



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 17th JANUARY 2024

PRESENT: Councillor C Dean (Chair), Councillors B Clarke, R Pritchard and L Smith

CABINET: Councillor Jeremy Oates

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Steve Gee (Operations Manager, Joint Waste Service), Victoria Woodhouse (Customer Relations and Performance Manager, Joint Waste Service), Hannah Peate (Assistant Director Environment, Culture and Wellbeing), Mark Greaves (Operations Manager), Anna Miller (Assistant Director – Growth & Regeneration), Alice Poulton (Future High Streets Fund Project Officer), Leanne Costello (Senior Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer) and Tracey Smith (Democratic Services Assistant)

61 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors R Claymore, B Price and J Jones.

62 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meetings held on *13th September 2023, 10th October 2023 and the 21st November 2023* were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor L Smith and seconded by Councillor B Clarke)

63 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

64 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

There was no update.

65 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH COMMITTEE

There were none.

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

There were none.

67 DUAL STREAM (RECYCLING SERVICE) QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Chair introduced the Report of the Operations Manager to provide the Committee with an update on Joint Waste Service Operations.

The Operation Manager highlighted the following information from the report –

- The services has just been through the busiest 3 weeks of the year and whilst the figures aren't out for the period yet the service did deliver.
- Missed bins were down on average compared to the same period last year.
- Complaints were down on average compared to the same period last year.
- Sign ups to the garden waste service were down however this may be due to a late launch date due to the introduction of a direct debit option for users.
- The number of contaminated bins was lower than the same period last year.
- Quality - there has been one rejected load since the service went live.
- Contamination rate has increased.
- Residual Waste tonnage not including garden waste has increased slightly.
- Dry recycling rates have dropped, this could be due to several factors, people have become used to the scheme/lack of care/disengaged/cost of living crisis. A campaign is being launch in the spring which will be fully funded, and the team will be looking for Councillor support to take this to residents and members will be invited to a briefing in the future.
- The services is anticipating a 40k overspend (16k attributed to Tamworth) which is an improvement on the previous year's overspend of 195k.
- Flats and HMO's are now on the dual recycling scheme and there continues to be work needed in this area.
- Government have announced that food waste collections will be mandatory from 2026 and the service has been awarded £1.7 million for the infrastructure.
- Fleet replacement is still being explored and a briefing will be bought to committee at a later date.

The Chair thanked the officers for a comprehensive report and acknowledged that from personal experience the service had delivered over Christmas.

The Committee made the following comments/observations and asked the following questions:

1. Whether missed collections were coming down due to a more staffed team?

The Officer confirmed that this was monitored daily. The team were asked why collections were missed and responses reported included locked gates on assisted collections, human error.

2. Were schools being targeted in the proposed campaign as it was felt that children could be key to engaging families with re-cycling?

It was confirmed that engaging with schools is key in encouraging parents to engage in recycling.

3. Were there any ideas in place yet as to how the food waste service would be introduced and can we fail?

The Officer confirmed that this would be challenging but that the law required it. It would be a smaller, simpler operation and there were already contracts in place for disposal. Challenges were around extra staff (approx. 23), extra vehicles (approx. 11/12) and engaging service users to participate. In terms of failure the service would aim to deliver this as it does all of its services. It was highlighted that whilst tonnage will be important, the aim is to change behaviour to reduce household food waste. It was highlighted that national adverts suggest the average family wastes £60 per month in food.

The Chief Executive added that this was mandated from March 2026 and that whilst the Council had received provision capital figures to pay for infrastructure, they were missing the detail on the ongoing revenue to support the service which is expected to be at no cost to the Council.

4. Whether there was an update around the fleet replacement and looking at alternative vehicles?

The Officer confirmed that there was no update at present but that moving to an alternative fuelled fleet in the upgrade in 2025 would not be possible.

RESOLVED That Committee:

Noted the update on the performance of the Operational Service for Joint Waste.

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor L Smith)

68 ENDING PLASTIC POLLUTION

The Chair introduced the item to consider the petition which was referred to the Committee from Full Council around ending plastic pollution. This was added to the workplan in September. The Chair highlighted that the Council made four resolutions, three of which had been addressed by the joint waste service with the report in September and this was again attached to the agenda, and that Hannah Peate, Assistant Director for Environment, Culture and Wellbeing and the Operations Manager, Mark Greaves were at the meeting to provide a verbal update on the second resolution for which the Council is responsible.

The Operations Manager highlighted the following information to the committee –

- The Council do ensure that public spaces are clear and litter free however all of this litter is dealt with in the same way.
- Plastic waste is not dealt with separately, there is no separation in public bins and litter pickers do not separate plastics when collecting litter.
- All of the waste is disposed of via incineration at Lower House Farm rather than at Landfill.
- Plastic waste is an issue.
- The Committee could consider whether they want the public to consider recycling waste whilst they are out and about by offering different types of litter bins however there can be issues with contamination.

The Assistant Director added that communication and messages that are put out around using this issue including more use of reusable water bottles are important and the Council could look at supporting and extending campaigns as mentioned by Steve Gee to get those messages out including to sports clubs and community groups. A pilot scheme could be considered to look at multi-use bins.

The Committee considered whether they could consider some dual use bins, in targeted places where they might be most used?

This was supported by the Chief Executive who highlighted the importance of ongoing communications to get resident engagement.

The Committee acknowledged the work done by Street Scene and thanked the Council for supporting the litter pickers in the town.

Resolved by the committee to recommend that Cabinet:

Look at the feasibility of strategically siting some dual use bins around the town with ongoing communications to explain and encourage the correct use.

(Moved by Councillor C Dean and seconded by Councillor B Clarke)

69 FORWARD PLAN

There were no new items identified from the Forward Plan.

70 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

There were no updates.

71 INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY & GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Chair highlighted that the Local Plan Progressions is ready to come to Committee.

The Committee agreed to add this item in at an extra meeting on the 19th February 2024.

The Chair highlighted that a scoping document would be circulated to the Committee for input in respect of the Bulky Waste item that the Committee had requested.

72 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meeting and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, and Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor L Smith)

73 FHSF UPDATE

The Report of the Portfolio for High Street Fund Delivery to provide the Committee with a quarterly update of the Future High Street Fund projects.

The Committee endorsed the report and moved three additional recommendations to be considered by Cabinet.

Chair