

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
COUNCIL HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2021

Item 8 – PETITION – WASTE MANGEMENT SERVICES

STATEMENT and QUESTION from Ms Sue Bliss, Matlock Local Resident

“Please read my statement below the line and submit the following question:

Conservative ideology is to operate in a 'free market'. The DDDC tax payer has been subsidising Serco (a company which makes millions in profits), which hardly follows this ideology. The GMB says its workers are still not getting a fair pay deal (despite the recent injection which was specifically designated to increase HGV rates) and as a result there will be strike action. When are the conservative councillors on this council going to stop serving the interests of shareholders and start looking after its residents??

I am writing to register my dissatisfaction about the inadequate service Serco is delivering.

To date the tax payer has subsidised Serco to the tune of £500,000. It is wholly unacceptable for the hard working residents of Derbyshire Dales to subsidise a company that makes millions in profit. It beggars belief that this council continues to throw money at Serco. The recent decision which gave additional funds to Serco means we are paying for an increase in pay to Serco's drivers and yet the service is still appalling.

The Tory government's policy is to deprive companies of European workers on the basis that companies will then increase wages, attract British workers and it will all be fine in the long term. The food processing industry, the care industry and many companies are struggling to survive under this tory ideology. And yet Derbyshire Dales District Council, even though it is tory run, has broken from this impractical, unfair and disastrous ideology to do the exact opposite. I seriously challenge the wisdom of this District Council.

Derbyshire Dales's management of our refuse collection has been disastrous. The decision to contract out and the negotiation of a badly designed contract suggests in my opinion that this council's ability to do business with the corporate world is inadequate. I have repeatedly complained about the litter that Serco drops during their collections. I have been told by the waste management department that the workers don't have time to pick it up. We have a litter problem in the Dales and the amount of rubbish Serco drop is a significant part of that problem. This has been happening for years - nothing to do with the pandemic and everything to do with the inadequate setting up and management of the service.

It is clear to the residents if not to the district council that we have every right to exit the Serco contract as they have repeatedly breached it. The sooner we do this the sooner we can take control and offer a refuse collection that our residents deserve.”

RESPONSE:

Whilst there may be some dismay amongst the workforce regarding the HGV driver rates of pay, given the current climate, the proposed industrial action relates to the annual pay award offer. GMB have confirmed this does not relate solely to the Derbyshire Dales contract, nor does it solely relate to Serco – they are having these issues across the country.

The District Council has, throughout the negotiation period, encouraged both GMB and Serco to find a solution to this issue, as we believe our residents have already suffered enough disruption.

STATEMENT from Mrs C Elliott, Grindleford Local Resident

“I support the motion for a public enquiry into waste management. The 3 month recovery plan proposed and brokered by DDDC with Serco from August 2021 in itself is ineffectual as evidenced by sporadic and partial collections, despite assurances to the contrary. Out of 3 collections since the recovery plan was in place only 2 green wastes have been collected, with no communication or explanation from DDDC about the failed and not caught up collection. Further evidence of flawed waste management over a prolonged period of time by Serco and thereby DDDC.

As residents we pay council tax and then pay extra for green bin waste collection. This is on the understanding of services being delivered each month, not sporadically and not with no communication regarding issues. Seemingly there is no recourse for us as residents or sanctions for non-delivery of waste services for either Serco or DDDC.

A public inquiry is necessary to restore public confidence in DDDC waste management handling.”

Item 9 – PARKING OFFER IN DECEMBER 2021

QUESTION from Rev. Louise Petheram, Bradwell Local Resident

“I am writing as a trustee of Hope Valley Climate Action. I see that on agenda item 9 you are discussing a proposal for free car parking during December between 2.00 pm and midnight. I would like to ask how encouraging the use of private cars, in preference to public transport, is furthering the Council’s target towards achieving net zero carbon emissions?”

RESPONSE:

Thank you for your question, the proposal put to Members this evening is based on a historic arrangement designed to encourage visitors to the Dales and, in turn, support the local business community.

Whilst this was the primary driver was to support the local economy, we do hope that visitors and residents make best use of public transport, car sharing, cycling or walking where possible. The Council has also completed its first

phase of installation of EV charge points across the district, with further installations planned.