

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 24 April 2018.

PRESENT

Cllr D McVicar (Chairman)
Cllr B Saunders (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs D Bowater
P Downing
Ms A M W Graham

Cllrs J Kane
K C Matthews

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Cllr M Liddiard
R Morris

Substitutes: Cllrs P Hollick
N Warren

Members in Attendance: Cllrs Mrs A Barker
R D Berry
A D Brown
I Dalgarno
Mrs A L Dodwell
B Wells
J N Young
Vice-Chairman of
Development
Management Committee
Deputy Executive
Member for
Regeneration
Executive Member for
Community Services
Deputy Executive
Member for Families,
Education and Children
Deputy Executive
Member for Community
Services
Executive Member for
Regeneration

Officers in Attendance: Mr M Coiffait – Director of Community Services
Mrs P Everitt – Scrutiny Policy Adviser
Ms T Harris (Waste) – Head of Waste Services
Mrs R Preen – Scrutiny Policy Adviser

Public/Press 1

SCOSC/17/76 Members' Interests

None.

SCOSC/17/77 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman informed the Committee that he had visited the new Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Thorn Turn which had replaced the old site at Frenches Avenue Dunstable and was impressed with the quality of the facility. The Chairman highlighted the importance of ensuring the public were aware of the closure of the old site and requested of the Executive Member that appropriate signage be displayed.

SCOSC/17/78 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 March 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to Minute SCOSC/17/71 being amended to clarify that an HGV ban had been introduced to the West of the M1 as follows:-

“An HGV ban towards the West of the M1 had recently been introduced which had resulted in a significant decrease in the number of lorries travelling on local roads although there were still a core number cutting through villages and towns.”

SCOSC/17/79 Petitions

None.

SCOSC/17/80 Questions, Statements or Deputations

None.

SCOSC/17/81 Call-In

None.

SCOSC/17/82 Requested Items

None.

SCOSC/17/83 Executive Members Updates

The Executive Member for Regeneration advised the Committee that due to the success of a recent campaign to educate lorry and HGV drivers regarding the banning of such vehicles in some areas of Dunstable, similar enforcement schemes would soon be underway. Work to Dunstable High Street phase one had begun and had been well received locally. The Committee would be updated with progress as necessary.

The Executive Member and the Director of Regeneration had been granted delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Local Plan, if necessary, following its consideration by Full Council at their next meeting. There were concerns that if the Plan was not adopted the Government would take over

responsibility for the Council's planning function with many more hostile applications being granted.

SCOSC/17/84 **The Waste Collection Contract**

The Chairman introduced the item and reminded the Committee that the Waste Collection Contract was the largest revenue contract awarded by the Council. The current contract had been in place since the inception of Central Bedfordshire Council with many processes inherited from previous authorities. It was important to reassess efficiencies and harmonise the service across the whole of the area.

The Executive Member for Community Services delivered a presentation, which set out the case for change, outlined targets in relation to recycling, the impact to the environment and costs involved. The presentation outlined resident's views having received over 15,000 responses to the recent consultation. With the current contract due for renewal in 2019, the Council had the opportunity to reassess the future needs of the area with regards to waste collection and Members were appraised of the various options available in addition to impact assessments.

There had been consistent themes emerging from the consultation with 94% of residents agreeing the importance of recycling; 57% did not support the option of three weekly black bin waste collection; and 53% supported the need to identify cost savings from the service. There were variations in the north and south of the area with regards to support for food waste collection and methods of collecting green garden waste with various concerns raised by residents. However it was acknowledged that many such similar concerns had been raised when food waste collection had been introduced in the north of Central Bedfordshire previously so the directorate was confident these could be overcome. Comments from the Committee would form part of the consultation response and would be considered by the Executive on 10 May 2018.

In light of the presentation Members discussed the following in summary:-

- There were very few complaints to the existing service with concerns that new collection methods, cost and efficiency savings would result in a deterioration of current service levels and additional pressures put upon staff as calls and complaints from the public increased.
- The need to take into consideration Government proposals to process plastic and glass returnables due to the impact on the levels collected locally and the income generated.
- The need for flexibility with regards to vehicle specifications and collection methods, taking into consideration the substantial financial investment required.
- The need to support residents to recycle effectively, reduce food waste and dispose of their residual waste in the correct manner in order to combat concerns in relation to smell, contamination and an increase in vermin and flies.
- That consideration be given to including nappy waste within the clinical collection in order to support larger families, to which it was confirmed that need would be assessed as it arose.

- Whether a charge for the collection of green garden waste was outweighed by the cost of regular trips to the HWRC's.
- The importance of taking into consideration the lack of public support for three weekly collection proposals.
- The benefits of a dual service for residents in order to increase the choices available to them, particularly in relation to green garden waste and taking into account the different types of properties across the area and space available for additional bins.
- Confirmation that the new waste depot at Thorn Turn provided adequate provision for commercial waste.
- That additional research data in relation to green garden waste charges applied by other authorities ought to be included within the Executive report.
- Confirmation that the cost of additional bins and equipment had been included in the capital budget.
- The need for retailers to take responsibility for packaging.
- That glass would need to be collected separately due to health and safety concerns and the contamination of other recyclables once broken.
- That if additional bins were introduced planning applications and conditions for bin storage and space on new build properties would need to be adapted accordingly.
- The impact of the new Covanta waste site on the disposal of residual waste.
- Whether a charge could be levied for green garden waste for 9 months instead of 12 and so reduce the cost.
- That existing bottle banks across the area would be retained regardless of any future policies to collect glass from individual households.
- That consideration be given to a phased implementation of any changes to the service in order that the public had time to adapt.

RECOMMENDED that the following comments of the Committee be provided to Executive during its consideration of the proposals:-

- 1. That a new contract allow for flexibility within its processes in order to maximise service level efficiencies.**
- 2. That the Committee support the harmonisation of service delivery across the north and south of Central Bedfordshire in relation to food waste and green garden waste collection.**
- 3. That the majority of the Committee supported a £nil charge for green garden waste (5 in favour and 2 against).**
- 4. That the kerbside collection of glass, paper and cardboard be supported.**
- 5. That the option of a dual service for residents in order to increase the choices available to them be supported.**
- 6. That following changes the directorate invest time and resources to supporting and educating the public with regards to appropriate recycling and waste disposal.**
- 7. That the service be kept as simple and as streamlined as possible.**
- 8. That the vehicles should be suitable for multi-operational collections as necessary, minimising the impact on the capital budget.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.00 p.m.)

