

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Improving Places Select Commission</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Cleaner, Greener Agenda</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>
5.	<b>Advisory Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Councillor Sims</b>

### 5. Summary

- 5.1 The report comprises a scoping paper which identifies a range of issues which have an impact on the cleaner, greener agenda.

### 6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members determine how the issues outlined in the report are taken forward into the work programme for the Select Commission.

## 7. Proposals and Details

### 7.1 Background

**7.1.1** The Improving Places Select Commission's work is most closely aligned to the Council's **Corporate Priority 3: Ensuring all areas of Rotherham are safe, clean and well maintained**, and to a lesser extent **Priority 1: Stimulating the local economy and helping local people into work**. In order to inform the Select Commission's future work programme, this scoping report sets out a number of service areas and issues which members of the Commission might consider taking forward.

**7.1.2** In the context of the Council's need to achieve substantial savings from its revenue budgets over the next 3 years, Members may also wish to consider how to engage with Parish Councils, the Voluntary sector, Area Assemblies etc. to establish what capacity they may have to work with the Council in discharging its statutory powers in areas such as enforcement where resources have already been substantially reduced.

### 7.2 WASTE MANAGEMENT

#### 7.2.1 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and Bring Sites

The Council operates 4 HWRCs each of which currently closes for one day per week, and the savings proposals for the 2015/16 budget included closure for a second day each week. Savings realised from waste treatment costs have enabled us to defer implementation until later this year, so there is an opportunity to undertake a more fundamental review of what we provide and where.

The Council also provides recycling bring sites across the borough, some of which attract fly-tipping on a regular basis. A number of other local authorities have withdrawn some or all of their bring sites and the costs/benefits of this service could be a topic for an IPSC review.

#### 7.2.2 Waste Collection

The Waste collection service is comprised of a number of different waste streams, residual (black bin), green, blue box/bag for recyclables. The residual waste collections are tied into the Waste PFI contract and so offer little scope for change, but the methods and frequency of collection of other materials (including size and type of bins/containers) are not constrained in the same way. The refuse collection arrangements will be reviewed as part of the 2015/16 budget process, including charging arrangements for elements of the service e.g.:

- Green waste,
- provision of bins
- bulky collections

This is a piece of work that the IPSC could influence.

**Note:** In order to comply with the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, every waste collection authority must, when making arrangements for the collection of waste paper, metal, plastic or glass, ensure that those arrangements are *by way of separate collection, where separate collection is Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable* – this is the **TEEP** assessment.

### **7.2.3 Recycling rates**

The volumes of recyclable materials are showing a steady decline, probably more associated with the changes in packaging (glass is lighter), reduction in volumes of news print and the level of economic activity than to participation levels. Members may wish to review whether re-investment in *behavioural change* is worth consideration.

## **7.3 LEISURE & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **7.3.1 Grounds Maintenance**

Since the last review by IPSC, the HRA has provided funding to provide additional grass cutting around 200 Council owned aged persons (bungalow) complexes and in communal areas around (predominantly) council-owned housing estates. This is in addition to the winter programme of edging back, self-sets, hedges, and shrub bed reductions. Plans for (selective) shrub bed removal from Housing sites are also being drawn up for next winter.

The additional funding has also released capacity to increase the frequency of grass-cutting on non-HRA land which includes public open spaces, parks and highways verges.

A further review might focus on:

- The frequency of grass-cutting across different types of sites and how to obtain the best quality of cut.
- Whether an 'invest to save' strategy for reducing the number and type of shrub beds is viable.

### **7.3.2 Street Cleansing**

There is statutory guidance for Street Cleansing which is laid down in the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse; this sets out categories of (public) land and the standards against which cleanliness is measured. These standards were previously monitored through a national performance indicator NI 195 – no longer a statutory indicator. NI 195 was in four parts, measuring levels of litter, detritus, fly-tipping and fly-posting.

Substantial reductions have been made in the Street Cleansing budget over the last few years which has made it difficult to consistently meet the standards in the code of practice; IPSC might therefore consider:

- What standards are realistic for the service to achieve
- Whether the response times laid down in the code of practice are achievable
- The impact of the additional £200k funding onto overall cleansing standards

### **7.3.3 Fly-tipping and enforcement**

Nationally there has been a 20% increase in fly-tipping over the last year; this is reflected in the figures for Rotherham. It is well established that failure to remove fly-tipping promptly can lead to further incidents at the same locations. Other factors which may be relevant include the provision and availability of HWRCs and Bring Sites, and the impact of house clearances from private sector housing, particularly in areas where there is a high turnover of tenancies. A review of enforcement strategy might readily be part of that review.

**Note:** Enforcement is currently managed in Neighbourhood Services, and Fly Tipping is only a part of their role.

#### **7.4 NETWORK MANAGEMENT - Parking services**

The focus of most the council's Parking Service is in and around Rotherham Town centre; and it comprises management of off-street car parks, the enforcement of parking restrictions (both on and off-street). Many businesses have for some time been arguing that a 'free parking' strategy would be beneficial to the town centre. The cost of implementing a free parking scheme in Rotherham Town Centre would be substantial, and there is no clear supporting evidence whether or not this is true.

IPSC could look whether adequate parking is available in the right locations, and at the structure of charges for parking.

#### **7.5 TOWN CENTRE – night time economy**

IPSC could consider what the impact of the night time economy has on the environmental quality in (Rotherham) town centre, and how we might better engage with businesses such as night clubs and fast food outlets to get them to take some responsibility for cleaning up afterwards.

### **8. Finance**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

While the programme of reviews are likely to identify potential changes to services, these may not be deliverable if there are financial implications linked to their implementation.

### **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The scope of any agreed reviews will link directly into two of the Council's corporate priorities:

**Priority 1:** Stimulating the local economy and helping local people into work

**Priority 3:** Ensuring all areas of Rotherham are safe, clean and well maintained

### **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act
- Defra: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse
- The Council's General Enforcement Policy
- Traffic Management Act (decriminalised parking etc)

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