

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Streetscene Scrutiny Panel (to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 24 September 2020

Venue: Virtual Meeting - Microsoft Teams

PRESENT:

Councillor Miss T G Harper (Chairman)

Councillor G Fazackarley (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs L E Clubley, Mrs K Mandry, J S Forrest (deputising for R H Price, JP), Mrs T L Ellis (deputising for J E Butts) and L Keeble (deputising for J M Englefield)

Also Present: S D Martin, Executive Member for Streetscene, (For Item 6) and S Cunningham (for item 6)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J E Butts, J M Englefield and R H Price, JP.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Streetscene Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 30 January 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. REVIEW OF GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

The Panel received a presentation by the Head of Streetscene on the Review of the Garden Waste Collection Service and were given the opportunity to comment on the draft report that will be considered by the Executive at its meeting scheduled to take place on 12 October 2020. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor S Cunningham addressed the Panel on this item.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor S D Martin, Executive Member for Streetscene, also addressed the meeting on this item.

Members discussed the report at length and acknowledged that the Council has had to take action to secure new revenue streams to assist with the funding gap that will arise as a result of a recent decision by Hampshire County Council to no longer allow Fareham Borough Council to recover costs for material recycling.

Members felt very strongly that the marketing campaign to launch this service will be a key tool in ensuring residents understand that this service is currently a free service that is not covered by Council tax payments, and to explain why it has become necessary to consider implementing a charge for the collection of garden waste.

Members discussed the proposed cost of the service and felt that when compared to some other Council's, it appears to be quite expensive. However, Officer explanations were accepted that the costings have been

calculated by benchmarking against a group of Councils with a similar size and demographic to Fareham to ensure that comparisons are relevant. In addition, comparison costs with other Council's should be made based on the likely charges in the 22/23 municipal year rather than current rates as this is when it is proposed that the service be implemented. Members acknowledged that whilst people may regret the necessity to charge, they are likely to accept it and welcome what will ultimately be an improved service in terms of capacity and handling.

Members put forward concerns that some residents may not be able to afford to purchase a subscription or may not have space to store a bin. Officers acknowledged that there will be a need to consider whether some residents will need support through the transition period and explained that residents will be able to share a subscription with neighbours, family or friends. In addition, the marketing campaign will highlight the very successful scheme that is being run by Hampshire County Council that encourages people to home compost.

Members discussed home composting in detail including the merits of combined food and garden waste composting bins and considered whether it would be worth promoting this type of receptacle now. However, it was felt that the significantly higher unit cost for this type of composting bin is prohibitive.

Members raised concerns that composting could have a significant impact on the Council's recycling target. It was felt, however, that this would be offset by the significant benefits to the environment and a reduction in the carbon footprint. It was agreed that the Panel would recommend that the following paragraph be added to the Executive report as an additional recommendation:

"Fareham Borough Council will work with Hampshire County Council to further promote home composting of garden and food waste."

Members raised concern that if residents did not take up the service, this could result in garden waste being disposed of as general household waste. This would also then have a potential impact on the Council reaching its recycling target. Officers explained that there was no evidence put forward during research carried out with other Council's to suggest that the volume of residual household waste would increase as a result of implementing charges.

Members queried whether it might be possible to provide residents with a choice of available bin sizes. Officers explained that the cost saving for a smaller sized bin is so small that it is unlikely that residents would want to take up this option.

Members discussed who would be responsible for replacing broken bins and also whether a subscription would be transferrable in the event of people moving to a new house. Officers confirmed that the current policy for replacing the bin free of charge will continue to apply and that if moving to a new house within the Borough, the subscription could be transferred. Refunds on subscriptions would not be offered as the cost to administer this would be expensive.

RESOLVED that the Panel recommends that the following additional recommendation be added to the draft Executive report for consideration at the meeting scheduled to take place on 12 October 2020.

“Fareham Borough Council will work with Hampshire County Council to further promote home composting of garden and food waste.”

(The meeting started at 6.10 pm
and ended at 7.31 pm).