

Environment, Health & Wellbeing Cabinet Advisory Committee

Environment Portfolio Update – Cabinet Member Cllr. Julian Saunders

Waste contract

Waste collection and street cleansing services have been maintained over last 6 months with minimal disruption, despite challenges posed by national HGV driver shortage and COVID absences. A contrast to some other districts in Kent that have had to cancel collections.

Re-tendering of the contract is now underway. Overview of process and some of the national challenges resulting from possible legislative changes was given at waste briefing on 20 January. We are continuing to work in a Mid Kent Partnership with Ashford and Maidstone and will be hoping to achieve improvements, particularly in terms of better street cleaning, reduced carbon emissions, more effective public communication and increased recycling. Key future dates: contract award Feb 2023 contract commencement Oct 2023

Brown bin numbers continued to increase last year and a Marine Town 3 month food waste collection trial going ahead. Special rotas in place for leaf collection. Biffa currently trialing use of an electric collection truck for 3 months.

Revised snow plan developed to make communication with residents clearer and to help get rounds back to a regular pattern as quickly as possible if we have similar challenges to last year

Enforcement

'Smart Camera' trial ongoing in Marine Town and further camera about to go live at location in Bobbing

Environment Grants programme launched

Grounds maintenance

Pre start meetings for GM and Tree maintenance contract completed and final documentation issued. New contractual arrangements started 15 January. Improvements around biodiversity, reductions in pesticides, introduction of electric tools will be phased in once new contract has bedded down.

Greenspaces

Plenty of volunteering activity, snagging works at Fav Rec completed, Perry Wood coppicing ongoing, Tree planting activity underway funded from successful bid. Coppicing on going Perry Wood, Oare and Milton Court, bulb planting various locations. In Bloom wide range of activities going on. Drainage tender for Barton's Point being prepared.

Work on externally funded Tree Fund project which provides for the planting and maintenance of 11,000 whips and 250 standard trees underway.

Engineering

Borough owned street lights surveyed and recorded in preparation for LED upgrade

Cllr Julian Saunders
24 January 2022