

MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2018,
10.30 AM

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Nick Craft
Councillor Mike Exton (Chairman)
Councillor Breda Griffin
Councillor Bob Russell
Councillor Brian Sumner
Councillor Linda Wootten

CABINET MEMBERS

Councillor Dr Peter Moseley, Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor Adam Stokes, Cabinet Member for Finance

OFFICERS

Assistant Director Resources (Richard Wyles)
Assistant Director Environment (Ian Yates)
Head of Street Scene (Keith Rowe)
Corporate Operations Lead (Paul Stokes)
Democratic Officer (Lucy Bonshor)

21. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee were notified that Councillor Griffin was substituting for Councillor Trollope-Bellew and Councillor Linda Wootten was substituting for Councillor Wilkins.

22. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

None disclosed.

23. ACTION NOTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2018

The action notes from the meeting held on 11 September 2018 were agreed.

24. UPDATES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

One Member asked if the visit to the waste recycling plant had been arranged. The Head of Street Scene replied that there had been a fire at the plant and currently no visits were being undertaken. Also Lincolnshire County Council were currently in dispute with Mid UK Recycling and therefore authorities had been asked to make no direct contact with the plant.

Another Member enquired about an update to the number of tickets issued in the Deeping. The Cabinet Member for Environment replied that to his knowledge none had been issued in the Deepings to date but the Enforcement Officer did attend the Deepings regularly. One of the reasons for having the enforcement function in house was the flexibility to direct where officers were required.

25. STREET LIGHTING

Members had been circulated with report CO0001. The report concerned street lighting and an initial report had been considered by Cabinet at their meeting in July. The Cabinet had referred the issue back to the Committee for further consideration in relation to lamps in conservation areas and more details in relation to the financial aspects of the Committee's recommendation. A further working group had been held in October to review the options for potential methods of investment in replacing South Kesteven owned street lights with LED's.

For clarity the following questions were asked and discussed:

- *Does the Committee still agree that SKDC streetlights should remain on throughout the hours of darkness*
Yes street lights would remain on all night
- *What was the status of the Street Lighting Policy agreed at the Committee on 24 April, the Member proposed that the Committee recommend to Cabinet the Policy be adopted without amendment*
The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that the Cabinet had no issue with the Policy that had been proposed, their query was in relation to lamps in conservation areas and the financial budget implications to replace the lights. Recommendation 1 within the report addressed lamps in conservation areas. He also made reference to Lincolnshire County Council's proposal to charge Parish Councils if they wanted to keep their street lights on overnight.
- *A question was asked in relation to the spreadsheet and calculations considered during the working group meetings – It was confirmed that Members had been circulated with this information, the Member had originally provided the figures.*
- *What was the p/kWh unit rate on which expenditure reports are derived, was it a static unit rate or was there any prediction made for energy price inflation?*
- The p/kWh unit rate was 10pence

- *Did the unit rate include any inflation and had this been increased in the last five to 10 years?*
- No a static unit rate had been used within the calculations. The Cabinet Member for Environment asked for clarification from the Assistant Director Resources in relation to utility increases. The Assistant Director Resources stated that as far as he knew the Council's financial team had not been asked to validate any of the figures that had been put forward. They had not been independently validated and the assumptions made tested. Any decisions made should be based on solid financial information. The framework used for the utilities responded to the market and was secured on best value. A five percent cost growth was generally included for inflation, this was an annual growth across all utilities.

- *A further question was asked in relation to the £50,000 reduction in annual maintenance costs had these been taken into account? (e.g. re-invested? reported as savings?)*
 A discussion then followed on costs. The Corporate Operations Lead indicated that figures that had been used were in the proximate area of the energy costs, the framework was currently holding firm. However, it was noted that any increase in costs would lengthen any payback period. The energy costs in relation to street lighting were linked to the corporate utilities, any savings from the £50,000 would not be specific to street lighting it would go to the General Fund area to contribute to savings on energy costs. The maintenance savings were then discussed as these would also be impacted by the changeover to LED as they would not need to be replaced every three years as was currently the case as these were more reliable and therefore maintenance costs would be reduced. Maintenance savings could then be used to accelerate the programme of change. The Cabinet Member for Environment then asked about the period for reinvestment and replacement, how quickly did the Committee wish to accelerate the programme, how much of a kick start was needed.
- *What was the anticipated RoI for LED streetlights? The Members calculations based on a unit price of 10p/kWh and £350/lamp would result in a 5.7% return. He believed this was significantly better than some of the Council's capital investments – it was agreed that 5.7% was a good return but investments capital was a smaller figure and a longer return would be a longer return.*

Further discussion then followed on timeframes and the amount of investment the Committee were asking the Cabinet to consider was it in order to pump prime the replacement programme. A proposal was proposed to recommend to Cabinet the first recommendation as shown within the report, a second recommendation was that the street lighting policy agreed by the Committee at their April meeting be recommended again to Cabinet and a third recommendation be proposed that they invest a figure for invest to save in street lighting (£100,000).

It was noted that the financial figures needed to be more “fleshed” out and a sensitivity analysis undertaken on what would be the impact using different figures and timeframes. Members agreed that the financial team should be more involved. A question was then asked about the contract and it was noted that the Committee had indicated at the beginning of the discussions on street lighting that until the policy and a way forward had been determined the contract would hold over.

The proposal before the Committee was again read out. Further discussion on whether or not any figures should be included in the proposal was discussed. The proposer read out an amended recommendation that an annual investment in LED lighting of a meaningful amount over and above the ring fenced maintenance and energy savings which should also be reinvested. This represented a positive financial investment and a positive investment by the Cabinet in reducing the impact of climate change.

The Chairman made a proposal not to have a capital investment and to take the route of reinvesting the savings made in the replacement street lighting programme but this did not receive a seconder. Further conversation on the amount of investment and timeframes followed and the proposer was asked if he agreed to amend his proposal to include a timeframe of five years to which he agreed, the following recommendations were then put to the Committee, that the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet;

1. That conservation style lighting columns in villages will only be provided by the Council upon request by the Parish Council, who will be required to fund the installation and all initial costs. Thereafter, the Council will take responsibility for on-going maintenance and energy costs. Conservation lights will be compatible with LED replacement bulbs.
2. That the Cabinet adopts the Street Lighting policy as recommended to Cabinet at their meeting on 12th July 2018.
3. That an annual investment in LED lighting of a meaningful amount over and above the ring fenced maintenance and energy savings which should also be reinvested over a period of five years. This represented a positive financial investment and a positive investment by the Cabinet in helping against climate change.

The proposal was seconded and on being put to the vote the recommendations were agreed.

Recommendation

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends the following to the Cabinet

- 1. That conservation style lighting columns in villages will only be provided by the Council upon request by the Parish Council, who will***

- be required to fund the installation and all initial costs. Thereafter, the Council will take responsibility for on-going maintenance and energy costs. Conservation lights will be compatible with LED replacement bulbs.*
- 2. That the Cabinet adopts the Street Lighting policy as recommended to Cabinet at their meeting on 12th July 2018.*
 - 3. An annual investment in LED lighting of a meaningful amount over and above the ring fenced maintenance and energy savings which should also be reinvested over a period of five years. This represented a positive financial investment and a positive investment by the Cabinet in helping against climate change.*

26. RECYCLING

Members received a presentation on the challenges and complexities of recycling. There were a number of specific types of collection and disposal of waste. We no longer received recycling credits as Lincolnshire County Council were responsible for the disposal of waste. Currently recycling stood at 39.7%, this was below target but recycling nationally had gone down in the last four to five years. It was felt that residents had become complacent about recycling which was market driven. A lot of paper processing plants had closed and there were more restrictions on the Asian markets and therefore finding a market for recycling was becoming more difficult.

Currently the following items were recycled; paper, cardboard, glass, cans and plastics in various forms. The Head of Street Scene did caveat the list stating that the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership was looking at a Lincolnshire wide agreement to provide a more consistent list of what could be recycled as there were too many collection schemes, each slightly different. The introduction of the pilot food waste collection scheme had reduced contamination which was a major factor. To date 143 tonnes of food waste had been collected and this figure had been independently verified. Recycling contamination was at 30% by weight, the main contaminants were:

- Food
- Nappies and Sanitary Products
- Batteries and Electrical items

To try and bring this to resident's attention stickers had been placed on silver bins reminding them what not to put in the recycling bin to try to drive down contamination rates.



The Mobius loop indicated that an object was capable of being recycled, not that the object had been recycled or would be accepted in all recycling collection systems, residents should check the local authority's website to check what could be recycled. Sometimes inside the loop could be a percentage figure which indicated what percentage of the packaging was recycled material.

Included within the presentation was a list of seven different plastics and their Mobius loop and number.

A discussion followed on recycling and it was pointed out that often the number inside the Mobius loop was difficult to find/see. Examples were given of items that in some instances could be recycled but depending on the brand some could not. It was challenging and the Head of Street Scene stated that if a Member was uncertain it was best to put the item in the black bin rather than contaminate the silver bin. As previously stated recycling was market driven, at the moment cardboard had little value but metals such as aluminium had an intrinsic value. There was a debate to be had about the carbon footprint and the generation of electricity – energy from waste.

Members felt that education was key to getting the recycling message across and reference was made to what had happened in the past. One Member referred to the recycling wheel that had been produced some years ago which he still used to date. Could a new wheel be introduced and he asked if the costing of a new wheel could be looked into. The Head of Street Scene indicated that due to the discussions being undertaken about having a County wide recycling mix he was not in a position to produce such an item at the present time. The Cabinet Member stated that the education aspect was the responsibility of Lincolnshire County Council. In the past education had been carried out using money from the recycling credits as these now passed to the County Council it was their responsibility, however he was happy to discuss with the partnership the possibility of introducing a recycling wheel. It was felt that perhaps this could be done independently.

>Action Note

That a quote be obtained in relation to the possible introduction of a recycling wheel previously circulated in the district in the future.

Further discussion followed about recycling textiles (collected at household waste sites) which should not be put in the silver bin although it was noted that textiles did have a value. Further examples of what could be recycled was then discussed and also buying things which contained less packaging.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Street Scene for his presentation and his teams for all their hard work.

27. JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE

Members had been circulated with report ENV709 which concerned the draft Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWS) for Lincolnshire. A copy of the draft strategy was appended to the report. The Cabinet Member for Environment asked the Committee to recommend to Cabinet the adoption of the document. The Committee had received a presentation in April 2018 on

the draft document and a Member workshop had been held to help inform a response to consultation on the draft document. The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that a different approach to waste was needed. Innovation and Value for Money (VFM) were key to everything that was being done. Various discussions had taken place and a number of different options had been considered. The Cabinet Member pointed out that the wording in relation to objective 3 had been amended to include “consider” the introduction of separate food waste collections..... The current food waste pilot was only halfway through and until the trial was complete and all data had been collected a firm decision would not be made. Members were referred to the document which contained a large amount of data especially the page which gave a breakdown of the amounts of each type of waste collected. Of the 360,000 tonnes of waste collected 46,000 tonnes was in relation to plastics and nearly 49,000 tonnes was kitchen and food waste. The document was commended to the Committee for adoption.

A short discussion followed by Members who referred to the poor numbers who had responded to the consultation, especially as it was across the whole of Lincolnshire and also the costs associated with waste. VFM was key and cross contamination of waste did play an important part. Members felt that the team who dealt with waste did a very good job and on being put to the vote it was agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the draft strategy be adopted.

Recommendation

That the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet that the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Lincolnshire as appended to report ENV709 be adopted.

28. WORK PROGRAMME

A brief discussion on the content of the Work programme took place. The Chairman informed the Committee that three weeks’ notice needed to be given if they wished to add anything to an agenda. CCTV was down for 2019 on the work programme and Members asked if the report could come to the Committee early next year before April if possible. A question was asked about Ground Maintenance and the Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed that Environment SKDC existed and the contract would be transferred on a like for like basis from 1st March 2019. Any improvements/changes to the contract could be discussed but Members needed to manage their expectations until the transition period had safely passed and the contract was running well.

A question was asked about possible contracts with Parish Councils especially as precepts would soon be set. The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that Parish Councils could contact the service in December and quotes for services would be given.

Cycling was included on the work programme and the Cabinet Member asked in what context was the issue to be discussed by the Committee. The Member who had asked for its inclusion referred to how the council promoted cycling and how planning policies included the issue. It was suggested that the Strategic Director Growth be contacted as a starting point.

Biodiversity was also included on the work programme and it was suggested that perhaps this could be discussed as part of the Ground Maintenance item.

29. TRADE WASTE

The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that as trade waste was now working well he felt that it was no longer necessary to have it on the agenda as a permanent item and that an annual report to the Committee would be sufficient. He suggested that Grounds Maintenance be put on the agenda as a regular item.

> Action Note

That Trade Waste be taken off the agenda and replaced with an annual report on a future agenda and that Grounds Maintenance be a regular agenda item going forward.

30. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 12:40pm.