

CIVIC AMENITY SITE UPDATE

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with details of Essex County Council's proposals for dealing with the local civic amenity charging issue which has arisen between Southend on Sea Borough Council and the remainder of Essex.
- 1.2 Following due consideration of these proposals, this report seeks to gain a formal view from this Committee that can be given to Essex County Council.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At present the civic amenity site at Stock Road, operated by Southend on Sea Borough Council, levies a charge of £3 per visit to all members of the public who do not reside in the Southend Borough.
- 2.2 Essex County Council have agreed to refund non – residents the £3 charge but it is still inconvenient for those Rochford District residents for whom this is the closest civic amenity site.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At Full Council on 24 April 2001 Members agreed, amongst other things, to request Essex County Council to issue windscreen discs to Rochford District and Castle Point residents and to install a ticket machine at Castle Road civic amenity site with a £6 entry charge for non – Essex residents. Members also agreed to request Essex County Council to discuss with the Council whether, and if so where, it will open a civic amenity site in the South / Eastern part of the District.
- 3.2 A meeting subsequently took place in February 2002 between Members of Rochford District Council, Southend on Sea Borough Council and Essex County Council, at which Southend on Sea Borough Council confirmed that they would continue with the current charging regime detailed in 2.1.
- 3.3 Following on from that meeting a further Member level meeting took place between Rochford District Council and Essex County Council to discuss possible options in the light of Southend on Sea Borough Council's confirmation that the charge for non – Southend residents would remain. The County Council agreed to come forward with proposals for Members to consider, hence this report.

4 PROPOSALS

4.1 Essex County Council have now put forward the following proposals for Members to consider regarding the implementation of a new scheme at Castle Road site.

- Signs will be erected at Castle Road and local newspaper advertising will advise people in South East Essex that from a date yet to be determined, only residents of the Essex County Council area will be allowed to use Essex civic amenity sites freely. Leaflets will also be distributed at Castle Road.
- A charge of £3 per visit will be made to anyone unable to prove residency within the Essex County Council area. If an Essex County Council resident cannot provide documentation, a charge will be made but refunded by Essex County Council where proof is subsequently provided.
- The scheme will operate only at Castle Road, although Essex County Council will monitor the use of other sites by non – Essex residents.
- Essex County Council will continue to refund charges incurred by Essex residents when using Southend on Sea Borough Council civic amenity sites.

4.2 It is suggested that the most appropriate form of proof of residency would be a Council Tax bill or another household utility bill. Members' views are now sought on the proposals submitted and also the County Council's ideas on how proof of residence will be obtained. Members' views are also sought on whether a further joint Member level meeting is required with Essex County Council and possibly Castle Point.

4.3 Whatever scheme the County Council adopts will undoubtedly have resource implications for that Authority. Clearly, however, there is a need to respond to Southend on Sea Borough Council's continued charging policy, which penalises Essex County residents and sets a precedent which could be applied across a range of service areas delivered by either Southend on Sea Borough Council or the two-tier Essex County Authorities.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The implementation of an appropriate scheme at the Castle Road civic amenity site would help to balance the amount of waste being taken and the accessibility to the various civic amenity sites by residents of

the Rochford and Southend Districts.

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is proposed that the Committee RESOLVES

That Members consider the proposals put forward by Essex County Council for the Castle Road civic amenity site detailed in Section 4 of this report and provide a formal view for this Council to relay to Essex County Council.

Roger Crofts

Head of Finance & External Services

Background Papers:

For further information please contact Jeremy Bourne on:-

Tel:- 01702 318163
E-Mail:- jeremy.bourne@rochford.gov.uk