

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
HELD AT FREER COMMUNITY CENTRE, 242A LEICESTER ROAD, WIGSTON,
LEICESTERSHIRE, LE18 1HQ ON TUESDAY, 30 APRIL 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.01 PM**

PRESENT

I K Ridley Chair
F S Broadley Vice-Chair



Meeting ID: 2690

COUNCILLORS

N Alam
L A Bentley
G A Boulter
J K Chohan
M L Darr
J K Ford
D A Gamble
C S Gore
S Z Haq
G G Hunt
P Joshi

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

D M Gill Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer
S Khan Interim Strategic Director
T Neal Strategic Director
J Wells Senior Strategic Development Manager
S Wheeliker Senior Democratic & Electoral Services Officer
B Wilson Corporate Project Lead & IT Manager

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillors J Kaufman and K J Loydall.

67. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

Councillor J K Chohan substituted for Councillor J Kaufman.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

69. WASTE TRANSFORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out pages 3 – 21 of the agenda reports pack and 2 – 5 of the agenda update pack), which provided information on the waste service transformation and asked it to approve the Household Waste and Recycling Kerbside Collection Policy.

Due to the unavailability of live streaming equipment at the venue a more detailed minute of this agenda item was taken as featured below.

Members queried where the 30% up-take figure for purchasing large bins had come from, whether the excess bank holiday pay was included in the budget and under what circumstances excess waste such as cardboard would be collected. Officers advised the 30% up-take figure is an estimate based on figures provided by other local authorities that have similar schemes, that the excess bank holiday pay was included in the budget, and that the excess waste should be secured by the bins, either under the wheels or in between two bins so as to avoid rubbish being blown away.

Queries were also raised regarding proper emptying of bins, rather than just lifting out waste, whether the 'task and finish' work model would continue and ambiguous wording in the policy. Officers advised they were aware of some reported instances of incomplete collections and confirmed that only mechanical emptying of bins was allowed and this would be emphasised to Refuse Collectors. Officers also confirmed that spot-checking would be conducted and should any instances of incorrect refuse collection continue then this would result in disciplinary action. Officers also advised that the 'task and finish' work model would be continued and that the wording in the policy was designed to be as flexible as possible.

Members questioned the means-testing for providing free bins, whether the current fleet of refuse collection vehicles were compatible with larger bins, how an 'overweight' bin is determined and how the Council would defend itself from a legal challenge over non-collection of waste when it is a statutory duty. Officers advised the policy is designed to cover as many people in hardship as possible, so would not just apply to people receiving means tested welfare payments, but also to other vulnerable groups such as pensioners and couples on minimum wage etc. Officers also confirmed that the current fleet of refuse lorries are compatible with the larger bins and advised that a bin is considered to be 'overweight' when the mechanical lift on the lorry cannot lift the bin.

Regarding the legal defence query, Officers advised that the Council would be able to defend itself based around the assumption that the person is not fully utilising their separate recycling bin and because the Council is not refusing to collect the waste, they are only refusing to collect it all in one go, the additional waste would be collected at the next collection visit.

Members and Officers discussed the creation of a working group or appeals panel to handle appeals on the determination of applications for waived fees for the XL bin service. It was agreed that Officers would create terms of reference and a recommendation to Full Council be made to include both Members and Officers in determining appeals.

Members discussed the costs and savings involved in this service transformation and in the optimisation programme, querying whether the change to bi-weekly collections would generate sufficient savings to avoid charging for larger bins. Officers advised that the budget would not sustain this amendment and so a further capital budget would need to be proposed to Full Council for it to be evaluated.

It was moved by Councillor G A Boulter, seconded by Councillor L A Bentley, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

An amendment to ensure there is a transparent appeals process for the determination of applications for waived fees for the XL service and decision appeals will be heard by an Appeals Panel formed of Officers and Members be

approved.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor S Z Haq, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) Paragraph 2.7 line 2 reads "The only exception to this will be where a resident is liaising with the Council or other relevant monetary advice service, regarding additional support due to their financial difficulties";**
- ii) Paragraph 2.8 line 1 reads "Where a household has excessive medical waste, the fee can also be waived by a member of the Senior Leadership Team";**
- iii) In the proposed Household Waste and Recycling Kerbside Collection Policy on page 12 paragraph 4 line 2 reads "In these circumstances a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be able to waive the fee"; and**
- iv) In the proposed Household Waste and Recycling Kerbside Collection Policy on page 16 paragraph 3.13 the final line reads "In such cases senior management will have the discretion to waive any fee."**

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor S Z Haq, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

On page 6 after paragraph 2.8 a new paragraph renumbered as 2.9 be inserted which reads "To ensure oversight of the determination of applications for waived fees for the XL service, quarterly reports will be regularly presented to the Service Delivery Committee of the number of applications for waived fees and the number and percentage granted."

It was moved by Councillor C S Gore, seconded by Councillor N Alam, and

DEFEATED THAT:

The proposed amendment to "review the options at paragraph 5 and provide new bins at zero cost to residents" be approved.

For 4
Against 9
Abstentions 0

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor S Z Haq, subject to the 3 approved amendments and with an amendment to recommendation C to approve option A, and

RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The 'Household Waste and Recycling Kerbside Collection Policy' described in paragraph 2 and appendix 1 be approved (as amended);**
- ii) The proposed implementation of the policy and key project dates be noted (as amended);**
- iii) After Member consideration and review of the financial details provided in paragraph 4 and the options in paragraph 5, that financial option A be approved (as amended); and**

- iv) **The capital budget, included in appendix 3, for implementing the service transformation be approved (as amended).**

For 9
Against 4
Abstentions 0

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.48 pm