



## Cabinet Member Report for Environment

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2020

### **Environmental Services Contract**

Now that we have moved to the recovery phase in relation to the Covid-19 Pandemic shielding and sickness is still having an impact on the refuse collection teams, drivers, street cleansing staff, grounds maintenance teams and administrative staff at Veolia but other than the rescheduling of a few food rounds, the core services continue to perform well and are coping with the increases in demand.

The Contracts Manager is sending regular service reports to Councillor, Parishes and other stakeholders on an exception basis only due to services having stabilised and the reports have helped keep recipients and their networks engaged.

Basketball courts, Tennis Courts, Allotments shops and the Aviary have now re-opened having been risk assessed and new processes put in place to maintain social distancing.

The opening of Parks caused a number of challenges in relation to the high volume of anti-social behaviour including littering and lack of social distancing. The teams worked exceptionally hard to safely open the toilets and implement a greatly enhanced cleaning regime and also provide additional resources in the Parks to cope with the increased volumes of rubbish generated.

Veolia have now instigated a deep cleanse programme in hard to access streets, the inaugural cleanse happened in June in Southampton Road, residents were very helpful in helping move cars to allow better access to the curbside. The high volumes of cars parked in streets due to working from home has provided challenges across the Borough as these would usually be clear and support the cleansing regime.

### **Chargeable Green Waste Subscriptions**

At the time of writing there were 33244 subscriptions (as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020) well in excess of our initial target, Customer Feedback has been very positive in relation to the service and the ease of sign-up.

### **Environmental Services**

April, May and early June, the day to day work of the Neighbourhood Wardens had changed dramatically from dealing with environmental crime to assisting the most vulnerable within our communities by delivering much needed food and medical supplies to them.

However, June did see the Neighbourhood Wardens return to dealing with environmental crime on their Wards, as well as monitoring businesses that are open to ensure they are complying with the Governments Social Distancing Guidance.

The Park Rangers are continuing with their day to day tasks. There has been an increase in vandalism within some of the parks, but this could be down to individuals having a lot of time on their hands. The number of rough sleepers found in the parks has drastically reduced. Social Distancing signs on play equipment have been ripped down and are

having to be replaced regularly by the Rangers. They were also advising park users on the Social Distancing rules.

June, also seen the restart of projects that were put on hold in March, because of the Pandemic. Work has now started on the installation of play equipment at:

- Lingswood
- Kingsthorpe Rec.
- Hardingstone Rec.
- Newnham Road

The repairs to Abington Park's main lake embankment will begin mid-July and should be completed within 8 - 10 weeks. The works can be carried out without the need to drop the water level, so protecting the fish and the natural habitat. The Abington Angling Club can also continue to fish from the opposite bank.

## Environmental Health

Officers from the food and safety and licensing team continue to support the business community as they return to work. Staff in the team have worked with colleagues across the county to develop a countywide leaflet providing advice on steps to be taken when re-opening premises, information on social distancing and safe working. The leaflets have been circulated to businesses across the town and distributed through a range of networks.

<b>Budget carry forward reserves</b>	<b>Opening Balance 01/04/20 £</b>
Business Incentive Scheme	55,000
Museums	27,520
<b>Sub-Total - Economy, Assets and Culture</b>	<b>82,520</b>
Small Grants	31,481
Cllr Community Fund	12,452
<b>Sub-Total - Chief Exec</b>	<b>43,933</b>
JPU - Local Plan	122,100
Planning Policy	414,110
Neighbourhood Planning	26,920
Conservation Area Article 4 Advertising	24,604
<b>Sub-Total - Planning</b>	<b>587,734</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>714,187</b>

Officers have also made visits to check compliance with social distancing and business closure requirements and provided phone and email advice to many businesses.

Air quality monitoring has restarted at the 90 Nox tube sites across the town. The annual Air Quality Status report for 2019 was submitted to DEFRA ahead of the end of June deadline. Once the report is approved it will be published on the website,

Work on the installation of EV charging points started in March, but had to be suspended due to the Government's Lockdown – work is due to resume again shortly.

**Councillor Mike Hallam**

## **Cabinet Member for Environment**