

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## City Environment, South Downs & The Sea Committee

## Agenda Item 18

**Subject:** City Environment Improvement Programme Update

**Date of meeting:** 19 September 2023

**Report of:** Executive Director: Economy, Environment & Culture

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

**For general release**

### **1. Purpose of the report and policy context**

1.1 The Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee received an update on the City Environment Improvement Programme at its last meeting on 14 March 2023. This report provides a further progress update.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That Committee notes the report and the Programme Update in Appendix 1.

### **3. Context and background information**

3.1 The City Environment Modernisation Programme was established in 2018 to deliver improvements to the service in the context of reducing council budgets, increasing customer demand and an expanding service offer. Towards the end of 2022, the programme of work was reviewed and led to the creation of the City Environment Improvement Programme. This was to reflect:

- The growing number of projects across City Parks, including projects to address ash die back and elm disease; the £3.400m capital investment in the service and the need for new IT systems in allotments and arboriculture.
- The increasingly varying nature of projects within the Programme – some are modernisation, some are to ensure compliance, some are to deliver carbon neutral activities, and many are designed to improve services across City Environment.

3.2 The depth, breadth and complexity of the issues that are being addressed across City Environment cannot be underestimated. The improvements and modernisation required is a long-term programme that will deliver change over time. The cuts to the service over the previous 10 years have led to risks relating to non-compliance and health and safety, as well as a deterioration in service levels. The pace of change is slow due to the extent

and depth of the problems caused by a decade of dis-investment. A significant proportion of management time and effort continues to be used to address these issues and build a strong foundation which is required to ensure visible and sustainable improvements in service delivery for the future. Furthermore, the challenges posed by two serious tree diseases have required significant council investment and pose widespread health and safety risks for the city if not managed effectively. Replanting is essential to contribute to the council's carbon neutral 2030 commitments.

### **Highlights from the Improvement Programme Update**

- 3.3 Appendix 1 contains an update on each of the key Cityclean projects within the Programme. A green RAG rating means the project is on track, an amber rating means the project is slightly off track and red means the project is off track.
- 3.4 Some key milestones achieved over the last few months include:
- Bringing the number of electric vehicles in operation across the council to 61 and ordering the first electric side-lifting communal waste vehicle
  - Appointing a Public Toilet Programme Manager
  - Appointing a new project lead to deliver the Bin Infrastructure Action Plan
  - Responding to 95% of City Environmental Management Stage 1 Complaints within 10 days (100% for City Clean)
  - Starting the implementation of the integrated waste management system
  - Completing the consultation process for extending the Flyering licence area
  - Completing Phase 1 of the Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme
  - Implementing the 2023 Weeding Plan, including a new traffic light system
  - Receiving permission from Policy & Resources Committee to demolish the old Hollingdean Depot offices and replace with new building, and to receive associated funding
- 3.5 In addition, two further appointments have been made to take forward key areas of work. A Food Waste Project Manager will lead on preparing for the Environment Act reforms in line with the latest information available. This will include developing costed options for a new food waste collection service. A Waste Minimisation Officer has been appointed to lead the work on a messaging campaign to reduce the volume of waste produced across Brighton & Hove, to increase the levels of reuse, to increase the levels of recycling and reduce contamination of recycling bins. Further information on this is available in the Waste Reduction and Recycling Report on today's agenda.

## **4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options**

- 4.1 The Improvement Programme is developing a sustainable future for the service in Brighton & Hove in the context of reducing council budgets, increasing customer demand, serious tree diseases and forthcoming legislative changes through the Environment Act. Within this, work is taking place to improve performance on refuse, recycling, garden and trade waste

collections and street cleansing, as well as adopting a more commercial approach to income generating services. The Programme has recently been expanded to take account the need for improvement and modernisation within City Parks. Without the continuation of the Programme, there is a risk that improvements will not be delivered.

## **5. Community engagement and consultation**

- 5.1 No direct community engagement or consultation has taken place in relation to this report. Previous community engagement and consultation activities in relation to the Programme are detailed in the committee reports listed as Background Documents below.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 This report provides City Environment, South Downs & The Sea Committee with an update on the delivery of City Environment Improvement Programme. Committee is asked to note the report and Appendix 1.

## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report which is for noting.
- 7.2 This report, ~~however~~, is an update report on progress on existing initiatives which are funded from existing resources.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack    Date consulted: 17/08/2023

## **8. Legal implications**

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report which is for noting.

Name of lawyer consulted: Alice Rowland    Date consulted: 15/08/2023

## **9. Equalities implications**

- 9.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from the report's recommendations.

## **10. Sustainability implications**

- 10.1 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from the report's recommendations. Many of the projects within the City Environment Improvement Programme have sustainability implications.

## **Supporting Documentation**

## Appendices

1. Appendix 1: City Environment Improvement Programme Update

### Background documents

1. Waste Prevention Programme available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/waste-prevention-programme-for-england-maximising-resources-minimising-waste>
2. [City Environment Improvement Programme Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 14 March 2023 (item 88)
3. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 15 November 2022 (item 46)
4. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 22 June 2022 (item 8)
5. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 21 September 2021 (item 41)
6. [National Resources and Waste Strategy – Responses to Government consultations](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 21 June 2021 (item 8)
7. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 16 March 2021 (item 80)
8. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 29 September 2020 (item 29)
9. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 21 January 2020 (item 66)
10. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 8 October 2019 (item 36)
11. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 25 June 2019 (item 10)
12. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 22 January 2019 (item 57)
13. [City Environmental Management – Modernisation Programme Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 9 October 2018 (item 29)