

# **Waste Management & Recycling Sub-Committee – 11 October 2005**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Waste Management & Recycling Sub-Committee** held on **11 October 2005** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr P K Savill

Cllr T G Cutmore  
Cllr C A Hungate

Cllr C J Lumley  
Cllr M G B Starke

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn.

## **OFFICERS PRESENT**

J Bourne                      - Leisure and Contracts Manager  
S Worthington              - Committee Administrator

## **20     MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **21     KERBSIDE RECYCLING SCHEME**

The Sub-Committee received a verbal update from the Leisure and Contracts Manager on progress with respect to the kerbside recycling scheme.

It was noted that the recycling tonnages for July and August were lower than for previous months, as had been anticipated, but not significantly so. The total for July was 284 tonnes and for August it was 278 tonnes, compared to a monthly average of between 310 – 320 tonnes of recyclables collected. It was therefore unlikely that tonnage estimates for the first 12 months of the scheme would change notably. It was expected that the Council could achieve recycling credits of approximately £30,000 in the first year of operation, with an additional profit of around £5,000 associated with the re-sale value of the recyclables. These profits would be set against the costs of the green waste scheme.

Officers advised that the kerbside recycling scheme would be rolled out to those properties not currently on the scheme, excluding those in flatted properties, at the end of January. This was later than originally expected, as a result of the delivery time for the new, smaller vehicle. A county-wide review, funded by DEFRA, was being undertaken of how best to implement recycling collections for flatted properties. This was as a result of common issues such as high contamination levels associated with communal bins. The review would seek to establish best practice county-wide for dealing with recycling collections for these kinds of properties. Once this review was completed, the kerbside recycling scheme would also be rolled out to flatted properties.

Members concurred that, given the increased pressure to build more flats, it was important that such properties included provision for the siting of recycling bins. It was noted that officers would clarify whether the Local Plan included such a provision.

Members were of the view that those residents on the previous kerbside recycling scheme were less happy with the current scheme, as there was now a smaller variety of recyclable materials collected, although the return to a weekly collection of the grey bin was popular. Residents new to the kerbside recycling scheme were, however, very happy with the current scheme.

It was reported that in September there were 900 properties participating in the green waste collection scheme. Since the scheme began in July there had been continual enrolment. Greens were confident that their target of 1,000 properties by the end of October would be met.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to the Saturday morning collections of green waste for areas not covered by the scheme, officers advised that around 6 people regularly went along to the Foulness collection point and 12 people went regularly to the Great Wakering collection point. Greens were happy with the tonnages collected on Saturday mornings.

Members expressed concern about payment methods for the green waste scheme. It appeared that residents joining the scheme part-way through the year (July to June) would pay the same amount as those joining at the beginning, but would not receive the service for a full calendar year.

Members were, however, updated that a system was now in place whereby the price was reduced by £2 for each month that new subscribers missed, up to a maximum of 6 months. There was a general consensus that many residents would probably be deterred from re-signing up for the scheme if payment was not done on the basis of an annual, rolling contract. It was noted that officers should raise the issue of introducing annual, rolling contracts with Greens.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to garden compost bins, officers advised that the use of such composters was not taken into consideration in determining Authorities' recycling targets, as quantities recycled were obviously difficult to quantify. Representations had, however, been made County-wide asking that some form of measurement be introduced for this.

In response to a further query relating to charity collections of textiles, officers confirmed that although this was, clearly, a form of recycling, it was also not taken into consideration with respect to recycling targets.

## **22 REFUSE AND RECYCLING OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) providing Members with proposals for amending certain procedures and policies in relation to refuse collection and recycling.

### **Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant**

During debate, Members concurred that, with respect to next year's waste performance and efficiency grant, the main priority for the District would be to increase the variety of recycling materials collected. It was felt that there would be merit in exploring the possibility of collecting cardboard, as this was bulky and would help boost recycling tonnages.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to the recycling vehicles, officers advised that each vehicle had 3 bays and that, given the current collection rates, there would not necessarily be the capacity to carry a further recycling material on them. It was, however, noted that Members felt that there would be merit in exploring the possibility of trailers for the vehicles.

Concluding the debate, there was a general consensus that Serviceteam should be invited to attend the next meeting of the Sub-Committee to present their views on how the variety of recycling materials might be increased within the District.

### **Recycling Paper Collection**

While mindful of officers' recommendation not to purchase red bags for the additional properties due to be rolled out onto the kerbside recycling scheme in January, Members nevertheless believed that the decision made by Council in July should not be changed. Members concurred that the extension to the scheme should be launched with both blue boxes and red bags, as this would appear more professional and would ensure that all households started the service on an equal footing.

Members further perceived that the importance of ensuring an efficient distribution of the blue boxes and red bags to the additional properties should be stressed to Serviceteam. There was a general consensus that red bags should not be replaced but that it should be made clear to residents that papers could be placed in either red bags or carrier bags.

### **Bag Collections**

It was noted that only a small proportion of properties within the District, ie 8% of properties, were on a bag collection for refuse. While mindful of officers' recommendation to limit the number of bags collected to four bags per household, Members nevertheless believed that no change should be made to current practice, ie that the number of bags should not be restricted. During debate, Members expressed concern that restricting the number of bags to be collected to just four bags could result in litter being strewn in the streets. It was also felt probable that only a minority of residents would put out more than four bags for collection.

### Green Garden Waste

Members, while mindful of officers' recommendation that a policy be adopted of no green garden waste to be placed in the grey wheeled bin or black bag refuse collection, nevertheless believed that current policy should not be changed until such future time as the Council was in a position to offer a full green waste collection service District-wide. Members were of the view that residents might have interpreted any such change in policy as forcing them to sign up for the green waste service, with associated costs. Members also expressed concern that any such move would have caused particular difficulties for the elderly, who would often be unable to travel to civic amenity sites with green waste or to afford the annual fee for green waste collection.

Members all concurred that it was important to continue to make every effort to encourage residents to recycle more. It was important that residents should be educated about ways to recycle, such as, for example, recycling green waste at civic amenity sites, via composting bins or by, perhaps 2 or 3 households sharing the costs of a green waste collection. Members also expressed the view that there should be a civic amenity site in the east of the District.

Members felt that there would be merit in including a future item in *Rochford District Matters* advising residents wishing to place green waste in their grey bins to place it in a bag first and also to ensure that any rose cuttings should be cut down and similarly placed in a bag.

### Resolved

That Serviceteam be invited to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee to present their views on how the range of recycling materials might be expanded within the District. (CD(F&ES))

### EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

### Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

## 23 ESSEX JOINT PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The Sub-Committee received a verbal update from the Leisure and Contracts Manager on the Essex Joint Procurement process.

It was noted that this was continuing to move at a rapid pace. Feedback had now been received from DEFRA and from industry, the latter by means of 2 soft market testing events. Following feedback from DEFRA, a further PFI bid

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for disposal only was being developed, in tandem with PPP bids for collection as the preferred, but not yet confirmed, procurement approach.

The meeting closed at 1.35 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....