

Environmental Services update

Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

6th December 2022

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Lasting Impact of COVID-19 on Services

Most of Environmental Services are back to pre COVID-19 processes and procedures

The volume of waste collected is heading back to pre-COVID-19 levels

Roker and Seaburn Beaches became more significant public spaces during COVID-19, which has involved more deployment of staff to the area

Fleet consist of a very small team and are still working in an agile fashion to prevent the spread of the infection

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Refuse - Pallion Household Waste & Recycling Centre

- ▶ Work on a new HWRC at Pallion began in December 2020 and opened earlier this year
- ▶ The new site cost circa £5m
- ▶ The site runs on a booking system basis, with residents of Sunderland currently able to apply for a free permit that will grant them access to the site
- ▶ Saint Vincent De Paul have been selected to operate the Reuse Shop on site



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Refuse - Side Waste Policy



From January 31st 2023, side waste will no longer be collected.

Over the last few months we have been communicating with residents through social media, stickers on bins and educational visits from our Waste Assessment Officers who offered advice on how to better manage waste.

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Refuse/Fleet - Electric Vehicle

- ▶ Refuse Electric RCV has been operating for 17 months and is used daily collecting an average of 1179 bins
- ▶ Fleet have introduced 24 new refuse collection vehicles to the service this year



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Fleet - Procurement Updates

- ▶ Fleet are experiencing long delays in the procurement of vehicles, plant and parts due to Covid and the war in the Ukraine.
- ▶ **Current Procurements**
 - ▶ 4 x Grab wagons
 - ▶ 2 x Gully Vehicles
 - ▶ 6 x Bulky Waste Collection Vehicles
 - ▶ 24 x refuse collection vehicles
 - ▶ 1 x Drainage van pack vehicle
 - ▶ 3 x drop side tippers
 - ▶ 1 x Nissan leaf
 - ▶ 17 x Grasscutters
 - ▶ 10 x compact sweepers
- ▶ **Future procurements in the next 12 months**
 - ▶ 14 x Cars
 - ▶ 3 x Diggers
 - ▶ 1 x Forklift
 - ▶ 42 x Grasscutters
 - ▶ 9 x Gritters
 - ▶ 1 x Scrubber
 - ▶ 2 x Sweepers
 - ▶ 5 x Tractors
 - ▶ 7 x trailers
 - ▶ 35 x Trucks up to 3.5 ton
 - ▶ 28 x Trucks 3.5 ton to 7.5 ton
 - ▶ 56 x Vans up to 3.5 ton.

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Fleet - Workshop Updates

- ▶ Phase 1 of the new Fleet Workshop was completed on 31st October
- ▶ Phase 2 began on 14th November
- ▶ The new workshop will allow us the opportunity to expand our range of services
- ▶ We will have greater operational control as less work will be contracted out and instead will be undertaken internally



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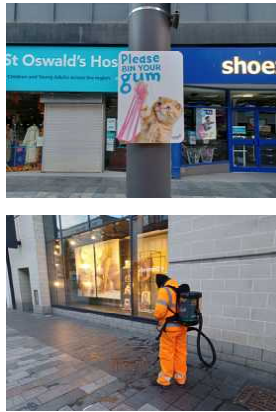
Local Services - Arbour

- ▶ This year the Council published its first Tree Policy. This policy brings all our tree management approaches together into one document.
- ▶ Working alongside colleagues in Economic Regeneration and Landscape Design we have planted 16,674 trees this year
- ▶ In addition to our Tree Policy, we have developed a 5-year rolling plantation management programme.
- ▶ Key procurement activities have taken place to aid the service including a tree inventory system and easier engagement with contractors



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Local Services - City Centre



- ▶ A multi-functional workspace has opened in High Street West
- ▶ We are currently running a chewing gum removal & behavioural change programme, funded by Keep Britain Tidy.
- ▶ Electric Street Cleaning Barrows have been rolled out across the City Centre to improve cleansing standards.

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Local Services - Coalfields and Washington

- ▶ Washington Area Staff are now located within the new Parsons depot alongside Fleet.
- ▶ Washington Village in Bloom group were awarded 'Best In Show' at Northumbria in Bloom and Gold awards in Britain in Bloom
- ▶ Fatfield War Memorial has been cleared and is now tidied on a regular basis
- ▶ A wildflower meadow was planted at Herrington County Park.

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Local Services - East and West

- ▶ Sunderland East area have secured £85,000 in Levelling Up funding to transform Barley Mow Park by March 2023
- ▶ Sunderland East team are working on a plan to enhance their shopping areas, including Grangetown and Ryhope.
- ▶ West area have replaced free-standing litter bins to green park bins as well installing new and updating existing seating within their parks and green spaces
- ▶ A fruit orchard and wildflower garden has been planted at Silksworth Recreational Park.



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Local Services - North and Resorts

- ▶ Roker Park received funding to renovate their water features, which includes the Boat Lake, Ravine Pond & Waterfall and Fairy Dell Waterfall.
- ▶ Upcoming improvements of Roker Park's Bandstand and the Lodge are expected, dependent on securing funding.
- ▶ Hylton Castle Grounds are now open for the public, this project is part of English Heritage.
- ▶ Roker and Seaburn won the Blue Flag award for the 8th consecutive year.



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Local Services - Local Environmental Quality Monitoring

- ▶ This year saw the handover of the LEQ inspections from Enforcement to Local Services.
- ▶ Local Services have continued to monitor and inspect each area City wide on a quarterly basis, breaking these inspections down into manageable ward areas.
- ▶ This monitoring will provide a consistent, citywide service standard.

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Local Services - Weed Killing and our use of Glyphosate

- ▶ A Council Motion was passed on 24th March 2021 which agreed that an action plan would be produced to eliminate the use of pesticides, inclusive of Glyphosate within no more than 3 calendar years
- ▶ A pilot took place from 1st April - 30th September of this year, in which we tested alternative treatments to Glyphosate
- ▶ The pilot allowed us to monitor the impact of not using glyphosate and evaluate alternative methods.
- ▶ We continued to update residents of progress via our website. Signage was placed across the city inviting residents to provide us with feedback on the pilot through our Let's Talk Weeks page



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Bereavement Services

- ▶ Digital Improvements across Bereavement Services include a new visual webpage and a Memorial Product Catalogue
- ▶ Digital Cemetery Maps are also in development
- ▶ Bereavement Services administration system redevelopments have also been made
- ▶ 44 memorial benches have been sponsored since May



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Bereavement Services

- ▶ Cemetery regulations have been improved
- ▶ The deadline for removal of unauthorised grave items was 31st October 2022
- ▶ Remedial works to cemetery lawn sections are ongoing.
- ▶ Staff have been trained to test the safety of memorials across the city



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Winter Maintenance



- ▶ A service resilience plan has been implemented to cover any issues that may arise over the winter period including COVID-19
- ▶ We currently have almost 14,000 tonnes of salt split between our Houghton and Pallion stores.
- ▶ We have 10 new road sensors across the city that will detect road surface temperatures in real time - this will help officers to identify localised cold spots across the city.

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Service Improvements

- ▶ Local Services are trialling a solenoid system which will allow for water systems to be remotely flushed, making Legionella inspection regimes more efficient.
- ▶ Smart litter bins have been installed and are currently being trialled within the North Area and City Centre
- ▶ Goss has been rolled out across each area within local services, replacing MS Dynamics
- ▶ Environmental Services have reviewed and developed their training matrices, risk assessments and safe working procedures alongside Health & Safety.
- ▶ Wellbeing mentors are in place across the service to offer support and guidance to colleagues.
- ▶ An apprenticeship programme has been established across Local Services. These apprenticeships have allowed us to give current members of staff the opportunity to learn and develop their skills as well as recruiting new staff members to the service area.

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Service Improvements

- ▶ Bereavement Services are working with Funeral Directors to identify service improvement measures and areas of joint working
- ▶ Bereavement support charities are holding 'pop-up' cafés at Sunderland Crematorium each quarter for shared experiences, company and grief support.
- ▶ Fleet have introduced a new 'Pre Use Vehicle Check' application which allows for drivers to electronically carry out their vehicle checks, replacing the paper system.
- ▶ Improved compliance monitoring is taking place within the Fleet department

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Use Of Social Media



Social Media has been used throughout the services, with staff members working closely with the Communications department to share area improvements



Resident feedback has been gathered through out Social Media channels in relation to a number of service including the let's talk weeds, wildflower gardens.



Refuse have continued to utilise social media to share messages regarding side waste and contamination

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Resident Feedback

- ▶ “The new HWRC is a lot better and easier to use than the Beach Street Site. I much prefer coming here”
- ▶ “Thanks for the attention to detail and exceptional customer service on installation of a memorial bench”
- ▶ “I’m very impressed with the speed and efficiency of the grass cutting in my area”
- ▶ “Our refuse crew are brilliant. They do a great job in all kinds of weather and they were superb during COVID”
- ▶ “Staff who cut back bushes at Hemsley Court did a great job, it looks very smart”
- ▶ “I wanted to congratulate the teams involved in creating the many wildflower meadows across the city. They provided a real pop of colour and habitat for many insects. The signage on why you weren’t getting rid of weeds was also excellent.”