

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS) held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 7th November 2019

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs A Dickinson – Chairman.

Councillors B S Banks, R E Bellamy, S Bywater, S J Criswell, K I Prentice, Mrs S Smith, Mrs J Tavener and Mrs S R Wilson.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors T D Alban, Ms A Diaz and D A Giles.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor M L Beuttell.

40 MINUTES

Subject to the inclusion of Councillor Mrs S Smith in the apologies, the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2019 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

42 NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st November 2019 to 29th February 2020.

43 WASTE MINIMISATION

With the aid of a briefing note (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received an update on Waste Minimisation. The Executive Councillor for Operations and Regulation introduced the item.

The Waste Operations Manager addressed the Panel and highlighted the key points of the briefing note including the number of activities undertaken by the Waste Minimisation Service. It was also noted that the refuse workers have rejected 7000 bins in 2018/19, in an attempt to mitigate the risk of contaminated bin which could cost the Council £100k per year. The Waste Minimisation Officer explained to Members the literature the service distributes including literature in other languages in order to communicate with families whose first language is not English.

Following a question on whether more can be done to start up projects in order to invest to save, the Panel was informed that the service is currently trying to concentrate on those issues that affect Huntingdonshire's communities the most.

A Member questioned whether the process of checking a bin reduce the speed of collection but they were informed that the check is quite quick and doesn't add that much time. The Panel was reminded the reason for the check was because the contamination rate is currently at 7% and the risk is if it increases to 9% then it will cost the Council £100k in fines. In addition, it was noted that as the refuse workers become more trained and with the intelligence gathered then the Council knows where in the District contamination is prevalent.

Concerns were raised that in some areas bins stay out all week and asked if the Council could persuade residents to put their bins away. In response, the Members were informed that education is important in changing behaviour but the Council can also issue a Section 46 notice in order to compel the resident to put their bin away.

Councillor Banks raised the concern of older residents who agonise what they can put in which bins. The Waste Minimisation Officer stated that the team can send pictorial stickers out which shows assists residents to identify what item goes in which bin.

A Member asked whether the food waste scheme would be extended into other areas. In response it was confirmed that the scheme was going well with minimal contamination, however the pilot areas have been carefully selected as it was recognised that introducing the scheme to all areas to begin would be problematic.

The Chairman questioned the success the Council is having working with tenant management companies. In response, Members were informed that the Council is having some success and noted that tenant management companies have the power to enforce on fly tipping, however it was recognised that the difficulty is finding out who the tenant management companies are in the first place.

Following a question about Christmas trees it was confirmed that they only need to be the size of the bin and placed beside it and not in it.

The Panel was informed that the team are developing environmental/recycling champions throughout the District and are using them to spread the message, although the team also do outreach events at schools. The Executive Councillor added that she believes the initiatives presented can grow from Parish Councils. The Panel added that the team should also consider visiting preschools as well as primary schools and try to imbed the right behaviours at an earlier age.

44 LITTER MINIMISATION

With the aid of a briefing note (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received an update on Litter Minimisation. The Operations Manager – Environmental Services outlined the themes the Council are currently working on.

Councillor Banks asked if consideration could be given to having a free bulky waste collection in problem areas. The Panel was informed that a collection was carried out in Bedfordshire and that the Officers running the collection discovered that people would travel from further afield to leave their goods.

Councillor Mrs S Smith asked if the Council could work with specialised external companies in order to recycle certain products (the example given was small electrical goods). Members were informed that the issue with this would be that external companies would want to charge and that the Council has existing waste contract in place which would make establishing new contracts more difficult.

When asked how the Council were implementing the bin recycling scheme in areas where the bins belong to the Parish Council, the Panel was informed that in the pilot scheme the Council empties the bins it owns and will analyse the results. It was noted that contamination could be an issue.

45 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

In discussing Members were encouraged to grasp the issues as the potential savings, both financial and social, can be huge.

46 CABINET FEEDBACK: LIFELONG HEALTH TASK AND FINISH GROUP - PART ONE FINAL REPORT

With the aid of a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received Cabinet Feedback on the Lifelong Health Task and Finish Group – Part One Final Report.

The Panel was informed that the Cabinet were content with the recommendations coming through but that it was thought the scope needed to be refined.

It was confirmed that Councillor Mrs S R Wilson is to join the Lifelong Health Task and Finish Group and that Councillor K I Prentice is to leave the Lifelong Health Task and Finish Group.

47 CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH COMMITTEE

Councillor Tavener informed the Panel that she was unable to attend the Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee on 14th November 2019. The Panel decided that a representative should attend and therefore it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor S R Wilson will be appointed as the Panel's substitute for the Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee.

Chairman