

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
P Hardy	Communities and Environment	November-December 2012

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

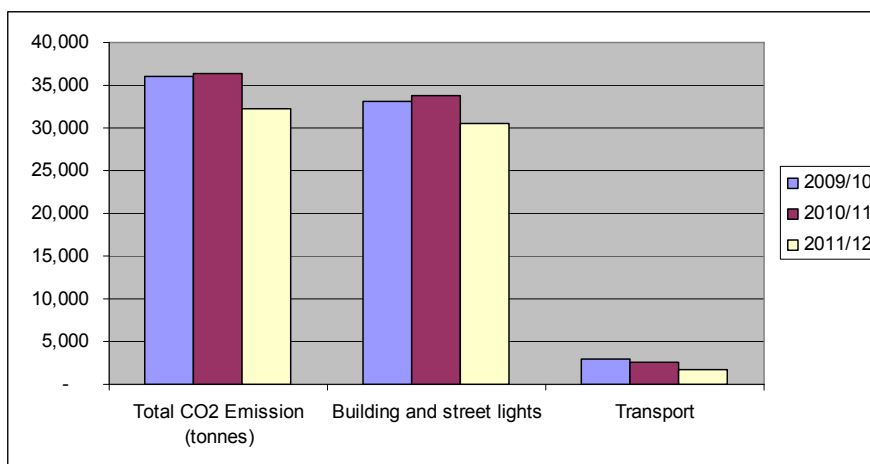
ENVIRONMENT

Procurement of Stray Dog Kennelling and Out of Hours Provision

The Cabinet Member Communities and Environment has agreed to proceed with the Liverpool City Council led Greater Merseyside Authorities Consortium joint re-procurement of the provision of Stray Dog kennelling and Out of Hours dog collection services. It is anticipated that there will be additional costs to Sefton Council as a result of the new tender, but it is anticipated that this can be accommodated from efficiencies from within existing Environment service budgets.

Declaration on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Sefton Council Estate

Local authorities have been asked by the Government to measure and report on all of their greenhouse gas emissions; this is part of the Government’s response to the UK Climate Change Act 2008. Using national guidance, Sefton Councils emission report measures all greenhouse gas emissions from council buildings (including schools) and transport, including staff business travel. At the end of year two of the Carbon Management plan (2011/12) overall emissions have reduced by 10% from 36,037 tonnes CO₂ to 32,310 tonnes CO₂ as shown below.



This reduction represents a £31,465 saving on the allowances which would have been purchased under the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) if we had taken no action to reduce emissions and £390,000 mitigation in energy costs. To date over 22 projects have been implemented under the new Carbon Management Plan.

North West Public Health Award

Sefton Council and Sefton PCT is the overall winner in the North West Public Health Awards 2012 Healthy Environment category for improving health through air quality management. The award relates to the innovative road washing intervention in the Millers Bridge Air quality Management Area to reduce secondary re suspension of respirable dust by heavy goods vehicles.

PLANNING

Major Planning Applications

1 Southport Road, Formby: Grade II Building at Risk Positive discussions have taken place in the form of a compromise on the extent of additions and enlargement in order to allow the dilapidated building to be re-used, permission has now been secured.

Wind Farm discussions: Initial consultation has begun in the format of a draft Environmental Impact Scoping Report, concerning a proposed wind farm that may have a significant impact on the setting of Heritage Assets in Ince Blundell, Sefton and Lydiate,

Regeneration

Cultural Centre, Lord Street, Southport: Refurbishment work to portions of the historic tiled floor are underway and are expected to be completed soon. Remaining Listed Building Consent and Planning conditions still need to be resolved.

Potters Barn, Crosby Road South, Waterloo: Additional Section 106 of £88,684 has been committed to Potters Barn (subject to formal signed agreement), topping up the previously secured £19,745, giving £108,429 potentially enough match funding for a HLF. However the stumbling block on moving forward on this is essentially the lease and conditions from Peel Ports, discussions are ongoing with this issue.

King's Centre, Balliol Road, Bootle: Currently a vacant and dilapidated Grade II listed building. Plus Dane housing association hopes to convert into flats and take over ownership from the Council. Funding identified from combination of Regional Growth Fund (600k) and Plus Dane (300k) following changes to previously agreed RGF scheme.

Heritage Skills Project

Sefton has given its guidance and support to the English Heritage Funded, Heritage Skills project which is identifying the range of practical heritage skills (construction) needed to maintain local heritage assets.

Corporate Issues

Cast Iron Street Lighting in Conservation Areas – Rescheduled meeting with John Fairclough to take place in the New Year – Date to be confirmed, joint briefing note to follow prior to the meeting

Lock Up, Botanic Gardens, Grade II Listed Building at Risk – currently in discussions with the Landscape Services department in rectifying the problems with lack of weather protection, particularly with rainwater goods provision.

Buildings at Risk/enforcement

229-231 Lord Street, Southport, Grade II Listed Building – derelict untidy site, informal section 215 proceedings begun, owner of building now rectified situation.

53 Gores Lane, Formby, Grade II Listed Building – informal section 215 proceedings begun; owner has now initiated renovation works it is hoped they will be finished by the end of February

International Hotel, Seaforth, Grade II Listed Building – deteriorating vacant derelict former pub, on the market for sale, likely for Urgent Works proceeding to begin in the New Year if no resolution found.

Scarbrick Hotel, Lord Street, Southport, Grade II Listed Building – Investigation into enforcement begun concerning the installation of approx 130 pvc windows, initial discussions with owners to begin in the New Year to work towards a resolution for the reinstallation of original timber sliding sash windows.

Policy

Heritage Strategy

The National Planning Policy Framework outlines that Local Planning Authorities should set out within their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment; this will include heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.

We are currently reviewing guidance and have begun formulating a framework for the strategy.

English Heritage guidance sets out that generally it is a three stage process

- 1) Gathering evidence – essentially, what have we got and why is it important
- 2) Setting out a positive strategy – how we will seek to make positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment
- 3) Formulating Strategic Policies to be included within the Local Plan/Neighbourhood Plans – these policies will influence the development process and be integrated into strategic policies for example, design, economy, climate change etc

Updates will be provided on the strategy, along with the likely further discussion on key decisions, especially that concerning the pro-active implications and neighbourhood issues.

Contd.....

STREET SCENE

DIRECT SERVICES

Public Conveniences

With effect from Saturday 1st December 2012 all of the public conveniences in the Borough are being cleansed by external contractors as part of the previously approved saving proposal for 2012/13. This is a temporary arrangement until March 31st 2013 by which time an additional saving proposal will be considered. Under this arrangement the external contractor provides all of the necessary cleaning materials, and also undertakes minor repairs and maintenance works. The existing in-house resource previously allocated to this area has been transferred to provide additional savings via an increased night time operation and amended litter bin collections. This will also support further savings from within Cleansing Services by allowing additional members of staff to leave the service via VR/VER in March 2013.

Litter Bins

The Council currently collects rubbish from some 1,400 bins across the Borough. This number has risen over recent years as Area Committees have added a number of bins at new locations, funded via Area Committee budgets. The age and quality of the litter bin stock varies across the Borough. There are now a number of litter bins which require replacement due to their reaching the end of their operational life. In addition, there are still a number of the older stock 'cast concrete' bins which are problematical to use a plastic bin liner with, in addition to the very rough edges scratching operatives when being emptied. Certain 'open topped' bins also attract seagulls, pigeons, and in certain areas, vermin, which then spill the bin contents around the base. As the number of litter bins has increased, the volume of traffic on the roads has also grown. This has led to increasing pressures upon the service in maintaining the emptying schedules for each bin and area, as it is more difficult to travel to each location during a particular shift.

A replacement programme has now commenced to replace a number of litter bins across the Borough with new larger capacity litter bins in locations where capacity is currently an issue, and the existing arrangements are sometimes overwhelmed, or rubbish/litter sometimes placed beside the bin. Any bins which are replaced which are in a good condition will in turn be 'recycled' to replace the bins which are no longer fit for purpose, including the older cast concrete bins and the open-topped bins. It is envisaged that this process will be particularly effective in areas where large volumes of litter is produced as the reduction in collection frequencies, coupled with alternative collection methods, will in turn generate additional savings through reduction in the overall cost of the service.

WCSS Award

The Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) announced at the Conservative Conference in September 2011, that a £250 million weekly collection support scheme (WCSS) would be announced in late 2011 / early 2012, to promote the return of weekly waste collections. In August 2012 the Cabinet Member - Communities & Environment delegated authority to the Director of Street Scene to submit two final bids to the Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG) for funding from the £250 million weekly collection support scheme.

Contd.....

The final bids were submitted before the deadline. Both bids sought funding for enhancing the current weekly dry recycling collection service by adding plastic bottles and cardboard to the range of materials collected. One bid referred to enhancing the recycling collection service for properties in a specific part of the borough only with the other bid for an enhanced recycling service borough-wide. Sefton currently does not collect plastic or cardboard as part of its kerbside collection scheme.

A formal offer of funding has been received from DCLG for partial funding of the bid entitled 'Enhanced Weekly Recycling Collections to All Areas'. The total level of support sought via this bid totaled £2.3m over 24 months between January 2013 and December 2014 (£298k in 2012/13, £1.1m in 2013/14 and £863k in 2014/15). DCLG's assessment of this bid was that it did not fully comply with WCSS core criteria. However DCLG have made offer of partial funding for £467k over the same period (£64k in 2012/13, £230k in 2013/14 and £173k in 2014/15). The offer will enable weekly residual collections to be retained and enhanced recycling collections to be provided for specific properties within a defined area in the Borough from the start of the 2013 calendar year.

The funding offered will fully fund the service, which will be introduced and provided under contract by Palm Recycling until July 2016. The commitment to provide weekly residual collections for these properties will continue until 2017 under the terms of this funding. The Council has a statutory obligation to introduce separate collections of plastic and cardboard from January 2015. The offer of external WCSS funding provides Sefton Council with the opportunity to collect plastic bottles and cardboard from specific properties 2-years in advance of the statutory date at no direct revenue cost. The collection of plastics will be limited to plastic bottles only to prevent contamination. As different types of plastic require separation for re-processing it is likely that the ability to process mixed plastics will improve in future, and as this occurs the collection service will be amended to cater for additional plastics collected and the public will be informed accordingly. The vehicles used by Palm Recycling were designed to incorporate the collection of these additional materials and the Contractor has confirmed that they are willing and able to provide the enhanced collection service.

'Metal Matters' Award

Sefton Borough Council, along with our recycling contractor partners, Palm Recycling, has won a major green award for a metal recycling campaign called 'Metal Matters'. The Alupro 'Metal Matters' campaign is an industry-funded recycling initiative designed to encourage more households to recycle greater volumes of metal products. It was launched earlier this year and such was the success of the initiative across Sefton, it scooped the 'Best Local Authority Recycling Communications Campaign' as part of the recognised 'Can Do Awards 2012'. The Can Do Awards are organised by the British Aerosols Manufacturing Association (BAMA) and are designed to encourage Local Authorities to promote the recycling of aerosol cans. The campaign boosted capture rates of metal packaging recycling as well as significantly increasing the percentage split of cans collected at the kerbside (a remarkable 50% increase was recorded). The communications campaign included radio and newspaper advertising, leaflet drops to Sefton households, promotional messaging on Palm's recycling vehicles as well as roadshows held across Bootle, Crosby, Maghull and Southport.