

TASK AND FINISH GROUP CABINET PANEL

Thursday, 30th August, 2018
Time of Commencement: 2.00 pm

Present:- Councillor Trevor Johnson – in the Chair

Councillors Burgess, Miss J Cooper, Harrison, Proctor, Reddish, Robinson
and P Waring

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Wright.

2. INTRODUCTION FROM CHAIR

The Chair advised members that the purpose of today's meeting was to consider the options and agree upon a recommendation to Cabinet.

Councillor Proctor addressed the Chair stating that he had had to send apologies to the previous meeting. He raised concerns that the Group's position had been compromised in that the discussions and conclusions had been made public on social media. Councillor Proctor felt that the principal of speaking to press / going public on social media was unacceptable until the Group had completed the task that was being considered.

Councillor Robinson left the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July, 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Councillor Reddish had asked at the previous meeting if comparisons from other authorities could be obtained regarding charges that had made for collection of garden waste. The Council's Head of Recycling, Waste and Fleet Services, Andrew Bird confirmed that these had been received.

5. A FUTURE RECYCLING STRATEGY

Mr Bird handed round two appendices to accompany the agenda report.

Members were advised that if the collection service was to remain unchanged, significant investment would be required.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 3.1 of the report which outlined two possible options for the future delivery of the service.

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Councillor Waring stated that there needed to be as little contamination of the materials as possible. It was agreed that a robust approach to contaminated bins would be necessary with either of the two options.

Councillor Burgess stated that a resident had contacted her regarding all materials being put into the one vehicle after being sorted. Mr Bird stated that there was a trial currently underway in various streets where recyclables were being collected using the twin stream collection system. Residents in those streets should have received a leaflet advising them of this and, in addition, there were signs on the vehicles in question saying 'Contents are being recycled'.

Councillor Burgess also stated that she had been advised that a bin in the centre of Kidsgrove would not now be emptied because the gentleman who had previously paid for it to be emptied had left. The Executive Director for Operational Services, Mr Dave Adams asked Councillor Burgess to provide him with the details.

Members were advised that feasibility studies had been undertaken into various options. In addition, the Cabinet had stated that they wished to continue with the separate food waste collection service. The collection of food waste was not mandatory at the present time in England but DEFRA may introduce it later in the year when they publish their resources and waste strategy.

The costings indicated that the Council could achieve the continuation of the food waste collection along with collection of the 'other' recyclables.

Members felt that the better option would be the twin stream and that fully comingled was not the way forward.

Councillor Reddish enquired as to the timescale for the new arrangements and Members were advised that the new arrangements could be in place by 2020/21, but as stated in the report, this was dependent on detailed planning and finances being available.

Councillor Cooper enquired as to who received the Borough's food waste and was advised that a contract with Biffa to take it for processing was in place, and the food waste is processed through anaerobic digestion, where it was turned into gas and produces power, as well as a high quality fertiliser for use in agriculture. Councillor Cooper asked if it could be sold directly to the electricity board.

Mr Bird explained that, for that, an anaerobic digester would be required by ourselves which would cost millions to build.

Councillor Proctor had seen one of the anaerobic digesters in Ireland and told Members that they were impressive – not only for power production but the end product of compost was also good. However, for such a system to be feasible, a number of authorities would need to come on board and have shared ownership.

Mr Bird stated that the Council's current contract runs until 2022 at which point we may be in a position to consider partnerships with other authorities, especially if food collection were to become mandatory.

Councillor Proctor asked for consideration to be given to people living in terraced properties whilst looking at a new system, in respect of the size and quantity of containers.

Members then looked at garden waste collection and were advised that there was no alternative than to look at a chargeable service in order to absorb the financial implications of the cessation of payment of recycling credits by the County Council.

There were two options available – to outsource the collection to a private company – with a charge to residents or to continue to operate in house with a charge to residents. The charge would be introduced at £36 per year for the main garden waste bin and Members felt that, for properties requiring a second bin, discussions should take place as to a reduced charge.

The current system ran for ten months of the year but the new system would operate for the full twelve months.

Members agreed that, whilst they did not like the idea of charging for garden waste collections, there was no other alternative.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the fortnightly twin stream option (with separate paper and card) and separate food waste collection be recommended as the best option.
 - (ii) That, subject to the cost of acquiring an additional bin being considered, a chargeable garden waste collection service be introduced.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

This was the last meeting of the Task and Finish Cabinet Panel. Members were thanked for their support and comments during the process.

COUNCILLOR TREVOR JOHNSON
Chair

Meeting concluded at 3.10 pm