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TAMWORTH AND LICHFIELD JOINT WASTE COMMITTEE

21 NOVEMBER 2022

PRESENT:

Councillors Doyle, Pullen and E Little

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Councillor Stephen Doyle was elected as chair for the remainder of the municipal year.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Jeremy Oates.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 22 November 2022, were taken as read and approved.

5 CHRISTMAS CATCH UP PLAN

The report was presented by Sharna Quirke (Interim Assistant Director Operations, Regulations & Enforcement). Members raised concerns about the potential of Lichfield residents waiting 17-18 days for recycling collection over the Christmas period. Ms Quirke assured the committee that there were contingencies in place with staff were on standby to work the additional Monday, though this comes with related overtime and pay. Additional support was being sought from the tipping sites, which have agreed to extend their opening hours. Members also expressed a desire to see more than one option presented for decision in subsequent reports.

RESOLVED: Members approved the Christmas Collections Catch Up Plan for the Joint Waste Service.

6 JOINT WASTE SERVICE PROJECTS

Mr Fletcher explained to the committee that the initial rollout of dual stream recycling had encountered some challenges. The Chief Executives of both authorities had subsequently held discussions in order to put forward a proposal, with key priorities for the service and would look for feedback.

These discussions included questions about strategic capacity. Ms Quirke was identified as part of the additional strategic capacity. Steven Forster, who recently undertook the review into dual stream recycling, was also highlighted as helping to identify additional strategic capacity.

Mr Fletcher confirmed that questions around the depot size will be dependent on decisions regarding food waste. Members noted that the issue of food waste was not going to disappear, and all options need to be on the table. When discussing timescales, Mr Fletcher highlighted the importance of the fleet review, noting that a lack of clarity on this by March 2023 would present serious issues.

RESOLVED: Members noted the Joint Waste Service Projects Action Plan.

7 DUAL STREAM RECYCLING SERVICE UPDATE AND PERFORMANCE DATA

The report was presented by Ms Quirke. She informed the committee that the target of 8.5 crews per day on average had been tasked as a priority earlier that day. She hoped a robust solution would be in place by January. Ms Quirke also informed members that letters would be written to the specific households that had seen a number of rejected bins.

In response to member questions about service performance, the possibility of a civic campaign to raise awareness of recycling and resident contribution was suggested to the committee. It was noted that there is useful data that the service does not currently utilise that could be incorporated into this campaign. The reduction of total tonnage compared to last year was noted as being in line with national trends, although there was appetite to examine this further.

Members questioned if the budget forecast was now presenting a pessimistic estimate and if so, was there budgetary room for additional recycling officers. Simon Fletcher (Chief Executive, Lichfield District Council) confirmed this was a very conservative estimate and asked Ms Quirke to examine the profiling of the end of year budget.

RESOLVED: Members noted the update on the performance of the Dual Stream Recycling Service.

8 BUSINESS PLANNING

Members asked to look at the structure of the Joint Waste Board and how it operates, noting that it was essentially an operational committee. Members suggested that there should be a realignment of member and officer responsibilities, with the focusing on strategic horizon scanning whilst officers focus on operational matters.

Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive, Tamworth Borough Council) explained that the Joint Waste Committee was essential for the function of the joint service when it was first established. However, other practices such as Building Control utilise a 'Management Board' that allows for member oversight of operational matters. Mr Barratt suggested this as a possible alternative, pending an examination of the Joint Waste Board Constitution to accommodate such a change.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to consider changes to the operation of the Joint Waste board at the next committee meeting.

(The Meeting closed at 6.30 pm)

CHAIRMAN

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