

Environmental Services Contract

Services continue to run well with some disruption experienced due to Covid related staff shortages. Veolia continue to manage services and provide comprehensive reports which is shared with all stakeholders providing information of service delivery including any disruptions to services.

The team have been working on a number of projects; planning is now taking place to start accepting subscriptions for the 2021/22 garden waste collections scheme, working with stakeholders via a zoom workshop to enhance the current tree policy, assisting with save our street trees to replace trees in the Far Cotton area and seeing completion of new contractors offices at the Westbridge depot.

We are also working with Idverde, Veolia's grounds maintenance contractors, on winding down the winter maintenance works and gearing up for the forthcoming mowing season. We are involved in the Unitary Waste and Recycling Unitary workstreams and are aligning services ensuring high standards are maintained.

The Partnership Unit continue to work with Veolia to look at performance and seek to build on the work undertaken since the start of the contract to make further improvements.

Environmental Services (Direct Services)

The Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers continue to monitor and patrol their areas, giving advice to members of the public and businesses on social distancing and the latest guidelines issued by Government on COVID-19.

The Neighbourhood Wardens have put up 62 Neighbourhood Watch signs in Blackthorn and part of Goldings for Northants Neighbourhood Watch, who's aims are to prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime, improve safety and encourage neighbourliness and supportive spirit across their communities.

The Park Rangers have installed a number of memorial benches in the parks for our customers, which has helped to keep the installation cost down.

At Abington Park, the Park Rangers have covered the tops of the Aviary cages with tarpaulin the help protect them from the latest outbreak of bird flu. The Aviary has been closed since January 2021 in compliance with the COVID Regulations.

There are four play equipment projects still to commence before the end of fiscal year and they are:

- Millers Meadow
- Aucklands Close
- Ecton Brook – Helicopter Park
- Victoria

Environmental Health

Staff in the food and safety team continue to work at the forefront of the Council's response to COVID19. They are carrying out checks of business premises which are permitted to remain open to ensuring that they are operating in a covid secure manner. The Council has legal powers to deal with businesses that are not permitted to open and the team have dealt with a number of queries about anomalies.

The team are also heavily involved in the investigation of outbreaks in workplaces and are also working with colleagues on the investigation and support around outbreaks in care homes and schools.

The installation of the eight electric vehicle charging points for the use of the taxi fleet has now been completed.

Work is now progressing on the technical work required to progress the declaration of the town centre air quality management area. This work had been delayed due to some problems with traffic flow data which have now been resolved.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment