Council

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 18th December 2012

Report From: Councillor Clare Feeney-Johnson
Environment and Sustainability Portfolio Holder

Report Title: Executive Report

The following matters have arisen with my Portfolio:-

This has been a very busy time within all areas of my portfolio; many projects have come together round about the same time. Please find a summary for your information of the main project areas.

Plastic and Cardboard Trial

The plastic and cardboard trial has commenced, 7500 properties now have collections every other week. Plastic is being collected in a clear sack, card in with the paper blue box. Information leaflets of the trial along with the first clear sack were delivered to each household via hand. All the team pulled together and helped undertake this massive task over a two week period, I also helped in the preparation – folding leaflets and bags ready for the letter box. I would like to pass my thanks on to the teams involved; their going that extra mile has prevented any additional costs to the budget!

In the first three weeks the average increase to the recycling collections was 7t in card and 2t in plastic. This is based on WasteDataFlow guidance.

Prior to the trial the average recycling tonnage per week was 30.55t.

In the 3 collection weeks we have had in the trial the collections were as follows:

Wk 1: 42.38t
Wk 2: 38.20t
Wk3: 37.88t

Prior to the trial we were averaging 82.46t waste collection per week. Tonnages went up but are now declining steadily as the weeks pass i.e.:

Wk1: 104.40t
Wk 2: 100.39t
Wk 3: 97.43t
Wk 4: 94.87t

The reason for the increase is typical in such trials across the country, when space in the grey bin is created by removing the card and plastic, householders fill that space with other waste. Perhaps waste that they have previously taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRCs) or non green garden waste. Cumbria County Council has advised us that the tonnage for Kendal HWRC went down by approx 12t in October, so this could well be the case. This is now reducing and levelling out, hence the reduction in tonnages over the weeks. A true reflection of tonnages will be seen in January and February when the scheme has settled and Christmas passed. Monitoring of the tonnages at the bring sites is taking place, there was negligible change in November; slightly down on both plastic and card but well within the range we expect.
**Air Quality Management Zone Partnership**

The air quality management zone partnership is preparing for the next annual report to DEFRA, meetings between the County Council transport teams and the board are underway to ensure better cross referencing, to minimise duplication and stop any parallel working take place. The Go Easy project continues, development of the car share scheme is almost complete with several of the Town’s larger employers (Kendal College, Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) are two) signed up for the initial trial, which will hopefully iron out any issues before it goes fully public. Take a look at the web site; I’m sure this innovative scheme will prove to be very successful. The Town’s County Councillors are donating £250 each from their member’s divisional schemes which will allow the Go Easy campaign to carry on for another year, building on the work already done.

The Air Quality Management Group identified the benefits of ‘Green Walls/Urban planting’ and the reductions these can bring to various gases and improved air quality by their oxygen production, site are being looked into and costed to see if this is an achievable option in the management zone area.

**Young People**

During November, the Council engaged with the National Takeover day, where young people from across South Lakeland helped run the Council for the day.

Nine young people from local schools joined councillors and staff to see how the authority makes decisions and operates on a daily basis. They attended Cabinet, Shadow Cabinet and a mock Licensing Sub Committee, looking at real case examples. Economic Development, Communications, Environmental Protection, Parking and Contact Centre teams were all ‘taken over’ as was my day. I spent the day accompanied by three young people, they attended meetings with me re: community switch – the next steps, clean streets update, depot visit, recycle/waste review and a visit to the Mayors Parlour to see what the civic side of being an elected Member may bring.

The young people were all very enthusiastic, very knowledgeable and they impressed us all with their attitude to problem solving and ideas.

The feedback has been great and I hope that they will have benefited from their experience, I know I did.

On the 11th of December a group of primary school children are coming to the Town Hall to present their school council suggestion for “If Father Christmas could bring your community a gift, what should it be?.....” The Queen Katherine school council have organised this event and are working with us to help deliver the day. The schools will be given a chance to present a case as to why their idea should be the chosen one, a debate will follow and a vote will decide. The ultimate suggestion will then be presented to the various tiers and Youth Council in the hope that their wish can be fulfilled. By the time of the Council meeting I will be able to tell you result.

**Community switch**

Cabinet has agreed to the next Community switch date, 26th of February – please put that date in to your diaries. We have a break down for each ward from the last results, I will happily go through your ward to help identify the areas that would really benefit from taking part in the process. The results from the last switch are now in, 5% of our population registered their interest which was spot on using Holland and Belgium as a guide. 31% of those actually switched, this was higher than expected. 25% was our target. The highest saving I know about was over £700, many £500 and plenty £300. An overall average saving was £104. Which in terms of Council tax paid to this authority – is roughly two thirds!

We have an uphill struggle next, we need to get the message to those people that have never switched – 80% of our community and that isn’t going to happen without effort from us all. We have applied to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) for a grant with the next phase, I believe we will hear before the end of the year whether we have succeeded in that bid. As and when I hear I will let you know.

**Date:** 11/12/2012  
**Version No:**  
**Amended by:**
Waste

Waste diverted from landfill, as you all know I am trying to organise a visit to the MBT plant. This is the Shanks run plant that will take all our waste and turn it into fuel which will then be sold onto industry thus diverting all of our waste away from landfill sites. The original date of the 16th of January is being changed to enable those Members of the Planning Committee to attend. I am confident that I will be able to give you a date for your diaries in the full council meeting. I must apologise for the change in dates and any confusion this may cause but I believe it will be best for us all to go together on one visit.

Textile Banks

It was agreed that the Council could facilitate a trial for local schools to have textile banks alongside their paper banks with the income going directly to school funds. This would offer an additional choice to parents and local communities of where they can take their no longer needed clothing. I have given the South Lakes Federation the details and I hope that this scheme will help raise addition funds for our young people whilst helping in the learning process of the need to reuse and recycle our resources where possible.

Dog Control Orders

The dog control orders went to Cabinet for approval on the 12th of December, this turned out to be the largest piece of consultation we have undertaken, with over 1000 participants. It was very important that we listened to all the comments and formed the Orders to meet the needs of our community. I am confident that the Orders will allow us to manage and enforce irresponsible dog owners far more effectively. I had hoped the report could come to Council but the decision making process meant Cabinet was the executive decision making body. I hope you manage to take the time to read the report on the Cabinet papers and if you have any questions, please ask for clarification. The approach will be a pragmatic one, our enforcement officers will take a very level headed approach to this and only those dog owners whose animals are causing a nuisance/danger or fouling where inappropriate and identified will be fined.

This was a very lengthy process and all the enforcement team have worked very hard to ensure as many Members of our community whether dog owners or not had an opportunity to feed their views into the process. I joined them on several of the road shows around the district and saw firsthand the effort that was made. My thanks go to them.

Improved partnerships

Improved partnerships, we will start servicing some Cumbria County Council (CCC) vehicles at the Kendal depot in the New Year, we are starting to work better together in partnership, looking at the most efficient cost effective ways we can do this. I see this as the start of the process and can see many opportunities for better practical ways such as this for the future.

Meetings/Training attended

Community Switch update review meeting
Go Easy prize giving
Plastic and Cardboard delivery information
South Lakeland Children and Young People’s Project Board
Better ways of working meeting with CCC
School Council workshop day
Budget meeting
Community switch planning meeting
Ichoosr seminar- Kendal

Date: 11/12/2012
Version No:
Amended by:
Go Easy – future planning meeting
Young People Future sports project
Waste/recycling/enforcement update meeting
Lancaster Canal Restoration Partnership
Action for Market Towns
Communications team meeting
Park visit
Cumbria Waste Management
Energy Management Board agenda setting
Meeting with Don Foster minister
Policy away day
Many meetings with leader
Informal Cabinet x4
Cabinet x3
London, DECC seminar giving/sharing community switch experience
Ward review- community switch break downs
Homeless Team catch up
Energy Efficiency Board meeting
Remembrance Sunday
Portfolio Holder target setting meeting
Portfolio Holder meeting
Licensing Committee
Kendal Mountain Festival x 2
Air Quality Management Working Group review meeting
Better ways of working update meeting
National takeover day
The Queen Katherine school textile meeting and sustainable schools meeting
Homelessness seminar
Capital project prioritisation meeting
Manna House homeless meeting
South Lakeland and Eden Homelessness strategic planning group
Inpira
Lakeland Radio
Assistant Director Portfolio Holder update
Licensing Sub committee
Prince’s Trust presentation
Homeless Review

Date: 11/12/2012
Version No:
Amended by:
Community switch information sharing – Allerdale

If you have any questions or issues regarding any training/meetings I have attended please ask.