

Committee: Scrutiny

Date:

Title: Street services update including waste education action plan

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Summary

1. Scrutiny Committee previously considered a report detailing the impact of Operation Sword on the UK recycling market. As part of the discussion that followed, it was agreed that the Committee would receive a further report detailing a new action plan for waste education and awareness. The overall aim of the plan is to increase participation in the Council's recycling services and to help reduce contamination levels. The Committee heard that providing good quality, clean material for reprocessing is critical for ensuring higher material incomes from the sale of recyclables.
2. Since the meeting there have been a number of staffing changes within Street Services including the appointment of a new Waste and Recycling officer. This member of staff will be tasked with implementing the waste education and awareness plan.

Recommendations

3. The report is for information only.

Financial Implications

4. Service budgets for 2018-19 were set using assumptions about the state of the market for recyclable materials going forward. The rates ultimately obtained for sale of materials are affected by global market conditions and demand. Whilst the Council is not able to influence volatile markets conditions, it does use longer term materials contracts to even out variations in price.
5. Waste education initiatives are critical to ensuring that residents understand the types of materials that should be presented for collection. It is hoped that with the appointment to the post of Waste and Recycling Officer that issues such poor participation and contamination can be addressed and the Council's historical good recycling performance can be maintained.

Impact

6.

Communication/Consultation	Continuation of clear communication regarding quality of recyclables.
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	N/A
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

7. In order to maximise income to offset the cost of providing collection services, the Council must ensure that the materials collected are of good quality and that public participation in services is maintained.
8. In recent years, the Council's recycling rate has fallen from 51.12% in 2015/16 to 50.00% in 2017/18. The actual tonnage of recyclables collected has remained largely consistent over that period; however composting rates have varied due to fluctuations in weather. The amount of waste residual waste collected has also grown over time by almost 1000 tonnes which is in part attributable to housing growth within the district.
9. APPENDIX 1 sets out a high level action plan for waste education and awareness plan which aims to increase participation in the Council's recycling services and to help reduce contamination levels. The plan takes into account feedback from the Council's reprocessing contractors, the views of the collection staff 'on the ground' as well as county / nationwide waste education initiatives. The key aims of the plan are 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
10. Crew feedback will be used to ascertain areas where participation is lower than or where contamination is higher. In Uttlesford, like many other parts of the UK, lowest participation rates are generally found in newer communities where the residents are, on the whole, time poor and perhaps have less interest in environmental issues. These areas will be the focus of initial waste education programme.
11. The waste and recycling officer will be making contact with schools with catchment areas within poor participation areas to attempt to engage with the pupils who may take positive messages home. This is a proven technique in raising awareness.
12. As well as focusing on school age children, efforts will also be made to target areas of the district where recycling performance is poor. In these scenarios the waste and recycling officer will use crew feedback and their own observations to encourage participation.

Risk Analysis

13. The waste education programme is specifically designed to improve participation in the district's recycling services and is in effect designed to help mitigate some of the financial risk associated with waste services.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Significant overspend against current budget for dry recyclables processing	3	3	Continued communication activities to improve quality of materials presented for recycling.

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.