



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 6th JULY 2022

PRESENT: Councillor S Goodall (Chair), Councillors R Ford, A Cooper, J Harper, S Peale and P Turner

CABINET: Councillor Stephen Doyle

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Anna Miller (Assistant Director – Growth & Regeneration), Ben Percival (Operations Manager), Nigel Harris (General Manager, Joint Waste Service) and Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michelle Cook, Sarah Daniels and Ben Price.

17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th June 2022 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor R Ford and seconded by Councillor J Harper)

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

19 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reminded the Committee of the additional Committee meeting scheduled for 23 August 2022.

20 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH COMMITTEE

None

21 CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS REFERRED TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH COMMITTEE FROM CABINET OR COUNCIL

No new items had been referred.

22 DRY RECYCLING CONTRACT UPDATE

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Skills, Planning, Economy and Waste, Councillor Stephen Doyle and the Chief Executive, Andrew Barratt, the Operations Manager, Ben Percival, and Nigel Harris, the General Manager, of the Joint Waste Service to the meeting to update the Committee.

The Operations Manager provided an overview of the implementation phase of dual stream service during which there was concurrent implementation of the new service together with continuation of the old service. Implementation was completed at the end of May 2022 with the full dual stream collections commencing from 30th May 2022. During the first five full weeks of the new service there had been carefully monitoring and whilst it was early to draw firm conclusions it was reported that:

- There had been no appreciable increase in residual waste, suggesting that recyclable materials were not being put into the general (black bin) waste
- Missed bin reports had been reducing since implementation
- Rejected bins and contaminated waste had significantly reduced since implementation
- It was intended that there would be regular reviews, including at month 3 and month 6 to consider whether there were any improvements which could be made.

The Committee commented and sought clarifications in the following areas:

1. Whether there was any comparator data from other local authorities regarding the roll out of the dual streaming systems and how did Tamworth Borough Council's data compare. It was reported that the implementation of dual stream recycling had transformed the quality of the recycling collected and led to a significant reduction in the percentage of contamination rate from around 14 /15% (for co-mingled waste) to <2% for card and paper, and to <5% for glass, plastics and cans which had meant there had been no rejected loads, which was not understood to be the case in all local authority recycling services. Going forwards further data would be available.
2. Information on methods for securing the blue bags, where it was reported that the bag had been specified to fit within the top of the blue bin, and it had never been designed to hook onto the blue bin. It was reported that second blue bags could be requested by residents. It was reported that once there was further data available there would be consideration of whether any improvements could be made. It was highlighted that any changes would need to be made on a round by round basis and not by specific households
3. How many requests for additional blue bags had been made where it was reported that 3500* had been requested.

4. Whether the blue bags delivered had met the specification, whether the decision to use bags for card and paper and the bins for the glass, plastic and tins reflected the volume of waste from households, as well as consideration as to how the card and paper waste in bags would be managed in inclement weather. It was reported that the specification of the bags was currently a matter under discussion with the supplier and an update could be given at a later meeting of the Committee. In terms of reversing the use of bags and bins, this was something under discussion and whilst it was considered that the use of the bags for card and paper and bins for glass, plastic and cans was currently the right way round (in terms of volumes of waste received) this would continue to be kept under review. In terms of the query about inclement weather / working through the winter, the bag and bin service was close to industry standard and was used in other local authorities and there was the velcro lid on the bag to assist, however, there would continue to be work to consider how to provide additional capacity over the Christmas period.
5. An independent review of the implementation of the service had been commissioned which was expected to report back in August 2022 and could be included as part of the next update to this Committee.
6. What was the expected lifespan of the bags, where it was reported that the service had planned to replace 105 of bags per year.
7. Clarification on the assisted service available to residents, where it was reported that details were available on the website and that a modest increase in the number of requests had been received following implementation of the new dual stream service.
8. The plans which would be in place for the Christmas period where it was reported that this was an area considered each year and plans were underway which could involve extra resources being utilised. An update on the Christmas plans was requested to be included in the next update to the Committee.
9. The risk to the service's delivery in terms of HGV driver shortages and any mitigations in place or under consideration. It was reported that this was an ongoing risk for the service and that to address this risk the service had reviewed the pay for drivers and was considering implementing training for its own drivers.
10. The position of the plans in communal housing properties where it was reported that this piece of work was expected to take 12 months and would commence shortly.

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder and Officers for their update and attendance and requested that the above comments be considered when preparing the next update for the Committee in 3 months time. The Officers then left the meeting.

** Post Meeting Note: the correct figure for the number of additional blue bags which had been requested was 2000 (not 3500).*

The Head of Economic Development and Regeneration provided an update to the Committee on the progress made since the Committee's last update on Electric Vehicle Charging. The update included confirmation that a contract had been signed with BP Pulse for the installation and ongoing maintenance of electric vehicle points at 2 council owned car parks in the town; Bolebride and Riverside. A map of the intended locations of the points was circulated, which had followed a site visit by BP Pulse to identify the optimal locations. At each location there would be two fast chargers, with 2 charging points on each. The installation had not yet commenced.

The Committee sought clarifications in the following areas:

1. How the usage of the charging points would be monitored where it was reported that this would be done by BP Pulse and the contract included some sharing of information.
2. How long it would take to install the charging points, where it was reported that this would depend upon the locations and proximity to electricity sub stations.
3. Any potential limitations of the infrastructure available in terms of electricity supply, where it was reported that these charging points would assist in identifying the demand for charging points, which would help future conversations in this area. Further it was reported that there was a Corporate Project in the Corporate Plan to develop an EV Charging Strategy which would articulate what as an authority we want to deliver and then discussions on how this could be delivered would commence. Further there was work at a Staffordshire County level on sustainability which also included EV Charging at a Staffordshire level. Over time it was also reported that the range of electric vehicles and other technological developments would develop and this could impact the demand and nature of charging facilities required.

The Chair thanked the Portfolio Holder and Officers for their update and the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration then left the meeting.

24 PETITION TO STOP THE NETTING OF HEDGES IN TAMWORTH

The Chair reminded members that this was report was before the Committee following a petition to full Council, which Council referred to the Committee to review the relevant legislation and any other relevant material before reporting back to full Council.

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Growth provided an overview of the report and highlighted that the relevant legislation included Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and that the netting of hedges was used by developers to mitigate their risks of undertaking works illegally. It was reported that Natural England did not regulate the use of netting by developers, however,

they would expect developers to take a proportionate approach to netting and they provide guidance about the netting mesh size.

The Assistant Director further reported that Part 6 of the Environment Act 2021, included a requirement for developers to deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) as a condition of planning permission in England, and that this requirement was a direct consequence of the petition presented to Government in 2019. This requirement had cascaded into the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, and this was being implemented by Borough Council officers. The result of the BNG was expected to encourage developers to consider their approaches which could involve them retaining the existing habitats to achieve the 10% BNG.

The Assistant Director advised that some other council's included information on their website which could be considered, and further included Informatives on their planning permissions which were of an advisory nature, which highlighted to developers their duties under the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

The Committee commented and sought clarifications in the following areas:

1. Whether there was anything the Council could do to prevent the removal of hedgerows as part of a development, where the Assistant Director reported that it was not unusual for there to be some tree or hedgerow loss as part of an application for development, however the application would normally be accompanied by ecological surveys, which would assess the value of those habitats. Sometimes hedgerows were lost for safety (visibility) reasons. The BNG would now mean that developers would need to consider further any removal of hedgerows / trees given the need to deliver more than the net gain.
2. Could the council put planning conditions on, for example, the timing / period of netting of hedges? The Assistant Director reported that she would need to take legal advice on whether this was possible.
3. To consider ensuring that training for planning committee members included the consideration of the environment / green agenda.

The Chair reported that following receipt of the further information requested regarding what could be included in permissions, the Chair would feedback to the Committee.

The Committee thanked the Assistant Director for her report and for the Assistant Director and the Portfolio Holder's attendance, following which they left the meeting.

25 FORWARD PLAN

No further items were identified at this time.

26 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

There was no further update at this time on the Facilities for HGV Drivers working group.

The Chair reported that in respect of the Travellers working group, he was in contact with the Portfolio Holder who had identified that there was work at a Staffordshire level ongoing. Once there was further information regarding this he would report back as appropriate.

27 INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Committee considered its work plan and update it as below.

A further working group was identified to look at the integration of transport available to local residents in Tamworth.

Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan	
DATE	SUBJECT
23 August 2022	Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation
23 August 2022	Statement of Community Involvement and local Development Scheme
23 August 2022	Netting of Hedges (response to Council)
14 September 2022	Net Zero – baseline reporting
14 September 2022	Future High Street Fund
11 October 2022	Amington local centre
11 October 2022	Dual Stream (recycling service) quarterly update
Quarterly updates	Future High Street Fund
Quarterly updates	Dual Stream (recycling service) updates
Quarterly	Reset & Recovery updates
Date to be confirmed	Council Housing Repairs Policy
Date to be confirmed	Review of policy / engagement with stakeholders relating to Travellers
Date to be confirmed	Fire Safety Update
Date to be confirmed	Town Hall
Date to be confirmed	Funding of public toilets (link to HGV working group)
Date to be confirmed	Strategy for older buildings
Date to be confirmed	Review of Taxi Licensing Policy – Points System
Date to be confirmed	CCTV update

Working Groups		
Topic	Possible WG Members	Target IS&G Com meeting date
Review of policy / engagement relating to Travellers		
Facilities for HGV Drivers in Tamworth	Cllrs B Price (WG chair) Cllrs S Daniels and M Cook	
Transport integration	Cllrs R Ford (Chair), A Cooper, S People and P Turner	

**Upcoming Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee
Meetings**

Meeting dates:

23 August 2022 (new)

14 September 2022

11 October 2022

22 November 2022

18 January 2023

23 March 2023

Chair