



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environment Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, 15 November 2022 at 18:30

PRESENT:-

Councillor Wells (in the Chair); Councillors Bird, Cameron, P Carpenter, Fairhead, D Hammond, Martin, Robinson-Payne, Waters-Bunn & B Wright.

Councillor Galer attended as a substitute for Councillor Annison.

Councillor P Hammond attended as a substitute for Councillor Bensly.

Mrs P Boyce (Strategic Director), Mrs J Beck (Head of Property & Asset Manager), Mrs G Tilley (Environmental Health Manager), Mr J Wilson (Head of Environment and Sustainability), Mr C Silverwood (Director of Operational Services), Mr C Bye (Senior Coastal Advisor), Mr T Williams (Media and Communications Manager), Mrs A Kourt (Democratic Services Officer), Ms T Koomson (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager), Mr M Brett (IT Support).

Remote attendance :

Environment Agency: Mr M Johnson (Area Coastal Manager) and Mr P Doktor (Project Manager)

Coastal Partnership East: Sharon Bleese (Coastal Manager, Great Yarmouth and East Suffolk), Fiona Johnson (Senior Technical Funding Officer)

01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologises for absence were received from Councillors Annison and Bensly.

02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wells declared a personal interest in Item 6 in his capacity as a representative on the Broadland Future Initiative, Item 7 in his capacity as a Board Member on the Coastal Partnership East and Items 9,10 and 11 as a Director on the GYBS Limited Board.

Councillor Galer declared a personal interest in item 7 in his capacity as Ward Councillor for Hemsby and a Board Member of Save Hemsby Coastline.

03 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 21 September 2022 were confirmed subject to the following amendments :-

- Councillor Annison be added to the list of those present at the meeting.
- Item 7 - axed be amended to asked

Item 7 - Councillor Fairhead provided an update on the issue that she had raised raised with regard to surges of salt water, she advised that the Internal Drainage Board had confirmed that this had been caused by the Yacht Station not raising the barrier due to a busy period of boat hiring.

04 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman asked the Head of Environment and Sustainability to provide Members with an update on the Marram Grass at Great Yarmouth. It was advised that Officers were looking at ploughing technique at the site that would be cost effective and would keep grass growth a minimum, this would be brought back to the committee via a report at a later date. Councillor Waters-Bunn further highlighted concern that cars appeared to be able to access and drive around the central beach.

Councillor Robinson-Payne passed on her thanks for the distribution of the recyclable cups for all of the Committee.

With regard to Item 7 within the previous minutes, Councillor Fairhead provided an update on the issue that she had raised raised with regard to surges of salt water, she advised that the Internal Drainage Board had confirmed that this had been caused by the Yacht Station not raising the barrier due to a busy period of boat hiring.

05 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received and considered the Forward Plan. Councillor Waters-Bunn referred to the Removal and Maintenance of (Marram) Grass on Great Yarmouth beach and asked for this item to be added onto the forward plan. Councillor Robinson-Payne also wished to add the management and maintenance of the St George's Park following the area being used during the October Fair. The Strategic Director confirmed that the full outcome report in relation to this event and any Great Yarmouth public events were reported to the Economic Development Committee in line with the Committee's terms of reference. However, it was acknowledged that as St George's Park was an open green space, it was suggested a condition of the open space report by the Head of Property & Asset Management could be brought as a single item and added onto the forward plan.

RESOLVED:-

(1) That the Committee note the Forward Plan with the addition of the following two items

- (a) Marram Grass report
- (b) Condition of open space at St Georges Park Report

06 BROADLAND FUTURE INITIATIVE UPDATE

Members received a presentation from the Environment Agency representatives, Mr M Johnson (Area Coastal Manager) and Mr P Doktor (Project Manager) which looked at the ambitions of the Broadland Future Initiative and why it had been formed.

Councillor Fairhead commented on the importance of the works being completed on the flood defences / barriers in order to continue to protect the broads from tidal surges. Councillor Fairhead also asked with regard to joint working with the Broads Internal Drainage Board, it was confirmed that contact had been made with the IDB.

Councillor Galer asked how the representatives felt the partnership working relationship with GYBC could be developed, it was confirmed that the Initiative were hoping to collaborate with GYBC and other local Councils. It was reported that the Shoreline Management Plan was under review but this would align with the initiative.

The Chair referred to earlier comments around water surges and agreed that there were multiple avenues for water surges, not only via the river Yare, he commented that all work needed to be based on the strategic modelling of the wider area as that whole coast line was at risk.

The representatives confirmed that as 60% of the Broad area was below sea level, joint work had been completed with the Internal Drainage Board on issues such as water pump replacements and relocation.

The Chairman thanked the representatives for their presentation and again highlighted the importance of the work being completed.

07 HEMSBY - UPDATE MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL EROSION

The Committee hereby excluded the public at 19.12 so that Members could discuss the confidential appendix.

It was resolved that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public to be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act."

The committee re entered into a public meeting at 19.25.

Members received an update and presentation from Mr C Bye (Senior Coastal Advisor), Sharon Bleese (Coastal Manager, Great Yarmouth and East Suffolk) and Fiona Johnson (Senior Technical Funding Officer) on the Hemsby management of coastal erosion.

It was reported that Great Yarmouth Borough Council's Planning Committee approved a recommendation in April 2022, to delegate authority to the Head of Planning to approve the application for the Hemsby Rock Berm. In parallel with this, Coastal Partnership East have continued to work with the Marine Management Organisation in order to gain a marine licence for the proposed works and gain consent under the Coast Protection Act 1949. It was further advised that The Marine Management Organisation had now produced a draft decision notice for the marine license for the Hemsby Rock Berm including conditions.

Members were advised that the Borough Council, through the Coastal Partnership East team, had commissioned consultants AECOM to undertake a Wider Economic Appraisal for Hemsby to quantify the impact of coastal erosion to the local economy and community, with an aim to support an application for Grant in Aid for the Hemsby Rock Berm Scheme.

The local economic impacts considered included economic value linked to businesses, tourism, private properties, roads, footpaths and future development and majority of the economic values presented in this study are additional to those included as part of the original high-level assessment for the Hemsby Rock Berm scheme.

The risk of coastal erosion has been assessed across three time periods, using coastal erosion rate estimates from the Environment Agency: Short Term (present day – 2042), Medium Term (2042 – 2072) and Long Term (2072 – 2122).

In summary, under the Do-Nothing baseline without measures, the impact of coastal erosion in the study site could reach £22million in PV terms over the next 20 years, £62million over the next 50 years and £92million over the next 100 years. This had assumed a 20% reduction in tourism numbers due to a deteriorating environment, beach and infrastructure system.

It was reported that the Hemsby Rock Berm Scheme was expected to reduce the rate of erosion at the site by 70% over the next 20 years (as per the recent public consultation materials for the project). It was advised that Implementation of the scheme was likely to benefit Hemsby and the wider Great Yarmouth region, increasing opportunities for the visitor economy to grow, increasing business confidence and leading to greater spill over benefits.

Councillor Waters-Bunn thanked Officers for the report and asked for more specific information of number of properties impacted. The Chair confirmed that more detail on impacted properties was available on Wider Economic Appraisal document.

Councillor Fairhead highlighted the importance of needing to consider the benefits for the wildlife.

Councillor Galer confirmed that he had been involved over several years with Hemsby via various forums and had highlighted the threat of coastal erosion to Hemsby, and acknowledged the sense of pride of what has been achieved so far in protecting the area.

Councillor Carpenter proposed that the Committee approved the recommendation, Councillor Galer seconded approval.

RESOLVED - by unanimous vote that the Committee

1. Notes progress on the work completed to date to gain planning permission, marine licence and Coast Protection Act consent for the Hemsby Rock berm.
2. Notes the findings of the Wider Economic Appraisal.
3. Supports consideration of a capital submission for interim works at Hemsby.

08 Hemsby Confidential Appendix - November 2022

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

09 THE FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2022-23

The Environmental Health Manager presented the Food Service plan to Members.

Members were advised that the Food Standard's Agency (FSA) required all Local Authorities to produce and review an annual Food Service Plan for all areas of food law that the Authority has a duty to enforce. A performance review must be carried out at least once a year and be documented.

The presented Food Service Plan also outlined the service plan outcomes for 2020/21 and the plan contains information on proposals for undertaking duties in 2022-2023 that the team were working towards. It was reported that the Covid pandemic had brought a major impact on the delivery of food enforcement over the last two years. For food enforcement this had meant that the inspections that were due during the times of lockdown were unable to be completed which had resulted in a backlog of inspections.

It was advised that in response to the pandemic the FSA produced a Food Recovery Plan which covered the period from the 1st July 2021 to 2023/24. The FSA's Recovery Plan provided a framework for local authorities to catch up with the food hygiene delivery programme in line with the Food Law Codes of Practice.

The Environmental Health Manager reported that there were currently 2 FTE vacant posts within the team and needed to be successfully filled with the appropriately trained officers to enable the Council to successfully deliver the food service plan. It

was noted there was currently a national shortage of qualified officers and GYBC as other councils were struggling to recruit into these professional posts.

In summary, the food service plan provided a current picture of the food safety service. It highlights the main areas of work during the previous year and comments on the work and resources proposed for this year including areas for change.

Councillors Carpenter and Galer asked for further details of the premises that fall into Cat A and how this is determined. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that the premises rating category was not linked to specific type of establishment and was not necessarily an indicator of poor compliance, but could also be driven by an initial risk assessment on the daily operations carried out at the premises.

Councillor Carpenter asked for clarification as to the role of the Environmental Health team in enforcing the Natasha's law. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that the enforcement of Natasha's law was driven by trading standards. The role of the Environmental Health was to provide advice and guidance relating to the law and this has impacted on time spent in carrying out inspections.

Councillor Robinson-Payne asked if there was anything that could be done better to improve recruitment of qualified officers. The Head of Environment and Sustainability, confirmed that the Environmental Health sector had suffered from lack of qualified personnel for a long time (prior to pandemic). He outlined some of the efforts made to ensure that GYBC offers competitive employment opportunity including benchmarking salary offers, promoting the variety of development opportunities presented by the location, considering apprenticeships in joint working with local colleges.

Councillor P Hammond proposed to approve the recommendations, Councillor Fairhead seconded.

RESOLVED :-

That the Committee approve and adopt the Food Service Plan for 2022/23.

10 FLYTIPPING AND WASTE - LESSONS LEARNT REPORT

Mr J Wilson, Head of Environment and Sustainability, presented Members with an update on the Fly tipping and Waste project.

He advised that the project commenced almost two years ago and the objective was to address the issue of bins left out and fly-tipping around Churchill alleyways. After its initial success, in February 2022 it was agreed to progress the project to all remaining alleyways in one go, which equated to approximately 250-300 properties. Two years on, the success of the project has been visible, as almost no bins are being left out in targeted alleyways.

It was reported that In the last 3 months only 15 fly-tipping incidents were reported in this whole area in comparison to previously receiving the same amount of complaints in one week. It has also been evident that the target project had resulted in the 'trickle-effect' and the other surrounding alleyways across the area had improved with little intervention from Officers.

In summary, it has been considered that the project has been a success and a sustainable improvement has been achieved in the whole area, with the community appearing to take responsibility for their area. Although it has been recognised that running the project has impacted on Officer time and the cost for things such as a letter drops and bin numbers; had been offset by the reduced cost of clearing fly-tipping. It was advised that the plan was to now roll-out similar project in Cobholm area.

Councillor D Hammond thanked Officers for the report and confirmed she had also seen a notable reduction in complaints from residents.

Councillor Robinson-Payne also complemented on such a good job and asked if there were more specific examples about the lessons learned. The Head of Environment and Sustainability gave an example that it might be worth considering to leave the fly-tipping notices for longer period of time before clearing out to allow more time for messaging about 'what is fly-tipping' to reach the residents. He further confirmed that there was widespread joint working and learning from different areas within Norfolk and that this project had already attracted interest from other areas in the County.

Councillor Martin also thanked for the Officers on a good job and encouraged partnership working to tackle graffiti and making the best use of 'hit squad'.

Councillor Waters-Bunn asked if the planned next project area in Cobholm could be extended to include areas around Isaac's Road.

Councillor Carpenter complemented the work done and encouraged partnership working and sharing of the best practice.

Councillor Bird also complemented on the success and suggested that perhaps better communication was still needed in relation to bin collection dates.

Councillor B Wright highlighted an issue of fly-posting and the Head of Environment and Sustainability confirmed that Officers were currently drafting a specific fly-posting policy to better tackle the issue.

Councillor Waters-Bunn suggested that there still needed to be better messaging on recycling and what can go into what bin. The Head of Environment and Sustainability confirmed that a big campaign is planned in a New Year.

Councillor D Hammond suggested better labels to be put in(side) the bins about the specific collection dates.

The Chair thanked everyone involved in this successful project.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the report.

Mr J Wilson (Head of Environment and Sustainability) and Mr C Silverwood (Director of Operational Services) gave a summary presentation on the Council's new Green Fleet Strategy with recommendations that had already been agreed by Policy and Resource Committee on the 8th November 2022.

The main recommendations being

1. the conversion of the whole fleet from diesel to sustainably sourced fuels including Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) and electric where possible to achieve immediate carbon savings.
2. replacement of six Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV) with the latest Euro 6 vehicles to run on HVO in 2022/23 to deliver frontline operational services via the new GYS Limited company. Six Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV) with the latest Euro 6 vehicles to run on HVO in 2023/24 One Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV) with electric Refuse Collection Vehicles (eRCV) in 2023/24. One panel van with an electric equivalent in 2023/24.
3. up to £20,000 per vehicle can be made available to retrofit emerging fuel technology including hydrogen within the fleet of Euro 6 RCVs to reduce fuel and associated carbon emissions further. Subject to the success of the initial trial, there would be an outlay of £20,000 for one vehicle retrofit funded from the invest-to-save reserve.
4. to release £50,000 from invest-to-save for a feasibility study to assess the current depot's ability to deliver the future needs of the service.
5. to investigate options for members and the workforce which encourage greater active travel including use of public transport, lift-sharing and salary sacrifice schemes which enable greater uptake of electric vehicles.
6. the release of the agreed capital budget allocation of £1.13 million, with the addition of an extra £106,000 (due to a cost increase since the budget was agreed last year) making it £1.236m in 2022/23 and the allocation of a further capital spend of £1.7m in 2023/24 for vehicle acquisitions.
7. to agree to lease all operational vehicles to the new company Great Yarmouth Services (GYS) Limited and delegates authority to the Deputy Section 151 Officer to agree the lease terms.

The Director of Operational Services confirmed that following the approval of the strategy by the Policy and Resource Committee, the implementation of the strategy had already began.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the report.

12 GYBS LTD END OF SEASON - UPDATE

Mr C Silverwood (Director of Operational Services) gave the Committee a

verbal update. Some of the issues highlighted included

- a 15 000 litre reduction in use of diesel and 39kg reduction in carbon footprint.
- 44 unauthorised bins have been removed from circulation and Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) in recycling were all green.
- Efforts continue to maintain street cleaning standards and 'Hit Squad' continues with targeted work.
- Grass cutting was suspended for 4 weeks in September due to the dry season, teams were redeployed to St Cleansing, teams are now starting on winter works.
- The tree planting project is ongoing with further 200 trees to be planted.
- Staff performance indicators highlighted no particular issues, although there was a period when large number of staff were hit by covid in June.
- Currently in the process of setting up a Local Authority Trading Company (GYS Ltd).
- Finally, a long serving staff member Refuse Supervisor Mr P Turner is retiring.

Councillor Bird acknowledged all the good work done by Mr P Turner and wished him well for his retirement.

Councillor Hammond asked with regard to the colour scheme of the new overalls/uniforms being rolled out and commented that it was important that the colours were chosen by best possible visibility. The Director of Operational Services noted the importance of health and safety considerations and confirmed that no final decisions had been made yet but were likely to be a mixed colour scheme.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Operational Services for his report.

13 NORFOLK WASTE PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE

Mr J Wilson (Head of Environment and Sustainability) gave a presentation to the Committee.

He referred to the Norfolk Waste Partnership report circulated ahead of the meeting. He highlighted the ongoing efforts to improve recycling and reduce contamination of

the recycled waste.

Councillor Hammond asked clarification of the level of 'wash-up' of items suitable for recycling as this is having a negative impact on some people's perception of recycling. The Head of Environment and Sustainability confirmed that items do not need to be 'dish washer' clean, but for example bottles with liquid inside contaminate quite a large quantities of recycled waste.

Councillor Cameron asked if there was a difference in the level of contamination during the tourist season. The Head of Environment and Sustainability confirmed that no specific peaks had been noted.

Councillor Galer asked if there had been any progress in standardising the colour coding of recycle bins, as that would surely help reduce contamination. The Chair and the Head of Environment and Sustainability both confirmed that unfortunately not, but further guidance is waited from Central Government on recycling and it was hoped that it would include standardised color-coding.

Councillor Carpenter asked why food waste recycling was yet to be implemented. The Head of Environment and Sustainability confirmed that this is anticipated to be implemented in due course, but again this was expected to be part of upcoming Central Government Guidance. It was advised that the roll-out of food waste recycling was costly and therefore it was important to wait to ensure implementation would be done in accordance the Guidance that would hopefully also include some assistance to fund the roll-out.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Environment and Sustainability for the report.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the report.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman acknowledged concerns that had been raised by Councillor Robinson-Payne in relation to the defibrillator location at the Gorleston crematorium. Although advised that this was not a matter subject for consideration by the Committee but would be addressed directly by Officers.

The meeting ended at: 21:20