

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Tuesday, 24th August, 2021 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman) (In the Chair)
Cllr S.J. Masterson (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Jib Belbase
Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr Nem Thapa

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Gaynor Austin, Cllr R.M. Cooper and Cllr M.D. Smith

12. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July, 2021 were **AGREED** as a correct record.

13. FOOD WASTE SERVICE - COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION PLAN

The Committee welcomed Gill Chisnall, Corporate Manager Communications and Ruth Whaymand, Contracts Manager, who were in attendance to give a presentation on the communications and education plan for the new food waste collection service.

The Committee was advised on a number of issues, these included:

Work Streams – it was noted that collection arrangements with the Council's contractor, SERCO, were being reviewed to incorporate the new service, this had some legal and financial implications, due to round changes and a rebalancing of top heavy rounds to ensure a smoother service to residents. It was advised that two Recycling Support Officers had been recruited, on a one year contract, to support the launch of the new service, both would be carrying out engagement with residents prior to, during and after the launch. Their role would also include monitoring feedback and adapting the communications to address residents' concerns. IT systems were being updated to allow for a customer self-serve portal to report missed collections/check collection days, the crew would also be able to log problems from hand held devices in real time.

Caddies and Liners – It was advised that the service would be launched in two phases, the first phase would be to individual properties and phase two would be to

properties with shared facilities, such as flats. As part of phase one, it was noted that households would be provided with a 23L kerbside caddy, a 5L kitchen caddy and a one-off roll of liners. It was noted that the use of liners wasn't necessary and these could be substituted with alternatives such as bread bags, newspaper etc. It was advised that the caddies were due to arrive in early September but the liners had been slightly delayed. Once everything was in place the "go live" date would be announced for phase one. The launch of the service to shared facility properties (phase two) was likely to commence in spring 2022.

Engagement/Communications – It was noted that a Leadership Group within the Council had been established to consider the implications of introducing a food waste collection service. The Group had considered opportunities/barriers, especially with harder to reach groups and had spent time learning from the experiences of other councils and industry specialists, WRAP (Waste and Resource Action Programme). Following the establishment of a Member Working Group, a communications plan had been developed. Initially, social media had been used to raise awareness of the importance of a food waste collection service, following the adoption of the Council's Climate Change Strategy. More recently, "teaser" leaflets had been distributed to all households and further information, such as a "how to guide" and "tips" leaflets, would be circulated with the delivery of the caddies, in September 2021, to phase one properties. To complement this, social media would continue to be used to raise awareness of the new service and offer tips and advice on how to get the most from the service, this would include a "how to" video. The food waste advisers would also be promoting the service and offering help and advice to residents, community groups and harder to reach communities. Communications would increase around the launch and would continue to be monitored post launch to assess how the new service was being received by residents.

Leadership Project – the Leadership Group had been asked to consider how best to engage with harder to reach groups, in particular the language barriers with the Nepali community and the transient nature of the military community. Translation of leaflets/videos etc. would be available to help engage with the Nepali community, this had worked well during the pandemic. A Nepali speaking Customer Services Unit Adviser would also be trained and available to offer advice, translations and face to face engagement, when necessary. It was noted that the Group had liaised with the military and options for engagement with military personnel included, information distributed via the Garrison magazine, BFBS radio, welcome packs, attendance at coffee mornings etc. In addition, as part of the phase two work, it was advised that consideration would be given to engaging Resident Food Waste Champions in flatted developments, the Council would work with these individuals to help get neighbours on board with the new arrangements for recycling food waste.

Members discussed the presentation and raised a number of issues, including:

- Request for a Members "frequently asked questions" document to help address residents' concerns
- Request for a Members Seminar giving a step by step guide to how phase one will be launched

- Request for Food Waste Advisers to visit local neighbourhood shopping centres, such as North Town, to engage with residents
- Request for an “alert sticker” to be placed on caddies before delivery stating the start date of the service – this would be considered and, in addition, it was noted that a sticker would be placed on general waste bins requesting “no food waste”
- Joint working with Registered Providers as part of phase two? – it was noted that conversations with registered providers would be initiated by the Council to assist with engaging their residents. The rollout of phase two would be much slower. The engagement of the nominated resident champions may lead to different solutions being required for different blocks
- On the question of alternate weekly collection on general and recycling waste, it was noted that WRAP had suggested that councils offering alternate weekly collections got better participation rates than those offering weekly collections of other waste streams
- Nepali engagement, it was requested that a presentation could be given to some of the key members of the Nepali community to help engagement. It was suggested that Ms Whaymand or Ms Chisnall could attend a forthcoming Community Leaders meeting to give a presentation
- Expansion into food waste collection for commercial services – it was noted that the focus was currently on the domestic collection of food waste, as part of phases 1 and 2. Commercial services would be explored in the future

In response to a question, it was noted that by diverting food waste to recycling streams less domestic waste was being incinerated, this gap could be backfilled with commercial waste, which was currently going to landfill.

The Chairman thanked Ms Whaymand and Ms Chisnall for their presentation.

14. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee **NOTED** the current work plan.

It was noted that the agenda for the next meeting in October 2021 might include a presentation from Citizens’ Advice and Rushmoor Voluntary Services on their activities and joint work with the Council.

It was suggested that a review of VIVID Housing could be carried out following recent land ownership issues in the North Town area. It was agreed that this would be followed up at the next Progress Group.

The meeting closed at 8.38 pm.

CLLR MRS D.B. BEDFORD (VICE-CHAIRMAN) (IN THE CHAIR)
