

Environmental Health, Recycling & Waste Policy Development Advisory Group
16 NOVEMBER 2023

Present: Councillors: Jay Mercer (Chairman), Emma Beard, James Brookes, Philip Circus, Joan Grech, Kasia Greenwood and Lynn Lambert

Apologies: Councillors: Nick Grant, Warwick Hellawell, Jonathan Taylor and Mike Wood

7 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 13 July were received.

8 **COMMUNITY LINK SERVICE**

The Community Link Manager gave a presentation on the Community Link service that was hosted by the Council. The service supplied personal alarms, fall detectors, GPS devices and other services to vulnerable people, including those with epilepsy and victims of domestic abuse as well as the elderly.

The Group noted how the service had been revamped and upgraded since the pandemic, with a 78% increase in new users in 2023 over 2022 (calendar year). The service was in the process of replacing all analogue with digital equipment. The cost of replacing equipment had been compensated with an increase in the cost of the service, the first price increase in 12 years. The price of the service remained competitive and would remain so after a further modest increase planned for July 2024. There were currently 1,698 monitored connections of which 1,550 were lifeline alarms (the red button) and the balance were GPS devices and specialised sensors.

It was noted that the service currently broke even. The Cabinet Member stated that there was potential to grow the service further and generate income for the Council.

The team worked closely with WSCC's occupational therapy services and also covered part of Mid Sussex. The Head of Environmental Health & Licensing congratulated the team on their achievements in growing the service.

9 **UPDATE ON SIMPLER RECYCLING ANNOUNCEMENT FROM DEFRA**

The Head of Recycling & Waste gave details of DEFRA's recent announcement regarding Simpler Recycling and its implications for the Council and how the service was run. The announcement included:

Collection of Dry Recyclable Waste Streams (Excluding Plastic Films): required by 31 March 2026. The Council already collected the required waste

streams. Co-mingling was confirmed as acceptable and therefore the Council met all requirements.

Collection of Recyclable Plastic Film: required by 31 March 2027. The WSCC Material Recovery Facility did not have the capacity to do this at present, but trials were taking place and options being explored to help local authorities establish best practice before the deadline.

Collection of Food Waste: required by 31 March 2026. HDC were consulting on various options for household collections which would be put forward for consideration next year. There were significant capital cost implications and the level of Government funding to support implementation was yet to be confirmed.

It was noted that a significant amount of food waste included in general waste collections did not end up in landfill because it was extracted at the MBT (Mechanical Biological Treatment) centre. The Cabinet Member stated that this was not included in the Council's recycling rate figures and, although it was low grade, it was diverted from landfill.

Collection of Garden Waste: required by 31 March 2026 as a service requested by the householder with fee paid. The Council already delivered this service and no further change was required.

Frequency of residual waste collections: proposed requirement for a minimum fortnightly collection for residual waste, with weekly collections preferred.

The Cabinet Member stated that HDC were being robust in their consultation response regarding fortnightly collections as this could risk maximising recycling.

Businesses – Recycling and food waste collections: required by 31 March 2025. HDC was putting together a business case for new vehicles to augment existing commercial waste services.

The Director of Communities stated that he had discussed the recycling reforms with the local MPs, who had taken on board comments regarding food waste and fortnightly collections.

It was noted that the new measures could have capacity implications for the depot, given that more vehicles would be required.

10 **CLOUD 9 - APP UPDATE**

The Head of Recycling & Waste updated the Group on the implementation of the Cloud 9 app, a free mobile app already used by some other local authorities. The app would use HDC branding and give information on recycling and waste collection dates, alert users if collections were delayed (eg

due to road closures), advise on what can be recycled and recycling options for items that aren't included in kerb-side collections. Information on other HDC services and HDC social media could also be included and information available through the app would be extended after the initial launch.

It was hoped to launch the app before Christmas and there would be wide-spread communications to encourage its use, including social media, and in the New Year each household would receive a 'bin hanger' with details of the app.

The Group were advised that WSCC would cover all costs for the first year, after which the service would be reviewed. It was noted that East Devon District Council had used the app for several years and there was an approximately 50% take up rate by residents.

11 **PROPOSED GARDEN WASTE CHARGE - 2024/25**

The Director of Communities updated the Group on the proposed increase to the Garden Waste collection charge for the next financial year. The report to Cabinet on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy included a recommendation to Council that the charge for the Garden Waste subscription service be increased from £49 to £54 per annum per bin.

The recommendation included the removal of the current discount on additional bins. The Head of Recycling & Waste agreed that the impact of the removal of this discount would be monitored.

The Cabinet Member stated that the income generated through this service was significant and HDC continued to charge the lowest rate in Sussex.

The meeting closed at 6.32 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN