

SOUTHEND ON SEA CITY COUNCIL

Place Scrutiny Committee

28th November 2022

Questions from Members of the Public

Question 1 from Donna Richardson for Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking (Cllr Wakefield):

After having many discussions with the residents in Blenheim Chase and Elmsleigh Drive, who have concerns regarding the state of the pavement & road, Could the portfolio holder please let me know if and when these roads will be resurfaced.

Answer:

We are looking to deliver a 5 year forward works programme, based on current capital funding levels, for both footway and carriageway before the end of the financial year.

We are currently adding more detailed footway condition data, along with skidding resistance data for the carriageways to the priority data.

Both items could have a significant impact on the order in which schemes appear, therefore it would not be correct to detail any information on specific roads at this time.

Question 2 from Donna Richardson for Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking (Cllr Wakefield):

I have had a lot of residents in Blenheim Chase raise concerns over a lot of caravans, campervans and trucks parked along Blenheim Chase alongside Blenheim Park, they have mentioned that they are constantly parked along there and have been for quite a while now; could I ask the portfolio holder if we could have a Parking survey completed in the area please.

Answer:

A request for a parking survey can be added to the Traffic & Highways works programme. A survey will help identify and evidence what the parking pressures are at this specific location.

Should the survey identify the need for the introduction of a parking scheme (parking restriction/P&D for example) then this would need to be considered and prioritised in situ with other such similar requests and funding secured. Safety schemes are currently being prioritised and it is estimated that should it be appropriate to introduce a scheme at this location it will be in approximately 6-8 months.

(Background: There are approximately 9 caravans/campervans parked along Blenheim Chase outside Blenheim Park.

All vehicles are taxed and MOT'd except for one; the vehicle is taxed but the MOT has expired. As long as the vehicle is taxed it can be parked on the highway but should the vehicle move then it becomes a Police matter and is not something in which Traffic & Highways can enforce.

None of the vehicles are parked illegally and so there is not any specific action that Traffic & Highways can take at present.)

Question 3 from David Webb for Cabinet Member for Public Protection (Cllr Terry):

2021/2022 Southend Council report our current household waste sent for refuse, recycling and composting was 46.48% below the target for 50%, below last June 2020 46.81%. The target by 2025 is 65% in 15 years' time. behind 18.52%.

What practical steps are Southend Council and Veolia putting steps, strategies and how successful are they in 202022, 2023 to raise recycling across Southend and what are the poorest areas in Southend and what are they doing to raise recycling of pink, food waste, garden waste and reduce black sacks?

Answer:

There are a number of projects, initiatives and campaigns running currently in order to drive up recycling across the City. I concur with your concern which is a concern for us all. As we enter the cost-of-living crisis and a climate emergency it is essential residents take more responsibility. Our disposal costs including landfill taxes is currently costing our city appx £17000 per day from our revenue. This is money that could be diverted elsewhere for vital services such as assisting the vulnerable or running any service such as a library. Each 1% we increase our recycling rate saves the city £120k per annum. I urge all residents to take this seriously and do their bit as the social responsibility it is. There really is no excuse, throwing this money away is harming us all. Similarly, we must avoid land fill disposal as this is very harmful to the environment and climate. We are currently running a 'Low Performing Areas' project which aims to increase recycling across c.15,000 properties in the 5 lowest performing wards which are Victoria, Milton, Kursaal, Chalkwell and Westborough. This includes a survey to collect information on recycling habits and a chance to win a prize.

A contamination project is being rolled out City wide to improve recycling quality and 1259 letters have been issued this year.

Since April we have run 13 events and talks, issued over 1134 instructional letters and run various social media campaigns.

In terms of future activity, we are in the process of reviewing the recycling method for street cleansing operatives and researching a double hoop option to allow litter to be sorted into recycling and non-recycling material.

Finally, the procurement of the new waste contract includes an option for alternate weekly collections of waste in a wheeled bin. It should be noted that large increases in recycling rates are often only accompanied by significant service changes. A new contract does give a good opportunity to re-vamp and promote current services and a Communication Campaign is being planned for this time once we understand how the new services will be configured. It should be noted that we may not want to commit a large financial resource to communications until this time in the event services do change.

Question 4 from David Webb for the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Tourism (Cllr Mulronev):

How many trees are going to be planted in Prittlewell ward and what roads are they going to put in and over which period of 2022 and 2023?

Answer:

Thank you for your question, Mr Webb. We are currently in the process of assessing the central area of the City for tree planting, so we do not have a list of locations or tree numbers for the Prittlewell Ward finalised, but there will once again, be many hundreds planted.

The survey work for tree planting involves the assessment of all underground utility plans, as well as above ground considerations (junctions, street furniture, private driveways, streetlamps, overhead cables, driving sightlines etc).

As soon as the locations in the central area are confirmed, the Tree Planting section of the Southend Council website will be updated, emphasising our continued commitment to increasing the tree cover in our City as highlighted in our Tree Policy