responsible for both the design and build element of the project with the authority approving the works.
- Questions were further raised regarding the new road network from Menai Bridge to Beaumaris which has been in discussion for a number of years. The Chief Engineer responded that financial constraints has been an issue in respect of this project. Various options were being considered, one of which was the provision of the cycle route on private land adjacent to the A545
- Comments were expressed regarding the dangers of dual use of pavements which allow cycle routes and the potential of conflict and accidents between cyclists and the public. Members expressed that better signage was required to alert both cyclists and the public of the dual use of such pavements. The Chief Engineer responded that Officers from the Highways Department regularly visit schools to educate children of the requirement for safety on roads and cycle routes. He noted that he would consult with the relevant Officers in respect of better signage on dual use of pavements.
- Questions were raised regarding the possible savings achieved due to the joint working between authorities in respect of the road network. The Chief Engineer responded that this Authority has tendered the work out to contractors and does not have its own workforce in respect of the works required on the road network and that more collaborative working was being promoted between neighbouring authorities.

## RESOLVED

- **That the Scrutiny Committee accepts the Highways Asset Management Plan and thanked the Officers concerned for their work.**
- **To request the Communications Officer in consultation with the Highways Officer to prepare a Press Release to inform the public of the substantial asset the authority possesses in the highway network.**

## 4 DELIVERY AGREEMENT – JOINT ANGLESEY AND GWYNEDD LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Submitted – report by the Planning Manager (Policy), Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Planning Policy Unit in relation to the above.

The Head of Service (Planning & Public Protection) reported that the Joint Planning Policy Unit has been established with staff from both Anglesey and Gwynedd since 1 May, 2011. The main office of the Unit is located within the Town Hall in Bangor. A Joint Planning Policy Committee has also been established with 7 Members from each authority represented on the Committee.

The Planning Manager (Policy) reported that the finalised Delivery Agreement is an important and legal document that sets out how the Councils intend to undertake the process of drawing up the Joint Local Development Plan and will constitute an official agreement between the Anglesey and Gwynedd Councils together with the Welsh Government. The two main sections of the Delivery Agreement are the Joint LDP Preparation Timetable/Project Plan and the Community Engagement Scheme. The Councils will need to monitor progress against the contents of the Delivery Agreement. The public enquiry Inspector will scrutinise the documents in order to reach a conclusion with regard to the robustness of the Joint LDP. It was further noted that public consultation on the draft Delivery Agreement has been undertaken through the local press, websites of both Council's, public libraries and main offices of both Councils. Engagement also entailed corresponding with the General and Specific Advisory Bodies together with individuals and other stakeholders on the register of both Councils of interested parties in the Joint LDP.

The public consultation began on 14 April, 2011 until 2 June, 2011. A summary of the observations and the responses were attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

The Planning Manager (Policy) reported that the Welsh Government has published a manual providing detailed practical and technical advice on aspects of the production of the local development plans and it is expected to complement the legislation, regulations and the relevant guidelines relating to the preparation of local development plans.

Matters raised :-

- It was hoped that the immense work done on the previous UDP and LDP by this authority could be incorporated to the new arrangements of the joint LDP with Gwynedd. The Officers responded that the work on the previous UDP and LDP will be fully used but accepted that it will be a challenge for the new Unit and the Councils. It is considered that Consultancy work will have to be commissioned to help the Joint Policy Unit in terms of providing assistance with specialist and/or technical matters.
- Questions were raised regarding keeping within the timetable. Officers were confident that the Joint Planning Policy Unit has sufficient resources and the need for political commitment was emphasised. Concerns expressed that the Anglesey membership of the Joint Planning Policy Committee has not been sustainable since its establishment and attendance has also been low from this authority.
- Comments were expressed to the possible huge impact the construction of the new Wylfa B could have on the Local Development Plan not only to Anglesey but the Gwynedd as well. The Officers responded that the Joint Planning Policy Unit is in discussions with the Economic Development Section and the Energy Island Team in respect of the impact of migration of workers to the area in respect of housing etc.
- It was suggested that the Communications Officer prepares a press release.

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny Committee supports the Delivery Plan in order that it be submitted for approval to the Commissioner with responsibility for Planning and subsequently to the full Council for adoption.

**PRIVATE SESSION FOR MEMBERS ONLY**

**5 SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL – MEASURES UNDERTAKEN TO TACKLE UNDERAGE DRINKING**

Submitted – the final draft report of the Scrutiny Review Panel convened to review measures undertaken to tackle underage drinking on Anglesey for ratification before being presented to the Board of Commissioners.

**RESOLVED** to accept the report and that it be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for ratification.

**COUNCILLOR KEITH EVANS  
CHAIR**