



MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Juma Begum (Mayor), Joanna Kane (Deputy Mayor), Joe Baker, Juliet Barker Smith, William Boyd, Claire Davies, Matthew Dormer, James Fardoe, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Chris Holz, Sid Khan, Wanda King, Sachin Mathur, Gemma Monaco, David Munro, Rita Rogers, Gary Slim, Jen Snape, Jane Spilsbury, Monica Stringfellow, Craig Warhurst, Ian Woodall and Paul Wren

Officers:

Peter Carpenter, Claire Felton and Guy Revans

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill

35. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

Composting

Councillor Claire Davies presented a Motion on Notice on the subject of composting. The Motion read as follows:

“That the Executive Committee commits to increasing recycling rates for garden waste through home composting and develops Community Networks to support this.”

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Davies and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Davies commented that the Motion was asking the Executive Committee to commit to increasing recycling rates for garden waste in the Borough through home composting. Members were asked to note that at the Executive Committee meeting held on 9th July 2024, a report had been considered which had demonstrated that there were decreasing rates of recycling in Redditch. Many residents did not use the garden waste service that the Council provided and therefore a lot of garden waste was disposed of in the grey waste

Chair

bins. As a consequence of this approach, there were increasing in CO² emissions which had negative implications for carbon emissions in the Borough.

Members were advised that domestic composting in home compost containers was more environmentally friendly than the existing approach. The benefits of home composting included increasing recycling rates, reducing waste, reducing CO² emissions and increasing the accessibility of recycling for those residents who could not afford or otherwise could not access the Council's garden waste collection service.

Councillor Davies suggested that Redditch Borough Council could work with Worcestershire County Council on home composting. This could include a public awareness campaign to help educate residents on the benefits arising from home composting. The Council could also potentially request additional support from Worcestershire County Council, in terms of asking them to increase their subsidy for the service and exploring the potential to introduce free composting bins. Other partner organisations could also potentially be asked to assist, including garden centres and community groups through local networking. Community composting schemes had been found to work well in other parts of the country and there were examples of good practice that Redditch Borough Council could learn from.

Subject to agreeing the Motion, Councillor Davies suggested that the Council should monitor the uptake of home composting by local residents and that there should be an annual report to Council on this subject. The aim of the Motion was to enhance sustainability in the Borough whilst helping to reduce costs in the long-term which could arise if this resulted in a decrease in the amount of waste that the Council collected from households.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Harvey suggested that the action proposed in the Motion would support recycling as a whole in the Borough. This would also be a timely addition, given requirements to introduce a food waste collection service by 2026. The Council was aiming to increase the garden waste (brown bin) collection service but there was also a duty to support any action that could be taken to increase composting rates in the Borough.

During consideration of this item, Councillor Matthew Dormer proposed an amendment to the wording of the Motion. The amendment read as follows:

“That the Executive Committee commits to increasing recycling rates for garden waste through home composting and develops Community Networks to support this, and when demand is such, we expand our garden waste fleet to accommodate it.”

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Dormer and seconded by Councillor Gemma Monaco.

In proposing the amendment, Councillor Dormer noted that he was in favour of the action that had been proposed in the original Motion but he felt that this did not go far enough. The amendment was designed to enable the Executive Committee to consider as many options as possible when discussing this matter further.

In seconding the amendment, Councillor Monaco commented that the aim was to encourage the Executive Committee to consider taking action that would help to encourage people to do more recycling than at present. Members were asked to note that this amendment would not commit the Council to anything in particular at this stage, as there would be a need for further consideration at an Executive Committee meeting.

Members discussed the proposed amendment and in doing so commented on the following:

- The extent to which the wording of the amendment focused on a separate matter to the Motion, given that the intention of the Motion had been to increase home composting.
- The previous action taken in respect of promoting the Council’s garden waste collection service, for which there had been a lot of demand in the Borough and the potential to accommodate this demand further.
- The work that was already being undertaken separately to review brown bin service provision.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was agreed so that this then became the substantive Motion.

Members subsequently discussed the Motion in detail and in doing so commented on the following points:

- The potential for the Council to be ambitious when considering action that could be taken to improve recycling rates in the Borough and to lead by example.
- The financial implications arising from some action that could be taken and the need for prudent management of the Council's budget.
- The challenges in terms of recycling rates in the Borough and how these did not compare favourably with other Councils in Worcestershire.
- The potential for an Overview and Scrutiny exercise to be conducted investigating the causes of the low recycling rates and the action that could be taken to address this.
- The previous Overview and Scrutiny investigation in respect of recycling that had been conducted at the Council in the 2010s. Members suggested that this report could be revisited by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a view to identifying the impact that it had had on recycling rates and additional action that could be taken.
- The forthcoming requirement for the Council to introduce a food waste collection service in the Borough and the impact that this might have on recycling rates, including home composting.

RESOLVED to recommend to the Executive Committee that

the Executive Committee commits to increasing recycling rates for garden waste through home composting and develops Community Networks to support this, and when demand is such, to expand our garden waste fleet to accommodate it.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.19 pm