

# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Department of the Chief Executive

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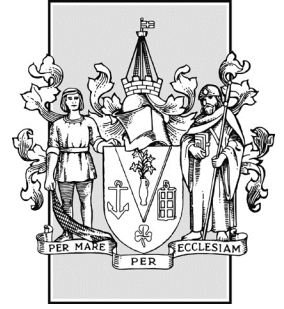
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Dear Councillor

## **PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 10TH JULY, 2017**

Please find enclosed the questions from and the responses to members of the public at Place Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 10th July, 2017 at Agenda Item No. 3.

Yours faithfully

Tim Row

Principal Democratic Services Officer

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## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS FOR PLACE SCRUTINY**

**MONDAY 10 JULY 2017**

**Question from Mr Webb to the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Waste and Regulatory Services - Cllr Tony Cox**

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**In February 2016 monthly report it shows to maximise % of household sent to reuse, recycling and composting is not going to be met and was down from 54% to 47.79% and will miss the government recycling targets of 50%.**

**Question: Would it be possible for Southend Council to show the percentage and cost saved by recycling pink, garden, food waste and what this money has been used for in the council tax bill (online and paper) and council advertising in libraries, council buildings with pictures of what to put in recycling bags because cross contamination of black and pink bags, white bags are still happening and Veolia staff do not have time whilst collecting the bags to put a tick on the sticker to educate the householder what they have done wrong. Does the portfolio holder think these steps will give incentive and a reminder for residents of Southend and businesses to recycle for the right reasons and raise recycling rates back to 50%?**

### **Answer**

Firstly, I need to correct the question in that the government's target is actually 50% by 2020 and Mr Webb is referring to the Council's 2016/17 data. However, in saying that it is concerning that the Council's fiscal target was not met and that the total recycling figure reduced slightly from the previous year. I can advise that there has been both a national & regional reduction in recycling performance across most authorities and the lead industry sources have stated that the UK as a whole is almost guaranteed to miss the household waste national target of recycling 50% by 2020. I can confirm that Southend will meet this national target of 50% by 2020.

To ensure that we do I have requested that officers arrange for the next Waste Management Working Party to be focussed solely on Recycling improvement and that Veolia provide a revised Recycling Action Plan that will be scrutinised by the Waste Management Working Party going forward.

In relation to the cost differential between recycling waste and residual waste, I can advise that the cost of disposing of recycling waste compared to the cost of disposing of residue waste, is approximately 50%. However, there is a contractual obligation that requires Veolia to achieve set recycling targets and any residual waste beneath the set threshold is a cost that is solely borne by the Contractor not the Council.

Concerning Veolia not placing contamination stickers on bags and Veolia staff having insufficient time to do this, I can confirm that officers from the waste team have stated that they are not aware of this allegation. If they did become aware of this failure it would be addressed immediately with Veolia management.

**Question from Mr Webb to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism & the Economy - Cllr Ann Holland**

The portfolio holder for Enterprise, Tourism and Economic Development said that the meeting room in Westcliff Library will only be used to hire by business and community groups not by the Southend Council for Library events for the community. I understand that the room will only be ready to use for next year because it will be used to store equipment from Leigh Library during their refurbishment.

**Question 2: In the Forum how much does it cost to hire per hour for business and community group and how many times per year has it been hired out by each group and how much money has this generated in each year since the Forum opened?**

**Answer**

The Meeting Room at Westcliff is available for use now, though it may be needed for storage for a few weeks during the refurbishment of Leigh Library. It is mainly provided for Community use but the Library Service may use it on occasion.

The charges for the meeting rooms at the Forum are publicly available. We have not kept separate running totals for the lettings or hire income since 2013, but in the first six months of 2017 there were 58 paid lettings in these rooms, bringing in an income of £3321.40, so around 120 a year potentially bringing in around £6650.