

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

28 April 2021

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

For the period February to April 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

The Commercial and Public Protection team have been busy focusing on getting through the huge backlog of food, licensing and health and safety visits that have been delayed due to their involvement in the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a priority they are working through the higher risk business activities and are also undertaking new business inspections to support the local economy and start-ups. In 2020/21 we have received 203 new food business registrations.

A Senior Public Protection Officer has passed the Level 3 Pet Care Industry approved Animal Licensing Qualification. There is now a requirement for officers to become competent under the new animal licensing requirements.

Two licensing sub committees have been held during this period.

The Team continue to play an active in the North Norfolk Safety Advisory Group, working with external partners to offer safety advice to event organisers within the district. This has been particularly busy in the lead up to the summer season.

The Environmental Services team continue with the mobilisation and management of the Serco contract. They assisted with the "go live" of new contact centre operations, following the start of Breckland and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk contracts. The team continue to further develop IT solutions relating to the contract.

In March the Direct Debit renewals for approximately 18,000 garden bin customers were processed, this resulted in the Council receiving around £930,000 in payments. Unfortunately, an error with some of the data did generate contact from brown bin subscribers but these have been effectively managed within the service.

The end of the financial year generated some work for Environmental Services ensuring that all contracts were rolled over and customer requirements are now place 2021/2022

The Council was awarded £14,000 from the WRAP 'Binrastructure' funding bid to purchase new litter bins.

Bank holiday leaflets were delivered covering Easter, May and August.

The team continue to make progress with 're-wilding' project an approach to managing our land with wildflowers instead of regular grass cutting.

A new community fridge has opened in Sheringham; the team have supported this project.

Alongside the normal response to enquiries and providing planning consultation response the Environmental Protection team have been busy preparing the renewal of the Public Space Protection Orders. These relate to dog fouling and dog restrictions in certain areas of the District, particularly the beaches. This has involved a wide reaching consultation process.

Several Abatement Notices for noise nuisance have been served under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in Holt and Hoveton. Officer's will continue to monitor for breaches of these notices and take the appropriate enforcement action.

There has been a steady stream of complaints relating to private sector housing properties over the winter months. These range from heating breakdowns, damp and mould growth. Officers have also been preparing for the introduction of the electrical safety standards in the private sector regulations 2020. These new regulations require that landlords have property electrics checked at least every 5 years by a properly qualified person. The electrics must meet standards and landlords must give their tenants proof of this. The team have been communicating this with landlords and preparing the relevant procedure.

The Environmental Protection team have arranged two Public Health Act funerals during this period.

The Civil Contingencies team continue to manage the North Norfolk Safety Advisory Group (SAG), as previously mentioned this has been particularly busy in the lead up to the summer and the extra guidance required to ensure that Covid control measures have been considered. The Covid-19 response and planning generally continues to dominate this service area. The team have attended and contributed to the newly formed Norfolk Strategic Flooding alliance.

Although in recent months the levels of Covid-19 cases have remained low throughout the district, the Environmental Health Team continue to contribute widely the Council's Covid-19 response. Through business advice and guidance, the civil contingencies response, enhanced contact tracing and the corporate health and safety function.

NNDC currently has 8 Covid Support Officers and 1 Covid Support

Coordinator located within the EH department funded through the Control Outbreak Management Fund. Step 2 of the Governments Road Map which included the reopening of hospitality and non-essential retail has gone well in the District. The EHOs and Covid Support Officers have been undertaking increased patrols and businesses have welcomed their support and advice.

Queries about marquees and outdoor shelters for outdoor spaces so businesses have been signposted to new information on our website and monitoring the presence of tables and chairs that may require pavement licensing.

Pop-up camp sites and caravan sites have been a topic for intervention and attention to ensure that the right Covid measures are in place and that new operators are aware of their legal duties. Business support packs have been given out and face-face engagement undertaken by the Covid Support Officers

Environmental Charter

The Environmental Charter is an important step in the Council's approach to dealing with the Climate Change Emergency. Born out of public and stakeholder proposals garnered at the Council's 'Environment Forum', the Environmental Charter is a public facing document which sets out NNDC's path towards environmental excellence and a net-zero carbon emissions future. The Environmental Charter has now reached its final draft stage and will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 21st April, prior to it being presented to the Environment Forum on Friday 23rd April.

The draft Environmental Charter is based on evidence and views contributed at engagement events and has been formulated with the input of a wide range of officers and members, through a series of workshops.

Over 90 staff and members attended internal workshops on the Environmental Charter.

Environment Forum

The Environment Forum is being held on the 23rd April 2021. There are currently over 50 delegates attending the online webinar/forum in which the Environmental Charter will be shared, together with a question and answer session.

After the Environment Forum questionnaires will be sent out to all delegates to seek their views on the emerging draft Environmental Charter. These views will be fed back into the existing document and amendments will be made accordingly prior to the final document being presented to Cabinet in May 2021.

Baseline Carbon emissions data

The baseline carbon emission data for NNDC is being completed by the Carbon Trust and the final report is expected at the end of April 2021. Initial queries relating to the original data set have been resolved.

Once the baseline information is completed an Action Plan will be put in place which will set out the steps that NNDC need to take in order to reach a net-zero carbon

emission position by 2030.

Liftshare/Mobilityways

The Council will be developing a partnership to help to reduce commuter emissions, and therefore NNDC's carbon footprint. This work will sit alongside the emerging 'new ways of working' policy that is being developed in collaboration with HR.

Greenbuild

Due to the ongoing threat posed by COVID-19 there are ongoing discussions regarding a 'live' Greenbuild event in September 2021, with other options being explored, including a series of online webinars, workshops and another Environment Forum event.

Tree-planting

NNDC's tree planting project is progressing well. There are currently 20,000 trees in the ground with an additional 40,000 trees worth of projects in the pipeline. Officers are currently in discussion with some major stakeholders about the potential of delivering a series of large-scale projects and the outcome of these will be known by the next planting season (October 2021).

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

A Covid Safe Business Award is being developed by the Service and the ambition is to launch this in time for the 17th May for the Step 3 roadmap.

The Environmental Health Team will continue to support the Councils Covid-19 response during the busy summer season ahead.

The Environment Forum is being held on the 23rd April 2021

3 Meetings attended

Attended the launch event with leaders from Breckland and Kings Lynn Councils to mark their waste collection contracts with Serco going live on March 29th.

Joint waste contract meeting with Serco management and representatives from Breckland and KL Councils.