

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**20 September 2023**

### **COUNCILLOR RINGER- CABINET MEMBER FOR IT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND WASTE SERVICES**

For the period July to September 2023

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Public Protection**

The team have two active cases of legionella, one relates to a domestic premises, and one relates to a commercial premises, the team have taken samples, offered advice and have worked closely with the UKHSA to ensure that the risk to public health is controlled and managed.

In terms of licensing the team have been working on a taxi fare increase the team has now calculated would be a reasonable increase in the maximum fares that taxis could charge. This has been sent to a taxi meter company to ensure that the meters could be adjusted in accordance with proposal. When they have outlined that there will not be any issues the trade will be notified of the proposed fares and the fares will then be advertised through various media channels for public comment. If there are no objections to the fares, they will be implemented. If there are objections the matter will need to go before the licensing committee for approval.

Throughout the summer the team have supported events across the district, by offering advice through the safety advisory group and conducting inspections of food vendors at events such as Cromer carnival.

The team undertook a significant investigation into a workplace transport accident. The matter has now been transferred to the Health and Safety Executive due to the nature of the premises involved.

The recently appointed caravan sites officer is making excellent progress in visiting the numerous caravan and camping sites throughout the district.

The team are still working with partner agencies to support the Sheringham Community Action Partnership to tackle underage drinking in that location this included some proactive test purchasing in August.

The team continues to get a large number of animal activity applications especially in relation to dog breeding premises and home boarding.

## **Environmental Protection**

The team have been busy dealing with the usual summer increase of cases, this alongside some absence within the team this has meant that the team have needed to take a risk-based approach to case management and it has resulted in a slower than normal response time in some cases.

The team continue to work closely with legal services on a fly nuisance case in Fulmondeston and the appeal process of the abatement notice which was served. They have attended residents' meetings and continue to gather evidence.

The stray dog service provided by Animal Warden Services has achieved the RSPCA gold pawprint award. This recognises outstanding service and best practice.

Proactive monitoring on Saturday and Sunday evening occurred during the Banneroo event in Banningham, alongside some proactive work in advance of the event through the Safety Advisory group to ensure the safety delivery of the event.

Despite problems with the trailer the team managed to ensure that the "Goats on a Slope" returned for the 2023 summer season.

## **Civil Contingencies**

The team have coordinated and respond to the following incidents during this period:

- Tidal surge and severe weather 3-6 Aug
- Storm Betty 18-19 Aug
- High tides 31 Aug – 3 Sep

## **Environmental and Safety services**

In terms of street cleansing services, the summer holidays have passed largely successfully, despite the influx of visitor and subsequent increase in pressure on the services. Officer inspections have identified only minor issues with services delivery, with Serco providing a good level of service, especially in the high tourism areas and around key events such as Carnivals and in response to the numerous high tide and severe weather events that have created additional work for cleansing teams.

Ahead of the summer holidays, around 25 new litter bins were deployed in Cromer town centre to replace aging and rusted cast iron litter bins. These have been well received and offer a slightly larger capacity than the previous bins which will help to manage the levels of waste that is generated in the town. Refurbishments are also underway with the solar powered 'Big Belly' litter bins which we have in areas across the district and offer further

efficiencies with street litter collection and this program will continue over the coming months.

The team have continued to work alongside Serco to improve performance of waste collections in terms of ensuring collections take place on the scheduled day and with the least environmental/carbon impact. Round completion has seen a general improvement in the last two months although the number of missed collections is higher than desired and this continues to be a focus for the team and Serco for improvement.

The staggered roll out of the kerbside waste electrical and electronic items (WEEE) across the district is now complete and all households now have access to a weekly collection of WEEE and batteries. Residents can simply bag up batteries or small electrical items in a loosely tied bag and leave them on top of the grey or green bin for Serco to collect.

Work is almost complete on a new online missed bin reporting system which will also inform enquiring householders of any round delays (e.g. breakdowns) or reasons as to why their bins may not have been emptied (e.g. not out or contaminated with incorrect materials) to avoid recording missed collections incorrectly. This will work in real time using the information from Serco's in cab devices and recorded by collection crews and will hopefully be launched during September.

In late July, Defra announced a decision to defer the introduction of the extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging fees for one year from October 2024 to October 2025. The Council is still awaiting further information from government regarding the introduction of this scheme and the financial impact this will have on NNDC. There has also been no update regarding the implementation of the 'consistent collections' agenda and how this may impact on the services that NNDC provides for householders and businesses.

Two vacant posts within the Environmental Services side of the team have recently been recruited and successful candidates are due to start in October.

Within Corporate H&S, construction projects and North Walsham Cedars and the Reef Solar Car Port have both been completed with no injuries to report. Given the number of staff involved, this shows a good safety culture was being implemented by all involved across both sites, with only minor issues identified during inspections.

Corporate H&S have also been involved in many requests to support day to day activities, DSE assessments and creating risk assessments for venues, events and offering guidance to the Safety Advisory Group (SAG). NNDC staff are actively seeking support from the team which demonstrates a positive image for H&S as a whole across the organisation.

Updates have been made to the Approved Contractors process to ensure greater tracking and traceability of those companies that NNDC are using

and ensuring that we have all relevant documentation for our defence in the event of an incident that involves property or people.

A further IOSH Managing Safely training course has taken place with a total of 11 NNDC delegates have now successfully passed the course and a further 24 booked for the coming months. The benefits of this training are already being shown across the organisation, with teams now developing high quality Risk Assessments and providing staff with better access to Safe Systems of Work.

A Risk Assessment template system has been created, at this stage for home visits, that will enable each department that performs this activity to pick from a bank of pre-determined Hazards and assign their own risk scoring to according to the environment they work in. As more departments attend the IOSH training, more areas will have templates created, in conjunction with consultation processes within each area. These will all work towards creating a shared safety culture approach and buy in from each area, helping them take ownership and think holistically and dynamically about their areas of expertise.

Good partner development has been taking place with DWP and Childrens services to ensure that we have sufficient Fire Marshalls and First Aiders in all areas of the building.

**IT**

### **IT Infrastructure Team**

- Over the summer team members have been taking their leave. Hence, with a small team, much of our time has been spent keeping the IT service running and supporting the staff.

### **PSN Accreditation**

- We have been working very hard to remediate all critical and high risks as identified by the health check. This has largely been done thanks to efforts with the infrastructure team and Applications.

### **Food hygiene Tablets**

- These have been upgraded to the latest versions and improved functionality.

### **Virus replacement**

- Continuing to remove the incumbent virus software and replace with Microsoft's offering of Defender which comes as part of the E5 license that we are already paying for.
- We have to have completed this piece of work by October.

### **IT Web Team**

- The Customer Services online AI chat facility has been published to live Tuesday 12 September. There will be a period of monitoring so we can confirm it is working correctly before it is publicised externally as part of Customer Services week.

### **ICT Applications Support Team**

- The last couple of months have seen patching or movement undertaken of our Iken (Legal), Resourcelink (HR) and Uniform (Planning) systems to address vulnerabilities.
- Revenues and Benefits software upgraded to latest versions.
- Plans underway to put our online payment solution (and counter receipting) into the Cloud.
- Forthcoming upgrade of our Planning software to then enable transfer from desktop mapping product to web-based product with additional functionality (also desktop solution being discontinued).
- Recent emails relating to EFin licensing concerns and the need to address PSN vulnerabilities have hopefully been mitigated following debate with finance service who have agreed to attempt to access legacy system using segregated PCs isolating the out-of-date software components from the main network. Substantial saving to the authority if successful.
- Remote cheque production functionality now in live use and functioning effectively. Principally (but not exclusively) used for Council Tax and Business Rates refunds.

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

IT Infrastructure Team

- Evening/weekend downtime to upgrade core networking equipment to give increased reliability and speed.
- Password change for all staff (members not included)
- Cyber Awareness training for staff and members.
- Procurement of new mobile phone contract.
- Recruitment of Technical Support Assistant.

**3 Meetings attended**

Regular meetings with Officers  
Norfolk Waste Partnership  
Norfolk Rivers IDB