

## **CIVIC AMENITY SITES IN SOUTHEND BOROUGH**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Southend Borough Council is proposing a trial which will introduce charges for residents from outside the Borough who wish to use their civic amenity sites.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Southend Borough Council introduced height barriers at its civic amenity sites in March 1999, with the aim of deterring the illicit deposit of commercial waste, which was largely being transported in high-sided vehicles. This followed a similar policy decision by Essex County Council
- 2.2 As a result of some complaints to Southend Councillors by the owners of large private vehicles, the Council's waste contractor, Cory Environmental Ltd, was asked to consider alternative controls.
- 2.3 Cory Environmental have proposed a scheme based on their experience in operating civic amenity sites in other areas, which involves the use of a waste disposal permit scheme. All householders in the Borough will be issued with a permit each year which will enable them to enter the civic amenity sites free of charge. Residents from outside the Borough will be able to use the sites, providing they are in a private car, but there will be a £3 charge. Private vans and trailers will not be permitted for out of Borough users.
- 2.4 The new arrangements will come into effect on 1 April 2001, initially for a 6 month period, after which a review of the operation and cost of the scheme will be undertaken.

### **3 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT**

- 3.1 Following the closure of the Essex County Council civic amenity and recycling centre at Common Road, Great Wakering, the Southend site in Stock Road became the nearest facility for many residents living in the eastern part of the District. The availability of the Stock Road site was taken into account by Essex County Council when they carried out their review which ultimately led to the closure of the Great Wakering site.
- 3.2 Under these proposals, the site is still available to Rochford residents, but only on payment of a fee. Those residents will have no choice but to pay, or to travel to Essex County Council run sites at Castle Road, Rayleigh or elsewhere.

- 3.3 It is inevitable that some residents will instead put recyclable materials into their normal refuse collection and that fly-tipping will increase in the eastern part of the District.
- 3.4 It is also highly likely that many Southend residents living in the Eastwood area use the Castle Road site as the most convenient facility.
- 3.5 Following consultation with Group Leaders and the Chairman of Transportation and Environmental Services Committee, the Chief Executive wrote to the Chief Executive and Town Clerk of Southend Borough Council before the meeting of the Cabinet that was due to consider this proposal, requesting a meeting between Southend, Rochford and Essex Members before a final decision was taken.
- 3.6 The letter was read in full to the Cabinet meeting, but the Members felt that, since the proposal was for a trial period, they were not minded to postpone implementation.
- 3.7 It is understood that the proposal subsequently passed the Ratification Committee and that it will also be considered by the Environmental Scrutiny Committee, to be held on 19 February.
- 3.8 It is further understood that the proposed scheme was not discussed with Essex County Council. The County Chief Executive has confirmed his Council's willingness to join in a meeting if one can be convened.

#### **4 NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Arrangements need to be put into place to ensure that all residents of the District have equal access to civic amenity sites after 1 April 2001.
- 4.2 An early meeting between Councillors from the three Authorities involved would still appear to be the most sensible next step. It may be possible to work out arrangements which will ensure that free access for Rochford residents continues. If Southend Borough Council decline a further invitation to meet, this Council and Essex County Council must investigate the options for re-providing free access to civic amenity facilities for the residents in the eastern part of the District.

#### **5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The loss of free access to facilities to dispose of household waste is likely to lead to fly tipping.

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**6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 In addition to the detrimental effects of fly tipping, the loss of recycling facilities will lead to more material being landfilled.

**7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 It is the duty of the Waste Disposal Authority to provide places for the deposit of household waste free of charge by the residents of its area.
- 7.2 This Council has duties to collect household waste and to keep the District free of litter.

**8 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Parishes in the eastern part of the District are likely to be affected by the Southend Borough Council proposals.

**9 RECOMMENDATION**

It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

- 9.1 To request an urgent Member level meeting with representatives from Southend Borough Council and Essex County Council.
- 9.2 To nominate Members to represent this Council.

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**Background Papers:**

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