

Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 26 January 2021, 10.30 am



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Meeting held virtually, via Skype

Committee Members present

Councillor John Cottier (Chairman)
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor Phil Dilks

Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Linda Wootten
Councillor Judy Stevens

Cabinet Members

Councillor Dr Peter Moseley, Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew, Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy

Officers

Ken Lyon, Assistant Chief Executive
Gary Smith, Strategic Director, Commercial and Operations
Ian Yates, Assistant Director Commercial and Operations
Ben Russell, Performance Lead
Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Officer
Naomi Page, Democracy Services
Susan Hislop, Democracy Services

Other Members present

Councillor Breda Rae Griffin
Councillor Jacky Smith

25. Register of attendance, membership and apologies for absence

A register of attendance was taken. The Chairman, Councillor Nikki Manterfield, had given an apology for absence and Councillor Judy Stevens was attending as a substitute Member for this meeting only. Councillor John Cottier would be chairing the meeting. It was noted that Councillor Breda Rae Griffin was in attendance as an observer.

26. Disclosure of Interests

No interests were disclosed.

27. Action Notes from the meeting held on 15 December 2020

The Action Notes from the meeting held on 15 December 2020, were agreed as a correct record subject to an amendment to insert 'are' within the last sentence of the second paragraph on page 9.

ACTION 1

Democratic Services to amend minutes to insert 'are' within the last sentence of the second paragraph on page 9.

28. Updates from the previous meeting

Updates from the previous meeting were noted subject to a correction to the date of the meeting to 15 December 2020.

It was noted that an item on planting trees agreed by the Council stipulated that the Council '*would consider planting of trees*' rather than '*would plant trees*' and that this item should be added to the Committee's workplan.

29. Performance Dashboards

The Committee received a presentation to the Performance Dashboards report from the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations that had been revised in accordance to requests from the Committee. Data provided was up to date and afforded a guide of the work being undertaken, while recognising limited control over resident behaviour as well as not having control over those who provide private waste collection services.

Members raised a number of queries to the report with explanations provided by the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations as below:

- Graphs demonstrated a multiplicity of figures between months that had demonstrated February being a consistently low collection month that seemed to be due to seasonal trends
- The average 41.58% recycling rate was principally a result of green waste collection. Due to the level of single use plastics used in production and by supermarkets, plastic continued to be an issue
- With an average of 250 contaminated bins a week, Members were assured that efforts were continuing by raising awareness through social media sites and improved understanding
- Due to a change in recording by Lincolnshire County Council it was no longer possible to provide exact waste collection figures by authority. Figures for South Kesteven were calculated by subtracting from the County total

- Members expressed concern over the impending loss of the Deepings' private recycling facility at the end of January 2021 and raised the benefits of skips provided by local Parishes

A significant increase in fly tipping was raised by Members concerned by restrictions at recycling centres due to the pre-booking system implemented by Lincolnshire County Council. Members received assurance from the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations that he had and would continue to raise the issue at the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership with local councils having covered the cost of fly tipping rather than the County Council.

The Interim Street Care Services Manager and her team were recognised for their prompt action to deal with fly tipping.

In discussion, the Members also raised the Best Kept Village Award that had generated great enthusiasm across the District. An update was provided by the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations that plans were already in place for South Kesteven District Council to take responsibility to run the award for 2021. Members also raised:

- The difficulty for those with dementia in using the correct bin and was advised of the assisted collection scheme provided by the Council. Additional means of providing clear advice would be considered
- Challenges to the use of electric powered refuse collection vehicles were explained due to the level of mileage required within the District in comparison to more urban areas

Additional improvements to the dashboards were requested through the use of text and colour for increased clarity to demonstrate emissions as well as a baseline to determine longer term statistics. The limitation of a hardcopy presentation was recognised with a Member supportive to information becoming available online.

ACTION 2

1. The Performance Lead to amend the performance dashboard to make it even clearer which period the figures and any averages relate to
2. The Strategic Director Commercial and Operations to circulate to the Committee a list of fly tipping prosecutions within South Kesteven
3. The Sustainability and Climate Change Officer to provide a list of innovative ways to reduce waste and encourage recycling to Members
4. The Strategic Director Commercial and Operations to consider means of providing clear advice to residents on what can go in what bin which can be communicated to the public (including those with dementia)

A vote by exception was taken and carried to recommend:

Approval to the revised dashboards and continued support to the ongoing transformation of performance reporting.

30. Performance Indicators

The Assistant Chief Executive presented the report on behalf of the Leader of the Council. Following agreement to the Corporate Plan by the Full Council on 1 October 2020, performance targets relevant to this Committee were identified and presented periodically to track deliverability to the Council's key priorities. An annual performance report would be presented to Cabinet following consideration by the relevant scrutiny committees.

A Member queried housing register figures within the Corporate Plan (Appendix A) that provided figures for 2019 rather than 2020; figures were now available for 2020 and would be provided to the Member.

ACTION 3

Councillor Linda Wootten to be provided with housing register figures for 2020.

In response to questions from Members, the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations advised:

- Achieving Green Flag Status involved considerable effort; other categories were available that could be more appropriate for Jubilee Park in the Deepings
- Food Waste collection costs alongside benefits were being considered towards achieving a neutral cost
- Breaking down waste collection by household was recognised as challengeable due to available figures provided by County, however an average figure per household would be provided through the dashboard with the KPI reflecting average recycling per household

ACTION 4

The dashboard to be updated to reflect average recycling per household

A vote by exception was taken and carried to recommend:

1. To Cabinet the proposed key performance indicators and targets associated with the actions in the South Kesteven District Council Corporate Plan 2020-23.
2. To note that key performance indicators and success criteria for each action will be reviewed and if necessary revised as part of the annual review process.

31. Big Clean

The Committee were provided with an update by the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations on the Big Clean scheme that had been

suspended during Covid-19 restrictions to enable staff to be redeployed to support the continuation of refuse collection services.

The Big Clean had provided a good investment in addressing 'grot spots' and setting a district-wide Higher Street standard through local teamwork. The district was cleaner and more attractive as a result. Councillors were encouraged to visit the Big Clean Team at work, location details were provided on the Council's website at [The Big Clean](#).

Members praised the success of the scheme. Overhanging hedging from privately owned land was queried in terms of the legal position and process to require owners to take appropriate measures.

ACTION 5

The Strategic Director Commercial and Operations to provide details of how to report overhanging hedging from private landowners to Councillor Gloria Johnson.

32. Cycling in South Kesteven with Staff Travel Survey

A summary of the staff travel survey undertaken during February 2020 was provided by the Sustainability and Climate Change Officer. In addition to establishing how staff travelled to and from work, it provided data on the Cycle to Work Scheme. Having been carried out pre-Covid-19, it was recognised that staff travel had drastically changed however this provided a snapshot of staff travel at that time.

At the request of the Chairman, Members considered the presentation and discussed the following:

- Staff homeworking, telecommuting and holding online meetings during the pandemic had presented positives, including a reduction of staff mileage
- Continuation of online meetings post-lockdown was being investigated that included new technology to stream meetings in the Council Chamber
- New ways of working were being considered to recognise the need for staff to have more in person working, including a hybrid system; split between homeworking and office. Wellbeing of staff and Members was recognised
- A new hybrid policy was being considered by the Chief Executive and Human Resources which would consider the impact to buildings and technology
- Operational services had continued to be active

Members considered the presentation provided by Sustrans at the meeting held on 15 December 2020. The Chairman requested ideas to present to Cabinet. Suggestions from Members included:

- Improved facilities to encourage staff and Members to cycle such as secure cycle parking, changing facilities, showers and potentially making a pool of bikes available for short term use. It was recognised that some parts of the District were more accessible for pool bikes than others. Members noted that the previous cycle store for staff and the public in St Peter's Hill had been demolished and relocated.
- A recommendation for planners to imbed into the planning process cycle and pedestrian facilities within planning applications; it was acknowledged that the Council's planners do already prioritise this objective, for example, through the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.
- The Bourne CiCLE Festival was considered by Members to be an excellent event to promote the District while recognition was made that this could be more cost effective and lessons learnt to the one held previous. Sponsorship would need to be considered. It was reported that a business plan had been presented to the Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy.

A continuation of the Bourne CiCLE Festival was PROPOSED by Councillor Ashley Baxter and SECONDED by Councillor Phil Dilks. The proposal was amended to reflect that this event falls within the remit of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

A vote by exception was taken and carried with one abstention to recommend to Cabinet:

1. To request Cabinet investigates the breakdown of costs and benefit for each facility for secure bike storage, including shower facilities, and to include pool cycle opportunities at the main council offices
2. That the Planning Team create a local policy to highlight pedestrian and cycling facilities
3. That the relevant committee to look again at the Bourne CiCLE Festival and work with outside agencies

33. Work Programme

Members suggested that the Committee consider the potential for the Council to introduce a policy for replacing felled trees and promoting tree cover in the District.

The Strategic Director for Commercial and Operational informed the Committee that he had been in contact with the Woodland Trust with provisional request to provide a presentation at the committee's meeting scheduled for 20 April 2021. Clarification was sought for the focus of the Woodland Trust's update.

Members welcomed a presentation by the Woodland Trust to share their opinion as experts in relation to tree management. The suggested topics to be covered included a brief overview of what the Woodland Trust do, the progress of the Tree Charter both locally and nationally and the role of trees in carbon capture and storage.

ACTION 6

Democracy Services to liaise with the Strategic Director Commercial and Operations to update wording for Work Programme to reflect requests raised by committee members

34. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent

None had been received.

Meeting closed 13:00