



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 7th AUGUST 2024

PRESENT: Councillor M Couchman (Chair), Councillors L Wood, C Adams, M Bailey, L Clarke, M Clarke, J Oates, B Price and N Statham

CABINET:

The following officers were present: Anica Goodwin (Executive Director Organisation), Hannah Peate (Assistant Director Environment, Culture and Wellbeing) and Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager)

Guests: Lizzie Barton (Lichfield's Director Residents & Business Services)
Darren Phillip (Lichfield's Operations Manager)

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

At the start of the meeting the Chair moved a motion to give a vote of thanks to the Street Scene Operatives who following the disorderly incident on Sunday night started at 5.00am on Monday morning to clear up the mess left in the Castle Grounds and surrounding areas. This Committee would like to record their appreciation also to the public-spirited members of the public who came out and took part in the clear up operation including our own Councillor Margaret Clarke.

(Moved by Councillor M Couchman seconded by Councillor L Wood)

There were no apologies for absence

24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th July 2024 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor C Adams and seconded by Councillor L Clarke)

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

26 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

There was no update from the Chair

27 ANNUAL GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION CHARGE

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Sustainability, Recycling and Waste to seek ISAG consideration and support of the approval to Cabinet to increase the garden waste subscription fees for 2024/25. Below are the recommendations the committee were considering

RESOLVED: That committee approved the recommendations to be agreed by Cabinet

1. Approved the increase of the annual subscription fee to £41 effective 1st October 2024.
2. Agreed that each year, under delegated powers, the Cabinet Member responsible for waste services will approve the price increase in consultation with the Executive Director Organisation and the council's Section 151 officer. Furthermore, that variations in pricing can be agreed through the same delegation to support promotions (for example to encourage take-up of direct debits), provided these can be funded from within the service without placing additional pressure on the MTFS; and
3. Approve the amendments set out in the report which include basing the coming year's annual price increase on June's CPI figures that are released by the Office for National Statistics in July, and that the final subscription price will be rounded up or down to the nearest 50 pence.

Further to receiving the report Committee made the following comments/observations and asked the following questions:

Have we looked at reducing the number of collections from 23 per year to keep costs down. The scheme originally started at 25 per year and this was reduced to keep costs low. Feedback from customers say they are happy with the amount of collections no data to suggest that the service should be reduced.

If the increase is approved and residents start to not use the service is there a risk to the council if for example 30% of residents decide not to use the service. There was not a great shift in garden waste going into the black bins or an increase in fly tipping when Lichfield changed the price in 2023.

Why is price increase based on CPI this could be higher than the actual base costs. Worked with S151 officer regarding using CPI is the most accurate indicator of what the true cost would be.

If we automate in line with CPI members lose the opportunity to discuss the increase. Could this increase be covered in the budget review process each year.

Report does not contain costs to justify the cost increase. Cannot give costs it would have been agreed by members and officers at TBC, when decision was made to subsidise the service. The increase in costs include pay awards, cost of fuel as gone up. Increase will cover the additional costs of running the service. The cost increase reflects the delivery of the service.

Direct debit payments - no option to pay monthly it's an annual subscription fee.

Following consideration of the item the Committee agree to the following recommendations being made to Cabinet:

1. Ask Cabinet to defer the increase until a full breakdown of costs has been provided and discussed at the next Infrastructure, Safety & Growth Committee at its 22nd August meeting and then make a decision at the next Cabinet meeting; and
2. Agreed that each year, under delegated powers, the Cabinet member responsible for waste services will approve the price increase in consultation with the Executive Director Organisation and the Council's S151 Officer before being ratified by Cabinet. Furthermore, that the variations in pricing can be agreed through the same delegation to support promotions (for example to encourage take-up of direct debits), provided these can be funded from within the service without placing additional pressure on the MTFs

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

28 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 L Wood and seconded by Councillor J Oates)

29 JOINT WASTE SERVICE UPDATE AND FLEET PROCUREMENT

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Sustainability, Recycling and Waste to seek Scrutiny's support of the recommendations to be presented to Cabinet on 8th August 2024 to award the contract for the renewal of the Joint Waste Service fleet.

Councillor J Oates & M Bailey left the meeting at 19.09 and did not vote on this item.

RESOLVED: That the committee supported all the recommendations to be presented at Cabinet on 8th August 2024

(Moved by Councillor B Price and seconded by Councillor M Clarke)

Chair