

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

From: Councillor Elisabeth Malvisi Cabinet Member for Environment	Report Number: CMU14
To: Council	Date of meeting: 21 January 2020

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

1. Overview of Portfolio

- 1.1 This report summarises the key areas of activity in the portfolio since September and highlights what is coming up for the next 3 months. The portfolio includes Waste & Recycling, Public Realm, Building Control, Public Protection, Health & Safety and Leisure.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Council notes the report.

3. Key Activities since September

Waste & Recycling:

- 3.1 *New Recycling Facility:* The new recycling centre at Masons MRF has started to process the district's kerbside collected waste following a £15 million investment in the old facility. The major refurbishment started in May this year and was recently completed during November. The new facility has a dedicated education room to enable community learning and site visits this will be open during 2020.
- 3.2 *New Depot Scoping:* Initial work has started on the scoping of a new operational depot; a project team established, potential sites being explored, scoping of operational requirements and preliminary costing – more detail will follow as the project becomes more developed over the coming months.
- 3.3 Work continues on the National Waste Strategy; officers are working on options appraisals on potential new service delivery models, accessing future infrastructure needs and financial impact assessments on service changes. We expect further consultation to start in 2020 as government thinking becomes more refined following the first round of consultation carried out in May 2019.
- 3.4 *Food Savvy:* Babergh and Mid Suffolk are supporting the countywide Food Savvy project through our membership of the Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP). In Suffolk over 50,000 tonnes of food waste is thrown away by residents each year costing the local taxpayer approximately £4.75 million.

A full impact report outlining Food Savvy's achievements in year one has now been published. The report outlines the many innovative ideas undertaken already. This includes ideas such as Pumpkin Rescue, Christmas Savvy (currently being repeated for 2019), Banana Drama and Travellers Checks, a campaign which sought to encourage residents to share food when going on holiday.

As well as these campaigns, Council officers have spoken with over 12,000 residents at multiple events and the project has brought external funding into Suffolk supporting, amongst others, the creation of a community kitchen and Suffolk's first community fridge. If you would like to learn more, the full report can be found here - www.foodsavvy.org.uk/about-1

Year two of the project is now underway and Officers are working with Hubbub to develop new ideas, repeat those initiatives that worked well in year one and further promote our overarching aims to residents. This will include new schemes focused on reducing the wastage of individual types of food i.e. potatoes or bread, the expansion of Suffolk community fridge network and an exciting partnership with the East of England Co-op.

Public Realm: Civil Parking Enforcement

- 3.5 The work to ensure implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement in Babergh and Mid Suffolk continues. The Statutory Instrument is ready to be laid in Parliament by the Department of Transport in January 2020.
- 3.6 Ipswich Borough and West Suffolk Councils will be taking on these duties, via a Service Level Agreement, for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. Recruitment will be starting soon for Civil Enforcement Officers so that training and development can take place prior to patrolling our districts.

Public Realm:

- 3.7 This is the 1st year of Tree for Life project in Babergh. Applications are flooding in; with 3 weeks to go to register there were 170 applicants in Babergh. This is over the estimated take up (based on last year's figures from Mid Suffolk) and equates to 23% of births and adoptions in Babergh.
- 3.8 Following consultation with local residents a part refurbishment (£24k) of Pinecroft Rise play area in Sudbury has taken place. These new pieces of equipment are already proving a success with local children.
- 3.9 A children's cycling proficiency area has been designed and marked out on the hard surface area (former metal skate ramp area) in Belle Vue Park Sudbury. This was completed and available for use over the Christmas holiday.
- 3.10 Public Realm Officers are working with colleagues in the Communities Team to advise a number of Town and Parish Councils with regard to current play refurbishment projects.

Building Control:

- 3.11 The Suffolk Group collaboration had suffered a minor setback in that the Business Development Officer post became vacant. However, a successful recruitment took place before Christmas. Our relationship with Concertus continues to improve due to work undertaken as a Suffolk group which we will be looking to replicate elsewhere. Following all the groundwork put in over the last 11 months the intention is to now increase marketing activity to raise awareness with the public around what we do and what we offer.

- 3.12 The situation with the private sector and issues over insurance has yet to be fully resolved. We are currently managing the additional workload from private sector failures and are now seeing more work being handed back to us where private bodies are either unable or unwilling to complete. We will continue to monitor the situation and deal with each instance as it occurs accordingly.
- 3.13 We are expecting a fundamental change to the Building Act coming in next year which will address issues around regulations affecting Approved Inspectors, time limits for enforcement, possible charging for demolition notices as well as a general update.

Public Protection:

- 3.14 Through its membership of the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership (SCCP), a further offer to residents and businesses to have solar panels installed on their premises at a significantly discounted rate has been made. The first round saw 177 Babergh and Mid Suffolk households and businesses benefit from a 20% discount through our 'Solar Together Suffolk' bulk-buy scheme. This time round there have been 1,048 registrants of interest across Suffolk. The winning supplier is Greenspace, an Ipswich-based business with accreditation from SCC Trading Standards, Which? And Trusted Trader. An average 32% saving on the typical market price of panels has been negotiated. Installations should start in the New Year.
- 3.15 The Food and Safety team have been surveying the main industrial estates across the districts to establish information about warehouse activities that are under the jurisdiction of the local authorities for health and safety. General health and safety advice has been given to relevant businesses with more than 100 contacted so far.
- 3.16 In October the director of the company running the Maldon Grey public house in Sudbury was given a Simple Caution for health and safety offences which related to a six-year-old girl breaking her leg when she fell from a bouncy castle. This was administered with accompanying publicity, including a press release, about the offences and the dangers of operating inflatable play equipment without appropriate safety measures in place.
- 3.17 The Food and Safety team have started to promote food businesses achieving a 5 rating on the councils' social media platforms under the label Friday 5s.
- 3.18 Prosecutions for food safety offences relating to a tearoom in Lavenham and a Chinese takeaway in Sudbury were concluded successfully with both defendants pleading guilty to the charges.
- 3.19 Two prosecutions for fly tipping were concluded in September with fines of £720 and £1,000 imposed as well as costs being awarded to the councils. These both followed failures to pay fixed penalty notices. Ten further fixed penalty notices were served by the Environmental Protection team up to the end of September and a Simple Caution was administered to another person for failing to meet their legal 'duty of care' to ensure that waste from their household was transferred to a licensed waste carrier.

4. Future Key Activities

Waste & Recycling: New Depot Scoping

- 4.1 As work on the depot project moves forward; sites are identified, preliminary costings are finalised and discussions with potential partners are developed we will be able firm up a detailed proposal and time frame for the project.

Waste & Recycling: National Waste Strategy

- 4.2 We expect further consultation to start in 2020 as government thinking becomes more refined following the first round of consultation carried out in May 2019. We will respond to consultations as they become available and as we find out more information be able to prepare for the future changes to our Waste services.

Waste & Recycling: Alternative Fuel Waste Vehicles

Most of the Waste Service's vehicles are due for replacement during 2023, while a way into the future we will start to explore options with our service partner Serco for alternative fuelled waste collection vehicles; trialling of demonstrator vehicles and detailed options appraisals.

Public Realm:

- 4.3 Over the next few months all mapping data held by the Council will be checked and updated. This will include checking whether areas maintained are accurately mapped. This will give accurate information on the quantity of work the Council needs to complete and most importantly how this is spread out over the District. This information is very important if the Council is to review these services in order for members to make the best decision on how these services are managed in the future.
- 4.4 The Tree for Life scheme will close on the 31st Dec 2019 and now comes the important work of distributing the trees. Two distribution sessions are being organised for Jan and Feb 2020.
- 4.5 In Oct 2015 a new skatepark opened in Hadleigh following a successful partnership with a local skatepark group, BDC and Hadleigh Town Council. £120k was raised by the group to fund the works and since it opened has proven to be one of the most successful play projects that the Council has completed. It was always intended that this would be phase 1 and that the space around the skatepark would be utilised for an extension. The skatepark group have now raised the funds for the extension and we look forward to working with the group to secure the build in 2020.

Building Control:

- 4.6 Recruitment of Suffolk wide marketing/business development post to continue the good work already done and to further promote the service.
- 4.7 Changes in legislation and standards, particularly Parts F (ventilation) and L (energy efficiency), to be published late March early April with a few being in force in early October
- 4.8 Changes to the Building Act to address issues with private sector provision – possibly 2 tier insurance structure for private sector.

- 4.9 Await legislation to implement recommendations of the Building A Safer Future (Hackitt/Grenfell reports).

Public Protection:

- 4.12 The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership is seeking to invest in the installation of solar panels on the roofs of suitable business premises. We have already installed one array at the University of Suffolk and are in negotiations with a leisure centre provider to install a second array. These projects are on an 'invest to save' basis, with the income generated being used to sustain the work of the partnership. However, the Partnership intends to revise its business model to significantly expand its offer to Suffolk businesses to help them reduce their energy bills and become 'carbon neutral'.
- 4.13 Information gathered from surveying warehousing businesses will be used to develop more targeted health and safety interventions in 2020 for those identified as having some of the more significant risks such as the use of forklift trucks and high racking.
- 4.14 Licensing training for members of the licensing committees is being planned for March 2020.