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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday 19th September 2019

Present: Councillor Harpreet Uppal (Chair)
Councillor Martyn Bolt
Councillor Richard Murgatroyd
Councillor Richard Eastwood
Councillor Yusra Hussain

Co-optees Andrew Bird
Chris Friend

In attendance: Rob Dalby – Greenspace Operational Manager
Lory Hunter - Commercial and Technical
Development Manager
Karl Battersby - Strategic Director Economy and
Infrastructure

Apologies: Councillor John Taylor
Eilidh Ogden (Co-Optee)

1 Membership of the Committee

Apologies were received from Councillor John Taylor and Eilidh Odgen.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

All items were considered in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

No public questions were received.

7 Waste Related Issues

Rob Dalby, Greenspace Operational Manager and Lory Hunter, Commercial and Technical Development Manager gave a presentation to the Panel in respect of the following:

Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel - 19 September 2019

- Ward Squads
- Fly Tipping
- Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Bulky Waste Collection

Rob explained that the Ward Squads had been established to enable the service to work in a constructive manner with Ward Councillors on environmental issues. The aim was for each ward to have two weeks of scheduled work per year; one in the summer and one in the winter. It was considered that a number of benefits had been realised including; improved joined-up working, upskilling of team members, increased co-operation with third parties, improved communication with ward councillors, and a number of longer term environmental issues being addressed. He noted that, in light of the current capacity of the team, the two weeks of work per ward may not be sustainable in the longer term.

In response to suggestions from Members of the Panel he agreed that it would be a good idea to provide ward members with intelligence/data on the issues raised by their constituents. He also said that he would welcome suggestions in respect of how the service might be able to support them in publicising/promoting the work being undertaken.

In response to questions Rob explained that:

- There were 7 Enforcement Officers and 11 Rangers in the Greenspace Action Team (GAT); each delivery team consisting of 4 team members plus a supervisor.
- The works were pre-scheduled to be delivered during a particular week.
- Volunteer groups could achieve a great deal and tended to be issue or site focussed. Volunteers could be supported and provided with training to assist them in working independently of the GAT.
- In terms of evaluation, a feedback questionnaire had been sent out to Ward Councillors and a review of the work undertaken during the summer period would be undertaken including an assessment of the skills and capacity of the team.

Rob explained the legal definition of fly tipping and the ways in which the Council could deal with this issue. He gave examples of recent prosecutions and it explained that if an individual gave waste to a third party to dispose of and this party was not registered this was also an offence. In respect of responsibility for clearance; if the waste was on Council owned land it would be cleared; the Council would serve notice on a private landowner to clear their site of waste and if this was not done this could also result in an offence; and if no landowner could be identified the decision about whether the Council should clear it was public interest/risk based.

He noted that consideration was being given to re-modelling street based enforcement activity.

In response to questions Rob and Lory explained that:

- The heat maps did not inform practice; they illustrated the correlation between population density and deposition of waste.

Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel - 19 September 2019

- There were a number of locations that were known to subject to regular fly tipping such as rural laybys and cross border tipping was an issue.
- Incidents could be reported online, by phone, via Kirklees Direct or the Police 101 phone line. The court system meant that witnesses could not remain anonymous and people could be reluctant to go to court but cases could be resolved before that point when an individual was presented with the evidence under formal interview and admitted the offence.
- It was not considered that changes to service provision had had a significant influence on the levels of fly tipping.
- Signs had been provided in the past and could be considered if there were particular locations that were of concern.

It was suggested that completion of an on-line form may allow the collation of evidence/intelligence on particular incidents or vehicles.

Rob undertook to provide information on the level of fines collected in relation to the number issued and to send Members the flow chart of enforcement action. If a case went to court the Council did not collect the fine but could apply for costs including recompense for the time spent investigating the offence and for legal work.

He said that the service did undertake proactive information sharing in areas where there may be a recurrent problem including explaining the offence, the consequences, how people could dispose of their waste legitimately and advice about caution in the use of third parties such as requesting to see their waste carrier licence and taking number plate details.

Lory highlighted the following points in respect of the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC):

- HWRCs were located across the district, they were small and designed for household waste; there were other options for the disposal of trade waste.
- A permit system for Kirklees residents had been in place since July 2016 to facilitate better management of the sites and remove large commercial type vehicles. It was considered that the application process was quick and straightforward through the My Kirklees Account. Support was available for individuals who weren't able to apply online.
- The website provided information about what could be recycled. Soil and rubble were no longer collected at HWRCs and were dealt with through the kerbside bulky waste collection service.
- A national resources and waste strategy had been published by the Government and the Council would be developing a new recycling and waste strategy.

In response to questions Lory explained that:

- The value of any recycled materials was retained by the contractor SUEZ. Figures could be provided to show the split between recyclable and general waste.
- The Council was running workshops 'love food save more' to encourage food waste minimisation and could explore the development of social enterprise recycling/re-use initiatives or re-use shops.

Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel - 19 September 2019

- A strategic environmental assessment including the whole system would need to be considered as part of the district's new waste strategy.
- Capacity at the HWRCs would be looked at as part of the wider strategy.
- The current contract ended in 2023 with an option to extend by 5 years.

In relation to the bulky waste service Lory explained that changes had been implemented in 2016 and this service was now subject to charges. All the West Yorkshire local authorities charged for this service and the rates were comparable with Kirklees. There was an online booking system but support was available if this was an issue. The most vulnerable residents were offered two free collections a year and there was a discount for Kirklees Passport holders.

A member of the Panel raised an issue where a constituent had experienced a lengthy delay in collection of a bulky waste order. It was noted that this provision would be reviewed as part of the development of the new strategy but that capacity may be an issue that the Panel might want to consider in more detail in due course.

Rob and Lory were thanked for attending the meeting and for the presentations on the various issues.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the value of the work being undertaken by the Ward Based Squads, and the opportunities being taken to further expand the skills of the members of the team, be acknowledged and welcomed.
- (2) That it be recommended that:
 - Ward Councillors should be provided with an overview of the issues reported to the Council by residents (including on ROSS) to assist them in determining the priorities for action within their ward.
 - Consideration be given to how best the Service might be able to support ward members in promoting and publicising this work to their residents.
 - The Service should consider raising awareness within schools and colleges of the potential for volunteering opportunities and work experience.
- (3) That Members of the Panel be provided with:
 - data in relation to the number of fines collected for littering and fly tipping compared with the number issued.
 - the enforcement flow chart.
 - the gross tonnage figures for the Household Waste Recycling Centres broken down into general waste/recyclable waste for 2015/16 onwards.
- (4) That it be recommended that:
 - A strategic environmental assessment should be undertaken as part of the development of the Kirklees Waste Strategy.
 - Disposal of trade waste, including the potential impact on the levels of fly tipping, should be considered as part of the development of the new waste strategy.

Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel - 19 September 2019

- (6) That fly tipping be retained on the Panel's Work Programme with a particular focus on the use of an intelligence led approach.
- (7) That it be noted that:
 - information is provided on the bulky waste website to encourage recycling/re-use.
 - the potential for re-use shops, with links to the Household Waste Recycling Centres, is being studied.
 - It is anticipated that the operation of the bulky waste collection service will be reviewed as part of the overall waste strategy for the district and that the potential for limited free collection(s) could be considered as part of the review.
- (8) That the Panel considers that it would be beneficial to increase awareness of:
 - The concessions available for the bulky waste collection service for those residents in receipt of an assisted bin service.
 - The permit process for the Household Waste Recycling Centres.

8 Work Programme 2019/20

That the Panel's Work Programme and forthcoming items/activities be noted.