

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## City Environment, South Downs & The Sea Committee

## Agenda Item 51

**Subject:** City Environment Improvement Programme Update

**Date of meeting:** 12 March 2024

**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 City Environment, South Downs & The Sea (CESS) Committee received an update on the City Environment Improvement Programme on 19 September 2023. This report provides a further progress update. The report also provides information on forthcoming waste reforms which will impact on the council.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That Committee notes the report and its appendices.

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

3.1 The City Environment Improvement Programme is delivering improvements to the service in the context of reducing council budgets and increasing customer demand. The next few years will see the biggest reforms to waste management for a generation, the timescales for change and the impact of statutory requirements pose a tremendous challenge to local authorities, financially and operationally.

3.2 As stated in previous updates to Committee, the depth, breadth and complexity of the issues being addressed across City Environment cannot be underestimated. Since the last update to Committee, the report into the Cityclean Independent Inquiry has been published. This highlighted the difficult environment the service operates in and provides some insight to the challenges faced in delivering change and improvements.

#### **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:
- Responding to 96% of Cityclean Stage 1 complaints within 10 days
  - Extending the time-banding zone for commercial bins on the highway
  - Completing the consultation events to refresh the Graffiti Tagging Reduction Strategy and Action Plan
  - Bringing the number of electric vehicles in operation across the council to 72 (up from 61 in the September 2023 update)
  - Demolishing the old office building at Hollingdean Depot
  - Continuing to manage the outcome of the Independent Inquiry, including the development of a culture change programme
  - Receiving CESS Committee approval to create new public toilets at The MacLaren Pavilion at The Level; this was followed by approval from Planning Committee
  - Opening the Changing Places Toilet at The One Garden at Stanmer Park in partnership with Plumpton College
  - Progressing plans for installing additional carton and WEEE recycling containers following committee approval
  - Beginning to implement a new approach to weed management for 2024 following approval by CESS Committee
- 3.5 In October and November 2023, Cityclean trialled a bin amnesty on three roads across the city. The purpose of the trial was to collect unused bins and boxes to reuse them, help keep pavements clear and to understand whether this approach would be successful in the future.
- 3.6 Posters were put up on Springfield Road, Portland Road and Elm Grove asking residents to indicate the unused bins and boxes on their roads. A total of 11 containers were retrieved. At the same time, the Report a Problem form on the council's website was amended to enable residents to notify the council of unwanted bins and boxes. Between October 2023 and January 2024, 38 containers were reported by residents and retrieved by the Bin & Box Crew.
- 3.7 As there was a much larger take up of returning bins via the Report a Problem option rather than a targeted bin amnesty, it has been determined not to continue with the bin amnesty approach. Significant resources were required to plan the amnesties, as well as the collection of unwanted bins, with little return. The Report a Problem option will continue to be available for councillors and residents to report unwanted bins and boxes.
- 3.8 From 27 December 2023 to 22 January 2024, 22 Christmas tree recycling sites were available across the city. 78 tips were made and 121 tonnes of Christmas trees were collected during this time and sent for composting.

### **Waste reforms**

- 3.9 At its meeting on 14 March 2023, the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee received an update on the Environment Act. Appendix 2 provides a further update on the forthcoming waste reforms.

### **Waste minimisation**

- 3.10 As reported at the September 2023 meeting, a Waste Minimisation Officer had recently 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. Since that time, work has progressed on achieving these objectives.
- 3.11 The waste minimisation update in Appendix 1 provides an overview of the work completed. In addition, key to achieving the objectives is building relationships with stakeholders, both across the city and further afield. To that end, the Waste Minimisation Officer has:
- Met with officers and students from Brighton and Sussex universities to facilitate dissemination of information and sharing council news stories and campaigns through their regular posts, bulletins, newsletters and existing websites. This is to encourage reuse and donation at start / end of private tenancies, as well as engage with students directly via Climate Justice Week at Sussex University and Freshers Weeks.
  - Met with the Environmental Education Officer to identify opportunities for joint working and messaging. This includes the Waste Minimisation Officer supporting the production of a short film for secondary schools on sustainability and recycling rates.
  - Worked with the Circular Economy and Sustainability Team to identify synergies between work and feed into the Circular Economy and Sustainability Action Plan
  - Met and corresponded with other local authorities as part of understanding best practice, as well as the local community / circular community and experts at WRAP, Material Focus and Behaviour Change Ltd

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

- 4.1 The Improvement Programme is delivering improvements to the service in the context of reducing council budgets and increasing customer demand. 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. 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 its appendices. Further updates, particularly on the waste reforms, will be provided to future committee meetings.

## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report which is for noting. 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: 15/02/2024

## **8. Legal implications**

- 8.1 No legal implications are considered to arise directly from this Report, which is for noting only.

Name of lawyer consulted: Victoria Simpson Date consulted: 09/02/2024

## **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**

### **1. Appendices**

1. Appendix 1: City Environment Improvement Programme Update
2. Appendix 2: Waste Reforms Update

### **2. Background documents**

1. [City Environment Improvement Programme Update Report](#) to City Environment, South Downs & The Sea Committee on 19 September 2023 (item 18)
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. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 16 March 2021 (item 80)
7. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 29 September 2020 (item 29)
8. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 21 January 2020 (item 66)
9. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 8 October 2019 (item 36)
10. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 25 June 2019 (item 10)
11. [City Environment Modernisation Update Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 22 January 2019 (item 57)
12. [City Environmental Management – Modernisation Programme Report](#) to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 9 October 2018 (item 29)

