

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Performance & Finance Scrutiny Committee
25 January 2023

Environment and Health Portfolio Update

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Colin Dougan, Environment & Health
Strategic Director: Nick Steevens, Strategic Director: Environment & Community
Report Author: Various

Summary and purpose

The purpose of this report is to update the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee on the areas of work carried out by services within the Environment and Health portfolio. The report covers information such as key activities, events and performance over the last 12 months and reference to future work activities within the portfolio.

Recommendation

The Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment on the update on work areas contained within the Environment & Health Portfolio.

1. Background and Supporting Information

- 1.1 The Environment and Health Portfolio covers a wide range of public facing services. The Services covered are:
- a. Climate Change Action
 - b. Corporate Enforcement including Environmental Enforcement
 - c. Emergency Planning & Business Continuity
 - d. Environmental Health, Licensing and Air Quality
 - e. Health & Wellbeing
 - f. Recycling, Waste Collection and Street Cleansing

2. Climate Change Action

- 2.1 Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in October 2019, the Planning Policy and Conservation Team in conjunction with the Climate Change Working Group developed a Climate Change Action plan which was agreed by the Executive on the 16th March 2021.

The Surrey Heath Climate Change Action Plan has two key aims:

- a. To work towards achieving the ambitious net-zero carbon emission target by 2030 as an organisation (see box 1) and contribute to making the Borough net zero by 2050 (with the aspiration for net zero by 2030)
- b. To ensure that the Council as an organisation is resilient to the impacts of climate change and support the resilience of the Borough to the impacts of climate change.

- 2.2 Thorough oversight of the Climate Change Action Plan is conducted by the Climate Change Working Group.
- 2.3 Now located within the Recreation & Leisure service, the Climate Change Officer position has been subject to change in 2022. The former Climate Change Officer, Dr Anna Godleman left Surrey Heath in August. To ensure continuity an interim Climate Change Officer was sourced to bridge the gap in recruitment. Simon Mills has remained in post until January 2023 to ensure a through handover with our new Climate Change Officer Cameron Dent who joined the Council In December 2022.
- 2.4 Net zero means achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases put into the atmosphere and those taken out. In other words the net-zero commitment means that by 2030, Surrey Heath Borough Council will reduce the carbon dioxide it emits. This may be achieved by:
- Reducing the size of its operational estate
 - Enhancing the energy efficiency of its buildings, through the installation of insulation and energy efficient lighting
 - Replacing Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) units with more energy efficient plant
 - Generating a proportion of the energy it uses through renewables such as solar panels or micro-wind turbines installed on its operational estate
 - Reducing the use of petrol or diesel in its fleet (including those used by its contractors, such as waste collection), as much as possible
- 2.5 The Council will calculate how much carbon it is emitting and will seek to offset the remainder. These offsets could be achieved in a number of ways:
- By planting trees
 - By purchasing biofuels for use in its fleet
 - By purchasing renewable energy
 - Purchase of carbon offset credits
 - Inward carbon insetting investment

To deliver these aims the Action Plan includes actions across 6 key themes. It sets out Surrey Heath specific actions, whilst recognising the importance of partnership working to deliver these actions.

- 2.6 The climate change action plan is divided into six sections each of which contains actions aimed at either Surrey Heath Borough Council or the wider borough. Details of progress in these areas is covered below

Section	Action	Objective	Status
Energy	E1	Develop and implement an Energy Strategy for the Council do deliver Energy actions, working with partners including the Surrey Energy Partnership and Surrey Climate Commission.	A detailed energy strategy has been developed and is currently under review. It will be taken to the Climate Change Working Group in late January 2023
	E5	Continue and accelerate improvements to the energy efficiency of Council owned and operated buildings. Work with tenants to identify	In February 2022 Inspired Energy Solution Ltd were commissioned to conduct energy audits at Surrey Heath House and the Camberley Theatre.

		and implement measures to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's leased assets.	energy strategy.
	E6	Examine the viability of installing renewable energy onto Council owned buildings and land, such as solar panels, and identify buildings and/or land that is suitable for renewable energy installations.	Initial feasibility studies have been conducted at the Camberley Theatre, Frimley Lodge, Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road Car Park & Main Square Car Park. Multiple quotations have been obtained for solar arrays at the Theatre.
	E9	Work with businesses and citizens across Surrey Heath by providing information and advice on low cost technologies to reduce energy consumption.	Residential Energy efficiency grants in the Borough are managed by Action Surrey, an impartial energy advice service set up by local councils across Surrey as well as Surrey County Council, between April and October 2022 helped 22 households across Surrey Heath with more than £160,000 of improvements which saved approximately 33 tonnes of carbon.
Transport	T5	Investigate the potential to increase electric vehicle charging points within Council car parks.	Following a survey of resident car park users 7 locations have been selected for the installation of EV charging points. A procurement exercise was conducted using a KCS framework and a contractor has been appointed on a concession contract basis. OZEV funding is being applied for and installation of the infrastructure is due to commence in April 2023.
Environment	ET7	Examine how the carbon storage capacity of the Council's green assets can be maximised.	5000 new trees are being planted as part of the Queens Green Canopy programme. When mature these will absorb 125 tonnes of CO2 per year. This is in addition to the approximately 3420 tonnes of CO2 absorbed by the boroughs existing woodland cover ¹ .

¹ Calculation based on Forestry Commission figures of 1ha of trees absorbing 90 tonnes per year. The Borough is 9500ha in area, 40% of the borough is forested (source ONS)

Behavioural change	B1	Increase and diversify our communications and engagement on climate change, including directing resources towards community engagement and behavioural change.	A review is currently underway of climate change content on the Council's web pages and new content will be posted in the new year. The new energy strategy contains extensive actions for communicating responsibility for energy efficiency to staff.
Operations	O7	Educate, train and encourage internal procurers and commissioners to review their consumption of goods and services, reduce usage and adopt more environmentally friendly products and procedures	Carbon literacy training was piloted for staff in July 2022. The aim of this programme is to create a network of climate change champions who can educate, train and encourage staff across the organisation.
Monitoring	M2	Create a monitoring framework for the Action Plan to monitor progress.	Quarterly reports are given to the Climate Change Working Group on progress in implementing the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). A review of the CCAP will be undertaken in 2023 to ensure that the council is on course to achieve net zero by 2030.

3. Corporate Enforcement

3.1 The Corporate Enforcement Team covers a number of statutory enforcement functions on behalf of the Council including:

- Planning enforcement
- Abandoned vehicles
- Environmental crime such as fly tipping and other unlawful disposal of waste
- Unauthorised encampments
- Social housing/Council tax fraud
- Anti-social behaviour
- Dog fouling
- Dog on dog attacks

3.2 Following a restructure and successful recruitment drive in November 2021, the resourcing within the service currently totals 12 team members, 4 of which work part time hours. This includes a dedicated planning enforcement resource which dovetails into the overall Corporate Enforcement service. Further changes to the service structure occurred in December 2022 with the inclusion of Community Safety and the appointment of a Corporate Enforcement Team Leader and the recruitment of two Senior and one Principal Planning Enforcement Officer.

3.3 The level of work undertaken by the Corporate Enforcement team over the last twelve months is shown in the following table.

CASES	2022
Abandoned vehicles reports	236
Dog-on-dog attack reports	13
Anti Social Behaviour complaints	17
Community Protection (Warning) Notices issued	12
Community Protection Notices issued	5
Planning Enforcement referrals	196
Planning Enforcement Notices Issued	11
Unauthorised Encampments	6
Waste offences e.g. fly tipping	37
Fixed Penalty Notices issued (waste offences & abandoned vehicles)	6
Prosecutions (breach of CPN)	2

3.4 In Summer 2021 the Council carried out its largest resident consultation. The resident responses were evaluated and were instrumental in the moulding of the Surrey Heath BC 5-year strategy. Within the responses residents gave a clear steer that they wanted us to Deliver a safe borough and take prompt action in response to environmental crime (such as fly-tipping) and anti-social behaviour, building a reputation as the safest Borough in Surrey and deliver improvements to green infrastructure across the Borough.

3.5 The Driving Improvement initiative has focused on the 3 key objectives of:

- Tackling Antisocial Behaviour
- Taking action against Fly Tipping
- Planting 4,000 new trees in the borough by the end of planting season in March 2023

3.6 The Corporate Enforcement team has spearheaded the Driving Improvement Initiative through its targeted approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour (ASB) and fly tipping. The service has worked closely with other internal departments such as Environmental Health as well as external partners to:

- Tackle ASB at an early juncture, increase public awareness and partnership working to provide greater collaboration to bring forward a quick resolution wherever possible
- Identify fly tipping hot spots and work with partners to identify perpetrators and undertake clear-ups to enhance the local environment.

3.7 Some of the more challenging cases managed by Corporate Enforcement over the last 12 months include:

- Community Protection Notice Warnings (CPNW's) were issued in conjunction with Policing colleagues to deal with unauthorised car meets that were taking place at Watchmoor Park/Riverside Way off the Blackwater Valley Road A331. These meets were happening on an almost weekly basis and the noise and associated behaviour was having a detrimental impact on neighbouring

residential areas. As a result of over 100 CPNWs issued and within a couple of weeks the situation had been managed and the drivers responsible had moved elsewhere

- The owner of a trailer dumped full of rubbish was successfully prosecuted in court for breaching a Community Protection Order resulting in a fine of over £2,600

- 3.8 Following the introduction of deployable CCTV as part of the Driving Improvement incentive, the team are looking to take appropriate action against individuals who fly tip or fail in their duty of care.
- 3.9 The current borough wide Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in place expires in October 2023. The public / partner organisation consultation exercise will commence in May 2023 with a view to future implementation of the scheme.
- 3.10 Following a number of successful joint activities with Accent housing and Surrey Police, further days of action are being scheduled for later in the year to combat illegal scrap metal dealers, unauthorised waste carriers and fly tipping.
- 3.11 In relation to planning enforcement, the investigation and action against breaches of planning control are carried out in accordance with the Council's Local Enforcement Plan and are measured against a 80% target of first action within the specified time frame. These are:
- HIGH PRIORITY = 2 working days
 - MEDIUM PRIORITY = 10 working days
 - LOW PRIORITY = 21 working days

Quarter 4	January to March 2022	89%
Quarter 1	April to June 2022	88%
Quarter 2	July to September 2022	90%
Quarter 3	October to December 2022 (to date)	95%

- 3.12 In October the Corporate Enforcement service advertised three planning enforcement positions which are intended to rectify the services ongoing reliance on agency staff and fixed-term contracts. Interviews were conducted in late November with the following posts being recruited to:
- Corporate Enforcement Team Leader
 - 1 Principal Planning Enforcement Officer
 - 2 x Senior Planning Enforcement Officers

- 3.13 As a result of the changes in the Planning Enforcement structure compliance checking will now be shared between the two newly-appointed Senior Planning Enforcement Officers to provide allow greater resilience. It is anticipated that all our new appointments will all be in post by February 2023.

4. Emergency Planning & Business Continuity

- 4.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places duties on the Council to ensure critical services are resilient to respond to disruptive events and that the Council has plans in place to respond to a civil emergency in the Borough. The Council is supported in delivering these services through Applied Resilience; a specialist public service mutual procured for this purpose.

- 4.2 As legislation and guidance for Covid-19 has subsided the workload associated with Covid-19 had drastically reduced over the year. Covid-19 remained an ongoing challenge at the start of the year, and meetings were held during the first quarter of the year to coordinate the recovery. However, there were several other incidents which the Council responded to throughout the year in order to support residents and businesses. These included the response to:
- Storm Eunice in February
 - Extreme Heat over the summer
 - Industrial action
 - Surface Water Flooding in November
- 4.3 There is continued focus to ensure that Officers at all levels and Members are trained to respond to Civil Emergencies and disruptive incidents to the Council's services. The training and exercises carried out in 2022 include:
- Service Level Business Continuity Exercises (January)
 - Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) Training (February/October)
 - Incident Liaison Officer (ILO) Training (February/November)
 - Rest Centre Manager training (February)
 - Member Training (October)
 - Incident Management Team (IMT) Training (March)
 - BECC Exercise (May)
 - IMT Cyber Exercise (May)
 - Widespread Power Outage Exercise (October)
- 4.4 To ensure the Council is prepared for civil emergencies and disruptive events of all types, and ensure compliance with legislation, the following plans were reviewed and updated in 2022:
- Surrey Local Resilience Forum (SLRF) Multi Agency Flood Plan Part 2
 - Adverse Weather Plan
 - Fuel Shortage Plan
 - Borough Emergency Control Centre Plan (BECC) Plan
 - Service Level Business Continuity Plans
 - Strategic Business Continuity Plan
- 4.5 Some additional projects carried out in 2022 include:
- The development and implementation of the Fuel Shortage Plan
 - The development of a rest centre set up guide
 - General winter preparedness
 - The development and delivery of a multi-agency widespread loss of power exercise.
- 4.6 The Council continues to work closely with the Local Resilience Forum on multi-agency plans, procedures, training, and exercises. In 2022 there has been a focus on power outages as well as ensuring multi-agency plans are updated and tested.
- 4.7 Applied Resilience have recently developed the work programme for 2023 to ensure that the Council continues to be resilient to disruptive events and prepared to support residents and businesses impacted by civil emergencies, particularly as emerging risks increase in likelihood and impact.

5. Environment Health and Licensing

5.1 The Environmental Health (EH) Team enforce a range of statutory functions to protect health and the environment. These functions include:

- Food Safety in approximately 700 food businesses including inspections, revisits and complaint investigations
- Health & Safety in approximately 1400 workplaces including investigation of workplace accidents and safety at public events
- Air Quality monitoring (see separate report on the Agenda)
- Statutory Nuisance investigation such as noise, smoke, light, odour, rubbish and animal nuisances
- Control of Pollution Emitting Premises such as paint sprayers, dry cleaners and petrol stations
- Contaminated Land investigations
- Licensing of animal activity establishments, street trading, scrap metal and registration of skin piercing activities
- Investigation of infectious diseases;
- Pest Control and Stray Dog control.

5.2 An out of hours noise complaint response service operates between 17.00 Thursday to 08.00 Monday and Bank Holidays, to respond to complaints about excessive and unreasonable noise disturbance.

5.3 The Council through an agreement with Buckingham and Surrey Trading Standards Service acts as Primary Authority for food hygiene matters for:

- Krispy Kreme
- Exclusive Hotels (who own Pennyhill Park Hotel)
- Manning Impex (a food importer)
- Kerry Foods, (a large multi-national food manufacturer)
- Huel (nutritional shakes manufacturer)
- Pilgrim's Food Masters (food manufacturer)
- The Health Food Manufacturers Association.

5.4 The Council also acts as Primary Authority for health and safety for Exclusive Hotels and Manning Impex. The main benefits that businesses get from their Primary Authority Partnership include:

- Assured advice, consistency in interpretation of legislation and protection against enforcement action from other regulators
- Stronger relationships with partner regulators including Trading Standards, Food Standards Agency and Health and Safety Executive
- Support in identifying and targeting resources to areas of greatest business risk
- Notification of emerging regulatory changes
- Insight into the regulatory world such as National Health and Safety/Food Safety inspection priorities
- Personal development of business managers to undertake self-audits and develop priority based action plans for compliance matters

In turn the Council is able to recover the cost of providing advice and support to those businesses through the Primary Authority Partnership approach.

- 5.4 During 2021/22 Environmental Health investigated 656 service requests, the majority of which concerned requests to investigate statutory nuisances and complaints or enquiries about food safety and workplace safety. Performance of the service is high, with Quarter 2 performance against the corporate success measure *resolution within 90 days for nuisance investigations* was 91% against the target of 80%.
- 5.5 Whilst most complaints can be resolved informally formal notices may be served and a prosecution is currently underway relating to a resident's failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice with regard to noise disturbing neighbours.
- 5.6 The Food Standards Agency requires the Council to inspect food premises in accordance with a risk based inspection programme and to rate eligible food businesses under the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. In 2021/22 the Team carried out 435 routine food hygiene inspections which was 98% of those due.
- 5.7 In 2022/23 the routine inspection programme has been impacted in due to a 3 month vacancy in the team and a spate of voluntary or enforced closures of food premises due to pest infestations and a food poisoning outbreak. In Autumn 2022 officers were redeployed from routine workloads to investigate a food poisoning outbreak which culminated in a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice being served on the business, requiring it to shut immediately to protect public health. An Order then had to be sought from the Magistrates Court to confirm they agreed with the action taken by officers.
- 5.8 Despite the significant workloads caused by the food premises closures, performance to the end of November 2022 remained good with 184 inspections of food premises being carried out resulting in a Quarter 2 performance of 96% against the corporate success measure target of 100%.
- 5.9 The proportion of food businesses rated three or above under the food hygiene rating scheme (a rating of Satisfactory/Good/Very Good) is currently 98.5% against the corporate success measure target of 95%.
- 5.10 A major proactive health and safety enforcement project has been undertaken in 2022 with checks being carried out on 132 independent catering businesses to check the safety of their gas appliances. This has resulted in 30 formal notices being served prohibiting the use of unsafe equipment or requiring improvements to safety in a specified time. Further such initiatives are planned for electrical safety in outdoor hospitality settings resources permitting.
- 5.11 The Licensing Team are responsible for the licensing of:
- Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles
 - Premises that sell alcohol and/or provide public entertainment;
 - Gambling premises;
 - The placing of tables and chairs on the pavement (Pavement Licenses)
 - Street collections
- 5.12 The two Licensing Officers administer and monitor over 900 active licences. Officers work closely with businesses and other agencies to help promote the Licensing Act objectives in licensed premises in the Borough, which are:
- The prevention of crime and disorder,
 - Public safety,

- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm.

5.13 Our Licensing Officers are proactive in their work to ensure licence holders are acting responsibly and adhering to the requirements of their licences. This proactive work includes weekly meetings with the Police Licensing Officer and attendance at all the Town Centre and Village Pubwatch meetings.

5.14 Both Environmental Health and Licensing are heavily engaged in the Council's Driving Improvement initiative in relation to Anti-social Behaviour. Officers undertake regular joint enforcement initiatives with partners including the Police and Trading Standards colleagues. Many of these initiatives involve out of hours work to check licensing conditions, particularly in relation to underage alcohol sales such as the recent Borough-wide Day of Action. Further Licensing compliance initiatives are planned for 2023/24, involving the Police and DVSA in relation to taxi vehicle safety.

6. Health & Wellbeing

6.1 The Council were previously asked by the Surrey Health Health Alliance to lead on delivery of a "Whole Systems Approach" to Obesity, which aims to support residents to maintain a healthy weight by following a six stage Public Health framework. This is a highly collaborative project involves partners from Voluntary Support North Surrey, Surrey Public Health, Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group, Active Surrey and the University of Surrey.

6.2 A WSATO summit started the obesity conversation in Surrey Heath, with representatives including those from community, faith, voluntary, health and educational sectors being given the opportunity to share their experience and ideas. A key outcome from the summit was the development of detailed, causal maps which centred around six themes leading to obesity (lack of education around healthy eating, poverty, lack of cooking skills, a need for exercise and movement, lack of time, and mindset).

6.3 Following on from the summit, a smaller group attended a second workshop to work through the themes and pinpoint priorities for the delivery action plan. These priorities are mindset/mentality, poverty, education, and cost.

6.4 More recently, the cost-of-living crisis has had an impact as people need to eat as cheaply as possible, yet healthy options are considered by some to be expensive. To combat this, funds from WSATO have been utilised to help the community to change their mindset through the acquisition of skills to help understand ingredients and prepare healthy food.

6.5 Utilising the WSATO funding, the Happy Healthy January initiative has been developed with grants of up to £500 being offered to small groups wishing to deliver a healthy eating event or activity during Happy Healthy January. It is hoped the start date will attract people with health-based new year's resolutions as well as those looking to save money at the start of the year. Projects will be selected according to how they match the WSATO priorities, and how collectively, they offer breadth of opportunity without replication. To be successful and sustainable, activities need to offer participants education or skills around healthy eating, but a further requirement is detail around how feedback will be obtained from participants and shared with SHBC.

- 6.6 The first round of Happy healthy January assessed six applications. Groups are invited to continue to apply throughout January:
<https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/happy-healthy-january>
- 6.7 Officers are reviewing the potential for a Healthy High Streets initiative in Surrey Heath and the places available in shopping centres for the community to walk, eat and rest. Work is also taking place in conjunction with Collectively Camberley to identify ways to integrate health and wellbeing into all events in Camberley, promoting physical activity and healthy eating.
- 6.8 Cross-departmental working is taking place with the Council's new Climate Change Officer supporting a project looking at the environmental impact and health benefits of projects such as:
- Walk to school week/
 - Promoting anti-idling of vehicles at key locations in the borough such as outside schools and major junctions
 - Reducing consumption of red meat and looking at plant-based options
- 6.9 Officers are also working closely with Surrey County Council to understand why Healthy Schools accreditation levels are low in Surrey Heath and to see if there is a way to promote an uptake.
- 6.10 In conjunction with Environmental Health and Public Health Colleagues a relaunch of Eat Out, Eat Well is being proposed to encourage healthier options and ingredient substitutions in food premises such as takeaways and restaurants.

7 Waste & Recycling

- 7.1 Surrey Heath Borough Council's contract with Amey for waste and street cleaning services is part of a joint arrangement alongside Elmbridge Borough Council, Mole Valley District Council and Woking Borough Council.
- 7.2 The Contract is managed by a joint client team, the operational arm of Joint Waste Solutions (JWS). The team reports to a Contract Partnership Board, which comprises of the Lead Officers from each of the partner authorities who provide strategic direction and leadership to JWS. The Contract Partnership Board in turn reports to the Joint Waste Collections Services Committee (JWCSC) and is comprised of the Portfolio Holders from the authorities and provides political scrutiny of the contract. Ultimately the JWCSC reports back to individual authorities but has authority to make decisions under agreed delegation.
- 7.3 Surrey Heath is the host authority for the JWS team, which includes providing corporate support services and ensuring that the governance arrangements for both the joint contract and the Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP) are working effectively.
- 7.4 The services provided by Amey are measured against a suite of key performance indicators (KPI's) covering both their kerbside collection and street cleansing responsibilities. Areas included in the Authority's own quarterly performance reports include levels of missed collections and the results of street cleaning surveys. Performance figures for the year to date are provided in the table below.

		Target	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Missed collections	No. missed per 100,000 collections	80	44	76	57	54	804	62	50	46	
Street cleaning surveys	% transects below standard (litter)	4	0.2			0.2					
	% transects below standard (detritus)	8	8.7			8.5					

7.5 Other service measures relate to the amount residual waste collected per household and the recycling rate – the percentage of all waste which is sent for recycling or composting.

		Target (22/23)	Q1	Q2
Residual waste	Kg per household of residual waste – based on rolling 12 month total	360kg	312 kg	309kg

7.6 Encouraging waste reduction and driving down the volume of residual waste will be a priority for 2023-24. SHBC traditionally boasts a high recycling rate, comparing favourably to other authorities, and work continues to be carried out to sustain this and make improvements where possible. The following table sets out the monthly recycling rate and the rolling 12-month rate for the year to date.

		Target (22/23)	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
Recycling rate	% material sent for recycling and composting	63.0	56%	66%	62%	60%	55%	61%	60%	62%
	% Rolling 12 months		59%	60%	59%	59%	58%	59%	59%	59%

7.7 In 2021-22 recycling rates were impacted by the disruption to garden waste services with the reduced number of collections meaning less material was sent for composting. The figures above show that while the recycling rate recovered as the service was restored, the dry summer resulted in lower than normal green waste tonnages in July and August, which again impacted the overall recycling rate. August collections were also affected by two weeks of industrial action.

7.8 Garden waste collections were restored to a fortnightly service in April 2022 following a period of reduced service due to driver shortages. The staffing issues resulted from a combination of factors which were addressed through benchmarking pay, offering recruitment and retention incentives, and with longer term initiatives such as training existing staff to qualify as HGV drivers. In the summer, Amey began the process of contacting customers whose accounts were due for renewal. This process had been paused during the disruption, and this has now been brought up to date.

7.9 In the summer Amey staff in two depots, including Surrey Heath, voted to take industrial action over their proposed pay deal. Initially three weeks of strike action were

notified, followed by a further three week notice being submitted. However Amey engaged ACAS to facilitate negotiations with the GMB union, which saw an agreement reached and strikes called off after 10 days. While recycling and garden waste services were impacted by staff shortages during this period, refuse and food waste collections took place throughout and normal services were rapidly resumed.

- 7.10 Work has been carried out by JWS to improve the quality of recycling collected in the borough. This has seen a range of new initiatives from crew training to targeted interventions such as additional checks alongside collection crews and information letters sent to residents who have put incorrect items into their recycling bin. To support the crew training in the longer term a video has been created to be used for both induction and refresher sessions. This was produced in-house by JWS.
- 7.11 In October and November the food waste collections service was expanded, and introduced to 2,700 properties who were previously not able to use this. The work was delivered by the JWS projects team, who are funded by SEP, and work across the county to support service improvements in all 11 Districts and Boroughs. The team, assisted by the Operations Officers, oversaw the delivery of food waste bins, kitchen caddies and service information leaflets to households. This was followed by several weeks of monitoring to ensure a smooth introduction of collections.
- 7.12 Officers from SHBC, JWS and Surrey County Council have been working in partnership to review options and prepare a business case for the redevelopment of the Doman Road depot. The current facilities for tipping at the site require updating, and options are being explored to ensure that any improvements carried out are not only fit for purpose for the Council's waste collection contractor, but are aligned with SEPs infrastructure requirements and the Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS) and key emerging government policy in the longer term.
- 7.13 Looking ahead to improvements that will be carried out to enhance services for our residents, the Recreation & Leisure and JWS teams are working together to review litter bin distribution and the routes available for residents to report issues with bins. This project aims to improve the customer journey for anyone needing to report an issue with a litter bin, using maps and improved processes to ensure the problem is directed to the correct department or contractor first time. In the longer term and subject to funding, there is a plan to undertake a review of bin locations and replacement of bins which are no longer fit for purpose.
- 7.14 The government's RaWS will impact how we collect waste and recycling in the future, although we await further information including the outcome of a range of consultations, to understand the extent of the policy changes that will be implemented and how we will need to adapt our services in order to meet any new requirements. The Partnership's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) is due for review, however it was not felt viable to meaningfully do this without clear policy direction. As such, "SEP 2025 – a partnership approach to waste prevention and recycling", has been developed on behalf of all Surrey local authorities through the SEP to cover the three-year period from 2023-24 to 2025-26. SEP 2025 sets out our strategic aims and priorities in the short to medium term, while focusing on the longer-term policy direction and the strategic vision for the partnership.

Annexes

None

Background Papers

None