

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

23 November 2015

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Councillor Marjorie James (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jim Ainslie, Allan Barclay, Steve Gibbon, Peter Jackson, Brenda Loynes and Jean Robinson

Officers: Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Mike Blair, Technical Services Manager
Kieran Bostock, Senior Engineer
Craig Thelwell, Waste and Environmental Services Manager
Jayne Brown, Passenger Transport Services Team Leader
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

38. Apologies for Absence

None

39. Declarations of Interest

None

40. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2015

Received

41. Recycling (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non-key decision

Purpose of report

(i) To provide information about the Council's kerbside dry recycling

service and the challenges of dealing with the high levels of contamination, the recent changes in Government regulations and the difficult trading conditions that currently exist within the recycling industry.

- (ii) To seek approval to introduce changes to the kerbside dry recycling service, aimed at addressing these issues and, as part of the changes, to gain approval for the collection element of the contract to transfer from external contractor to the Council.
- (iii) To seek approval to carry out works at the Burn Road Transfer Station to accommodate changes to the kerbside dry recycling service, relocate the confidential waste shredding facility, and provide efficiencies/savings during closures of the Energy from Waste (EfW) plant on Teesside. The proposed works will also bring back into use a redundant area of this site that was recently closed on the grounds of health and safety, as it was deemed to contain a hazardous structure.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided background information regarding the Council's kerbside dry recycling service, the challenges in dealing with high levels of contamination and the changes to the environmental permitting regulations recently introduced by the Government in October 2014. It was reported that at its peak, contamination had reached an unacceptable level of 24% against the specified contractual level of 5%. Contamination levels currently stood at around 20%.

As a consequence, the Waste Management Section, along with Procurement and Legal, had had a number of meetings with Palm Recycling in an attempt to find a suitable resolution acceptable to both parties. A number of options had been discussed and proposals had been developed, details of which were set out in a confidential appendix attached to the report. **This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (paragraph 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.**

Members' approval was sought to introduce changes to the kerbside dry recycling service and for the collection element to transfer to the Council. Approval was also sought to carry out works at the Burn Road Transfer Station to accommodate the proposed changes to the recycling service, details of which were included in the report. The Committee was referred to the financial, risk, staffing and asset management considerations of the

proposals.

In the debate that followed, the Committee discussed the proposals and emphasised the importance of utilising Hartbeat to carry out an education campaign in relation to recycling procedures to assist with reducing contamination levels. It was suggested that the education campaign should include the consequences of contaminated recyclables together with a savings matrix setting out income generated as a result of effective recycling and the potential savings to the Council Tax payer as a result. Various methods of publicising recycling information were debated. A number of suggestions were considered which included providing education sessions in schools, including information on the Council's website, parish magazines and newsletters as well as via residents' associations.

Officers responded to further issues raised by Members in relation to the proposals. Clarification was provided regarding the confidential waste paper disposal arrangements and the Committee requested that all Council departments be reminded to utilise the Council's internal confidential shredding/waste disposal arrangements. The financial benefits of extending the Council's in-house confidential waste disposal service to external companies was highlighted and it was suggested that this issue be explored.

Decision

The Committee:-

- a) Approved the proposal for the Council to carry out the collection element of the Recycling service in-house as outlined in the proposal, as detailed in Section 5 and a **confidential Appendix A** of the report,
- b) Approved the transfer of staffing budget for 9 staff from Operations to Waste to minimise the resulting budget pressure associated with the proposed changes,
- c) Authorised officers from the Council to re-negotiate the terms and conditions of the contract with the provider/contractor in accordance with corporate procurement and legal requirements.
- d) Authorised officers to negotiate with the provider/contractor regarding potential TUPE implications.
- e) Noted that subject to the approval of recommendations a) to d), the Medium Term Financial Strategy to be referred to Council by the Finance and Policy Committee, included the following recommendations:-

- i) Approve the use of Prudential Borrowing for the purchase of Operational Equipment which includes the three vehicles required to bring the recycling service in-house,
 - ii) Approve the use of Prudential Borrowing to fund the £250,000 Capital Costs associated with the works required to the Burn Valley Transfer Station,
- f) Noted the financial implications outlined in section 6 of the report.
- g) Noted the risks associated with the new arrangement which may result in a budget pressure in 2017/18, which will need to be considered as part of the 2017/18 budget process.
- h) That a savings matrix be included in future education campaigns setting out income generated as a result of effective recycling and the potential savings to the Council Tax payer as a result.
- i) That all Council departments be requested to utilise the Council's in-house confidential shredding/waste disposal service.
- j) The option to extend the Council's in-house confidential waste disposal service to external companies be explored.

42. Tees Valley Local Standards for Sustainable Drainage *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Key decision test (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference No RN17/15

Purpose of report

To set out the Council's guidance document for the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) on development sites and to update Members on the Council's duties as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information to the Council's role, as lead Local Flood Authority, and the development of the Council's guidance document for the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems. The Local

Standards, a copy of which was available in the Members' Library, had been produced by a Working Group of Local Authorities of Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton on Tees and Darlington Borough Councils. The proposed document formed the local standards for the Tees Valley Local Authorities, and together with the National Standards, strongly promoted the use of SuDS which helped to reduce surface water runoff and mitigate flood risk. The document was intended to be used by architects, engineers, planners and developers involved in the preparation of schemes for new development. The LLFA should be involved in any pre-application discussions relating to a development. SuDS presented an opportunity to educate and engage communities about water management.

Members were referred to the risk, legal and asset management considerations as set out in the report.

The Chair welcomed the report and took the opportunity to express the Committee's thanks to the Principal Engineer along with all members of the team for their hard work in relation to progress made on this issue.

Decision

- (i) That the Local Standards document be adopted as a benchmark for future SuDS schemes.
- (ii) That the publication of the Local Standards be approved.
- (iii) That the document be referred to Planning Committee.

43. Grass Verge Policy (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek Members' approval to adopt a policy in relation to the prioritisation and construction of parking provision in and on grass verge areas within the town.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported that the purpose of the policy was to ensure that any inspections the Local Authority undertook in relation to grass verges complied with the recommendations contained within the document "Well Maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management". Whilst the Code was primarily concerned with large landscaped areas, the report concentrated on problems with the

maintenance and upkeep of highway verges abutting the carriageway in residential areas.

Members were advised that a number of legal aspects of parking needed to be considered, details of which were included in the report. There were several ways in which the problem could be tackled which included prevention of all parking on verges, construct lay-bys, construct parking bays, reconstruct grass verges in tarmac or extending the width of the carriageway.

Due to the large number of requests for verge treatment received, it was necessary to establish a method of prioritisation based on criteria of safety, amenity, accessibility and cost. A scoring method had been established, details of which was set out in the report.

Decision

The Committee approved the Policy of prioritisation of grass verge hardening based on the criteria contained in Section 5 of the report and with consideration to the legal issues as detailed in the report.

44. Update – Review of Concessionary Travel Rates for Home to School Transport Provision (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To update Members on the take-up of Concessionary Travel Permits for home to school transport following Members' request from the meeting of this Committee on 27 October 2014.

Issue(s) for consideration

It was reported that at a meeting of this Committee in October 2014 the Committee had considered a range of options and agreed to increase the rate in a staged approach commencing September 2015, £195 per annum from September 2015 (£1.02 per day), £285 per annum from September 2016 (£1.50 per day) £285 per annum from September 2016 (£1.50 per day) and £375 per annum from September 2017 (£1.97 per day).

With regard to take-up of concessionary travel provision across the home to school transport services from the start of the academic year in September

2015, Members were referred to Appendix A of the report which detailed the mainstream home to school transport services, showing the vehicle seating capacity, the number of students who were statutorily entitled to transport and the number of students purchasing a concessionary seat. There had been an increase of 44 students from the start of the new term in September. Based on the current numbers the projected income for the financial year 2015-16 was estimated at £24,620.

The Chair commented on the benefits of reports of this type and requested that an update report in relation to take-up figures be provided in 12 months time to enable the Committee to closely monitor the position. A Member advised that some of the figures had been calculated on a term time basis, whilst others had been calculated annually. The need for consistency in terms of presenting this information in future reports was highlighted. With regard to maximising take-up of the service, a view was expressed that all options should be explored including the feasibility of the public utilising empty seats.

Decision

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That an update report be provided in 12 months time in relation to take up of the service.
- (iii) That all options in relation to maximising take-up be explored including the feasibility of the public utilising empty seats.

The meeting concluded at 10.55 am

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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