

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environmental Excellence Panel** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Thursday 31 May 2018** at **4.00 pm** when there were present:

Mr J F Fisher – Chairman

Mr R F Grady
Mrs J Leggett

Mr I J Mackie
Mr G K Nurden

Mr J M Ward

Also in attendance were the Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects) Environmental Protection Manager, Norfolk Waste Partnership Communications Officer and the Committee Officer (JO).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Copplestone, Mrs Rix and Mr Tapp.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 NORFOLK WASTE PARTNERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER – INTRODUCTION OF NEW RECRUIT

The Panel was introduced to the new Norfolk Waste Communications Officer, Catherine Morris-Gretton, who would be taking up her post at the end of July. Catherine confirmed that she was looking forward to taking on this exciting new role.

The Chairman welcomed Catherine and noted that it would be far more effective to have a dedicated Communications Officer for the Waste Partnership. Her first project would be to work on the forthcoming Textiles Campaign.

4 NORFOLK WASTE PARTNERSHIP – PLASTICS CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The Norfolk Waste Partnership was collaborating with the national plastics recycling charity RECOUP (who had secured funding from M&S) to explain to residents what types of plastic could or could not be recycled in Norfolk.

The two specific target audiences for the campaign were:

- 16-34-year olds who might not recycle at all
- 55+ recyclers, who did recycle, but not always correctly and therefore could increase contamination

The campaign would be in two parts: part one was a Norfolk Fashion Design Challenge Competition, targeted at the 16 to 34 year group to raise awareness that rigid plastic containers could be recycled into polyester fabric. The competition would culminate with ten selected finalists making a garment for a fashion show at the Forum on 9 June 2018. The strapline for this part of the campaign was “Putting Recycled Plastic on the Catwalk!”

Part two of the campaign was a Plastics Roadshow that would run from 9 June to 6 July across Norfolk. The roadshow would include a giant plastic container sculpture, information banners, pavement flags, examples of those plastics that could and could not be recycled, as well as products made from recycled plastic. Leaflets and informative plastic fridge magnets would also be available.

The strapline for part two of the campaign was ‘Plastic Recycling – Cutting the Confusion’.

A key message of the campaign would be that items placed in recycling bins must be ‘Clean, Dry and Loose’.

The impact of the campaign would be evaluated and measured through a number of key indicators including:

- Quantity and quality of plastic packaging going in recycling bins
- Comparison of MRF incoming audit samples compared to previous year
- Awareness of brand – online activity and face-to-face contact
- Interest / engagement with 16 to 34 year olds from the fashion design challenge competition
- Media interest, positive, neutral or negative
- Community support gained/lost
- Cost of delivering campaign, versus benefits of improved recycle

- Cost per household in relation to tonnage capture

The Chairman encouraged Members to attend the events, if possible.

The campaign would initially be publicised in *Broadland News* and might be followed up by leafleting all households in the district

5 BROADLAND'S CONTAMINATION WORK

The Council was to repeat the initiative to address recycling contamination that it carried out last year by recruiting six students to inspect recycling bins in areas where contamination was high.

The inspections would be held over the summer. Refuse collection crews would provide feedback to identify the areas to be targeted. It was anticipated that approximately 3,500 bins could be inspected per week.

The project would be publicised in *Broadland News* and Ward Members in the targeted areas would be contacted before the inspections commenced. If timescales allowed, the areas in question would also be leafleted ahead of the inspections.

The Chairman also advised the meeting that food waste collection was about to be rolled out to an additional 3,000 households in the district.

6 FEEDBACK FOLLOWING VISIT TO FOOD WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITY BIOGEN

Three Members had accompanied officers on a visit to the BIOGEN facility near Baldock in Hertfordshire in April. The plant took in 55,000 tons of waste each year, including all types of plastic bags and processed it into methane gas and liquid farm fertiliser. The methane gas was then used to run two gas turbines producing enough electricity to power 5,500 nearby homes. The liquid fertiliser was sold to farms within a five-mile radius. Broadland's contribution was currently about 1,800 tons per year.

The process involved the bags being separated and sent to an energy from waste plant to produce electricity, so it was no longer necessary for the bags to be biodegradable. The Council was to encourage the reuse of plastic packaging for this purpose and would also be supplying cheaper polypropylene bags for residents, as it had been found that Council's that supplied bags for food waste achieved a higher collection rate than those that did not.

The Chairman agreed that the following items be considered by the Panel as matters of urgency.

7 REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FROM A RESIDENT

A letter had been received from a 13-year-old student at Broadland High School, who was seeking support for a four week trip to Tanzania to be part of an international marine conservation team clearing beaches of plastic.

In order to raise money for the trip the student was collecting waste from the Broads by kayak throughout the summer.

Members commended the student's actions and noted that supporting the student could be a good way of publicising the Council's corporate priority of Environmental Excellence.

It was **AGREED** that officers would contact the Broads Authority and the County Council regarding the disposal of the waste that had already been collected. The Council would also assist in publicising the clean-up campaign.

8 COURTAULD COMMITMENT

The Courtauld Commitment was a voluntary agreement aimed at improving sustainable food and drink production and reducing waste within the UK.

The Commitment was primarily aimed at the food production and grocery sector, but local authorities were also being asked to sign up to the voluntary agreement to increase recycling and promote food waste prevention.

There would be no cost to signing up to the Commitment, but it could bring benefits to the Council when seeking funding for other initiatives. The Commitment required the production of an annual report and, therefore, it was suggested that Broadland should sign up for it through the Norfolk Waste Partnership, which could then produce a single annual report for all its members.

Members were advised that the Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer had confirmed that the Panel could make this decision.

RESOLVED

that the Council sign up to the Courtauld Commitment through the Norfolk Waste Partnership.

It was also agreed that a Press Release would be issued that would highlight the Council's decision to sign up to the Commitment, as well as its position as the leading recycling authority in Norfolk and the roll out of food waste collection to a further 3,000 households in the District.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following future agenda items were agreed:

- Future Recycling Targets
- Impact of Fees for DIY Waste

The Panel was informed that the interim management arrangements for Housing and Environmental Services were working well. A decision about the filling the Head of Service post would be deferred until the outcome of the Feasibility Study into collaboration with South Norfolk Council was known.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 19 July 2018

The meeting closed at 5.18 pm