

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

**27 July 2021**

### **Waste and Street Scene**

- The Council is preparing to lift Covid restrictions both within the depot and the out on the rounds, this will lead to quicker more efficient rounds by returning back to three crew in a cab allowing the return of the additional hire vehicles.
- Garden waste is performing well, and sales are at 101% of last year, with an income of £924k. (Figures 7/7/21)
- A new littering campaign and project group has been launched with emphasis on littering from vehicles and parish/community engagement. Many parish councils are being supplied with signage and posters to display around their areas. A meeting is being held with local litter picking groups to further help the focus of their work and support them where possible. Over 80 community litter picks have been supported in quarter one. Regular scheduled social media updates are being posted to raise awareness.
- We continue to work with the police to address fly tipping and 5 tonnes of drug related fly tipping was removed in quarter one alone.
- An additional Refuse Collection Vehicle is in operation (budgeted for) in order to provide collections to new developments around the District, this means that recycling rounds will be adjusted but disruption to customers will be kept to a minimum where this is possible.
- Members may be aware that there is a national shortage of Large Goods Vehicle drivers, the service is taking appropriate measures to ensure that the service remains resilient to this shortage, by training loading staff where possible, training office staff to drive and engaging with agencies to ensure that a supply of drivers is necessary if required.

### **Environmental Health**

- Preparations are underway for easing of lockdown restrictions for food and other businesses. A plan is being prepared in accordance with Food Standard Agency guidelines to ensure that food business inspections are on track to ensure the safety of food and drink in Hambleton. Recent recruitment exercises will support this work.
- The service is also gearing up to ensure that a myriad of events such as fairs and food and music festivals can operate safely. As such, the Environmental Health multi-agency Safety Advisory Group is convening to review plans for these events. This group is exceptionally busy, though it should be noted that they are an advisory and have no powers per se to prevent events from happening but are there to provide appropriate advice to ensure events can run safely.

## **Emergency Planning**

- 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 fully supported.
- Covid cases have risen in line with the rest of the country however in the meantime, the message remains - Hands, Face and Space. Further updates will continue to be provided through the weekly member briefings.
- Pavement Licence applications are coming in at increased rates and this council continues to support businesses being able to open and operating fully. However, there have some issues with businesses operating in breach of the licence or operating without a licence, these are being dealt with informally in the first instance.

## **Climate change strategy**

The action plan continues to be implemented, as well as large actions such as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme in Leisure and the work undertaken in Environmental Health to improve energy in people's homes, a trial of recycled paper is taking place across the authority which uses 53% less CO2 to produce.

**Councillor Stephen Watson**

**Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, Waste and Recycling**