

Environmental Services Cabinet Committee

Monday, 19 November 2018

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr John Knight (Chair)
Cllr Sandra Garside (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Gurdip Ram Bungar
John Loughlin
Peter Rayner
Alan Ridgers
Lenny Rolles

Stuart Alford Assistant Director (Environment)
Nicole Arthur Repairs Administration Manager
Carlie Simmonds Committee Services Manager (Minute)

70. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Bronwen McGarrity.

71. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2018 were signed by the Chair.

72. Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

73. Housing Repairs & Maintenance Update - New damp and mould Process/New arrangements for communal repairs - oral report.

The Repairs Administration Manager informed Members that historically £200-220k had been spent on dealing with damp and mould with the root cause never being investigated or resolved.

Training was therefore arranged with a Mould Tutor specialising in building surveying and life coaching. The purpose of the training was to assist officers in establishing the root cause of the mould and feel confident in controlling it.

The Repairs Administration Manager advised that the training was well received and had been put into practice. The Council was now working more proactively with tenants to control the mould in their homes and providing education particularly in those cases where the root cause of mould was self-imposed for example by not closing windows when using an extractor fan.

Following the introduction of the new regime, Members were informed that significant savings had been made to date; last year's expenditure being £40k.

The Council had also invested in damp and mould meters which were being provided to those homes affected by damp and mould. The meters will provide guidance to tenants by indicating when action needs to be taken (the needle will move towards the green when damp air is being reduced and will move towards the red when damp air is increasing).

The Repairs Administration Manager also informed Members that she had been working closely with the Council's Digital Team to launch a text messaging service which will notify tenants of communal repairs. Tenants will receive a text message when a fault, within a communal area, has been reported to the Council together with an approximate timescale of the repair.

The intention will be to leaflet all tenants within communal areas to inform them of the new text messaging service and to encourage them to update their contact details currently held by the Council.

The Committee was also informed that the repairs team was currently expanding its workforce. The Council intention will be to have tradesmen at communal areas on designated days/times in order to carryout minor repairs.

The Committee paid tribute to the Repairs Administration Manager and her team for the work undertaken to date.

74. Corporate Register of Partnerships 2018-19

The Chair informed Members of the Council's involvement in the following partnerships that were within the remit of the Committee:-

- Altogether Safer – Reducing Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG);
- CCTV Partnership;
- G-Safe;
- Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership;
- Kent Resource Partnership; and
- Contaminated Land Officer Partnership.

The Committee noted the information provided within the report.

75. Corporate Performance Update – Quarter Two 2018-19 (July to September 2018)

Members were presented with an update against the Performance Management Framework, as set out within the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-19, for Quarter Two 2018-19 (July to September 2018).

The Committee considered each page in turn and highlighted the following:-

Littering/recycling

- promotional work relating to litter and recycling needed to continue particularly as Christmas was fast approaching. The promotional work should be linked in with other relevant services/advertisements so that one message was regularly being sent i.e. information by the Food Standards Agency on cooking your turkey safely. The Assistant Director (Environment) advised that he was currently working with the Communications Team to develop a 12 month communications plan and that he would give consideration to the joined-up approach;
- Kent County Council's be contacted to request that consideration be given to extending the opening times of the Pepperhill Household Waste and Recycling Centre over the Christmas period;
- concern was expressed regarding the unacceptable standard of litter on some public footpaths and in some alleyways. The Assistant Director (Environment) advised that he had produced a plan of action which will be implemented in the New Year. In the meantime, the Assistant Director (Environment) asked that Members contacted him directly if there were specific issues. An audit of the litter bins was also being undertaken to ensure their current locations met the need of the area they are located in;
- promotional work needed to be undertaken on recycling plastics to give a better understanding on what plastic can be recycled;
- the Council needed to lead on recycling i.e. the cups next to the water machines should be recyclable etc. and consideration be given to making a public declaration.

Crime and anti-social behaviour

- confirmation be sought on the number of FPNs issued by the Safer Place Officers for littering as the report refers to two separate figures (11 or 15).

Housing

- the Committee paid tribute to the work which had been undertaken to date to achieve the performance as detailed at PM 5 (Average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days)) and PI 16 (Percentage of emergency jobs completed on time).

The Committee noted the information provided within the report.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8.37pm

This page is intentionally left blank