

Good afternoon,

I wrote to your Council about twelve months ago informing you of agreed changes to the terms and conditions of staff and working practices of East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS). You will recall these changes were the final part of the Action Plan designed to stabilise and improve the service for your parishioners.

Nearly a year on, I wanted to update you on progress and recent developments including future plans for the service.

Whilst the number of missed bins has fallen significantly in the last twelve months, there still remains considerable strategic and operational challenges facing the service.

We are all aware of the increased impact that the disruption of services had on parishioners and we hope the changes we have made to staff conditions, improved management, the delivery of new vehicles next month and improvements at the depot will continue to improve matters. We continue to welcome feedback and immediate notice of missed bin collections.

The improvements summarised above come at increased cost to the Council of £ 458,000 of which £ 314,000 related to investment in improvements to the terms and conditions of staff. Other additional costs largely related to vehicle maintenance and rising fuel. The robustness of the Council's finances meant that this additional expenditure was able to be absorbed without a risk to our overall Medium Term Financial Strategy and our commitment to Council Tax as a last resort, it is not a situation which we would want to repeat.

In response to these developments, the Council's Audit Committee instructed me to conduct a review into the reasons for the additional costs highlighting lessons learned and understanding any ongoing risk to the Council.

This review concluded that we needed to improve the financial reporting arrangements between the company and the Council and until these improvements have bedded in, ECSS remains a corporate risk to the Council and is therefore receiving full attention of senior management to mitigate the risk.

Looking forward, the plans for the future specification and delivery of the service will be commencing very shortly. The current contract with ECSS is up for renewal in March 2025 and the Council will be assessing its options particularly in the light of long anticipated government legislation. We will keep your Councillors updated on these developments.

Finally, I have made some changes to senior management at the Council with Emma Grima, Director Commercial managing both East Cambs Trading Company (ECTC) and ECSS on a full time basis and Isabel Edgar, Director Operations will lead preparations for the new service.

Thank you again for your attention.

John Hill

Chief Executive, East Cambridgeshire District Council

