

Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, Waste and Recycling

13 April 2021

Waste and Street Scene

- Recycling tonnages remain high, during the lockdown. The national recycling rates for 19/20 were released on 3rd March 2021. HDC have moved from 98th place in 2018/19 to 73rd in 2019/20 out of 351 authorities. This is great news and is largely due to increased high quality publicity and engagement from the recycling service.
- Garden waste licences are on sale now for the coming season and sales are already at 80% of last year.
- A new fleet of recycling vehicles have been delivered with more environmentally friendly electric bin lifts fitted, which are not only better for the environment but are cheaper to run.

Environmental Health

- Preparations are underway for easing of lockdown restrictions for food and other businesses to ensure compliance with new legislation.
- The service is also gearing up to ensure that a high level of events such as fairs and food and music festivals can operate safely. As such, the Environmental Health led multi-agency Safety Advisory Group is convening to review plans for these events.
- Work continues on joint working for outbreak control in food and other business and high-risk locations. This detailed, valuable work helps to stop the spread of the virus and enables businesses who have been affected to get back to working as normal.
- The Environmental Health Service, in partnership with Scarborough, Ryedale, Richmondshire and North Yorkshire, have been working to secure National Warm Homes Funding to tackle fuel poverty. The partnership has successfully secured £1.3 million in funding for Green Homes Grants, of which Hambleton's share is £597,000 which will help support people with inefficient heating systems replace them with renewable heating sources. This not only improves the quality of life for people on lower incomes, but supports the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

Emergency Planning

- Lateral Flow Device testing for Hambleton staff started in February. Initially testing was only for people who could not work from home and was centred on the 80 Waste and Street Scene staff and a smaller number at the Civic Centre. However, as the Government's roadmap for opening up the country reaches its later stages this testing has been opened up for elected Members who need to attend the Civic Centre and for other staff required to support the opening of the Civic Centre and the Leisure Centres.

- Work is underway to ensure that staff can return to work safely and that staff who are affected by mental health issues during lockdown are looked after and have access to any support they require.
- Timetable going forward -
 - From the 12th April public buildings, including the Civic Centre can open to the public, retail and indoor leisure can recommence.
 - From the 17th May larger outdoor events can start again, indoor entertainment and organised indoor leisure activities can restart.
 - From the 21st June no legal restrictions on gathering.
- In the meantime the message remains- Hands, Face and Space. Further updates will continue to be provided through the weekly Member briefings.

Climate change strategy

The Strategy went to Cabinet on the 9th March and work is progressing well on various projects, such as the Public Sector decarbonisation scheme, along with the refuse vehicle replacement using electric bin lifts and the Green Homes Grant.

Councillor Stephen Watson
Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, Waste and Recycling