

Operational Services Cabinet Committee

Tuesday, 8 February 2022

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Lee Croxton (Chair)
Cllr Gurbax Singh (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Conrad Broadley
Gurdip Ram Bungar
Gary Harding
Nirmal Khabra
Leslie Pearton
Alan Ridgers
Brian Sangha
Frank Wardle

Stuart Alford Assistant Director (Operations)
Joel Simons Waste Projects & Compliance Officer
Julie Francis-Beard Committee Services Officer (Minutes)

22. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

23. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 8 February 2022 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

24. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

25. Street Cleansing Digitisation Update

The Committee were updated Members on the digital improvements to the Street Cleansing Service.

The Assistant Director (Operations) and the Waste Projects and Compliance Officer guided Members through the report and highlighted the following key points:

Bartec Street Cleansing Module

- Move street cleansing to a smarter service, Bartec Collective System, where the council will be able to move towards a more intelligence based proactive service rather than a reactive driven service.
- Refuse, recycling, garden waste and trade waste collections had used this system since April 2019. It transformed the waste and recycling collections and was easier for the public to report their bins, when full.

- The system sends out automatic reminders for residents to pay their garden waste subscription for their garden waste bin. Before this system the Team would send out notifications manually and the service would never have managed this through the pandemic.
- The Bartec Collective System is a software system. Over 100 councils use Bartec Collective throughout the UK and it serves over 2m households.
- There will be an improvement by removal of paper schedules. Paper tickets were not always reliable, could get lost and would not be available for audit purposes.
- Jobs previously issued to crews, unless urgent, would have to wait until the following day to be completed. With the new system, a service request on Bartec, is immediately allocated to crews whilst already out on the road.
- Customers will receive a real time update on fly-tipping once the job is completed by the crews.
- To close the call, the crews will need to take photographs of the fly-tipping, before and after, to ensure the work is completed to a good standard.
- Litter bins will be mapped and logged once the bins have been emptied along with the capacity. This will enable the emptying regimes to be revised dependant on the fill level, over time.
- Bulky collections – the system will deliver dynamic routing of the bulky waste collections and will immediately update the customer once the job has been completed.
- The Street Cleaning Manager and Business Apprentice are currently mapping all the bins and other assets.
- Training is currently taking place within the workforce and it is anticipated that the fly-tipping and bulky waste clearances will go live within the next month with the remaining of the cleansing functions by April 2022.

Following questions and comments from Members, the Assistant Director (Operations) and the Waste Projects & Compliance Officer explained that:

- Refuse crews did not have to be first aid trained but the Assistant Director (Operations) would review this. There are trained first aiders out on the road that could respond immediately to any incidents, if required.
- Operatives will be given sufficient time to undertake the training and if required, one to one training, would be offered. The new system is very easy to use, generally two or three clicks with reduced writing. Operatives needs to be confident in using the system and report back to Officers and Managers with any concerns.
- To ensure customers, that do not use devices to report incidents, get feedback, the customer focused system will provide more time for supervisors to be out on the road and to allow them to go and meet or telephone these residents to give them an update.
- Members congratulated the team on this new system. The work to update customers will be well received and will make the system more efficient, more empowering for operatives and demonstrate working better.

Litter Bin Fill-Level Sensors

- The council has started a 12-month trial of Enevo litter bins using the fill-level sensors. This monitors the fill rates, calculates when the bin should be full and emptied and will monitor as the seasons change.

- There are currently 100 litter bins with sensors in the borough and the system will prioritise emptying the fullest bins first to ensure they do not overflow and to minimise customer complaints.
- Only emptying bins when required will reduce mileage consumption and CO2 emissions.
- The rural Street Cleansing Team will trial 70 sensor litter bins within Meopham, Luddesdown, Vigo, Higham, Cobham and Shorne. This round covers the greatest distance to service all the bins.
- Larger 1100L general waste and recycling housings will be installed in our parks and open spaces. The Street Cleansing Manager will be able to analyse the data and weight to compare how quickly the recycling is filling compared to the general waste.
- There will be 20 more sensor bins located in urban locations that historically generate complaints. This will enable the Street Cleansing Manager to monitor the fill-rate of these bins to assess the bin capacity and emptying frequency.
- The Enevo bins were installed in December 2021 and data is currently being gathered. Operatives had been asked not to change the way they work or the frequency they emptied bins as from Monday, 21 February the predictive technology will provide operatives with routed daily emptying schedules to optimise efficiency.

Following questions and comments from Members, the Assistant Director (Operations) and the Waste Projects & Compliance Officer explained that:

- If certain bins indicate there is no requirement to empty them on a regular basis, the Street Cleaning Manager can look at moving the bin to a better location.
- Limits can be set on certain bins if they are known to regularly have dog mess or other contaminated waste left in the bin so they can be emptied at least once a week to avoid becoming a health issue.
- The sensors are powered by a battery pack which last 5 years.
- The Street Cleansing Manager and Team will be alerted if the bins are moved from their current location or they detect a heat source (fire).
- 70% of bins, on average, were 70% full when emptied.
- The sensor litter bins have a rolling 30-day data capture so during the summer the bins will identify that the bin requires emptying much quicker than during the winter.
- The bins will provide a cleaner borough for residents and visitors and will improve street cleaning.

The Chair and Members thanked Officers and the Team for all their hard work and time spent getting these projects installed and in production.

The Committee noted the information contained within the report.

26. Waste Communication Campaigns Update

The Committee were updated with the current and upcoming waste and recycling education campaigns.

The Assistant Director (Operations) and the Waste Projects and Compliance Officer guided Members through the report and highlighted the following key points:

- **Anti-Littering Campaigns** – an opportunity to educate residents about recycling and waste.

- The Team worked closely with the Communications Team and Kent Resources Partnerships, with representatives across Kent, providing new bespoke signage around the borough.
- In the past the signage regarding waste, littering and recycling was generic. These new signs are more specific for certain areas.
- In Spring/Summer 2021 signage for the rural areas, in conjunction with the Parish Councillors, were installed.
- There are specifically different colours and designs for different areas. Orange is for the open spaces, green for the town centre and urban areas and purple for the rural part of the borough.
- In paragraph 2.4.1 of the report the signage welcomes visitors to the rural area and reminds them to take pride as people live and work here. It reminds them it is their responsibility to take their litter home. These will be trialled in rural locations in collaboration with Parish Council.
- The bespoke signage in paragraph 2.5 of the report will be trialled in three locations in Northfleet.
- The signs are targeted at those leaving or dropping litter.
- The Team will work closely with Parish Councillors to trial these campaigns to see if residents and visitors get the message.

- **Letter Drop** – in September 2021, targeted letter drops pertaining to street sweeping and waste services information were trailed on the Dickens Estate.
- This was well received as local children were seen sweeping their own area into the street so the scarab could remove the debris.
- This will be repeated over the next few months and rolled out to streets around the Denton area imminently.
- A follow up letter was then delivered giving educational advice, explaining different services and waste collection days, having all the useful information in one place.

- **Excess Waste Bin Hanger** – during the pandemic a decision was made to remove all excess refuse from properties in Gravesham owing to the increase in waste generated at home during the national lockdowns.
- An excess waste hanger has been designed and is being implemented from February 2022 to leave on the wheelie bin to limit the amount of refuse that can be contained within the 180 litre bin which is put out on a fortnightly basis.
- The bin hanger will remind residents to recycle more, and information about any additional waste that can be taken to the Pepperhill Household Waste Recycling Centre.
- For large households, larger waste or recycling bins can be issued.
- The Team will remove as much recycling as each household leaves out, there is no limit. It is the right thing to do for climate change and is beneficial for the council to collect more recycling than general waste.
- The Assistant Director (Operations) explained that the Team and Planning Officers work closely with Letting Agents, Estate Agents and Landlords to give advice and educate regarding waste and recycling in HMO's (houses in multiple occupation). There are properties in Parrock Street where the Team worked with each property owner to establish where the bins can go, how many bins are required and the collection day and will continue to work with them.
- A digital refuse and recycling leaflet had been sent to all Letting and Estate Agents.

- The Waste Projects & Compliance Officer and the Environmental Enforcement Manager have recently attended a Landlords Forum to discuss waste and recycling and have been asked to attend again as it was so beneficial.
- **Pumpkin Rescue Campaign** – this is an annual nationwide campaign supported by Hubbub to communicate to residents that you can eat your pumpkin after you have carved it at Halloween or recycle it in your food waste.
- **Kent Resource Partnership Contamination Campaign** ran a “Did You Know” recycling contamination campaign throughout November 2021.
- Using the Bartec System, in excess of 630 properties in Gravesham received educational letters offering advice and support when their recycling bins were marked as contaminated by the Waste Crews.
- **Pledge2Recycle** – an educational project has been running throughout Kent from the summer of 2021 through to spring 2022.
- There are two roller-banner displays in Reception at the Civic Centre explaining what can be put in general waste and what should be recycled. The Waste Projects and Compliance Officer takes these banners to schools when discussing waste with the pupils.
- A leaflet shown in paragraph 7.7 of the report will be distributed to all properties in Gravesham between February and March 2022.
- The Waste Projects and Compliance Officer explained, following a Members question, that if a property had already received a letter about contamination and a second occurrence happened, the Team would drop off an educational leaflet which is more visual and then if a third visit is required then an Officer from the Waste Management Team will visit to discuss any issues.
- If language is a barrier, the Team are looking at embedding QR codes within these letters allowing residents to choose their first language to be able to understand the information.
- If occurrences persist there are potentially enforcement actions that could be undertaken, or their recycling bin could be removed. It is dealt with on a case by case basis.
- **Flat Recycling** – this is a Kent wide recycling project to support residents in understanding the new food waste recycling service and to educate residents about what should and should not be put into the recycling bins.
- Signage was provided at Admiral Beatty House in October 2021, and it clearly differentiated food waste, recycling, bulky waste and general waste. Before this trial there had been a bin marked “refuse” or “recycling”. There was no information about bulky waste or where it had to go and now there has now been a reduction in bulky waste being left.
- A recycling survey is being developed to get feedback from residents regarding their attitude towards recycling and how they perceive their bin store area.
- **School Engagement** – Officers attended Northfleet School for Girls and Tymberwood Academy to deliver educational sessions to all year groups about waste and recycling including a waste sorting game.
- Similar presentations will be organised in the near future to community groups, adult groups, coffee groups and the Gravesham Youth Council.

The Chair thanked the Officers for the report and explained that 44% of waste is currently recycled and it is important for all of us to find ways to increase that figure but the Chair was confident that the Council is addressing this issue.

The Committee noted the information contained within the report.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm