

COUNCIL 19th SEPTEMBER 2019

MEMBER QUESTIONS REPORT

1. Question from Councillor Andy Boddington:

My question concerns outcomes from green waste collections in 2018/19:

- 1) How many tonnes of green waste was collected in Shropshire?
- 2) What percentage of this is estimated to be food waste?
- 3) How many tonnes of compost were produced?
- 4) How much energy (Mhw) was supplied to end users from the composting process?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Waste and Communications

LEZLEY PICTON, PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Outcomes from green waste collections in 2018/19

1. Veolia collected a total of 39,218 tonnes of organic waste from the kerbside. This was comprised of 10,792 tonnes of garden waste and a further 28,426 tonnes of garden waste mixed with food.
2. Based on operational observations at the composting site, circa 5-10% of the garden/food mix was estimated to be food.
3. Compost output is not weighed separately but based on studies in other parts of the country and professional opinion, the output is approximately 70% of the input and therefore circa 27,450 tonnes of compost.
4. The pure garden waste is taken through a Windrow composting process and the mixture of garden and food waste collected in Shropshire is processed via In-Vessel Composting, neither of which produce energy. Food waste collected separately (i.e. not with garden waste) can be processed through Anaerobic Digestion (AD) which does produce a gas which can be used to generate electricity. However, the greater costs of collecting separate food waste across a large, relatively sparsely populated, county cannot be offset by the additional benefits of the AD process.

The potential benefits of separate collection were considered when the current contract was agreed, and also tested in 2013 and again during the review which led to cardboard recycling collections in 2016. On each occasion the costs of separate food waste collection were found to be prohibitive in a largely rural county. We acknowledge the benefits of the Anaerobic Digestion process but separate collection of food waste to provide a feedstock would need an increase in the waste budget to provide more vehicles, loaders and cover additional fuel costs. Such an

increase is not possible in the current financial climate and the estimated additional food waste diversion would not reduce disposal costs sufficiently to make it viable.

There is also a potential environmental argument against separate collections due to the additional vehicles and emissions etc - but that would highlight a conflict with the emerging Resources and Waste Strategy which is heavily focussed on nationwide weekly separate collections. However, you might reference the Strategy as potentially providing funding to bridge the gap, given its commitment to finance any additional costs to Councils resulting from compliance.

2. Question from Councillor Roger Evans

Recently we have had a number of very heavy rain showers causing many many roads to become flooded, a number being due to the drains and associated gullies becoming overgrown or blocked. A number of these are in my division and no doubt other councillors, especially those in rural areas are having similar problems.

Can a telephone number be provided so we, including Parish clerks, can contact the appropriate staff during office hours and so inform them of the problems and obtain updates on what action is being taken. In detail can the following be provided please.

Who is it best to report these to, especially the urgent ones so they can be attended to without undue delay.

How is it best to report these floods during weekends and when our offices are closed.

How do members of the public obtain updates on what actions are being taken and an indication of likely timescales when work to overcome the problem is to be carried out.

With the onset of Autumn can the process of how gully cleaning is being processed, who is doing the work and what resources are being made available to clean these numerous blocked drains and gullies.

Finally, can we all be informed how, when flooding of roads is reported what action is taken and how are these reports handled. Is there a hierarchy of how they are handled?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Car Parks

STEVE DAVENPORT, PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

We have been reviewing our gully emptying programme and have changed the management arrangement that supports this area of highway maintenance. We have approximately 32,000 gully assets in our annual programme, our priority is to ensure that these are all routinely cleansed as efficiently as possible within the financial year. A high percentage of issues relate to this programme not being delivered appropriately in previous years.

Drainage issues should be reported via the appropriate highways email address. These can then be reviewed by the appropriate officer. They will have visibility of the annual programme and can advise on when the location in question will be attended to. If the flooding issue pose a significant risk to properties or present other significant highways issues, we may escalate this and attend ahead of the programme.