

GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
3 NOVEMBER 2021	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and Environment Steve Cox – Executive Director, Place and Economy	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Nigel Simons - Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and Environment	
Contact Officer(s):	James Collingridge - Head of Environmental Partnerships Richard Pearn - Head of Waste, Resources and Energy Charlotte Palmer - Group Manager, Transport and Environment	Tel. (01733) 864736

PORTFOLIO PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR WASTE, STREET SCENE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: Councillor Simons Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and Environment	Deadline date: N/A
It is requested that the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is provided to update the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the progress of items under the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Waste and Street Scene.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The report is being presented by Cllr Simons at the request of the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee. The report will provide an overview of all the key portfolio areas. It will also provide an overview of the current performance of Aragon Direct Services.

2.2 This report is for the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2.1 Functions determined by Council:

- 2. Environmental Capital
- 6. Waste Strategy and Management

2.3 The Cabinet Portfolio for Waste and Street Scene and the Environment covers the following areas: -

- a) Peterborough Limited trading as Aragon Direct Services (ADS), ADS cover the following Services: -
 - Street Cleansing
 - Waste and Recycling Collections
 - Grounds Maintenance and Arboriculture
 - Home to School Transport

- Property Maintenance
 - Vehicle Maintenance and Taxi MOTs
 - Catering
- Peterborough Limited additionally cover: -
- Vivacity Leisure
- b) Waste Strategy and Management
 c) Lead on the Council's energy strategy
 d) Responsible for Westcombe Engineering
 e) Responsibility for the Council's Environment Strategy

- 2.4 The areas under this portfolio cover a breadth of services and contribute to all the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy: -
- Creating opportunities – tackling inequalities;
 - Creating strong and supportive communities;
 - Creating the UK's environmental capital; and
 - Delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth

3. **TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. **BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

4.1 **Aragon Direct Services**

- 4.2 Since ADS was formed in February 2019 it has seen many back-office changes to streamline operations and reduce overhead costs to the authority. More recently, Peterborough Limited has also taken on certain services previously delivered by Vivacity which has led to efficiencies as a result of the cross business sharing of resources. This has really helped to bolster PL in areas such as Communications, Finance, and HR.

The current ADS contract now delivers a breadth of services including: -

- Street Cleansing
- Waste and Recycling Collections
- Grounds Maintenance and Arboriculture
- Home to School Transport
- Property Maintenance
- Vehicle Maintenance and Taxi MOTs
- Catering

- 4.2.1 Peterborough Limited (PL) is overseen by a board of directors which includes senior PL officers and Councillors. The board is in place to oversee the running of the company and an overarching view on spend and business development.

PCC have fortnightly contractual meetings with the Managing Director of PL and fortnightly operation meetings with the senior managers of ADS. Ultimately any changes to the governance or structure of PL including performance will be reported into the Shareholder Cabinet Committee.

Daily the contract is monitored by The Head of Environmental Partnership who also uses contractual KPI's to ensure ADS are delivering cost effective services.

4.3 **Overview of Service Areas and Performance**

4.4 **Street Cleansing**

- 4.4.1 ADS undertake street cleansing throughout the city, currently emptying 1,366 litter bins and 351 dog waste bins on varying schedules across the city and since April 2021 Aragon have already

collected 865.01 tonnes of street sweepings.

They are now implementing the annual leafing plan and will work on a cyclical basis to cleanse the city; ADS have worked throughout lockdowns to ensure our city has been kept clean and inviting for residents including our open spaces that were heavily used and appreciated.

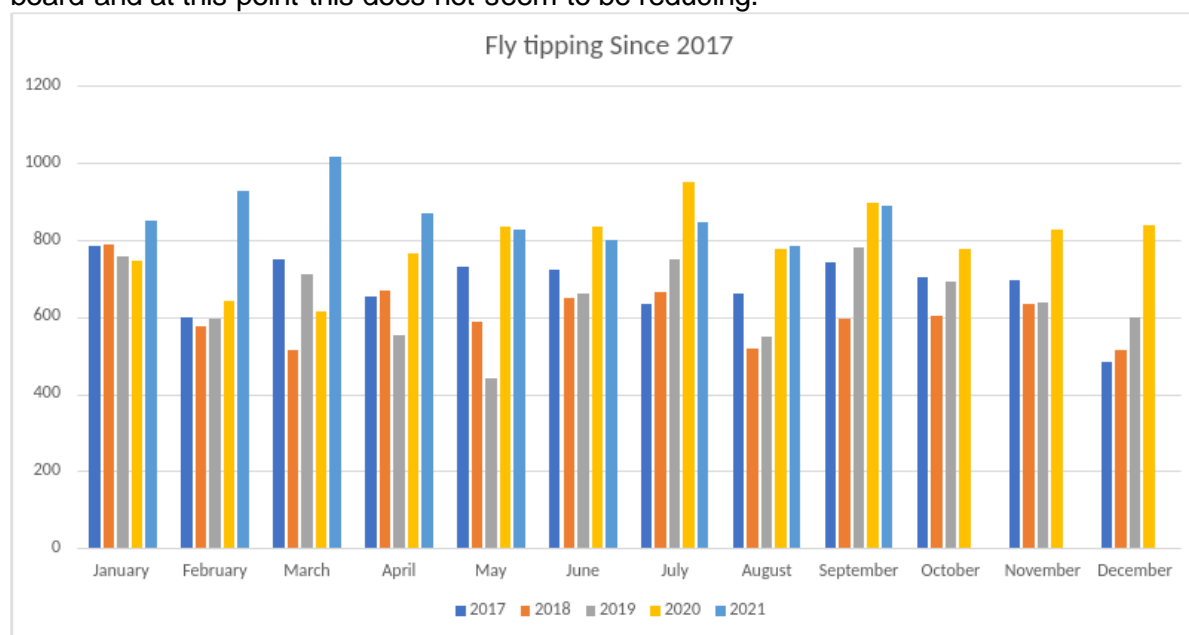
- 4.4.2 ADS has also been fully supportive and actively helping the Peterborough Wombles and the magnificent work they have been doing around the city, ADS has been providing litter pickers and bags collection the waste collected.

We are now currently working jointly to produce a litter strategy that we will adopt for the city including the types of bins we will install, signage and working with groups such as the Wombles.

We have continued to see a positive increase in the number of residents and groups wanting to volunteer to carry out litter picks.

- 4.4.3 Fly tipping continues to be an issue across the city, ADS are working hard to clear it within the KPI timeframe of 24 hours for hazardous and 48 hours for non-hazardous once this is reported to them.

The following table gives a monthly comparison on fly-tip numbers per month since 2017 as you can see the data shows that we have continued to see a high-level rate of fly-tipping across the board and at this point this does not seem to be reducing.



Since April 2021, 85 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for fly tipping offences and 9 cases have been prepared for court action.

4.4.4 **RECAP Fly Tipping Group / Task and Finish Group**
RECAP SCRAP Fly-tipping Group

An arrangement with all Councils within the Recycling for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP) area, Cambridgeshire County Council and its constituent District Councils and Peterborough, to tackle fly tipping together using a nationally available tool kit is working well with regular meetings and information sharing.

Part of the joint working was signature by RECAP Members to a joint letter from SCRAP participating councils to the sentencing council, who are responsible for guidance to judges and magistrates on sentencing measures for people convicted of crimes including fly-tipping.

The RECAP Fly tipping group continue to meet (via teams) on a monthly basis and is attended by other local authorities across Cambridgeshire.

Currently they are working on the following-

- Social media/ awareness campaign across the district re fly tipping SCRAP It campaign
- Looking into how the group can work closer with the Police and Crime Commissioner around environmental crime, in particular fly tipping.
- Sharing of best practice / intelligence around environmental crime, in particular fly tipping across the districts.

4.4.5 **Fly-tipping Task and Finish Group**

The Leader of the Council set up a cross party Task and Finish working group in June 2018, to examine the issue of Fly Tipping in Peterborough alongside making recommendations on how Council waste policy may evolve to assist in tackling the problem.

Following an interim report in January 2019, the recommendations in which were accepted by Cabinet, additional work was required to hone policy change recommendations into detailed proposals. This further stage of work was presented to Cabinet, following Scrutiny recommendation, in July 2019 and the report was received and several actions were agreed. This report covers the actions requested for development into outline business cases as well as other progress made in related business areas.

All elements proposed were new costs, which were unbudgeted, and therefore not covered for in existing resources and with no certainty that following their introduction that they were likely to reduce fly tipping sufficiently to cover their implementation cost.

Elements

There are several key elements from the report which affect the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) and Waste Collection service and these are set out in the following sections: -

Element 1

Recommend progress on a proposal to purchase an electronic system for replacing the existing paper HRC permit system with same allowance of annual visits, vehicle size and other controls as exists at present.

The proposal includes the ability to obtain a permit in advance, whilst on site on a mobile device and after visiting the site for the first time if the resident was unaware of the system when they first used the site.

Update: Officers have worked closely with colleagues from Cambridgeshire County Council and jointly procured a web-based system to allow easy online access to a permit for a van or car and trailer for the Fengate HRC. Further detailed information on this is included in the Fengate HRC section later in this report.

Element 2

Recommend the development of a proposal to allow commercial waste to be disposed of at the HRC for a charge, alongside the existing site operation for residents.

Update: Officers are working with ADS to examine the possibility of developing a commercial waste facility at the Nursery Lane depot, which provides a more suitable and controlled environment for the acceptance of such wastes.

Element 3

Recommended the production of a costed proposal to implement a free household bulky waste service which would allow residents to have the first collection of up to 5 items free of charge. Then any subsequent collections would be charged at a sliding scale rate to a maximum of 10

items.

Update: A free bulk waste service is to begin soon; more information is contained in the Bulk Waste update section later in this report.

Element 4

Recommended to implement an Aragon Direct Services trade waste collection service which can also collect for landlords that would allow them to dispose of their waste in a more economical way when tenants leave and do not dispose of the items in the correct way.

Update: We are working on a solution and Business case to see if a small trade waste disposal site could be developed at the Nursery Lane depot this facility would allow legitimate Trade Waste disposal but at a low cost as it would be per item instead of a minimum of a tonne.

4.5 Waste, Recycling Collection and Waste Treatment

4.5.1 ADS operate a fortnightly collection of residual and recycling waste from circa 85,000 properties with food waste being weekly.

Garden waste continues to be a paid for service and we have 21732 subscriptions this year compared to 21437 last year. Residents continue to take up the Direct Debit option with 7847 choosing to pay breaking down the £45.00 charge over 3 payments and making it a recurring subscription for them.

Current recycling rates are shown below compared to this point last financial year; we are currently slightly down which is a situation many councils have found following the impacts of Covid-19. Projects are in hand to drive this rate back up recognising that with each 1% that can be diverted into the correct recycling waste stream can save the authority circa £55,000.

April 20 - September 20 = 40.67% Recycled/Composted

April 21 - September 21 = 39.84% Recycled/Composted

4.5.2 The tender for the new Refuse fleet has been successful and orders have been placed with Denise Eagle for a new core fleet with food pods moving from all diesels to new diesel body with electric bin lifts. We are also carrying out a tender for two fully electric RCV's which will be used on the Garden Waste service as they do not require the food pods.

4.5.3 ADS has been delivering the new Garden Waste service this year and following the increase in sign-up fee and subsequent additional bins fees we saw an uptake of 20,262 in comparison to 2020 which was 21,270. We do however normally see sign ups continue throughout the year.

Unfortunately, due to the current HGV and operative shortage we have had to suspend the garden waste service until at least January, ADS has been working extremely hard to try and maintain all statutory waste services, but unfortunately, they currently cannot get enough staff to run the Garden Waste Service.

4.5.4 Bulky Waste Collections

This service presently is booked either online or through the call centre at Peterborough Direct, with payment being required at time of booking before the collection is approved and scheduled with Aragon Direct Services (ADS).

The service is presently capable of offering up to 30 collections per day on a Tuesday to Friday inclusive working week and is presently very well used and available slots/capacity booked up for at least 3 to 4 weeks in advance.

The opportunity to switch this from a service requiring booking and payment to a free service is ongoing, with implementation planned for November, this free service will deliver the current

service level of 30 collections per day of 5 items. The existing customer interface is a legacy system which is not fit for the future demands of the service, as it struggles to cope now, and as such a project is underway to directly connect the customer interface on the Council's website with the back-office computer system ADS use to streamline the user experience and reduce administrative costs. This work was required irrespective of the status of charging or otherwise.

4.5.5 Recycling Improvement - Education and Awareness Raising

Members may well have seen some of the good work undertaken earlier this year with the Waste and resources Action Programme (WRAP) supported food waste communications campaign, bin stickers and associated social media engagement.

In February and March 2021 all residents in the city were delivered a food waste leaflet and a roll of liners with a No Food Waste sticker applied to the Black Residual Waste Bin with the aim to increase participation in the weekly food waste service and thus increase tonnes captured. Initial results show it has been a success with 556 tonnes of additional food waste collected in April - July 2021 compared to April – July 2020, an impressive 39.85% increase. In addition, requests for food waste caddy's increased with 5214 indoor caddy requests and 6168 outdoor caddy requests being made.

Caddy request

Caddy type	Requests
Inside only	843
Outdoor only	1797
Indoor and Outdoor	4371
Total Indoor	5214
Total Outdoor	6168

Tonnes of Food Waste collected:

	2020	2021	Increase in tonnes	% increase
February	304	315	11	3.61%
March	336	386	50	14.88%
April	376	504	128	34.04%
May	367	480	113	30.79%
June	333	478	145	43.54%
July	319	489	170	53.29%
August	324	379	55	17.13%
September	351	404	53	14.97%

Total increase over 6 months post project is 664 tonnes = £58,000 saving

The following item is subject to success in being allocated funding through the RIT budgetary control process. With a planned start in early 2022 another approach, using dedicated education and communication staff, will commence with targeting of areas where contamination, poor participation or other issues are affecting the recycling performance of the City as a whole. Using information gathered from crews, inspections of collected material and data gathered by the onboard equipment areas can be identified and communication efforts targeting the key issues can be undertaken in conjunction with Aragon and the education team.

4.5.6 HRC

A user survey was undertaken in to ascertain usage patterns, identify areas for improvement and development etc., this information fed into a review of operations with the operator FCC

Environment (UK).

The site has been performing well in segregating material away from disposal and performance to end of August 2021 is 71.69% of received materials separated for recycling, reuse and composting. This is above the performance achieved at the Dogsthorpe site.

On the second of October a new set of policies for the Fengate HRC were implemented aimed at improving access to the site for slightly larger vans than were previously accepted, alongside setting out a new electronic system of obtaining permits for visiting the site with a van or car and trailer. (Household Recycling Centre (HRC) Waste Policy Update - SEPT21/CMDN/34)

The HRC in Fengate continues to recycle more material than the Dogsthorpe site did however the development of the service is not yet complete. Part of the facility is specifically designed to permit the hand sorting of any bags of mixed waste that contain recycling and included within the contract is a role for educating site users as to how to prepare for recycling on site. This will improve the residents next visit, as segregated materials are often quicker to deposit and also allows an opportunity to engage on the wider recycling and environmental message at home. Due to the implications of Covid-19 this development will have to wait until it is deemed safe to regularly come into close contact with residents using the service.

4.5.7 **Resources and Waste Strategy – RECAP**

A project was undertaken across the RECAP Authorities, Cambridgeshire County Council and its constituent District Councils and Peterborough City Council, to develop proposed ways of waste and recycling collection to allow partners to move services towards ways of working that will align with the developing government Resources and Waste Strategy.

The government strategy, subject to extended ongoing consultation, aims to bring consistency to the materials collected by Councils across the Country to improve the quality and quantity of recycling collected nationally. By working with RECAP partners funding for this system modelling exercise has been secured from DEFRA and the existing closeness in shared strategy and collection method places us well to share learning and adopt common approaches to reduce cost and improve services to residents. Due to ongoing delays, it is not expected that the government will publish their response to the second round of consultations (submitted to them in May 2021) until spring 2022, therefore RECAP partners are poised to revisit this modelling to ensure it reflects any update to previously published policy direction.

Other provision in the expected policy suite aims to legislate to influence the producers of packaging to simplify its design for improved recycling and to ensure the costs of recycling, and treating non-recyclable packaging, is borne by the producers themselves. This aims to assist Councils in future service design and delivery subject to how this is implemented, the aforementioned modelling work aims where possible to take account of these implications to futureproof developing services.

4.6 **Grounds Maintenance and Arboriculture**

- 4.6.1 ADS have completed all the city-wide grass cutting and have commenced shrub cutting. We have seen some great resident and community group engagement in the city this year with our biodiversity areas with both enhancements and creating new wildflower areas. We have been working closely with PECT who have supported both PCC and community groups in further enhancing natural habitats in our local areas.

ADS have retained Green Flag status at 4 parks across the city and continue to work with friends of groups to improve park facilities, this also includes working closer with the groups to apply for external funding for improvements and events within the parks. All of our parks received incredibly positive feedback from the judges and is a credit to the works of not only ADS but the Friends of Groups who work hard to improve the parks and put on events.

The New Towns Fund money that was received for improving parks is continuing to be

implemented with a new number of parks already completed across the city, the new Parks App which we are jointly creating with Cambridgeshire is also nearing completion which will offer residents key information on our parks and events.

4.7 **Home to School Transport**

- 4.7.1 ADS currently operate 30 Home to School routes for the City Council PCC, these are both mainstream and SEN. They additionally operate the CommunityLink Service that takes residents who cannot use public transport to get their shopping and back home, this continues to be a well-used service and utilises the staff in between their school runs to undertake the work.

Aragon Direct Services are also looking to upskill their staff members as they have seen a lack of skilled PSV drivers in the market for the hours required to cover Home to School routes, as such they are training non PSV drivers and Passenger Assistants to obtain their PSV licence. This will allow greater flexibility in the services deliver and offer the resilience needed to cover for sickness etc.

4.8 **Property Maintenance**

- 4.8.1 ADS offer a Repairs and Maintenance helpdesks function for all PCC properties with a 24 hour on call service where required, they also ensure that all our statutory servicing obligations on our properties are fulfilled, and a 5 yearly condition survey of our estate is conducted.

This is seen as an area of the business that can be further expanded with some schools already signing up to SLA's with ADS however, we want to expand this further as ADS can offer a complete package with Property, Grounds Maintenance, and Cleaning,

4.9 **Council's Energy Strategy**

In support of the PIRI Project, which includes transport, electricity and development of a heat and/or power network incorporating the Councils Energy Recovery Facility a visit by the Danish Board of District Heating (DBDH) was hosted at the ERF in Peterborough.

DBDH is a source of best practice information supported by the Danish Government and the UK consulate to share information on the experiences of councils and operators from across Denmark with councils in the UK to assist in the growth and continued development of combined heat and power and renewable energy schemes.

4.10 **Environmental and Climate Strategy COP26**

International leaders are preparing to attend the COP26 conference in Glasgow from 31st October. As public attention turns to the response to the climate emergency, Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council are running a public engagement campaign to capture this momentum. We are seeking local green leaders who can inspire others around the city and county to also adopt changes in their lifestyles to reduce their carbon emissions. We are also looking for people to make green pledges and share these on social media using the hashtags #COP26 #TogetherForOurPlanet and also to email them to communications@peterborough.gov.uk.

Green homes grant

Peterborough, in consortia with other local authority areas, has been awarded funding for energy efficiency improvements for low income households. Three rounds of funding, collectively known as the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivered Scheme, have been awarded. Each vary slightly in funding allocation method and criteria. Peterborough was awarded funding through each of these rounds of funding. Funding is allocated at the consortia level and so exact spend within the local authority area cannot be precisely determined and will depend on demand, however it is estimated that around £1m is available for the Peterborough area. Measures

installed, such as better insulation, will help homes retain heat, therefore lowering energy use and associated carbon emissions and reducing fuel poverty.

Carbon literacy training

Peterborough City Council took part in a pilot scheme to deliver the Carbon Literacy Trust's elected member training course. Having successfully run the pilot course, we have now delivered training to a third of our elected members. We have also run a variation of the course aimed at local authority officers and have trained colleagues and staff from our highways contract partner Milestone. There are plans to deliver further training in the near future.

Local Area Energy Plan

Peterborough has been selected as a pilot area to develop a Local Area Energy Plan. This work is funded by Innovate UK and will be delivered by Catapult Energy Systems working closely with Council officers and colleagues at key partner organisations. Data and local insight will be used to determine the current and future energy demands for areas of the city. Demand for heating, electricity, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and property retrofitting will be evaluated. Peterborough's 2030 carbon neutral target will be used to frame the work. A pipeline of potential projects will be created, which may be used to inform funding applications or seek commercial investment. The plan will be used in the development of the city-wide carbon management action plan, which will outline how the city is moving towards carbon neutrality.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation through the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

6.1 It is anticipated that the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee will note the content of this report and any comments will be fed back to aid in future improvements to the services delivered.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

7.1 To allow scrutiny of the Portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Waste, Street Scene and Environment.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 The alternative option was to not present this report to the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee, this option was not taken forwards as it was important to allow clear and transparent scrutiny of these front line services.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

9.1 This report is to give an overview / progress update as such there are no financial implications.

Legal Implications

9.2 This report is intended to give an overview / progress update as such there are no direct legal implications.
As regards specific projects, legal advice has been sought on a case-by-case basis.

Equalities Implications

9.3 This report is to give an overview / progress update as such there are no anticipated equality implications.

Rural Implications

9.4 This report is to give an overview / progress update as such there are no rural implications.

Carbon Impact Assessment

9.5 Under this portfolio Cllr Simons is looking at all options to reduce our CO2 including through mitigation with tree planting and looking at new low CO2 vehicles and Energy production

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 *None*

11. APPENDICES

11.1 *None*