

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 24 August 2023

PRESENT: Councillor S J Conboy – Chair.

Councillors S W Ferguson, B A Mickelburgh, T D Sanderson, S L Taylor and S Wakeford.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors L Davenport-Ray, M A Hassall and B M Pitt.

28 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

29 CALL IN: GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

A special meeting was convened in order that Cabinet could consider a report prepared by the Interim Managing Director (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) in response to the call-in for the decision of the Garden Waste Subscription Service made at the Cabinet meeting on 18 July 2023 (Minute No. 23/25 refers).

The Executive Councillor for Customer Services introduced the report which, following recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Joint Panel, included figures recently provided by Cambridgeshire County Council. In addressing the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Joint Panel held on 10th August 2023, the Executive Councillor reassured the Cabinet that recycling waste was monitored; and the environmental impact and sensitivity analysis would be reviewed. He established that consultation with residents was not a statutory requirement; that previous Councils had made necessary decisions which, like this, had not been included in any political party's electoral mandate; and that evidence with regard to the impact of the scheme, including for grey bin waste and vulnerable residents, was covered in the agenda. It was hoped proposals to increase Council Tax Support to 100% for the most vulnerable would assist in mitigating the impact on the most vulnerable. This would be alongside collaboration with Town and Parish Councils.

Councillors recognised another method of achieving such savings had not been identified and was therefore the decision had been necessary.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Councillor for Planning and Executive Councillor for Leisure, Waste and Street Scene complimented the robust scrutiny and chairing of the Overview and Scrutiny Joint Panel.

The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources and Executive Councillor for Customer Services were pleased that the livestreaming facilities provided the opportunity for transparency. The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources also noted that the financial sustainability of the Council had to be prioritised over electoral mandates to allow operations to continue. The Councillor for Leisure, Waste and Street Scene concurred.

The Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy and Housing, stated councillors had conversed and empathised with both residents and the opposition group. He noted there were insufficient grounds or proposed alternative options for a non-statutory public consultation.

This was reiterated by the Executive Leader who stated the Council would continue to listen and engage with residents, but it was necessary to charge in order that the Green Bin Collection Service could continue. To mitigate the impact of the charge, the Council would explore promotion of waste reduction.

The Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy and Housing, noted that statutory consultation had been delayed by call-in, however, could now proceed.

The Executive Leader thanked the public, Officers, Councillors and the Call Centre for their involvement in the process; and thanked the Executive Councillors for Customer Services and Finance and Resources for supporting the process.

Whereupon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the original decision of Cabinet to progress the Garden Waste Subscription Service be endorsed.

Chair