

PLACE SELECT COMMITTEE

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday 9 October 2023.

Present: Cllr Richard Eglington (Chair), Cllr Katie Weston (Vice-Chair), Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley (sub for Cllr Ray Godwin) and Cllr Sally Ann Watson (sub for Cllr Alan Watson).

Officers: Abigail Kiddell, Dale Rowbotham, Edward Tannahill, Craig Willows (CS, E&C) and Rebecca Saunders-Thompson (CS).

Also in attendance: Mike Gardner (WRAP)

Apologies: Cllr Ray Godwin and Cllr Alan Watson.

PLA/12/23 Evacuation Procedure

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedure.

PLA/13/23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PLA/14/23 Minutes

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PLA/15/23 Scrutiny Review of Domestic Waste Collections, Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste

The Select Committee received a presentation on M.E.L Research analysis of waste and recycling in Stockton-on-Tees from the review's link officer, which included:

- M.E.L Waste Analysis
- Composition of Residual Waste
- Participation Rates
- Food Waste

The Select Committee received a presentation on waste and recycling in Stockton-on-Tees, from a Local Authority Technical Consultant from the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), which included:

- WRAP Support to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC)
- National Context
- Local Context
- Benchmarking Performance - comparing SBC's recycling and residual waste rates with WRAP 'nearest neighbour' Rurality Group 4 (suburban/ high deprivation) authorities

- Separate Food Waste Collections
- Refuse Collection Frequency over Time (% households in England) – data from 2010/11 – 2021/22
- Outline of 4 Alternative Collection Scenarios
- Assessment of Alternative Collection Scenarios
- Timeline for WRAP Modelling and Results Feedback

The main issues highlighted from the presentations and discussed were as follows:

- Following the coronavirus pandemic, waste composition had changed because of a change in buying habits. There was an increase in cardboard packaging disposal, due to an increase in online purchasing, and a decrease in paper disposal, due to a decrease in purchasing of printed newspapers.
- Members questioned if food waste would have to be collected separately. It was confirmed that this would be the case. It was added that the Environment Act 2021 stated that food waste was the only material to have a specified timeframe for collection.
- In terms of benchmarking, it was highlighted that SBC collected high quality recycling but only collected a low amount compared to other authorities. SBC also collected its residual waste more frequently than other Councils and provided residents with a larger bin. Barrow-in Furness Council was the only other Council within the Rurality Group 4 that collected residual waste weekly.
- Other local authorities had experienced a reduction in overall waste tonnage by reducing the capacity of residual waste bins (either by reducing the size of bins or the frequency of collections).
- Officers requested if a correlation between larger bin sizes and a larger amount of waste could be included in WRAP's analysis report. This was agreed.
- Members questioned if there had been an increase in fly tipping if bin sizes or frequency of collections were reduced. WRAP had researched this issue previously and could not find a clear link between an increase in fly tipping resulting from a decrease in the frequency of collection or size of bins. However, it was noted that fly tipping was reported through various channels, and this made it difficult to assess the situation fully.
- It was confirmed that three weekly collections would not be included in WRAP's scenario analysis of SBC's waste and recycling service.
- A discussion on green waste was held, and Members highlighted the problem of residents sometimes disposing of green waste in their 240l wheeled bins with residual waste. Further information on green waste would be provided by officers as part of this review.
- The option for additional residual waste bins for larger households was discussed.
- Discussions were held on the increase of recycling bins across the borough in town centre locations. It was hoped that the introduction of the Government's Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) would reduce levels of waste in street litter bins.
- At November's Committee meeting, analysis from WRAP's assessment of alternative collection scenarios would be presented.

The Committee requested the following further information:

AGREED that:

- 1) the information be noted.
- 2) the further information be provided as requested.

The Chair informed the Committee that a request had been received from a Member to move the meeting start time to 4pm and that any changes to meeting times would be effective from January 2024. The Committee agreed to move Committee meeting start times from 2pm to 4pm.

Consideration was given to the Work Programme.

The next meeting would be held on Monday 13 November 2023.

AGREED that the new Committee meeting start time (from January 2024) and the Work Programme be noted.