

Environmental Health, Recycling & Waste Policy Development Advisory Group
18 JANUARY 2024

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

Also Present: Councillors: Roger Noel and Paul Clarke

12 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 16 November were received. The Cabinet Member advised that a correction was required, to reflect that East Devon was a District Council, rather than a County Council.

13 **COMMERCIAL FOOD WASTE**

The Head of Recycling & Waste gave a presentation that outlined the new legislative requirement for Horsham District Council (HDC) to separate the collection of food waste, for disposal. The business case for offering a commercial food waste collection service was outlined. The costs and proposed pricing structures were detailed, and disposal options were presented. The risks were explained, as well as the expected payback. The Head of Recycling and Waste explained the opportunity the proposal offered, as well as how the proposal could be delivered.

Members discussed the risks, and the ways in which they could be mitigated. It was confirmed that businesses in the District had expressed an interest in food waste collection. The current database of businesses, and pricing strategy were discussed.

The Group queried how the waste would be processed, once collected, and raised concerns about the contamination of waterways as a result of spreading the waste product onto fields. Officers confirmed that anaerobic digestion tanks would process the waste, and a high-grade output would be achieved. As such, there were not concerns in relation to the contamination of waterways.

It was confirmed that HDC would not undertake to obtain its own biodigester, as this did not have significant benefits, and was not within its expertise.

The Group showed support for the proposal to collect commercial food waste.

14 **DOG WASTE**

The Group received a presentation from the Head of Recycling & Waste in relation to the collection of dog waste. The current service provided had reached capacity, and a review was to be undertaken to assess the current rounds. It was highlighted that HDC could only install bins and collect waste on

land owned by the Authority and that there would be a capital cost for any additional rounds.

The Group suggested that Neighbourhood Wardens could provide useful data, as well as parish councils. The Cabinet Member asked Members to provide suggestions of other potential consultees.

Members discussed the challenges of dog waste collection. Concerns were raised in relation to the disposal of dog waste in domestic waste, in light of the potential for 3 weekly collections. The Group were advised that there would be a seminar on food waste, and the frequency of collections remained to be determined.

Concerns were also raised in relation to the detrimental effect on wildlife of worming treatments in dogs. It was confirmed that in the future, animal waste would not be mixed with food waste at the Mechanical Biological Treatment Plant, and as such the risk should be reduced.

It was suggested that there could be a benefit to a collaboration with West Sussex County Council (WSCC). Officers confirmed that this could be explored.

15 **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & LICENSING FEES & CHARGES**

The Head of Environmental Health & Licensing advised that there was a proposed 6.85% increase to the fees and charges for Environmental Health, excluding taxi fares. The fee increase would be considered for approval at the Council meeting in February.

16 **XL BULLIES**

The Head of Environmental Health & Licensing advised the Group that XL Bullies had been banned and defined, but were not a specific breed. It was highlighted that DEFRA were the only authority competent to assess whether a dog was an XL Bully, which was anticipated to be a challenge for HDC, as the collecting authority for strays.

Local Authorities across Sussex were working together, and aimed to establish a Memorandum of Understanding with Sussex Police in relation to dealing with dangerous dogs. The key concern was that XL Bullies that may be collected as strays, cannot be rehomed if their owner is not identified. The main challenge was that HDC may not be able to confirm whether a stray dog is an XL Bully.

The Group discussed the challenges, and the Cabinet Member advised that Group that an Animal Welfare Policy would be developed that would define HDC's environmental health responsibilities, whilst highlighting the benefits that animals bring.

17 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH,
RECYCLING & WASTE PORTFOLIO**

It was noted that there were no items on the forward plan for the Environmental Health, Recycling & Waste portfolio.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN