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WASTE STRATEGY PANEL held at CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX CB11 4ER, on FRIDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2018 at 3.00 pm

Present: Councillors S Barker, G Sell and L Wells

Officers in attendance: B Brown (Operations Manager - Street Services), R Lockwood (Waste and Recycling Officer) and A Mawson (Democratic Services Officer)

WS1 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Councillor Barker welcomed the panel and introductions were made.

WS2 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Barker was appointed Chairman of the panel.

WS3 **MOTION ON PLASTIC WASTE**

Councillor Sell was very grateful to have been invited to attend the meeting to discuss the motion on Reducing Plastic Waste from the Full Council meeting on 9 October 2018.

The motion asked the Waste Strategy Panel to consider:

- I. ways in which single issue plastics used by the Council can be replaced with sustainable or reusable alternatives where practicable
- II. How the Council can play its role in helping to educate members of the public about plastic waste,
- III. The provision of public drinking fountains across Uttlesford and encouraging a culture of refillable bottles, to promote health, reduce litter and cut the use of plastic an
- IV. How to use the links we have with businesses in Uttlesford to encourage them to reduce the amount of plastic waste produced and encourage participation in refill schemes in town centres
- V. Lobbying for a plastic bottle deposit return scheme and support for the campaigns from Keep Britain Tidy, the Marine Conservation Society, Campaign to Protect Rural England and ReLoop.

WS4 **CURRENT INITIATIVES AND SERVICES**

Councillor Barker asked the Waste and Recycling Officer what Uttlesford District Council (UDC) had in place currently.

The Waste and Recycling Officer introduced the panel to the 'Waste Awareness Plan for Uttlesford District 2018-2024', and spoke about a number of current and future initiatives. Both documents are appended to these minutes.

Councillor Sell was very pleased that there was a plan and initiatives in place. He suggested that the Waste and Recycling Officer speak with UDC's Economic Development Officer, Simon Jackson in relation to getting local businesses on board with some of the initiatives. The Waste and Recycling Officer said that she was also going to be speaking with UDC's Senior Health Improvement Officer in relation to increasing awareness and initiatives internally.

The Waste and Recycling Officer said that there were to be a number of awareness articles in the 'Uttlesford Life' publication in the lead up to and over Christmas focussing on 'saying no to single use plastics' and unrecyclable wrapping paper.

The Waste and Recycling Officer had also met with the 'Saffron Walden against climate change' group in an unofficial manner and spoke about 'waste busters'.

Councillor Barker said that there has been a popular misconception that when it came to initiatives in Uttlesford that 'we didn't need help', being an affluent area, however this led to UDC being left behind and it was important that UDC was supported by Essex County Council

Councillor Wells spoke about a group called 'DIGIT' in Dunmow, and Councillor Sell said that contact needed to be made with community groups. He also advised that the Saffron Walden Town Council had been doing some work around plastics.

The Waste and Recycling Officer said that she had been carrying out 'The problem with plastics workshops' in schools. The workshop was suitable for all ages and the whole school benefits and that it was a way to help get the recycling message home to parents.

Councillor Wells asked how recycling rates were measured and monitored.

Councillor Barker said that it was anecdotal from the crews.

The panel discussed the apparent apathy to recycling in the rural community. As well as visiting schools, the panel discussed approaching older groups like the Women's' Institute and the University of the Third Age.

Councillor Sell offered to be the link to the Stansted Business Forum.

The Operations Manager discussed the possibility of offering trade waste recycling and waste collection, as well as the possibility of adding rural small businesses to the domestic rounds for collection. This could be more cost effective in some cases.

Councillor Barker told the panel about the new innovative way in which Eddington in Cambridge dealt with its waste from a recent visit to the development. It was discussed that whilst it was impossible to retrofit such a

system, new initiatives could be installed in new developments at the point of building. This would mean that waste management would have to be on the planning agenda for new developments.

The Waste and Recycling Officer then spoke about alternatives to plastics in the Council. Internal usage was very much within 'our control'. The panel spoke about new non-plastic plastics and biodegradable materials in place of plastics.

Councillor Sell said that he was very impressed and that whilst not being prescriptive the direction of travel was very much what he liked to see.

The Panel spoke about positive competition in the district, enabling pride in the community, best kept street, best kept village, but not judged on one day but at intervals throughout the year.

The Panel discussed the duplication of things like grass cutting in areas, where there was a crossover of responsibility and where this was the case that arrangements could be made to save money in duplication and hand pockets of land back to the community to maintain with the funds to do so, to give a sense of ownership.

Councillor Barker said that with new developments, they are kept pristine until the developer has sold the last plot and then it's left to deteriorate.

Councillor Sell said that it was important to maintain awareness of third party campaigns and support them locally.

WS5

POSSIBLE CHANGES

Councillor Barker asked about littering, and focussed on the main 'entrances to the district' being littered with waste from the fast food outlets that border the district.

The panel discussed that littering is a poorly reported and policed area with few fines being issued. Fly tipping is on the increase and that this was a national trend. The Operations Manager said that this was commercial, harder to deal with and was organised crime.

Councillor Barker said that if the district's verges were looking well maintained that perhaps littering would occur less.

The Operations Manager said that the business website was about to be relaunched and could be used as an information source for businesses with waste disposal queries.

The panel discussed the new developments and the strain on collection crews to collect additional waste with fewer resources. The increased revenue from council tax was disproportionate to the costs. Councillor Barker said that this was why it was important to get big new developments right at the beginning.

Councillor Sell said that this needs to be influenced at the planning stages of development.

WS6 **NEXT STEPS**

Councillor Barker said that the Panel should meet again in March 2019, Democratic Services Officer to arrange with the Operations Manager.

The Panel said they would like a report to be presented to Cabinet in December, which the Operations Manager and the Waste and Recycling Officer would prepare.

The Waste and Recycling Officer will be going out with recycling crews to look at levels of contamination.

There would be a press release advising of the 'Christmas Closure' for waste crews and that Easter next year had already been identified in terms of disruption to collections.

DRAFT Waste Awareness Plan for Uttlesford District 2018-2024

Uttlesford District Council is keen to educate the next generation about waste and the associated environmental issues. The Waste Education Plan (WEP) aims to promote and encourage the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) and the wider sustainability agenda in Uttlesford's schools and their local communities. Educating children about environmental issues is an essential component to achieving a more sustainable future.

Alongside targeted efforts to reach school age children the action plan aims also to reach out to local communities.

The aim of the Waste Education Plan (WEP) is to :-

- Reduce the level of contamination in the recycling collection services
- Increase participation in the food waste collection service
- Promote and encourage waste minimisation
- Empower schools and the wider community with increased knowledge regarding recycling and waste minimisation.
- To help schools to reduce the amount of residual waste they produce
- Improve capture rates of higher value materials

Objectives

- To enable 100% of schools to recycle by 2024
- To support and assist schools to compost on site by 2024
- To help schools who are engaged with the WEP to reduce contamination levels in their recycling bins
- Through the sharing of knowledge with parents/guardians a reduction in contamination in the recycling collection service
- A higher participation rate of the food waste collection service
- To assist schools with carrying out waste audits and developing waste minimisation plans
- To see a rise in the amount of higher value materials in the recycling collection
- To monitor the effectiveness of the plan and to keep accurate data

Primary School Programme

Primary schools have been identified as an opportunity to develop and increase pupils and staffs knowledge of the importance of recycling and waste minimisation. Primary schools have also been known as a channel to educating the wider community, as pupils will often share the information and knowledge gained with their families/caregivers and the wider community around them.

Therefore the target audience of the WEP will be Primary School Pupils, Primary School Staff and Parents/caregivers and then the wider family and community.

The WEP will introduce and build on the pupils understanding and knowledge of waste minimisation and recycling (focussing on Uttlesfords recycling collection system) an emphasis will be placed on reducing contamination and promoting recycling at home.

A range of activities will be made available to the School and will utilise a range of resources such as class worksheets, paper making kits, a wormery, waste audit kits and recycling props.

These will be used to deliver a wide range of education activities which will include and not be limited to;

Reduce, Reuse and recycle

introduction to the world of waste, the waste hierarchy and learn about the environmental impacts of landfill. Pupils will learn about what can be recycled in the Uttlesford District and how non-recyclable items should be disposed off. We will finish the session with a game of recycling bingo and a 'rubbish relay' to check the pupils understanding and knowledge.

Paper Making

The paper making activity teaches pupils about the natural resources required to make paper and why these need to be preserved. We will then look at how paper is recycled and then they can have a go at making their own paper

Wonderful world of worms

This session allows pupils to investigate the world of vermicomposting (wormeries) a real life working wormery will be brought into school and the pupils can learn all about nature's top recyclers. They can gently handle the worms, identify the main parts, and learn about their diets and what products the worms produce. Children can even make their own composting or wormery bottles to see the waste decompose into compost before their very eyes.

Waste Audit

This is a practical hands on activity that pupils can carry out in school to identify the main waste materials and waste hotspots at school. Pupils will collect samples of waste which will then be sorted by material type and then weighed. This information can then be used to pinpoint what your school can do to reduce the amount of waste you produce and this in turn can help to develop a waste minimisation plan specific to your school. The waste audit will be carried out over 3 sessions

- Planning the waste audit
- Carrying out the waste audit
- Results and producing a waste minimisation plan

Waste free lunch

A large percentage of the waste that a school produces comes from lunchtime. A waste free lunch is a challenge to everyone to make as little rubbish as they can from their lunch (including the Teachers). It can start off as a one off event but it could become a regular

activity. We will start off by first carrying out a mini waste audit on a typical lunchtime; we will then introduce the concept of the 'waste free lunch' and plan the event. A week later we will hold the waste free lunch challenge and carry out a repeat waste audit to see if the waste free lunch challenge has made a difference to the amount of waste produced.

The WEP will be evaluated through the use of session feedback forms completed by the teachers, presenter self-evaluation and anecdotal feedback from both teachers and pupils.

The WEP will at first be focussing on schools which have been identified as being in areas where participation in the recycling scheme or the food waste scheme is lower, contamination rates are high or newer communities.

Target areas

Firstly schools which are deemed to be in areas where participation in the recycling /food waste scheme is low or contamination is high will be targeted first. This information will be gained by getting feedback from our collection crews.

Once Schools in the target area have been visited the WEP will be rolled out across the whole of the district. It is hoped that a long term relationship will be built up with the schools engaged in the WEP. This in turn will hopefully lead to a decrease in the amount of residual waste a school produces, a higher (and contamination free) recycling rate and a mini informed, engaged and knowledgeable recycling officer sent home to every household to help their family to recycle more and to recycle right.

Participation and engagement

Schools will initially be contacted by email. The email will introduce the waste education programme and will detail the activities which the school can avail. The school will directly contact the waste and recycling officer to arrange any activities and to book these into the calendar. If no response is received from a School in a target area the recycling officer will follow up with a phone call to explain and encourage participation in the WEP.

The information will also be made available on the Uttlesford District Council website under recycling in schools (currently being rewritten).

Education in the wider Community

Even though educating children about waste and recycling will be a priority for Uttlesford District Council, it is just as important that every resident has access to the correct information and feels empowered to make the correct choices when dealing with their waste.

During the year UDC will be running recycling events including roadshows during Recycle Week. We will be meeting with residents and giving them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have about the schemes we run. In turn we will be spreading our recycling message, and getting our key messages about contamination in the recycling bin and improve the participation rate of our food waste scheme.

Early in 2019 we are also hoping to run some composting workshops for our residents. They would be able to learn the basics of home composting and would also offer advice to any residents who have tried in the past but faced difficulties and given up. These workshops would be free of charge.

Also in 2019 we will hope to launch the recycleopedia app. Recycleopedia is the recycling search tool that makes it simple for our residents to work out what should go into each collection service. It is currently available on the UDC website but the app should be released by early next year. Since its launch in 2017 the item search numbers are continuing to climb so our residents are making good use of this tool.

We will continue to promote the use of cloth nappies and the associated benefits to our residents. There is a £30 refund offer which is provided by Essex County Council for residents who do use cloth nappies or a laundering service. Leaflets outlining the refund offer will be made available during our recycling events and we hope to promote this to local baby groups such as the NCT and the baby weigh in session which is run at the local community hospital.

If any community groups such as the Scout or Girl Guide associations, neighbourhood watch, Women's Institute or U3A groups wish to have a visit from the waste and recycling officer this service will be available to them.

Current and future Plastic Initiatives

- **Refill Scheme**
In our district we do have a few businesses taking part; these can be seen on the refill app. This scheme will be promoted during the ECC reuse campaign which is due to launch in Q1 of 2019.
- **Uttlesford Life**
This year the recycling focus is on 'Say no to a single use plastic Christmas'. Giving alternative ideas to residents about how to cut their plastic waste during the festive season.
- Contact has been made with SWACC (Saffron Walden against Climate Change) who are very keen to get involved as 'waste busters' and help at events across the district.
- 'The problem with plastic workshop' was very well received at school. More sessions have been booked in.
- The writing instrument recycling programme is being offered by teracycle to schools. They will accept any pens, highlighters, correction fluid pots and marker pens. This is being promoted to schools when the waste and recycling officer visits and will be ongoing throughout 2019.
- Ella cycle- Terracycle and Ella's kitchen are working in partnership to create a free recycling programme for any brand of baby food pouches and Ella's snack wrappers. There is currently one collection point in the district. This scheme could be expanded upon across the district In Q1/2 of 2019.
- **Trade Waste Recycling**
We currently do not offer a trade waste recycling service. Potential to divert more plastic waste (amongst other items) to the recycling facility. This will be investigated in Q1/2 of 2019.
- **Litter Bin Recycling**
Currently the waste from the litter bins in the district is not recycled. There is the potential to speak to town councils about introducing dual bins for recycling -Q2 of 2019.
- **Alternatives to plastic at the council.**
The potential to look at what plastic items (especially single use items such as straws, stirrers, disposable coffee cups and plastic cups) are used at the council offices and investigate any viable alternatives. Q1/2 2019

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