

ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting - 6 December 2016

Present: Mrs Sullivan (Chairman)
Mr Bradford, Mr Read and Mr D Smith

Also present: Mr Dhillon

Apologies for absence: Mr Harding

15. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the PAG held on 7 June 2016 were received.

16. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

17. CURRENT ISSUES

The Members of the PAG were introduced to Sally Gordon, the new Joint Waste Services Manager. The joint waste team were explained to be in the midst of projects including the transfer of calls from The SBDC Waste admin team to the call centre at CDC, with training and testing of the systems currently being undertaken. Members requested updates on these projects, with agreement that these would be sent out as and when necessary.

In terms of the roll-out of recycling containers to flats:

- 74% of the project is now complete
- 15 of the remaining sites are in discussions with stakeholders e.g property managers, in order to ensure adequate bin storage areas
- 14 of the more complex sites that are remaining are to be completed in early 2017.

Councillors were advised that a situation concerning collections from a private road had been resolved, and were pleased to note that the team as a whole were able to learn from this situation.

18. CDC AND SBDC GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) REPORTS

Members received the CDC and SBDC Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reports, which had statutorily been submitted to DECC and made available on the website.

Members noted that there had been a 27.5% (187.29 tonnes) decrease of emissions throughout 2015/16, compared to the 2008/09 baseline. This was seen to be partly due to reduction in Beacon Centre emissions by 10%, and a move of many services from Capswood to King George V House, resulting in significant reductions in occupancy at Capswood. It was highlighted to Members that this has, however, led to an increase of emissions for CDC. It was noted that there has also been an increase of emissions for CDC resulting from the relinquishing of the electric vehicle.

During discussions, Members inquired as to why the electric vehicle had been relinquished, with the Head of Environment explaining that the mileage range of the electric vehicle had steadily decreased, and had therefore been proven to be inefficient. Members were informed that a report would be taken to Management Team in the immediate future regarding the Electric Vehicle plan, detailing in part the infrastructure that would need to be in place prior to acquiring any more electric vehicles. The model used by Milton Keynes was cited as one that would be useful to research and apply to SBDC and CDC.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the Greenhouse Gas report, its publication on the SBDC website and notification of completion to Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), along with the close link between the CDC & SBDC GHG reports be noted.

19. **PORTFOLIO BUDGETS 2017/18**

The Portfolio Holder considered a report seeking Members' comments and approval for the draft Revenue Budget and the Fees and Charges schedule for 2017/18 for the Environment Portfolio, prior to collation of all portfolio budgets for consideration by the Cabinet.

The report outlines the context of the overall financial position facing the Council for the coming year, and confirmed that as a result of the Government's deficit reduction strategy, Local Authority funding is subject to continuing significant reductions, particularly from 2018/19 onwards, alongside constraints on the level of Council Tax increases, whilst taking into account SBDC's position as set out in detail in the recently updated Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In considering the report, the PAG particularly noted:

- that it would be prudent at this stage not to include any funding for new recurring expenditure, or to expand services;
- that the authority needs to identify measures to compensate for the reductions in resources, which would include joint working with CDC;
- that much of the budget remained the same, but that the decrease to the Environment budget of £178k (6.9%) reflects the transfer of waste calls to the call centre at CDC (a reduction of 30k), and a saving of 50k on the contract.

During discussion, Members wished to be made aware of the Biffa contract end date, which was clarified as 2021. The Head of Environment further explained to Members that once the Joint Waste team were settled, officers would begin to work on how the service could look after this date. CDC's waste contract was similarly shown to be ending in 2020, and the possibility of extension would influence the look of SBDC's waste service.

Having considered the advice of the PAG, the Portfolio Holder **RECOMMENDED** the onward submission to Cabinet of:

- The 2017/18 Revenue Budget
- The 2017/18 Fees and Charges

20. **GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION CHARGES 2017-18**

The PAG received a report detailing the proposed charges for the garden waste collection service 2017/18, alongside a change in method of charging and charging structure.

Members noted that in the introductory year 2014/15, the charge per bin was set at £45, with an early bird charge of £35. For both 2015/16 and 2016/17, the charge per bin was increased to £46, with the discounted early bird charge set at £36. Currently after the early bird subscription, all SBDC residents pay £46 from the point at which they subscribe, until renewal on 31 March. Members felt that it would be appropriate to align the service with CDC, meaning that a full year's subscription would be provided to all residents from the date of sign-up. Work has been undertaken by the Joint Waste team in order to determine the appropriate charge for the next financial year, with the average charge of 7 surrounding councils being £43.85.

The report informed Members that the CDC fees and charges for 2017/18 are recommending increasing the flat rate from £35 to £38, with Members feeling that it would make sense to align the SBDC charge with this, and to amend the recommendation to reflect this and the rolling programme of subscriptions. Due to the increased resilience brought about by joining the waste teams, the steady flow of subscriptions throughout the year, expected from this change, was deemed manageable.

After taking advice from the PAG, the Portfolio Holder **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the garden waste service adopts a rolling programme of subscriptions, at a charge of £38 per bin.

21. WASTE CONTAINERS

The PAG were presented with a report containing information relating to the proposed fees and charge for 2017/18, specifically regarding the introduction of charges to developers for waste containers provided to new developments.

Members noted from the report that SBDC is a waste collection authority, with an obligation to collect household waste, as specified in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA1990). Under the Act, local authorities have the ability to charge developers for the provision of waste containers, but SBDC currently do not implement this power. As part of the setting of fees and charges for 2017/18, SBDC has proposed that reasonable levels of charge would help to mitigate against the increasing financial pressures within local authorities.

Discussion was had by Members concerning paragraph 3.4 of the report, detailing the costs to the developers in order for each household to take full advantage of the recycling facilities provided by SBDC's waste contract, alongside the admin time and costs, based on 2015/16 data. It was noted that the full set of containers (1x240litre black wheeled bin; 1x240litre black wheeled bin with blue lid; 1x44litre paper recycling box; 1x23litre food waste bin; 1x5litre kitchen caddy) would cost the developer £92.50 per household.

Members felt it important that the waste team ensure they work closely with other departments, such as Planning, to ensure that these charges are clearly explained to developers at the planning application stage. It was agreed that, once agreed, the process for the notification, charge and supply of the containers would be circulated to Members.

The Portfolio Holder therefore **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that Developers be charged for waste containers for new properties, at the rate of £92.50 per set.

The meeting terminated at 6.48 pm