

MINUTES of SPECIAL MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL PERFORMANCE**REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian

House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Tuesday, 8 October 2013 at 2.30 pm.

Present:- Councillors, Milligan (Chair), Coventry, de Vink, Montgomery, Muirhead, Pottinger, Rosie and Wallace.

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Baxter, Bennett, Boyes, Imrie and Russell.

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

2. Waste Management Services – Current Position

There was submitted report, dated 4 October 2012, by the Director Resources advising that in accordance with paragraph 4.2 (1)(d) of the Council's Scheme of Administration the Chair of the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee had requested a performance report on Waste Management Services.

The report provided the Committee with an update relating to specific service areas within Waste Management Services as follows:-

- Street sweeping
- Litter/dog fouling bins
- Recycling performance
- Food waste treatment facility

The Committee, having heard from the Director Resources, discussed a number of issues arising from the report, viz:-

- The current position with regards to the internal review of street sweeping activities;
- How the potential increase in the number of litter/dog waste bins, indicated by the desk top exercise, would work and what it would mean in operational terms;
- Current sickness absence levels within the service;
- How often waste collection crews completing their routes ahead of normal finishing times engaged in litter picking;
- The stickering of litter bins advertising that these bins could also be used for dog waste, and the possibility of using larger bins that didn't have to be emptied as frequently;
- The potential impact on the LEAMS (Local Environmental Audit and Management System) cleanliness index for Midlothian; and
- Progress in making larger or second recycling bins available to those residents who required them.

Thereafter, the Director, Resources , Head of Commercial Operations and Business Manager – Waste Services responded to Members questions and comments as follows:-

- It was anticipated that the internal review of street sweeping activities would be completed by the end of the current calendar year with a report being brought to Committee early in 2014;
- The desk top exercise had involved a remodelling of the existing service provision, and although further work required to be done, it appeared that it would be possible to increase the number of bins from within existing resources;
- The number of times that waste collection crews completing their routes ahead of normal finishing times engaged in litter picking was not currently recorded;
- During Quarter 1 there had been one LEAMS inspection visit resulting in a cleanliness index of 74 which was in line with previous years. The outcome of a second visit by colleagues from City of Edinburgh Council was still to be received;
- It was anticipated that stocks of the larger blue recycling bins would be received shortly and that in the meantime requests for second bins would continue to be accommodated as appropriate;
- If larger sized bins were to be used for the likes of dog waste, care would need to be taken with regards manual handling due to the heavy weight likely to be involved;
- It was acknowledged that sickness absence levels were unusually high however they were being managed in accordance with the appropriate Council policies. Additionally, additional staff had been taken on in an attempt to deal with any backlog; and
- One of the main issues arising from the employee engagement session was pay, which stemmed back to Modernising Midlothian pay levels, but also included the more recent removal of the market supplement.

Decision

- (a) To note the report;
- (b) To note that the internal review of street sweeping activities would be completed by the end of the current calendar year with a report being brought to Committee early in 2014;
- (c) To agree to seek an update report on the removal of the market supplement and if possible, in line with the timescales set out in (b) above.

(Action: (b) Head of Commercial Operations: (c) Director, Resources)

The Meeting terminated at 3.12 pm.