

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

5 April 2022

Waste and Street Scene

Garden waste: Year 6 subscriptions are going well at 52% of last year's scheme which closed at £946,480. Present income is £501,000 and is expected to reach £103% of last year's total.

Diesel: prices have risen significantly in the last weeks and they continue to rise. Since April last year there has been an increase of over 0.61p per litre, this continues rise. This had been offset by a significant increase in the recycle prices being received.

Recycling contract: The present contract expires at the end of March. A market testing exercise was undertaken in January and February and due to the global uncertainty, the windfall received last year will not be repeated. The present contractors have agreed to extend the contract on the best terms we could find, and this will still give an estimated income of £100,000 over the original contract figure.

Local Government Reorganisation - Waste: An approach has been agreed where the minimum changes will be made to the service at day 1. A staff briefing has been arranged for the 28th March at 05:30. An approach has been agreed with Customer Services, this is vital as the waste and recycling services account for around 40-50% of calls to the Council. A lot of work is going into establishing and measuring best practice, health and safety, PPE etc.

Local Government Reorganisation - Fleet: This sub-group is determining the best option for fleet renewal and replacement and maintenance, the preference being for owned vehicles and in-house maintenance at present. This area will merge with NYCC fleet operations.

Local Government Reorganisation - Street Scene: Work is being undertaken to establish best practice for all areas such as street lighting, street furniture, fly tipping, pest control and many other areas, this will merge with street sweeping and county street lighting.

Local Government Reorganisation - Workforce: Arrangements have been made to increase staffing in Waste and Street Scene to allow senior officers to concentrate on Local Government Reorganisation, the office staff has been increased and some duties have been re-allocated.

Winter work: Green waste collections are back in full flow. However, the close down allowed all staff to receive vital training including driver CPC. Also, it allowed major thoroughfares such as the A 19 between Thirsk and Shipton to receive a deep cleanse.

Environmental Health

Food: Due to Covid food inspections were suspended for a year, this led to the KPI being red. All food inspections are prioritised according to risk, the higher risk businesses being inspected more frequently. Work is underway to catch up with the high priority work.

New Management Information System: development work is nearly complete with Civica. The system will be live from April 2022. Staff are presently being trained. Staff have been working extremely hard to meet deadlines, but it is envisaged that the new system will set the benchmark for Env Health under the new authority.

Local Government Reorganisation: The service is preparing detailed plans for day 1 including Food, Residential and Safety Advisory Group work. Funding has been set aside to backfill officers' who are working on Local Government Reorganisation, all appointments have been made, meaning the service is as robust as possible.

Avian Flu: All protection zones and surveillance zones have now been removed from around the Morton-on-Swale and Sand Hutton cases. The only current restrictions still in place are in connection with the Whitby case.

Work is ongoing into minimum energy standards for households and retrofitting of properties with energy efficient and affordable heating systems.

Climate Change

Queen's Green Canopy: Take up has been very good. Trees are beginning to be planted including the one at the Civic Centre.

Outreach: Local climate groups are beginning to meet with the Director of Environment, we are actively seeking ways to engage with the community, for example a briefing was arranged on retrofitting.

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Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, Waste and Recycling