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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

19 May 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Edwards (Chair), Chace (Vice-Chair), Bicknell, English, Goodheart, Huntley, Needs, Pendleton, Thurston, Warr and Worne

Councillors Cooper (Andy), Cooper (Alison), Gunner and Walsh were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

17. WELCOME

After welcoming Members, Officers and guests to the meeting, the Chair then welcomed Councillor Pendleton as a new Member of the Environment Committee. He also recorded thanks to Councillor Staniforth for her work as Vice-Chair of the Committee over the past year.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Walsh declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 7 as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Goodheart declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 as a Member of Bognor Regis Town Council.

Councillor Pendleton declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 7 as a Member of West Sussex County Council

19. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2022 were approved by the Committee. These would be signed at the end of the meeting.

20. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent matters for this meeting.

21. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed four questions had been submitted, which are briefly summarised below:

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- 1-4 From Freddie Tandy to the Chair of the Environment Committee, Councillor Edwards, regarding parking at the Littlehampton Wave Leisure Centre/Mewsbrook Car Park.

(A schedule of the full question asked and the response provided can be found on the [Environment Committee Public Question Web page](#))

The Chair then drew Public Question Time to a close.

22. START TIMES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That its start times for meetings for 2022/23 be 6.00pm.

23. COMBINED CLEANSING SERVICES CONTRACT

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Environmental Services & Strategy Manager presented the report to the Committee. He explained the Committee had two choices, one being the recommendation which would bring a change to current services, the other option was to continue with current services for the time being. The recommendation was a move to alternate weekly collections for residual waste, with a bin provided to residents from the council, alongside a commitment to introducing food waste collections at the earliest opportunity when funding was available from the Government. Officers believed this was the right approach which was supported by partners at West Sussex County Council and through the work that Ricardo had undertaken on the council's behalf. The recommendations sought to build on the success of the council's recent 1-2-3 food waste trial, and the anticipated direction of the Government Resource & Waste Strategy. A weekly residual collection was around £358,000 more expensive compared to an alternate weekly residual collection. The recommendations were based on alignment with the council's adopted Vision; including a stated recycling target of 55% by 2025 and to 'ensure climate change and sustainability is at the heart of all council services'. He highlighted there were around 6000 properties within the District where moving to a fortnightly residual waste collection would be difficult, and the report proposed to keep these properties on a weekly collection until further proposals could be considered regarding how the transition for those properties could be made.

The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager explained that if the Committee decided to retain the existing services, the council would need to move to alternate weekly collection when the Government introduced mandatory food waste collection. This was because there would be no viability or argument for a weekly residual service in addition to weekly food waste collection, which would be impractical and costly to deliver.

The Chair then invited Sam Pullinger, Category & Commercial Procurement lead for External Partners, Hampshire County Council to address the Committee, who gave a summary of the procurement process and options.

The Chair then invited Steve Read, Director for Environment & Public Protection West Sussex County Council, to address the Committee. He believed that the success of the food waste trial showed that Arun had potential to be one of the UK's top performing authorities in recycling if they chose the right option for waste collection. He explained modelling and predictions showed moving to alternate weekly collection over the next 3 years would increase recycling levels, and reduce waste disposal significantly. This would be more significant upon the introduction of food waste collection.

The Chair then invited John Woodruff, Ricardo Consulting, to address the Committee. He explained that the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding would be in place from April 2024. This would be a contribution from producers to councils for recycling and waste collections. The process for allocating funding had not yet been finalised, but levels of contribution would be based on efficiency of scheme, recycling performance and material quality. Food waste collection would be compulsory from 01 April 2023, and specific costs for introducing food waste collection would be funded by New Burden Funding. However there was uncertainty around this which represented risk, and therefore price increases. When the final date was to be announced by DEFRA, there would be a bottleneck due to a surge in demand, there may not be enough vehicles and containers. The sooner a decision was made, the better chance of getting what Arun wanted, and if left longer the prices would increase.

The Chair thanked Sam Pullinger, Steve Read and John Woodruff for their contributions. He recognised that the recommendations supported alignment with the Vision of the council, and would support residents to do the right thing. He proposed an amended version of the recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Chace. This was as follows:

That subject to Policy & Finance/Full Council confirmation of the finance available, the Environment Committee approve:

1. The award of a three-year contract extension with modifications from the 1st February 2023 at an initial annual cost of £6.749 million (an additional annual cost of £655k on the current £4.918 million subject to indexation); To consist of service configuration 'A' which represents an 'as is' service comprising a weekly residual collection from sacks. The award will include a provisional annual sum of £1.176

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million (plus indexation) for food waste should it be mandated to be rolled out within the life of the extension.

2. To authorise the Director of Services to sign off a Deed of Modification to incorporate the service changes agreed at 1 above.
3. To approve that if food waste collection is mandated to be rolled out by government within the three year extension that the Council must switch to an alternate weekly collection service for residual collections at the point of roll out. And that on this basis that authority be delegated to the Director of Services to procure the 240 litre residual waste bins required to deliver services, for a one-off capital sum of £1.32million (subject to inflation) and a further capital sum of £300k (subject to inflation) for indoor/outdoor food caddies, utilising an existing framework(s) for such procurement and to be completed in consultation with the Council's procurement advisors.

The Committee then took part in a full debate, summarised below, during which time some non-Committee Members were also given permission to speak by the Committee.

Questions were asked on how the alternate weekly collection would be rolled out once the food waste collection was introduced, and whether there could be an overlap. The Chair said that although the detail would not be decided yet, this would be noted, and that residents would need to be well informed prior to roll-out.

Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) were discussed and it was asked whether the timescales for rolling out food waste collection had been decided. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager explained that as per the report, HMOs would be audited on an individual basis.

It was asked whether Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHPs) collection service could be provided, as this was a major contribution of waste. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager explained that this had been trialled as part of the 1-2-3 Food Waste Trial, however it was a very costly option and not considered necessary in a 1-2-2 collection. This was something that could be considered moving forward.

There was disappointment expressed that the recommendations in the Officer's reports were being altered. There was no reason to delay and it was felt the amended proposal would be a backward step, that there should be alternate weekly collections now with food waste collections being brought in as soon as possible. Many councils were already running an alternate weekly waste collection.

There was concern that if Arun funded food waste collection now, they may not be eligible for government funding when it became mandatory, so funding it themselves now would be a big risk.

It was important that preparations were made now to ensure Arun were ready to roll-out in a years time. It was suggested that the bins and food caddies should be ordered now, and not paid for until funding was secured. It was felt there should not be two changes to collections in a short space of time, and weekly waste collection should continue until a 1-2-3 collection could be properly rolled out. Residents should be educated in order to reduce food waste.

It was asked whether multi-functional split vehicles would be an option. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager explained that these vehicles were very expensive, and although successfully used by some councils, were not an efficient option for Arun at this time.

A recorded vote was requested. Those voting for were Councillors Bicknell, Chace, Edwards, English, Goodheart, Huntley, Needs, Pendleton and Warr. Councillor Thurston voted against. Councillor Worne abstained from voting. The vote was therefore declared carried.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That subject to Policy & Finance/Full Council confirmation of the finance available, the Environment Committee approve that:

1. The award of a three-year contract extension with modifications from the 1st February 2023 at an initial annual cost of £6.749 million (an additional annual cost of £655k on the current £4.918 million subject to indexation); To consist of service configuration 'A' which represents an 'as is' service comprising a weekly residual collection from sacks. The award will include a provisional annual sum of £1.176 million (plus indexation) for food waste should it be mandated to be rolled out within the life of the extension.
2. To authorise the Director of Services to sign off a Deed of Modification to incorporate the service changes agreed at 1 above.
3. If food waste collection is mandated to be rolled out by government within the three year extension that the Council must switch to an alternate weekly collection service for residual collections at the point of roll out. And that on this basis that authority be delegated to the Director of Services to procure the 240 litre residual waste bins required to deliver services, for a one-off capital sum of £1.32million (subject to inflation) and a further capital sum of £300k (subject to inflation) for indoor/outdoor food caddies, utilising an existing framework(s) for such procurement and to be completed in consultation with the Council's procurement advisors.

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24. BOGNOR REGIS BEACH ACCESS WORKING PARTY - 09 MAY 2022

[Councillor Needs declared a Personal Interest at the start of this Item as a Member of Bognor Regis Town Council]

The Chair of the Bognor Regis Beach Access Working Party gave a brief update to the Committee and presented the Minutes of the first meeting of the Working Party, which contained a recommendation at Minute 4.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Worne and seconded by Councillor Edwards

The Committee

RESOLVED

That 1a) of the Terms of Reference of the Bognor Regis Beach Access Working Party be changed to 'to consider the issues surrounding the provision of an access to the beach for all in Bognor Regis and to examine the options available for such an access'

25. WORK PROGRAMME

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Neighbourhood Services introduced the Work Programme.

It was requested that an interim report regarding HMO waste collections be brought to the October Committee meeting, and a final report brought in January 2023. Other Members expressed a wish for this to be added to the Work Programme and the Director of Services gave her assurance that this request would be looked at as a priority alongside the implementation of the new contract, and what the Government mandated regarding waste collection.

It was requested that an update on the tree planting strategy be brought to the Committee in Autumn. The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services confirmed this would be added to the Work Programme.

The Work Programme was noted.

(The meeting concluded at 7.43 pm)