

Folkestone & Hythe District and Parish Councils' Joint Committee

Held at:	Remote Meeting
Date	Thursday, 16 September 2021
Present	Councillors Graham Allison, Michael Boor, Laszlo Dudas, Tony Hills (In place of Martin Sweeney), Frank Hobbs, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee and Terence Mullard
Apologies for Absence	Councillors Martin Sweeney
Officers Present:	Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), Gavin Edwards (Performance and Improvement Specialist) and Andrew Rush (Regulatory Services & Corporate Contracts Lead Specialist)
Others Present:	None

8. Appointment of chairman

Proposed by Councillor Hobbs
Seconded by Councillor Allison

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee be appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

9. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

10. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021 were agreed. The Chairman's signature will be added confirming approval.

11. Waste Collection Service

A presentation, by Andrew Rush - Regulatory Services & Corporate Contracts Lead Specialist, was given to members outlining the challenges which had affected the district's waste collection services recently and an overview of

steps taken to address these issues. The presentation is attached to the minutes.

Mr Rush outlined various problems that had occurred as well as noting that the suspension of the garden waste service was a difficult decision due to HGV driver shortages and the immediate impact of Covid-19 related absences.

Actions taken involved staff stabilising the service; the Task and Finish Group set up in July through the Overview & Scrutiny Committee who looked intensively at initial problems, investigation and conclusions reached.

On a positive note, Mr Rush informed members that the Garden Waste Service will resume on 27 September.

Members asked various questions as follows:

- How will the Council communicate the garden waste restart news to residents? The Comms team will arrange for residents to receive letters. Collection days and weekly cycle remain unchanged. Social media and information on the website has commenced.
- Who will meet the costs of writing and sending letters? The Council will seek to recover its costs from the Contractor.
- Why change the routes? Routes had remained unchanged for 10 years, in that time new housing had been built; efficient use of new vehicle fleet; carbon savings to be made from more efficient routes.
- Why were there so many problems? Day to day routes not correctly balanced; local knowledge of crews under-utilised; problems with Contractor new IT systems and data transfer; new operatives working on changed routes; and latterly the national shortage of HGV drivers.
- Ultimately, who will pay for these problems? Contractor penalties will be investigated.
- Does the Council monitor post waste collection and how it is treated? FHDC are the waste collection authority. KCC are the waste disposal authority. KCC monitor the quality of materials collected and report on their website the end destinations for materials.
- Will the garden waste service fee be rebated? This is under consideration at present.

The Chairman and members thanked Mr Rush for the presentation and for his work in resolving this problem. It had obviously been a very difficult period for all officers involved.

12. **Any Other Business**

The Chairman reminded members that the next Planning Forum is scheduled for Thursday 28 October, 5pm start. All district town and parish councils have been invited. This will be a remote meeting, the agenda will be available nearer the date.