

## **Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services 2021-22**

This report is a brief run through some of the highlights of the last year's work in the areas of waste & recycling, street cleansing, parks & green spaces, and public protection.

### **WASTE & RECYCLING**

#### **Priority: moving towards zero residual waste to landfill and incineration**

- Despite continued staffing pressures from the pandemic and national HGV driver shortages, the City Council maintained another year of uninterrupted waste and recycling collections.
- After a very long wait, first of two new fully electric bin wagons now delivered and in use.
- In partnership with Lancashire County Council, a 6-month trial of weekly food waste collection was carried out in Heysham, ahead of central government plans to make it mandatory in 2025. Just under 900 households were involved, with trial providing data on participation rates (36%), waste composition, tonnages, collection time, and allowing County to test its treatment process.
- Route optimisation of collection rounds successfully implemented in September 2021. Currently showing an 11% decrease in distance travelled and 7% decrease in diesel consumption, saving approximately 4 tonnes of CO2 emissions per month.
- Battery recycling added to kerbside collections in April 2022 - £18K funding secured from Lancashire County Council to promote this.
- Continued working with Freegle to encourage reuse/free exchange of unwanted items by promoting Freegle in Your District Council Matters and on the side of bin wagons, and sponsoring our two local groups (Lancaster & Morecambe; Carnforth).

### **STREET CLEANSING**

#### **Priority: keeping our district's neighbourhoods, parks, beaches and open space clean, well maintained, and safe**

- Trial of litter bin sensors in Silverdale implemented, with further rollout now planned.
- Selected litter bins in rural areas being upgraded using £25K WRAP funding.
- Two local recycling points in West End of Morecambe upgraded with improved capacity containers and signage designed to increase participation and reduce side waste issues.
- Fly tipping initiative with Keep Britain Tidy agreed, with staff training underway in April 2022 and programme of interventions targeting some of the worst affected areas to run until October.
- Meetings held with Lancashire County Council requesting a significantly improved level of service on street weeding. Budget allocated to Lancaster was disproportionately low. We understand that the budget has now been increased and a dedicated service commissioned.

### **PARKS & GREEN SPACES**

#### **Priorities: increasing the biodiversity of our district; working in partnership with residents, local organisations and partners, recognising the strengths and skills in our community**

- Grasslands Management Strategy implemented in 2021 with a largely positive response and some localised issues resolved. As well as biodiversity benefits, this has also enabled a restructure of staff into area-based teams, and replacement of seasonal posts with seven new full time positions, increasing operational capacity.
- Partnership with Eden and Playstation to deliver 12 acres of wildflower planting in 2022.
- 5 Green Flag accreditations: Williamson Park, Happy Mount Park, Regent Park, Ryelands Park and Torrisholme Cemetery.

- Making Spaces green space grant programme now largely implemented, with twenty community projects funded.
- Tree Warden scheme launched in December 2021 together with Tree Council funded planting scheme on St Chad's Drive.
- Working with community and friends groups, £250K funding secured for improvements at Ryelands Park, Poulton Park, Crag Bank playground, Torrisholme Park playground, and Greaves Park playground.
- Just under £350K of S106 contributions secured for community playing field improvements.
- White Lund Deport nursery continues to host a growing site for the FoodFutures FarmStart project, training a next generation of market gardeners, and also the Hermitage Field Community Meadow project, which is helping the City Council grow wildflower plug plants to support the Grasslands Management Strategy.

## **PUBLIC PROTECTION**

### **Priorities: focused on serving our residents, local organisations and district**

- Local electric taxi charging point network installed.
- Successful consultation with taxi drivers on proposals for fare increases, and principles established for future annual reviews.
- Dealt with over 500 enquiries and 1200 complaints about Covid regulations, and carried out almost 3500 Covid advice and compliance visits to businesses over the past two years.
- Introduced and delivered food safety and allergens training service for local businesses to support pandemic recovery.
- Worked with Heysham Port to establish a new border post for inspection of imported goods.

Huge thanks to Will Griffith and Fiona Inston and their teams for their ongoing enthusiasm and commitment to improving services, despite the significant financial, social, and environmental challenges that continue to come our way.

**Cllr Dave Brookes**  
**Cabinet Member for Environmental Services**