

LEISURE, PARKS & WASTE MANAGEMENT (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE

25 SEPTEMBER 2019

PRESENT:

Councillors Matthews (Chairman), Banevicius (Vice-Chair), Silvester-Hall (Vice-Chair), Barnett, L Ennis, Ray, Salter, Tapper, Warfield, Westwood, M Wilcox and B Yeates.

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.17 Councillors attended the meeting).

8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from Councillor Baker

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

10 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were signed as a correct record.

11 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was considered. It was suggested and agreed to consider the Review of the Garrick CSA at the March meeting. It was also agreed to consider the Friary Grange Leisure Centre at the January 2020 meeting. It was then noted that there would be a special Meeting on the 18th Nov to consider the consultant's report for the F4F Waste Service Review.

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted and updated as agreed.

12 RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY FOR ENGLAND

The Committee received a report on the national Resources and Waste Strategy as published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). It was reported that the strategy set out the government's long term vision for resource management with the expectation to set higher targets and requiring producers to cover the cost of dealing with certain packaging materials.

It was then reported that there had been a number of accompanying consultations on consistency of collection, deposit return schemes, extended producer responsibility and plastics tax. It was noted that the Council had responded to these consultations as part of a wider Staffordshire representation.

It was reported that there were a number of proposals from the strategy that would have a significant impact on local authority operations and these were mandatory food waste collections, greater separation of dry recyclables and deposit return schemes. It was noted that there had been no decision as yet to whether garden waste collection would become statutory.

The Committee discussed these implications and it was noted that food waste collection would require new vehicles and bins as well as more frequent collections. It was reported that logistics of collections from flats/apartments would have to be thought out.

Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) were also discussed and it was reported that the materials that would be covered were the ones that gave the best return in recycling income for the Council and so it could have a financial impact. It was also reported that there had been a pilot in London. Members agreed that there was also a risk of a 'womble' culture where people could go through bins to take these materials to make profit. It was asked if the Council could have their own sites or get involved in collections at deposit sites and it was reported that any commercial opportunity would be explored.

It was confirmed that having one bin for recycling was not how the industry prefer to receive materials as it leads to quality issues and takes time to sort.

It was asked if communal waste collection could be investigated as it had proved successful in other countries and it was reported that it could lead to opportunities for flytipping and would take a lot of education to separate materials. It was then asked if black bags could be used and charged for non-recyclable waste like in Germany and it was noted that there could be some negative feedback that there is Council Tax to cover this service.

The Committee did have concerns that the Government strategy would add to an already very financially stretched situation for the Council. It was felt that it would be difficult with the loss of the Revenue Support Grant, the potential loss of around £1.4m from garden waste, the potential loss from some recycling income from DRS but the need to introduce food waste collections and greater separation of recycling. It was reported that the WMLGA were lobbying the government about this situation and as noted the Council had responded to the consultations but it was agreed for the Chairman to speak to the Leader of the Council with a view to discussing this further with the local MPs and other bodies if required.

RESOLVED: That the proposals contained in the Government's Resource and Waste Strategy and the potential impact they may have on the Joint Waste Service, if adopted, be noted.

13 JOINT WASTE SERVICE FIT FOR FUTURE REVIEW - APPROACH

The Committee received a report giving an update to the fundamental review of the Joint Waste service. It was reported that consultants had been appointed and their initial findings were that the service was currently operating with good performance and was efficient and safe. It was also reported that despite this, it was still good to conduct the review and investigate other options as well as any opportunities including trade waste.

It was noted that the review was due to be completed by December 2019 and Members would consider the consultants findings report at the special meeting in November 2019. It was confirmed that any options would have the national strategy in mind.

When discussed, it was noted that contracts of employment were part of the review and it was important to ensure the right terms and conditions were being offered. It was reported that there was a current national shortage of HGV drivers and this was being encountered with the Joint Waste Service with recruitment difficulties. It was also reported that there was a high number of agency staff being used and although the cost was the same, it would be preferred to have in house staff.

It was asked if a Member Task Group could be of use to help feed in ideas and it was agreed to defer this until after the special meeting.

RESOLVED: That the approach that has been taken for the fundamental reviews of the Joint Waste Service and Lichfield's Trade Service be noted.

(The Meeting closed at Time Not Specified)

CHAIRMAN