

## **June notes for Parish Councils.**

### **Business Rates Bills**

Between 1 April 2020 and 30 June 2021, as a response to the pandemic, Central Government introduced an expanded retail discount for businesses that primarily dealt with customers in a face to face capacity. During this period the discount was 100% meaning the bills were issued with nothing to pay for that period.

From 1 July that discount reduces to 66%. Therefore, many businesses will be receiving their first bill with a charge on since 1 April 2020. The Council has no say or discretion over this and we are obliged to charge the 34% from 1 July 2021 as per the Business Rates national legislation.

In case you receive queries, the various business grant schemes have meant that we were made aware of some businesses which we didn't know about previously and whom have received business grants support. Consequently some of these businesses will be receiving their first business rates bill.

When we completed our annual billing exercise, we did advise a further bill would be issued, so businesses are aware that this was due.

### **Council Receives Contractors Recycling Recovery Plan**

FCC Environment (UK) have presented South Hams District Council with a plan to put right their struggling new recycling service.

South Hams District Council has continued to express its dissatisfaction with FCC's role out of the Council's new recycling service and have insisted that the contractors take specific steps to fulfil their contractual obligations.

At an extraordinary meeting of South Hams District Council, held specifically to discuss the current challenges facing the new recycling service, Councillors discussed the proposals put forward by FCC.

Before the meeting, FCC's recovery plan was rigorously scrutinised by the Council's officers.

Cllr Keith Baldry South Hams District Council's Executive Member for the Environment said: "I am still very concerned about the level of service that we have been giving the public in some parts of the South Hams. As the lead member for Waste and Recycling, I take responsibility for that. It is not good for the image of the South Hams and it has been going on for too long.

"I would personally like to apologise to the public on behalf of South Hams District Council, for all of the distress and inconvenience that you have experienced.

"As a Council we are treating this situation with the upmost urgency and are currently allocating all resources we can to support FCC. We now have a Senior Management Team

embedded with FCC and we are being proactive in solving problems on a daily basis as they arise.

“However, I remain deeply let down by FCC’s failure to roll out the Kerbside service effectively. We therefore demanded that FCC give us a plan to put this horrendous situation right. They have now given us that plan and we have meticulously scrutinised it.

“Firstly, we expect FCC to collect all of the outstanding recycling, paying particular attention to those households that have been repeatedly missed and our most vulnerable residents on assisted collections.

“FCC have told the Council that they expect to collect recycling on the right day for all residents within by the middle of July.

“And secondly we expect FCC to give us a detailed long term solution which will see all residents moved onto the new recycling service as they are contracted to do. They have told us that they expect this to be fully completed before the end of 2021.

“This is an evolving situation that we will continue to monitor and ensure FCC Environment deliver the service to the levels that our residents expect and deserve.”

In the short term, 26,000 residents will continue to have their recycling sorted at the kerbside into the new vehicles. 11,000 residents will have their recycling collected in a different vehicle and it will be sorted at a local sorting facility. 8000 residents, will remain on the clear and blue sack system for the time being.

All residents are being asked to continue to separate their recycling following the instructions, regardless of which vehicle arrives on your collection day. This will ensure that your recycling is separated and ready to be sorted at the kerbside as soon as the new service resumes.

The Council will also directly contact all of those people who have been impacted the most, with further information about what to do now.

FCC have given the Council assurances that absolutely nothing will go to landfill.

To find out more about:

- Waste and Recycling, go to: [www.southhams.gov.uk/recyclingwaste](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/recyclingwaste)
  
- Council’s Climate Change and Biodiversity Declaration, please go to: [www.climatechange.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.climatechange.southhams.gov.uk)
  
- FCC Environment (UK) Ltd's statement please go to: [www.southhams.gov.uk/article/7994/Statement-and-apology-from-FCC-Environment-UK-Ltd](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/article/7994/Statement-and-apology-from-FCC-Environment-UK-Ltd)

**Funding available to help tackle the climate emergency in the South Hams**

South Hams District Council is joining forces with Crowdfunder to encourage and support projects and ideas that will help the District to tackle the climate emergency.

The South Hams Climate Action and Biodiversity Fund is offering match funding of up to £10,000 for projects within the district that align with the Council's Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy. It's hoped that the match-funding will provide crucial revenue to environmental projects that will help to make the South Hams become carbon neutral, improve its biodiversity and create climate resilient communities.

Cllr Tom Holway, South Hams Executive Member for Climate Change, said: "We are all aware of the huge challenge we face as a society in dealing with climate change. South Hams District Council is committing to playing our part in the fight, as shown in our extensive Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy.

"Working with Crowdfunder to help secure match-funding for local community projects is another way we can help the District reach its goals and make sure we all play our part in tackling the climate emergency.

"We know that the residents of the South Hams are passionate about the natural beauty of our area and many are working hard to protect our planet; we hope this funding can be of some use to those in the community working hard on environmental projects."

To apply for funding, you need a crowdfunding project. You must first demonstrate strong local support by getting to 25% of your crowdfunding target from a minimum of 25 unique supporters before being considered. If you receive a match-funding pledge from the South Hams Climate Action and Biodiversity Fund, but the amount does not take you to your crowdfunding target, you must continue crowdfunding until you hit the target.

Projects must support South Hams District Council's Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy in one of the following ways to be considered:

Reducing carbon emissions from households, businesses or organisations, including community and voluntary groups.

Creating new opportunities for renewable energy - Higher levels of match funding will be considered for projects providing innovative solutions for heat decarbonisation such as district energy networks.

Supporting behaviour change and sustainable living.

Projects which will result in removal of carbon from the atmosphere through nature-based solutions or supporting improvements in biodiversity.

Providing education and awareness of the Climate and Ecological emergency through direct engagement with hard-to-reach groups and individuals.

Projects which aim to help communities and species adapt to the effects of Climate Change.

Projects to help reduce organisational carbon footprints, this could include feasibility studies, action plans and emissions studies - (not open to for-profit organisations).

The Council will consider pledging towards crowdfunding targets as follows:

Up to 50% for constituted community groups and Town & Parish Councils

Up to 30% for registered not-for-profit organisations

Up to 20% for incorporated locally based for-profit organisations

To find out more about the project match funding, visit:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/funds/south-hams-climate-fund>

To read the South Hams District Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy, visit:

[https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/uploads/\\_south\\_hams\\_climate\\_change\\_and\\_biodiversity\\_fund\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/uploads/_south_hams_climate_change_and_biodiversity_fund_strategy.pdf)