

Runnymede Borough Council  
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

15 March 2018 at 7.30pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors J J Wilson (Chairman) Mrs G Warner (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs E Gill, T J F E Gracey, D J Knight, M T Kusneraitis,  
Mrs Y P Lay and Miss J K Sohi

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors P I Roberts and M L Willingale

579. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

580. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Group mentioned below had notified the Chief Executive of their wish that the change listed below be made to the membership of the Committee. The change was for a fixed period ending on the day after the meeting and thereafter the Councillor removed would be reappointed.

	<b>Remove From Membership</b>	<b>Appoint Instead</b>
Runnymede Independent Residents' Group	Councillor Mrs M T Harnden	Councillor Mrs E Gill

The Chief Executive had given effect to this request in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

581. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 January 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

582. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M L Willingale

583. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2018/19

The Committee was updated on the progress made against last year's Environmental Services Business Plan and provided with a summary of this year's Environmental Services Business Plan for approval.

The Committee reviewed the Business Plan and the associated addendum updates in detail. It was noted that the Trade Refuse Objective had been amended to focus on the surplus income generation rather than, as previously, customer numbers. Members were pleased to note that supporting the delivery of the River Thames Scheme remained a project.

Runnymede was producing less waste and a publicity campaign regarding this was being planned. Members did however have concerns regarding fly-tipping in the Borough, particularly since the reduced hours of operation at the Lyne Community Recycling Centre. Officers advised Members that it was too early to ascertain if the reduced hours had increased the incidents of fly-tipping. This would, however, be monitored over the coming months. It was noted that when fly-tipping did occur Officers were very successful in prosecuting offenders. Publicity regarding recent prosecutions would be published shortly.

It was anticipated that an increase of approximately 1000 households would take up the Green Waste service during the forthcoming year.

Members passed on their thanks to the DSO team for all their work over the winter months.

**RESOLVED that –**

**the Environmental Services Business Centre Plan 2018/19 be approved**

584. GARDEN WASTE SERVICES - CHANGES

Runnymede launched their garden waste service in 2004, and since then the service had slowly but consistently increased. At present approximately 7000 customers were provided with a fortnightly garden waste service 12 months of the year. However, when Runnymede compared their resident participation with other Boroughs there was a definite shortfall in participating residents compared to other Councils.

Currently Surrey Waste Partnership (SWP) was running a garden waste campaign and Runnymede was participating using artwork on their dustcarts and on garden waste tags.

From April 2018 Officers recommended a post from within the existing team be reassigned to monitor the amount of garden waste found in residual bins. The garden waste Officer would work in front of the targeted refuse round and "pull" the bins to check their weight. If a bin failed the "pull" test the bags would be quickly checked for the presence of garden waste. There would be no spillage issues as all refuse waste was presented in sealed bags.

Whenever green waste was found in a bin, a tag would be issued informing the resident that garden waste had been found and would give them three different ways to dispose of the waste. A note would be made on the Bartec system by the garden waste Officer and a letter generated informing the resident that the garden waste should not be placed within the residual waste bin and reiterating the three options available.

The three options the resident had to dispose of garden waste would be: using the garden waste scheme, having a composter in their garden or taking their garden waste to the local recycling centre.

Should the same resident continue to place garden waste in their bin the crew would reject the bin until the next scheduled collection as long as the garden waste had been removed. A second tag was currently being designed to inform the resident on why the residual bin had been rejected.

Members of the Committee were asked to approve the use of this soft enforcement approach to encourage the correct disposal of garden waste. This would be undertaken as a pilot with a view to wider usage and would be funded from existing budgets.

Members were keen to support the soft enforcement option. It was, however, felt that the green bin hanger needed to be re-worded to ensure residents were aware of the action that would be taken should the Green Waste not be removed. Similarly, Members of the Committee asked Officers to provide a copy of the proposed letter for residents following a bin hanger being left, so it could be reviewed at the Member Working Group on refuse and recycling.

#### **RESOLVED that –**

**approval be given to the use of soft enforcement in respect of garden waste placed in residual bins and, where found, to educate the correct disposal method for garden waste by promotion of the Council's garden waste service, use of a recycling centre or home composting**

#### **585. ENVIRONMENTAL MAINTENANCE (VERGE CUTTING) INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT**

The Committee was informed that for the past 4 years the highways verge cutting had been carried out under a contract with Grasstex Ltd and the weed control by Environmental Husbandry Ltd. Grasstex had offered to continue providing the service for a 4.7% increase and Environmental Husbandry Ltd at no increase in cost. Whilst the standard of verge cutting in the past had been on par with other contractors the standard constantly failed to meet the expectations of our residents.

Spelthorne BC had recently taken their grounds maintenance back in-house and had for many years now cut their own highway verges under an Agency agreement with Surrey CC.

An attractive joint working offer had been submitted by Spelthorne BC which Officers felt would provide a greatly enhanced service within existing budgets for the verge cutting elements of the proposed maintenance Agency agreement. For the sum of £110,000 per year Spelthorne would supply a 3 man crew, vehicles and equipment for 12 months of the year to cover litter picking before grass cutting, strimming and blowing on a 4 week cycle between March and October 2018 (during the heavy growing season they would schedule 5 weeks so as to not fall behind). The crew would remain static in Runnymede for 12 months of the year and would provide leaf clearance on the highway verges out of the grass cutting season.

Members were fully supportive of the joint working opportunity and were particularly pleased to note that litter clearing and leaf clearing (out of the grass cutting season) would be beneficial. It was of great importance that the Borough was kept clean and tidy.

As there was now insufficient time to retender the weed control contract the Committee agreed to extend the contract with Environmental Husbandry Ltd for 2 years from 1 April 2018.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) an Inter Authority Agreement with Spelthorne BC be entered into for an initial period of 2 years to fulfil the Council's obligations under the Agency Agreement with SCC for highways verge cutting; and**
- ii) the contract with Environmental Husbandry Ltd for weed control be extended for two years from 1 April 2018**

**586. MEMBER WORKING GROUP ON REFUSE AND RECYCLING - MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Member Working Group held on 25 January were noted

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.07pm)