



## Cabinet Member Report for Environment

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 23 January 2017

### Environmental Services Re-Provision

Following the decision of Cabinet in November 2016 to contract out Environmental Services when the current contract with Enterprise/Amey comes to an end in June 2018, the details of the procurement strategy were agreed by Cabinet earlier this month in readiness for the start of the formal procurement process.

Consultation with borough residents, community groups and councillors is currently still ongoing and, once complete, will be collated and analysed so that responses can be used to inform the way environmental services are to be delivered in the town from June 2018.

Consultation events have taken place as follows:

- Community steering group – 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016
- Combined steering group/cabinet advisory group – 11<sup>th</sup> July / 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016
- Staff panel – 12<sup>th</sup> April / 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016
- Community Reps panel – 12<sup>th</sup> April / 4<sup>th</sup> May / 28<sup>th</sup> June / 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016
- Councillors' workshop – 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016
- Drop in Surgery (councillors/community reps) – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2017

In addition to these events I have also attended/have in the diary meetings with the following community groups to directly gain their feedback and submit as part of the consultation process and I would welcome invitations to the meetings of other local groups.

- Brookside Residents Council
- St. James Residents Association
- Moulton Leys Residents Association
- St. David's Residents Association
- Northampton Federation of Residents Association
- Abington Park Management Committee
- Friends of Abington Park
- Friends of Eastfield Park

All residents of the town were also invited to take part in an online survey which will be used to inform the design of the new service post June 2018. The survey closes at the end of the month. The survey has been well received by the public and response levels are already high. As well promoting the consultation on our own website and social media feeds, it has been promoted across the various local media outlets.

A scrutiny panel is underway to ensure the environmental services procurement process is robust and delivers the best possible outcomes for the cleanliness and maintenance of the town in the future. Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 4<sup>th</sup> January to agree membership of the Environmental Services Re-provision working group. Councillor Meredith was appointed chair and Councillor Ashraf vice chair.

## **Environmental Services**

Waste and recycling collections continued as usual, with the exception of brown bin collections, which were suspended between 26 December and 7 January to allow for extra recycling to be collected. The service ran smoothly and was well received. Real Christmas trees are being collected on the scheduled brown bin collection day, or scheduled bin bag collection day, from 8 January for a four-week period.

The winter shrub maintenance continues to progress across the town. Most areas in the South and North of the town are nearly completed and the teams are working towards the eastern side of the town.

Leaf clearance collections are continuing, both on footpaths and in the parks. As well as manual clearance of leaves on the footpaths, Enterprise are also using a mechanical leaf collector, called an Amazon, for the collection of leaves in the parks

The enhanced tree maintenance program for this year, year 1, is being finalised, and work will be starting shortly.

## **Play Equipment**

The Council is currently developing a Play Equipment Strategy to provide a broad framework for the management and future development of fixed play equipment areas across the Borough. It will introduce a policy of systematic renewal and repair to play equipment on all Council owned play areas.

The strategy will be there to encourage future Developers, Voluntary Sector and the Council to work together to enhance play provision and promote its use by the whole community.

Play areas help to encourage children and young people to be active, which is vitally important for their physical, emotional and social development.

A budget has been identified and will be finalised as part of the 2017 / 2018 budget setting process.

In the last few months new play equipment has been ordered/replaced in:-

- Eastfield Park
- Banbury Lane
- Southfields Park
- Bridgewater Drive
- The Racecourse
- Parklands Open Space
- Fieldmill Square

Equipment has also been ordered for Abington Park and plans to bring back the Children's Train were unveiled at the last Abington Park Management Committee.

## **Environmental Enforcement**

The enforcement pilot has now been completed. During the pilot over 1,505 fixed penalty notices have been served.

Given the success of the pilot, the process is now underway to put in place a longer term arrangement. Expressions of interest will be sought next month for the new arrangements to go live in the town in the spring.

### **Air Quality**

Work is progressing to analyse the feedback from the consultation on the Low Emissions Strategy. A report will be presented to Cabinet in the near future which will provide feedback and give details of proposed actions to address ongoing air quality issues.

### **Park Management Committees**

There are eight Park Management Committees established across the Borough. Abington, Delapre, Racecourse, Swanshaven, Victoria, Bradlaugh, Eastfield and the newest, Becketts Park.

Each PMC brings key stakeholders around the table, to manage and develop the park. Each PMC has a set of action plans, which includes suggested projects, which will enhance or improve the park.

Through Abington PMC the Friends have been supported to access funding which is enabling the completion of mosaic works to the sensory garden. Becketts have been supported to develop Buddies of Becketts, of which there are now 20 members/volunteers who have recently carried out some planting of daffodils, cleaning of signage and removal of epicormic growth.

All of the Chairs of the PMCs and Friends Groups have been involved in the engagement of the environmental services re-provision.

**Councillor Mike Hallam**  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**