

Scrutiny Streets, Environment & Homes Sub- Committee Supplementary Agenda



5. Cabinet Member Question Time: Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon (Pages 3 - 16)

Question Time with the Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon, Councillor Stuart Collins.

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Streets Environment and Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Cabinet Members' Question Time

Presented by Cllr Stuart Collins

October 2019

Delivering for Croydon

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Background

- A growing population of 385,346 people, London's 2nd most populous borough and 2nd largest by area
- 24 Wards span the borough, each with their own characteristics creating significant diversity and range of challenges
- Serviced provided in this portfolio include:
 - Waste Management and Street Cleansing
 - Environmental Enforcement
 - Grounds Maintenance

What is your vision for your portfolio

- We want Croydon to be leading the way in innovation, service delivery and enforcement.
- Climate change is a global issue and we want to reflect the importance of sustainability in the services we provide.
- These include:
 - Managing waste in a sustainable way.
 - Encouraging waste minimisation and reducing dependence on single use plastics.
 - Recycling as much of our waste as possible and achieving the manifesto pledge of recycling over 50% of household waste by 2020.
 - Holding perpetrators of environmental offences to account
 - Increasing biodiversity in our parks and open spaces

Key Achievements in the Last Year

- Introduction of a new waste and recycling collection service which has seen the recycling rate increase from 38% to 48%
- Bringing the cumulative number of successful prosecutions for environmental offences to 225 since 2014.
- Bringing the Grounds Maintenance service back 'in-house'.
- Securing external funding for the planting of 300-400 additional trees each year.

New Waste and Recycling Collection Service

Aims

- To make Croydon one of London's cleanest, greenest boroughs.
- To increase the recycling rate to over 50% by 2020
- To reduce the amount of landfill waste disposed of, thereby realising savings in excess of £10M over the next decade.

This involved:

- Delivering smaller landfill bins to all kerbside properties.
- Introduction of wheeled bins for recycling to all suitable properties.
- A day change to 78% of residents in order to ensure resources were concentrated in one geographical area each day.

The rollout of the service was been a major undertaking and it was always anticipated there would be considerable disruption. However, we are now a year into the new service and are achieving a recycling rate of 48%

Street Cleansing Standards

- Streets Must be swept to a grade A at time of sweep.
- Streets must be maintained to a grade B at all other times.
- Street cleansing bags removed on day of sweep.
- Any streets falling below these standards must be rectified within 1 working day of notification.
- Fly tips must be removed within 1 working day of notification.
- 95%+ of all reports meet these standards.
- Introduction of free bulky waste collections.

Residents should use My Account or the DMWC App to report any issues with street cleansing or fly-tipping.



Enforcement Activities

2018/19

1056 Fixed Penalty Notices and 21 prosecutions for environmental offences.

2019/20 (Year to Date)

407 FPNs issued and 8 prosecutions for environmental offences.

In total 225 successful prosecutions have been made for environmental offences since 2014.



Strengths

- SLWP contract is saving the council £5M + each year.
- Additional avoided landfill costs of up to £10M over the next decade.
- New bin system will put Croydon amongst the highest recycling boroughs in London.
- Over 95% of flytips are being removed within 24 hours of notification.
- Over 95% of street cleansing issues are resolved within 24 hours of notification.
- DMWC campaign has achieved prominent publicity at both a national and local level.
- Bringing waste management and enforcement activities under a single Directorship will enable more co-ordinated approach.
- Bringing the GM contact in-house will allow greater flexibility and give the council more control over operations and enable more localised working.

Weaknesses

- Fly tipping remains high in Croydon and whilst this is a national issue and charities such as KBT and Waste Watch do a sterling job, funding is required to run a mainstream national anti-flytipping campaign.
- Missed collections remain higher than anticipated and over a third of these are not rectified within the contractual standard so there is work to be done to improve this.
- Role of local authorities in waste management issues has traditionally been 'end of pipe' limited, however, are seeking to be more involved with promoting the concept of 'circular economy' to residents and businesses in future and reducing waste as well as recycling it.
- Decisions made through the SLWP can take longer than if made by Croydon alone as they require the agreement of four boroughs.
- GM service is still awaiting a full review.

Opportunities

- The SLWP gives Croydon a prominent platform in terms of lobbying National Government on environmental issues.
- Croydon is working with the London Waste and Recycling Board and the GLA to produce a Waste and Recycling Plan which will help shape future direction of travel for the service.
- The Council will shortly be announcing plans for a new initiative whereby residents are rewarded for providing environmental information which leads to a successful prosecution.
- The SLWP contract has a focus on street cleansing staff being the ‘eyes and ears’ . They are trained to gather evidence from fly tips and to spot signs of modern slavery, hiding places for knives etc.
- Bringing the GM service in-house has enabled Croydon to opportunity to set a specification which brings about improved standards, particularly around grass cutting and litter bin emptying in parks.
- The in-house GM service has led to all staff being paid the London Living Wage as a minimum.

Threats/Challenges

- Across the waste industry, tolerances of contaminants in recycling is lower than ever . Croydon is in a better position than most as we separate paper from other recycling, but the rejection of recycling due to contamination remains an issue – especially with flats.
- Uncertainty around Brexit remains a threat for all services, however suppliers have produced plans for mitigating these issues.
- Whilst the free bulky waste service is extremely popular, it is expensive to run which creates a financial pressure within the service area.
- Incorporating Bereavement Services into Grounds Maintenance from November 2019 will be the next challenge facing the service and officers are currently working on this mobilisation.

Priorities for 2019/20

- Achieving a 50% recycling rate for household waste.
- Working with residents, staff and businesses to eliminate single use plastics wherever possible in the borough.
- Lobbying Government to back a national campaign on fly-tipping and rewarding residents who provide information about fly tipping which leads to a successful prosecution..
- Undertaking a review of the Grounds Maintenance Service once Bereavement Services has been incorporated.
- Improving the biodiversity of the borough by creating a 'bee highways' on our grassed areas.
- Planting trees in areas of high air pollution.

ONE TEAM

PROUD TO SERVE

HONEST AND OPEN

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

VALUING DIVERSITY

END

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