

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 6 December 2021

Wards: All

Subject: Reference from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Waste services, recycling and fly-tipping

Lead officer: Rosie Mckeever, Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Aidan Mundy, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Contact officer: Rosie Mckeever, Scrutiny Officer, 0208 545 4035

Recommendations:

1. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel requests that Cabinet implement its recommendations as set out in paragraphs 2.6 to 2.9 below and report back to the Panel with an update in six months' time.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. On 1 November the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel welcomed the Assistant Director of Public Space to lead a discussion on how Merton residents can be encouraged to recycle more. A presentation was also given on the recycling rates in Morden and London wide.
- 1.2. The Panel were reassured to hear that Merton's current recycling rate places us in the top quartile in London and would like to build on this with a few suggested areas of investigation for Cabinet and officers as set out in paragraphs 2.6 to 2.9 below.

2 DETAILS

2.1. Scrutiny process

- 2.2. The Panel were reassured to hear that Merton's current recycling rate places us in the top quartile in London.
- 2.3. However it should be noted that whilst Merton delivers similar levels of food waste and recycling as its neighbouring boroughs, our garden waste is much lower in comparison which has led to the Panels suggestion at point 2.7.
- 2.4. Panel Members also asked questions in relation to resident queries they have received regarding contaminated waste, with the Assistant Director of Public Space agreeing that this issue is the biggest blocker to improving the recycling rate.

2.5. Scrutiny response

- 2.6. The Panel RESOLVED (six votes for, one abstention) to send the following recommendation to Cabinet;
- 2.7. The Sustainable Communities Panel recommends Cabinet look at the feasibility of offering discounted access to our paid for waste services, to those residents on council tax support, in order to incentivize take up of

these services and further increase the rate of recycling. This should include garden waste collection.

2.8. Furthermore the Panel recommended (five votes for, two abstentions) that as a Council we lobby the government to accept central responsibility for producing effective policy and legislation to deter and deal with fly tipping.

2.9. Lastly, all seven voting Members of the Panel agreed to recommend that the Council, over a suitable time frame, proactively writes to all those blocks of flats with communal recycling, with details on how to recycle correctly and avoid waste contamination.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. None – Cabinet is required under the council’s constitution to receive, consider and respond to references from overview and scrutiny.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

5 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

5.1. None for the purpose of this report.

6 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Cabinet is required under the council’s constitution to receive, consider and respond to references from overview and scrutiny. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires Cabinet to respond to reports and recommendations made by scrutiny committees within two months of written notice being given.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are no human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications as a result of this report.

8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

8.1. These are no crime and disorder implications as a result of this report.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are no risk management and health and safety implications as a result of this report.

10 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- None

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None