

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environmental Excellence Panel** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Thursday 8 November 2018** at **4.00 pm** when there were present:

Mr J F Fisher – Chairman

Mrs J K Coplestone
Mrs J Leggett

Mr G K Nurden
Mr V B Tapp

Mr J M Ward

Also in attendance were the Interim Head of Housing and Environmental Services, Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects), Private Sector Housing Manager, Renewable and Energy Efficiency Officer and the Committee Officer (JO).

Mr Emsell was also in attendance for Minute no: 25 – Dussindale Centre Community Fridge – Update.

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Grady and Mr Roper.

23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Minute no: 19 – Dog Fouling Public Spaces Protection Order

The meeting was informed that the Top Dog, anti-dog fouling campaign, would be re-launched to coincide with the implementation of the Dog Fouling Public Spaces Protection Order. The new legislation would be publicised in *Broadland News* and the Environmental Protection Manager would also be attending the Parish and Town Council AGM to advise on the Public Spaces Protection Order.

24 EXTERNAL FUNDING OF ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

The Panel was informed that money was available through the Council's Better Care Fund allocation for Disabled Facilities Grants and other health initiatives, match funded by the Warm Homes Fund, for the installation of first time oil fired boilers for those in fuel poverty in off gas areas.

It was estimated that up to 60 installations could be carried out with this funding, at a cost of around £8,000 - £9,000 per installation. The initiative had been approved through a Portfolio Holder Decision and the two Clinical Commissioning Groups, which covered the District had been consulted as part of the process.

A stock modelling survey would be used to target areas in the district, which would then be leafleted to inform residents of this opportunity. Funding was also available for 15-20 replacement gas boilers in low income households.

The above projects would put on hold the air source heat pump initiative detailed at the previous Panel meeting.

It was confirmed that the Warm Homes Team ran checks to ensure that residents could operate and maintain their boilers and there was also a grant available towards annual boiler services.

The Private Sector Housing Manager advised the Panel that the Council had surplus income, from sources such as the Switch and Save project, which could be used to refurbish the roof of the bunker at Thorpe Lodge into a wildlife friendly area for staff to enjoy. This would involve clearing the brambles that currently cover the bunker, installing railings and planting up the roof with native bee-friendly flora. The project was currently being costed.

25 DUSSINDALE CENTRE COMMUNITY FRIDGE – UPDATE

The Dussindale Centre Community Fridge was one of seven Community Fridges in Norfolk funded by Sainsbury's at a cost of £49,000, as part of its 'Waste less, Save more' campaign, which was launched in April 2018.

The original concept was for members of the public to bring in food that they were not going to use and did not want to see go to waste, but this had not been a successful means of stocking the fridges. However, stores were keen to dispose of food that they could not sell locally in order to reduce transportation costs and a number of stores and a wholesaler, as well as the local allotment association, were now contributing to the Community Fridge, which was proving to be extremely popular.

Food donated to the project had increased from 20 kg in April to 549 kg in October 2018, none of which had been wasted.

Anyone could use the Community Fridges and it was emphasised that the scheme was not modelled on a food bank, which required a professional referral from the care services, but simply sought to prevent good food from being wasted. The Community Fridge at Dussindale was open 9 – 5pm six days a week and on average was used by up to 20 different people every day.

The Panel noted that a Community Fridge was reliant on volunteers to collect the food from the suppliers if it was to be successful, and commended Mr Emsell for the hard work he was putting into the scheme at Dussindale.

The Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects) advised Members that the Council had some funding for more Community Fridges and if they wished to discuss launching one in their Ward or wanted to discuss any other aspects about the scheme they should contact her directly.

26 SUMMER INTENSIVE RECYCLING MONITORING – RESULTS

Members were advised that a Recycling Monitoring Project was held over July – September 2018.

Five additional temporary members of staff were employed over this period to carry out the work, which covered 41 areas in total. Visual inspections were made of 7,170 grey bins, 4,090 in rural areas and 3,080 in urban areas.

The main contaminants were soft plastics, tissues, non-recyclable hard plastics and non-rinsed items/ food waste. Other contaminants included textiles, metal, garden waste, nappies, sanitary items and bagged items.

As a result of the monitoring a total 1,916 leaflets had been left informing residents what could and could not be recycled. One hundred and thirty red tags were left for grey recycling that was deemed so contaminated that it was uncollectable. A total of 732 personalised letters were sent to residents informing them of a problem relating specifically to their bin.

Following this work, 776 properties revisited in rural areas had improved the quality of their bins to a satisfactory level by the end of the summer monitoring. Only one grey recycling bin required follow-up action after the summer.

In urban areas 883 of the properties revisited had improved the quality of their bins to a satisfactory level by the end of the summer monitoring. Only six grey recycling bins had needed follow up action after the summer.

Overall 99.57 percent of the initial 1,666 properties, which required a revisit responded positively to a combination of the intervention techniques (leaflets, letters and red tags). This resulted in the recycling quality in these bins being satisfactory by the end of the summer period and no further action required.

By the end of the monitoring period out of the 7,170 properties initially monitored, 7163 properties were classed as satisfactory by the end of the period with no further action required. Some 2,017 routes were revisited – these routes had all improved compared to the previous visits.

The Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects) advised the Panel that this targeted approach had been a very effective means of improving contamination rates and would be a worthwhile exercise to undertake again next year.

In response to a query, Members were advised that areas to be monitored were selected following discussions with refuse crews and analysis of the audits carried out by the Materials Recycling Facility. Members had been informed if their Wards were being monitored and it was also publicised in Broadland News.

The Government's Resources and Waste Strategy should be published before the end of the year and was expected to place an onus on producer responsibility. The Panel would be provided with an update on the Strategy at its next meeting, if it was released on time.

Members were also advised that the aim of the new waste collection contract, which should commence in 2021, was to allow food waste to be collected across the whole District.

27 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 24 January 2019

The meeting closed at 5.37pm