

Committee: Council

Date:

Title: Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

Tuesday, 9 April 2019

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Susan Barker, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

Summary

1. This report is to provide Members with an overview of recent developments and key achievements during the year.

Recommendations

2. The report be noted

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation with local communities is in progress in relation to the High Street Clean Up initiative
Community Safety	
Equalities	
Health and Safety	
Human Rights/Legal Implications	
Sustainability	Positive impact
Ward-specific impacts	All/ specific
Workforce/Workplace	

Situation

6. Waste and Recycling

The vehicle procurement exercise to replace part of our front line collection fleet has been completed and new Twin Pack (Domestic), Garden Waste and Trade Waste vehicles have been ordered with the first deliveries expected in early summer.

The waste and recycling officer continues to focus on raising awareness of environmental issues by targeting schools alongside directly contact with residents. In recent months she has attended school assemblies and worked with schools to organise local litter picking. She has also been out on collection rounds supporting staff to deal with contamination issues and talking to residents without slowing down collections.

Service disruptions have been minimal since in the last Quarter of the year with the majority of rounds being completed as planned. Most recent operational challenges have related to access problems or vehicle breakdowns. New procedures are in place to deal with missed bins with customer liaison being dealt with by supervisors which has helped reduce the number of misses and the quality of response.

Replacement bin delivery lead times have improved dramatically since bringing the service back in house and customer now wait less than 5 days for a replacement.

7. Street Cleansing Litter Picking and Green Space

The council has received an unexpected grant of £15,371 under the government's High Street Clean Up Initiative. The grant which is based on population size is part of the national programme to support High Streets announced in the Spring Statement. We were notified of our allocation on 18 March and that the grant had to be spent by 31 March. Orders have been placed for equipment for use in community litter picks, and recycling bins with separate containers for recyclables and refuse. We are in the process of approaching relevant communities to assess how these items might be allocated. We need to feed back to the Ministry what has been achieved by the end of May.

This grant came shortly after receipt another grant of £13,763 under the government's Local Authority Parks Improvement Funding. This is for remedial work and renovation of existing parks to enhance the green space available to their local communities. We are therefore using it towards the costs of the scheme for Claypits Plantation to enable its use as a woodland school facility previously agreed by Cabinet.

8. Environmental Health (Protection) Service

Members will be aware that this is a statutory regulatory service whose work takes place behind the scenes to protect public health and the environment. The service

can be divided in the several core functions, namely; Environmental Protection, Private Sector Housing, Enforcement and Animal Warden services.

Members will be familiar with the air quality monitoring work of the service, but they may be surprised to know that during the year 2018/19 the service received over 600 requests from Planning Services to advise on matters relating to contaminated land, noise, air quality and other environmental related impacts. 1500 service requests were received from residents on matters concerning nuisance, antisocial behaviour, enviro-crime, poor housing and other public health related matters. The service also regulates polluting industrial processes, monitors and investigates private water supply quality failures and issues up to £260K worth of grants for disabled residents to promote independent living.

Last year, the service also conducted 19 interviews under caution, issued 24 fixed penalty notices, 4 formal cautions and carried out 2 prosecutions. 15 unsuitable licensed drivers have also been suspended and 168 nuisance and untaxed vehicles were removed from our streets. Finally, officers participated in 24 stop check initiatives at Stansted Airport in partnership with Essex Police, Transport for London and Trading Standards.

Additional responsibilities related to changes to the animal welfare licensing regime have also been taken up during the year. These were the subject of previous reports to council.

Risk Analysis

9.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Failure to demonstrate that the High Street Clean Up funding has been used effectively may be taken into account by the government in awarding regeneration funding in the future	2 The monitoring form suggests that the government attaches some weight to evidence of effective use of funding	2 Compared to other areas, the local case for regeneration funding in general does not usually fit the award criteria	Work with local communities to show what has been achieved

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.