

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

February 2021

COUNCILLOR NIGEL LLOYD - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT

For the period to February 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Environmental Services

The Commercial and Public Protection Team have agreed the final version of the Taxi handbook with the Taxi trade, the result of a successful partnership project. The team have investigated a zoonotic infectious disease (Psittacosis) connected with a local pet shop. They have served a prohibition notice as a result to prevent bird sales, their investigation remains on going.

Food Safety inspections have been resumed and are being undertaken in line with the government's regulatory priorities.

The team have been involved in the preparation of a case file for a civil case relating to the cancellation of an outdoor music event in summer months.

In terms of corporate health and safety the team have been working on a project to conduct display screen equipment assessments for all staff working remotely, this is a large task which is currently on going.

The Environmental Services team have dealt with and arranged the removal of two dead sperm whales washed up on beaches at Weybourne in December weighing 12.7 tons and one on Sheringham beach in January weighing 13.8 tons.

The team are continuing with the mobilisation and management of the Serco contract which has included; IT implementation and testing web forms, data cleansing to enable better functioning of the system, progression of designs for advertising panels on refuse collection vehicles, agreeing and implementing health and safety crew monitoring inspection forms and dealing with Covid related absence amongst Serco workforce.

The team are currently developing a litter strategy to support a funding bid up to £25,0000 for new litter bins.

Annual collection calendars for refuse and recycling have been delivered to all properties in the district.

Environmental Services are also currently developing a pollinator action plan/biodiversity strategy.

Progress has been made with a new community fridge in Stalham and a further site has also been identified in Sheringham.

The Environmental Protection team successfully prosecuted an individual for

fly tipping in Roughton resulting in a fine of £2,640, costs awarded in full totalling £3,425 and a victim Surcharge £170.

In terms of the private sector housing, the team have been busy over the winter months responding to complaints relating to housing conditions such as damp and mould growth. They have also issued a large House in Multiple Occupation Licence for residential accommodation linked to a business in North Norfolk.

The team have been involved in the investigation of several significant land drainage cases at Edingthorpe and Roughton.

The team continue to sample private water supplies and have recently completed the annual return to the Drinking Water Inspectorate which demonstrates that despite Covid-19 they have undertaken the appropriate level of sampling visits.

Investigations of Statutory Nuisances continue and the team have issued two noise abatement notices for amplified music.

The wintery weather and heavy rainfall mean that the Civil Contingencies team have been busy responding to flood alerts and weather warnings across the District. They also continue to play a vital role in the Council's response to Covid -19.

The severe weather conditions seen over the week commencing the 8th February meant that bin collections were not able to be undertaken as it was not safe for crews. Due to the number of days lost to the weather it was not possible to catch up collections and therefore the decision was made to undertake the following weeks collections as scheduled and take additional waste from customers who had their collections missed on the next collections for that bin colour.

Covid Impacts

The wider Environmental Health Team continue to play an integral role in the Council's response to the Covid -19 pandemic, the team have been involved with the investigation of outbreaks at larger food manufacturers in the district. They have offer advice on exiting the November lockdown, the move to tier 2 restrictions in December and then tier 4 and another national lockdown. Environmental Health staff supported and provided advice on these restrictions particularly in the lead up to Christmas. Time was spent with several large visitor attractions in the district ensuring that they could operate in a Covid secure way and that their risk assessments were suitable and sufficient.

Where advice and guidance has been ignored The Commercial and Public Protection team have served one fixed penalty for breaches of Covid restrictions.

Officers were involved in joint patrols with the Norfolk Constabulary over the festive period including New Year's Day and New Year's Eve ensuring that there were no large gatherings occurring. The team also worked closely with the Police and a local land owner to ensure that visitor to the Horsey seals were deterred after reports of large numbers and a lack of social distancing.

Three Covid Support Officers and a coordinator have been employed to offer advice and guidance to business and reassurance to the public. They have a presence right across the district. Most recently they have focused their attention on compliance in supermarkets and larger retailers. They have been tackling the reluctance for some of the public and staff in businesses not to wearing face coverings. On the whole compliance is very good in North Norfolk. These officers are also involved with the programme of enhanced contact tracing, this involves making contact with the contacts of Covid positive cases, ordering support to enable them to isolate effectively.

Climate Change and Environment

The new members of staff in the team have been leading on the implementation of projects and formulating the Council's Environment Charter. The following is a summary of recent activities

Tree Planting initiative

Clearly the planned planting events, reported to the last meeting have had to be deferred but revised arrangements are being considered. The project team has been making contact with third parties with whom the Council will work to implement tree planting initiatives. A tree planting strategy will be prepared in order to set out how the tree planting target will be met.

Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs)

Progress on the installation of EVCPs remains hampered by technical difficulties involving third parties. The installations in Holt, Wells, Cromer, Fakenham and Sheringham are fully operational although it is clearly too soon to report on 'normal' levels of usage. The North Walsham installation is awaiting the resolution of access to a suitable power connection before it can commence.

Options for installing ECVPs at the new Sheringham Leisure Centre are being evaluated.

Energy production

The feasibility study into the potential for Bacton Gas Terminal to become a major location for the production of hydrogen energy, as the U.K. transitions to a "net zero" carbon energy economy, is progressing with consultants and the Council sits on the Project Group, which meets fortnightly.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Staff, Members and interested stakeholders will be invited to be involved in the formulation of the Environment Charter prior to its adoption in the spring.

3	Meetings attended
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Norfolk Waste partnership Serco Officers and Directors
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