

TASK AND FINISH GROUP CABINET PANEL

Thursday, 1st February, 2018
Time of Commencement: 10.00 am

Present:- Councillor Trevor Johnson – in the Chair

Beech, Burgess, Owen, Reddish, Waring, Woolley
and Wright

Officers Executive Director Operational Services- David Adams, Andrew
Bird - Head of Recycling, Waste and Fleet Services and Geoff
Durham - Member Training and Development Officer

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

It was agreed that Councillor Marion Reddish be elected as Vice-Chair.

4. **CONFIRMATION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members considered a report outlining the Terms of Reference for this Task and Finish Group.

On number seven it was agreed that the Panel would meet six-weekly instead of monthly.

Resolved: That, subject to the frequency of meetings being changed from monthly to six-weekly, the terms of reference be agreed.

5. **MEMBERS BRAINSTORMING SESSION**

The Chair introduced this item by highlighting that the Panel had been set up due to ongoing problems that had been encountered with waste and recycling collections.

The Chair also felt that the service had to run like clockwork to work and was currently set up with little capacity to cope with single factors such as a breakdown, puncture or staff shortages that can all create a problem that has a knock-on effect. At Christmas it was inclement weather and the fact that there were two Bank Holidays that caused a problem. Furthermore, with more online shopping for Christmas gifts, there was a lot more cardboard to collect in the run up to Christmas compared to previous years.

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To assist with clearing the backlog, refuse collection vehicles were utilised to collect recyclable waste. This 'co-mingled' collection resulted in 80 tonnes of recycled materials being taken to Stoke on Trent for separation and subsequent re-use. This incurred a cost and the Council lost some income from the value of the materials.

It was also felt that consideration should be given to altering the collection methodology in some cases such as flats to provide a bespoke service that suited the type of accommodation. It was agreed to look further at options for recycling for flats as part of the work of the group.

Councillor Owen asked if all of the recommendations from the 2016 independent review had been implemented. Members were advised that they had.

Members were advised of ongoing work to improve crew supervision and operations at the Council's depot to ensure quicker tipping turnaround and ensuring vehicles were only returning to the yard to drop off when they needed to.

Members also commented on terraced streets where the larger vehicles cannot get down to collect waste. Officers explained that the service ran with two smaller vehicles for use in locations such as terraced streets but these were less efficient to operate than the main recycling collection vehicles. Members felt that this needed to be looked at in more detail as part of the work of the group.

Councillor Reddish suggested that the balance between losing materials to Stoke on Trent and this council's loss of income implications needed to be compared to look at the feasibility of acquiring further vehicles to help with situations where collections fall behind.

Mr Adams advised Members that the resilience of the service to deal with in-day operational issues was limited as the service did not currently benefit from additional back-up vehicles or staff that could be put into use to cover a range of issues that occur such as breakdowns or to be used as 'shunt' vehicles to reduce time lost in returning to tip. It was agreed that further work be done to identify options and costs for increasing the resilience of the service and that these be brought back to Members to discuss at a future meeting.

Councillor Wright asked how collections were logged. The Council's Head of Recycling and Waste Services, Mr Andrew Bird explained how missed collections were recorded and stated that occasionally residents would ring in to say that their waste had not been collected, when upon investigation, it had become evident that it had not been put out. It would be the responsibility of the individual drivers to log that waste had not been presented and at the end of a street, would log the street as completed.

Members asked if the bailer at the depot was coping and were informed that it was. There was money available to put another bailer in to split the materials or act as a back up.

It was stated that residents were phoning their local Councillor to report missed collections and that - if they called the council direct it could possibly save time as the information would be available to the team quicker through the Customer Contact Centre. People were informed that if they had been missed it would be collected within forty-eight hours.

Members also discussed how the Council communicated with residents from a number of aspects such as raising awareness of good recycling practices, offering additional

services such as extra boxes and lids, information given by the Customer Contact Centre, explaining reasons for missed collections and reporting back on service performance. It was agreed that this would be an area where the group wished to consider options for improvements in their work programme.

Prior to Christmas, a piece of work had been carried out to review the Council's policy in relation to Assisted Collections by a sub-group of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Communities Scrutiny Committee. Members agreed that it would be useful to see the report and to contribute to the review. It was agreed that this would also form part of the work programme.

6. DISCUSSION ON BEST PRACTICE AND FAMILIARISATION VISITS FOR MEMBERS

Members were asked and agreed that it would be useful to visit the council's depot to see the operation and also to go out on the rounds.

Mr Bird also suggested that a visit be made to a material recovery facility be made where co-mingling/ dual stream materials separation took place.

The Executive Director for Operational Services, Mr Dave Adams would look into arranging dates for visits.

The next meeting of this Task and Finish Group will be 15 March, 2018 at 10am.

COUNCILLOR TREVOR JOHNSON
Chair

Meeting concluded at 11.30 am