

# NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## CABINET

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH  
ON TUESDAY, 25TH OCTOBER, 2022 AT 6.00 PM

## MINUTES

**Present:** *Councillors: Councillor Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg (Chair), Ian Albert, Judi Billing, Steve Jarvis, Sean Prendergast and Tom Tyson*

**In Attendance:** *Abigail Hamilton (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Sarah Kingsley (Service Director – Place), Ian Couper (Service Director – Resources), Chloe Hipwood (Shared Service Manager – Waste Management)*

**Also Present:**

*At the commencement of the meeting there were no members of the public*

### 126 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

*Audio recording – 1:40*

Apologies for absence were received by Councillors Ruth Brown, Keith Hoskins, Tom Plater and Amy Allen

### 127 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Audio recording – 2:08*

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) Members were reminded that this Council had declared a Climate Emergency. This was a serious decision and meant that, as this was an emergency, all of us, officers and Members had that in mind as we carried out our various roles and tasks for the benefit of our District.
- (4) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

### 128 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*Audio recording – 2:50*

There was none

**129 FUTURE SERVICE DESIGN OF WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES**

*Audio recording – 3:00*

Tom Tyson to presented the report and highlighted points including:

- This report seeks the authority to proceed with a competitive dialogue procurement for the waste and recycling collection and street cleansing contract due to expire in May 2025
- The report is based on outcomes from the Member-led joint working group between East Herts Council and North Herts Council and identifies key service changes affecting the contract specification drafting
- The report covers details of both East Herts and North Herts changes to fully identify impacts across the shared service
- The key drivers of the service changes are set in the pending national resources and waste strategy consultation outcomes and the financial challenges authorities are facing
- It is anticipated that the proposed changes will secure more financially and environmentally sustainable service as well as making joint contract attractive to the market
- Our pre engagement work having identified aligned services is a key consideration for bidders
- Members are asked to consider extended frequency residual waste collections for the majority of households, supported by a continuation of weekly food and fortnightly dry recycling collections and an end to textiles and batter curb side collection services
- Proposals will be supported with a major communications plan and additional staff resource to ensure a smooth transition to the new services

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg reminded Members that they also had the notes referred by Overview and Scrutiny under agenda item 4. There were four concerns that came out of the meeting including:

- Concerns over the capacity of the 180L residual waste bins
- There is a move to three weekly collections
- Concerns regarding those with a large amount of waste, for example families with nappies
- A query over whether enough public consultation took place and the need to ensure that residents are aware of any changes through ongoing communication

The following Members participated in the debate:

- Steve Jarvis
- Judi Billing
- Ian Albert
- Sean Prendergast
- Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg

The points raised in the debate included:

- 7.19 in the report doesn't include North Herts climate emergency declaration.
- In 7.23 of the report we need to be clear that reducing the Councils carbon footprint has to be done. This can be read as optional, and it shouldn't be.
- Many people don't know what bins go out on what day. There is definitely space within purple bins due to things that could be recycled instead.
- The comments from the consultation are more positive than those in 2017/18.

- 2.17 makes sense and that North Herts is making things simpler in terms of the garden waste collection charge but this should be looked at carefully between now and 2025 and come back with some additional proposals. We recognise there are steps needed to get us to that point
- In terms of the climate emergency moving to three weekly collections is good. This report strikes a good balance between protecting the environment but also helping those who do need it, such as bigger families.
- If we are pushing people to use the right bins, how will we handle people using the recycling bins more? We could look into larger recycling bins or other alternatives

The following Members asked questions:

- Steve Jarvis
- Ian Albert

In response it was advised:

- We have engaged with consultants to help work through some wording we will include in our contract to look at securing improvements in the carbon impacts that the service has
- We are looking at all the technologies available such as the electric fleet and other options like alternative fuels.
- We will start taking soft plastics into the dry recycling which will remove a lot of bulk from the purple bin
- We know from research that a lot of things in the purple bins shouldn't be there, for example food waste, dry recycling and garden waste.
- Families with large amounts of waste will be able to qualify for fortnightly collection
- Around 2000 North Herts residents completed the survey. A majority said they have quite a lot of room left after the fortnight. Some were worried about coping and some said their bins were full, so we have to be careful with the results but there are ways we can solve this.
- All the collection crews work within cab systems so from a vehicle perspective there won't be loads of vehicles in the same street on the same time.
- We are aware that at times all the bins will be out and we are looking at what other Councils are doing to manage that. We have looked at alternatives, such as having garden waste being collected on a different day or opposing weeks to dry recycling
- One of our key aims is that we don't have a huge amount of disruption to residents
- We are looking at electronic notification options to inform residents which bins need to go out on what days. Details of these will come out in the Spring report. Some Councils use bin apps, and there are things like text messaging services and emails which we use.

Many Members commented that it was disappointing the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny couldn't attend.

Councillor Steve Jarvis proposed an additional recommendation and following a vote it was:

***RESOLVED:***

- (1) That the recommendations from the Joint Cross-Party working group attached in Appendix 1 were noted and considered prior to making a new substantive decision.
- (2) That the comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committee attached in Appendix 12 were noted and considered prior to making a new substantive decision.

- (3) That the responses from the public consultation as summarised in Appendix 2 were noted and considered prior to making a new substantive decision
- (4) That Cabinet approved a Competitive Dialogue procedure for the procurement of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing contract.
- (5) That Cabinet approved a joint project board to include the Executive Members for Finance as well as the Executive Member for waste, recycling and street cleansing services for both EHC and NHC to monitor the progress of the procurement project and for the delegation of powers to the Head of Operations (EHC) and Director of Place (NHDC) in consultation with project board in relation to amendments to the specification or service design.
- (6) That Cabinet approved to a Contract length of 8 years with the possibility of up to an 8 year extension.
- (7) That Cabinet approved the provision of customer services and contact handling being delivered in-house and a future report detailing how this will be delivered be provided in 2023.
- (8) That Cabinet noted the introduction of a new weekly separate food waste collection service in 23L caddies for houses and in wheeled bins for flats in East Hertfordshire from 2025.
- (9) That Cabinet approved residual waste collections occurring on a three weekly collection cycle from 2025. The implementation date confirmation to be delegated to the Director of Place/Head of Operations in consultation Project Board. As referenced in 8.11 to 8.46.
- (10) That Cabinet noted the standard receptacle for residual waste being 180L in size and that all new and replacement residual waste containers for houses will be 180l as soon as is reasonably practicable and phased in commencing no later than from 1st April 2023 in East Hertfordshire.
- (11) That Cabinet approved the transition to a standard bin colour across East and North Hertfordshire as outlined in 8.47 to 8.56 as soon as is practicable and no later than 1st April 2023.
- (12) That Cabinet approved the inclusion of plastic film in the mixed dry recycling collections from 2025, the implementation date confirmation to be delegated to the Project Board and subject to the outcomes of Resources & Waste Strategy consultation on consistency.
- (13) That Cabinet noted the cessation of bring bank services for paper and textiles in East Hertfordshire no later than the end of 2023
- (14) That Cabinet approved the cessation of kerbside textiles collections in North Hertfordshire with the shared waste service proactively engaging with the charity-sector to promote alternative outlets for expired textiles by the end of 2023.
- (15) That Cabinet approved the cessation of kerbside battery collections in North Hertfordshire from May 2025 with the shared waste service proactively promoting alternative recycling outlets.

**Tuesday, 25th October, 2022**

- (16) That Cabinet approved the service policy statements as outlined in Appendix 3 and for these to be further updated in advance of the contract start in May 2025 and be delegated to Head of Operations/Director of Place in consultation with the Executive Members.
- (17) That Cabinet agreed to the principle of aligning the garden waste collection charge from 2025
- (18) That Cabinet agreed in principle to the service design described in 8.94 to 8.93, should the outcomes from the Resources and Waste Strategy Consistency consultation mandate the separate collection of fibre, subject to the constitutional requirements for decision making.
- (19) That Cabinet noted the procurement process will include evaluation of options to reduce the carbon emissions of the waste service to contribute to achieving the Council's 2030 net zero target.

***REASONS FOR DECISIONS:***

- (1) These recommendations are in accordance with the Aim and Principles of the shared service detailed in Appendix 4 and offer an opportunity to ensure that services are financially and environmentally sustainable in the medium term. In particular it is an opportunity for the service to mitigate its carbon impacts and encourage a more sustainable lifestyle for residents.
- (2) It is necessary to ensure that any contract being procured is attractive to the market and by aligning services with EHC this will allow for greater efficiencies in the contract.
- (3) Increasing costs associated with contract inflation (9.92% in 2022/23) also require us to proactively seek alternative ways of delivering services and ensure we maximise the efficient of our operations.

The meeting closed at 6.47 pm

Chair