

**CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT
(O & S) Regeneration and Environmental Services**

Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
P. Hardy	Communities and Environment	January 2015

Conservation

Work has previously been undertaken to identify areas/properties within Sefton for inclusion on the English Heritage at Risk Register which was made public by English Heritage on 23rd October 2014.

As previously reported Community Support funding has been approved to fund a 'Heritage at Risk' officer, to be employed by the Council. The recruitment process is now underway and the post has been externally advertised, the closing date for applications is 8/1/2015.

Work is already underway to identify potential funding opportunities that will help to remove Sefton areas/properties from the current 'at risk register' and this will be augmented by the anticipated appointment of a suitably experienced person to the Heritage at Risk post.

Waste Collection Services

- **Bulky Item collection service**

In the budget setting arrangements for the period 2013 – 2015, it was agreed make a saving of £210,000 on the bulky waste collection service. It was anticipated this would be achieved partly by applying a charge for the service (£5 per collection) and partly by reducing the level of resource utilised to provide the service.

Demand significantly reduced, therefore the resource was further reduced to offset costs in order to achieve the approved overall saving. Whilst this contributed to the saving the level of income being generated was still insufficient. However as this also resulted in demand slightly exceeding capacity ad-hoc resources were required to address peaks in order to provide the chargeable service within agreed timescales (within 15 days following payment).

The financial position part way through 2014/15 was indicating that a shortfall would still arise, the full saving would not be achieved. Therefore it has been agreed to increase in the charge per collection to £7.50 with effect from 1st September 2014.

- **Christmas & New Year refuse and recycling collection arrangements**

The normal cycle of refuse and recycling collections is affected over Christmas & New Year by public holidays. Revised collection arrangements have been agreed which are scheduled to return the collection services to 'normal' by week commencing Monday 5th January 2015.

Domestic Refuse and Recycling collection services will operate on both Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th to provide collections that would have normally been provided on the previous Thursday (Christmas Day) and Friday (Boxing Day).

The services will also operate on Saturday of the following week to recover collections that would normally occur on the Thursday (New Year's Day public holiday). Collections that would have normally been provided on Thursday will move to Friday 2nd January 2015 with Friday collections moving to Saturday 3rd January 2015.

The normal alternating pattern of collections will resume from Tuesday 6th January 2015 onwards.

- **Green (garden) waste collection arrangements**

Members will recall that approval was given to defer charging for green waste collections and introduce a plastic and cardboard collection service to achieve a financial saving between 2013 and 2015.

In order to contribute towards the further financial savings which need to be made between 2015 and 2017 Cabinet approval was given, on the 27th November 2014, to the implementation of the amended green waste refuse collection timetable for 2015/16, including associated working arrangements. The Director of Street Scene was also granted delegated authority to undertake all necessary arrangements to enable the amended green waste refuse collection to be implemented by March 2015.

The previously fortnightly Green Waste collection, with collections on either a Saturday or Monday will change to a 3 weekly collection service for Green Waste taking place only on a Monday (including Bank Holidays). The three week cycle of collections will operate for 39 weeks of the year, commencing in March 2015.

It is envisaged that the reduced frequency of collections will still result in a sustainable service which will continue to provide Sefton residents with an opportunity to dispose of their garden waste free-of-charge collection. It is anticipated that this arrangement will negate any significant reduction in green waste tonnage and will therefore help the Council to continue to achieve an acceptable recycling rate whilst providing a more sustainable base to work towards the future 50% recycling rate by 2020.

Households that produce, and are able to store an additional wheelie-bin, will be provided with the opportunity to obtain one as this will also contribute towards the recycling rate, maximise the amount of green waste collected and minimise any disposal of garden waste via grey 'residual waste' wheelie-bins.

Arrangements are underway to inform residents of this change, by providing a letter which explains this change, when the 3-weekly collections will commence and the dates when grey, brown and green wheelie-bins will be collected via a new collection calendar.

As a result of this change collections of green bins will now resume from March 2015 and will operate each year between March and November only, no green w/bin collections will be provided during December, January or February.

On the 25th November 2014 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board welcomed the implementation of an amended green waste collection as a budget saving option and recommended that Cabinet approve the implementation of the amended green waste collection service for 2015/16.

Air Quality

The Cabinet Member has agreed to commence the process required to revoke the AQMA for Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) at Crosby Road North, Waterloo for the final decision on revocation to be made by full Council following consideration by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee.

The revocation is in compliance with government guidelines on air quality management and will remove the unnecessary identification of a part of the Borough as being in exceedance of a National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) Objective.

Cabinet Member endorsement to proceed with the process was based upon the detailed information presented in the report published on 18th November 2014

Consultation on the revocation of this AQMA will be undertaken with statutory consultees and residents in a similar way to that undertaken for the declaration of the air quality management area.

A report detailing the proposal to revoke the AQMA and providing the results of the consultation exercise will be presented to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee before full Council for a formal decision on whether or not to revoke the AQMA for PM₁₀ at Crosby Road North.

Pest Control

A report was published on 23/10/2014 based on a review of the Pest Control Charging pilot. The following recommendations were agreed;

- To continue to charge for the treatment of public health pests (rats, mice, bedbugs, cockroaches and fleas) subject to provision of concessionary (free) service for residents in receipt of Council Tax Reduction Scheme Benefit .
- Increase charges for the treatment of public health pests for those residents not eligible for the concessionary service as soon as practicable.
- Amend service provision for bedbugs and cockroaches to allow revisits
- without additional charge for treatment if arranged within one month of the
- original visit.

Based on the part income received to date and projected income for the remainder of the year, delivery of the approved savings option D1.30 for the financial year 2014/15 (£ 30k) should be achieved.

It was agreed to maintain the current £ 24 (inclusive of VAT) for rats, increase the current nominal charge to £ 36 (inclusive of VAT) for mice and to £ 60 (inclusive of VAT) for bedbugs, cockroaches and fleas.

The agreed increase will potentially generate between £ 2,169 and £ 10,773 (full year), assuming a further reduction in the number of requests for treatment service of between 10% and 30 %.

The Cabinet Member noted the potential impact of the increase referred to above and has requested a further update report six months following implementation of the revised charges, anticipated to be effective from 1st January 2015.

Flooding and Coastal Erosion

- The Flood Ready was launched in October and has received very positive feedback from a variety of users. The site can be viewed at www.floodready.co.uk. So far 1833 people have visited the site and on average spend 3.5 minutes viewing the content. The most popular pages being those of the real life case studies. The leaflet, that was produced in conjunction with the website, was distributed to all Sefton Libraries and has now been adopted by other authorities in the North West to promote their flooding services.
- The annual report will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny at your January meeting.
- The Met Office have produced a review of the weather last year and have reported that the 2014 was the fourth wettest year (across the UK) since 1910. A significant contributing factor was the stormy weather in January and February. This also coincided with astronomically high tides that caused some coastal flooding and erosion.

Revised Inspection schedule of YOTs 2015/16

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation has launched a revised inspection schedule for 2015/16 which outlines a greater emphasis on outcomes for young people in relation to re-offending.

The new inspection schedule will begin from 19th January 2015 and there will be 3 YOTs re-inspected. Given the poor inspection in 2012, there is a high probability that Sefton will be one of the YOTs re-inspected. Therefore, the service has embarked on a pre-inspection plan. The plan will focus on a self assessment of the quality of practice and leadership:

- Self Assessment on Practice – In the 2012 inspection findings identified poor re practice to protect the public; unsatisfactory re practice to reduce the likelihood of re-offending; unsatisfactory re practice protecting the child and good re ensuring the sentence is served*. Since YOT completed the post inspection improvement plan in April 2014 – consultants Cordis Bright has completed an independent audit on a sample of YOT casework using inspection audit rigor to support preparation for 2015/16 schedule for revised inspections. This audit has complemented internal service audit and assurance processes and has identified significant improvements across key inspection areas of practice: *keeping children safe; risk management; reducing the likelihood of re-offending and ensuring young people complete their sentence.*

However, these practice audits identified some inconsistencies in relation to the quality of management oversight, the quality of reviews (key milestones in a young person's court order that informs their progress or not against re-offending, safeguarding, public protection and compliance). As a response there is an action plan in place to ensure consistency and to target an inspection descriptor score of 'Good', if inspected.

- Self Assessment Leadership & Governance – In 2012 inspectors found that the quality of leadership and the role of the YOT Partnership Management Board were unsatisfactory*. The Youth Justice Board provided oversight to the YOT post inspection improvement plan with a particular emphasis on the quality of the leadership and governance provided to steer practice effectively. Significant improvements were made in relation to:
Vision and aims of the board

Revised terms of reference incorporating inspection quality standards and indicators (the board provides challenge and support to the delivery of youth justice services in Sefton)

Establishing coherent, strategic linkages with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Safer Stronger Communities Partnership Board

Implementation of a 'refresh and induction' for board members to provide a clear understanding of their role, responsibility and provides an insight into the front-line delivery of youth justice services.

Board member 'pledges' – all board members sign a pledge which outlines their commitment and support for improving youth justice practice in Sefton

- Strategic governance – robust accountability and support for YOT through the Safer Stronger Communities Partnership and Local Safeguarding Children's Board's will provide inspectors with a positive context for strong governance that was in its infancy at the previous inspection in 2012. Self assessment of the board is 'Good' based on inspection descriptors.

Future Actions: Service manager to report to SSCP re status of self assessment and inspection planning progress at the next board meeting on 29th January 2015.

Business Risks

- Funding reductions from the partnership
- Vacancy management
- Board member changes
-

*the methodology for assigning scores to each of the core themes

- Reducing the likelihood of reoffending
- Protecting the public
- Protecting the child, keeping the child safe
- Ensuring the sentence is served

Inspectors examine how well the work has been done across the practice areas outlined above – from assessment and planning to interventions and outcomes.

Core assessment score	Descriptor	Start rating
80% +	Very good	4 stars
65-79%	Good	3 stars
50-64%	Unsatisfactory	2 stars
- 50%	Poor	1 star