

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 21 April 2015

Subject: Environment **Item:**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor W Breare-Hall

Recommending:

That the report of the Environment Portfolio Holder be noted.

Waste Management

Members will recall that the decision to award the Waste Management contract to Biffa from November 2014 was based on a Tuesday to Friday collection service. The change was to become effective once Biffa procured a new vehicle fleet and relocated from Langston Road Depot to their own depots in Waltham Cross and Edmonton.

I am pleased to inform Members that the new 4 day collection service will commence on 12 May 2015. Prior to this every household will receive a letter in the post which will inform them of the specific day change for them, and the Council's website will have a new search tool that will allow residents to check their refuse and collection day. Some of the features of the new service commencing on 12 May are:

1. Refuse and recycling services will be collected from Tuesday to Friday.
2. No requirement to catch up after a Bank Holiday Monday.
3. A brand new fleet of vehicles for the service.
4. Batteries will be collected every week with the food and garden wheelie bin.
5. Textiles will be collected fortnightly with recycling sacks, blue box and the weekly food and garden wheelie bin.
6. Small electrical equipment will be collected fortnightly with the refuse wheelie bin and the weekly food and garden wheelie bin.

On 18 February I joined a small group of Members in visiting Biffa's Material Recovery Facility (MRF) at Edmonton, where our recycling material is delivered. The visit was both interesting and informative, and it was pleasing to see that all of the material that our residents recycle is diverted from landfill. I will arrange another visit for any other Members who would like to see the facility.

I am pleased to inform Members that the Department for Communities and Local Government has approved the joint funding bid of £896,468 submitted by Epping Forest, Braintree, Harlow and Tendring district councils. The funding will be used for increased publicity and initiatives to help with the following within the four districts:

- Weekly food recycling in 97 schools
- 11,000 properties in blocks of flats to receive new recycling services
- Reduction in landfill waste of circa 9000 tonnes

I shall keep Members informed of the specific schemes and initiatives within this district.

Old Shire Lane in Waltham Abbey received a deep cleanse in March, which included the removal of fly tipped items. Biffa have agreed a long-term cleansing plan for the area, with work to be carried out first thing in the morning when parking is less of a problem. The possibility of installing additional litter bins on the verge side of the road is also being investigated.

Flooding and Water

The relatively dry winter period has meant an overall reduction in flooding incidents. Liaison with Essex Highways and Thames Water has seen EFDC officers take a coordinating role, especially as the latter have not been proactive in either managing or taking positive action on the majority of cases. Members have invited Thames Water representatives to attend the next Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny Panel on 28th April in order to understand their priorities.

Officers from the Engineering Drainage and Water Team are working closely with Forward Planning to ensure that the forthcoming updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the district is sound and robust in order that it will help shape development policy across the district.

Fly-tipping

A curfew and community orders were imposed on two residents who illegally deposited waste on land at the entrance to a site previously used by travellers in Epping Lane, Stapleford Tawney, after being prosecuted by Epping Forest District Council in Chelmsford Magistrates Court on 5th March.

Mr. Karl Stichman, of Colson Road, Loughton, was given a 12 month community order with a curfew for a period of 3 months between the hours of 8.00pm and 7.00am, 7 days a week. Mr. Jay Grant, of Grosvenor Drive, Loughton, was also given a 12 month community order with a requirement that he carries out 100 hours unpaid work. The defendants were ordered to pay the Council's prosecution costs of £298 each.

Fly tipped waste was found by an Environment and Neighbourhoods Officer on 26th August 2014. The matter was investigated and the waste was traced back to a shop in Borders Lane, Loughton.

The owner of the shop informed the Council that she had asked her cousin, Karl Stichman, to remove the waste from her shop with the intention of it being taken to a proper recycling centre.

However, when interviewed under caution by Council officers, Mr. Stichman told the Council that the Essex County Council recycling centre had refused to accept some of the waste, as it was trade waste, so he and his friend Jay Grant had fly tipped it.

Additional general advice in relation to this case

Commercial waste from business premises, construction waste, or waste that does not come directly from a domestic property cannot be taken to ECC recycling centres. Commercial and construction waste must be disposed of via legitimate authorised companies. Companies disposing of commercial waste must also keep Waste Transfer Notes to record how they dispose of their waste.

Essex County Council have informed us that they are in the process of tightening up on checks that they carry out at their recycling sites to detect and deter commercial waste being passed off as household waste for free disposal. In particular, ANPR cameras will be used to record and detect regular visitors which may indicate a commercial source of waste. There is a risk that when waste is turned away from recycling centres (as in this case) this will lead to more fly-tipping. EFDC's enforcement team will be working with ECC to follow up on any evidence they obtain that indicates illegal commercial waste disposal.

Unauthorised encampments (UE)

Harlow Council obtained an interim injunction to prohibit unauthorised encampments from a number of open spaces around Harlow. Fears that this could lead to the caravans in Harlow moving to neighbouring authorities has so far been unfounded. Most of the caravans that had been regularly moving around Harlow left the area before the injunction hearing, with the final group moving when the interim injunction was obtained. It has been reported that the caravans moved out of Essex.

Officers still have concerns that Essex police have restricted the use of their discretionary power to remove 6 or more caravans from land, under s.61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (s.61), so removing UE primarily relies on landowners (including EFDC) pursuing possession proceedings to evict trespassers, a process that can take weeks to be effective.

Noise nuisance

A noise abatement notice was served in February on The Princess of Wales public house (formerly The Clydesdale), Westall Road, Loughton, after the duty noise officer witnessed loud music causing a statutory nuisance, contrary to advice that had been provided previously. The premises licence holder is now working with the enforcement team to comply with the notice.

Food Safety

The Food Standards Agency and the renown London School of Economics and Political Science are carrying out a research project into the consistency of inspections and risk ratings. I am pleased to confirm that the Agency is satisfied with the Food Hygiene Rating scores applied by officers from EFDC. Further information will be provided when the full results of the study are published.

Health and Safety at Work

Officers have identified a number of businesses in the beauty sector who have been undertaking treatments such as IPL (Intense Pulsed Light) and laser hair removal, teeth whitening and the application of semi-permanent make up without the necessary medical involvement and advice. They have been advised to stop providing such treatments until they meet all safety requirements.

The Health and Safety Executive have identified Carbon Monoxide (CO) emissions from Tandoor ovens and indoor charcoal cooking as presenting particular risks. The team have obtained monitoring equipment to measure the level of CO from kitchens and will be investigation whether food businesses in the area are at risk over the forthcoming year.

Air Quality

The Annual Updating and Screening Assessment for DEFRA is currently being prepared. Monitoring results show that air quality in Epping and Loughton high streets is at borderline levels, and any deterioration would require the authority to consider the declaration of Air Quality Management Areas.