

## **Environmental Services Committee – 9 November 2004**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on **9 November 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr J E Grey (Chairman)  
Cllr Mrs T J Capon (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R G S Choppen  
Cllr T G Cutmore  
Cllr Mrs L Hungate  
Cllr C J Lumley  
Cllr J M Pullen

Cllr P R Robinson  
Cllr C G Seagers  
Cllr Mrs M S Vince  
Cllr Mrs M J Webster  
Cllr P F A Webster

### **VISITING MEMBERS**

Cllrs Mrs R Brown, A J Humphries, C A Hungate, G A Mockford, M G B Starke.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

R Crofts - Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)  
A Bugeja - Head of Legal Services  
J Bourne - Leisure & Contracts Manager  
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

### **REPRESENTING ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cllr K Twitchen, OBE, Cabinet Member for Environment, Heritage & Culture  
N Beach, Waste & Recycling Manager  
K Kimber, Lawyer, Nabarro Nathanson

### **472 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2004 were approved as a correct and signed by the Chairman.

### **473 ESSEX JOINT WASTE STRATEGY**

The Chairman welcomed County Councillor Kay Twitchen OBE, who was in attendance to answer Members' questions on the Essex Joint Waste Strategy and also welcomed Nicola Beach and Kerin Kimber from Essex County Council who were present to give presentations relating to the Essex Joint Waste Strategy.

The following key points were noted:-

- The key driver for a change in waste strategy came from European legislation, the main elements of which were the Landfill Directive and the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme. It was a requirement that areas with

2 tier arrangements should produce a joint waste strategy by 2005.

- Central Government was concerned about the UK's poor performance in terms of waste management, but was equally mindful of the need for efficiency savings.
- Local Authorities in Essex, working in partnership towards an integrated waste management system, should be able to deal with regulatory change more efficiently and effectively and should be able to save costs and offset risk.
- The results of a desktop study had shown that Authorities within Thames Gateway could potentially realise £2.5 million per annum savings with respect to waste management, if an integrated solution was developed.
- The County Council had, following public consultation two years ago, agreed a strategic framework for developing a long term waste management solution and had agreed a protocol for Local Authorities to work in partnership, identified options for integrated working and created a project plan.
- The Essex framework included a long-term aspiration of recycling 60% of all waste within a total integrated system and of increasing the opportunities for potential markets for the recyclable materials. It also aspired to local disposal points for waste collection Authorities and to developing alternative methods of waste disposal to landfill and incineration based on anaerobic digestion and mechanical biological treatment. The latter was in tandem with the results of the public consultation in 2002.
- To achieve these aspirations it would be necessary to align closely the collection and processing of waste with the final disposal of the materials and partnership working was a crucial element of this. It was also vital that there be a co-ordinated campaign aimed at developing waste awareness amongst the public and educating residents in recycling.
- Landfill tax was currently set at £15 per tonne of waste placed in landfill above an Authority's allowance, but this would increase, over time, to £35 per tonne. In 2009/2010 the allowances for biodegradable waste in landfill sites would be severely reduced.
- DEFRA provided financial support (PFI credits) to cover part of the capital costs of solutions to waste management delivering high recycling.
- It would be necessary to identify infrastructure needs in order to achieve the long-term waste management aspirations of the Essex framework. Long-term integrated contracts would be an integral part of this.

- There would be a range of benefits for those Authorities who agreed to integrate contractually to the Essex waste strategy, from cost savings associated with recycling performance levels, recycling bonuses and opportunities for increased recycling arising from the residual treatment process. Those Authorities who decided against contractual or system integration would not receive any PFI credits.
- The timetable for achieving the strategy was tight, with the aspiration of recycling equipment and facilities being operational in 2007 / 2009.
- A Joint Committee would be established to facilitate joint working arrangements between Local Authorities; it would be the decision-making body in relation to the waste management procurement process.
- A first draft Constitution for the Joint Committee went out to consultation with Local Authorities in August, which limits it to the procurement timeframe of approximately 3 years.
- It was proposed that each Local Authority should nominate one Member and one Substitute Member to the Joint Committee, ie, each Local Authority would exercise one vote.
- The quorum for Joint Committee meetings would be the number of voting Members, less one. There would be six meetings per annum, which would be agreed in advance at an annual AGM meeting. The Chairman would be appointed at the AGM and would have a casting vote.
- The decisions of the Joint Committee would be subject to the scrutiny arrangements of each member Authority.

Responding to a Member concern relating to the ambitious target of achieving 60% recycling of all collectable waste, the Cabinet Member confirmed that this was very much a long-term target and that there would be a need to raise awareness and to educate residents in how to recycle their waste effectively coupled with a requirement to increase the number and range of materials recycled, eg, batteries and different types of plastic. It would, in addition, be necessary to ensure that there sufficient facilities on the streets to facilitate recycling for residents. In tandem with this work would need to be conducted jointly with Central Government to develop a variety of markets for new recyclables.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme penalty payments, the Cabinet Member advised that Central Government would benefit from any such penalty payments.

Responding to a further Member enquiry relating to the Joint Committee, County officers advised that officers and Substitute Members could accompany Members to the Committee, but that only the Member representatives would have voting rights. Similarly, members of community

groups would be welcome to attend, on a non-voting basis. The quorum had been set as a result of the responses received during the public consultation.

In response to a concern raised with respect to DEFRA not including composting in recycling totals, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the County Council shared this concern and that work would be done to try to find a proper means of measuring composted materials.

Members also raised a separate concern relating to the increase in new housing development within Essex, which would inevitably generate increased waste; all such new development would need to be considered in the context of any future recycling targets for Thames Gateway Authorities.

Responding to a concern raised about the increase in plastic packaging for household products, the Cabinet Member advised that, provided the polymers were kept pure, plastics could be recycled several times, and far more so than paper. It was therefore vital that new markets could be identified for plastic recyclables.

There was a general consensus that there would be merit in including an article on recycling in *Rochford District Matters* that would highlight examples of what could be made out of recycled goods.

Members concurred that the joint waste contract appeared to offer the opportunity of creating synergies between Authorities to gain real financial and environmental advantages. It was clear that in future years it would no longer be viable to place waste in landfill or to incinerate such waste and as such, the proposed strategy was one, which should be supported.

On a Motion moved by Cllr T G Cutmore and seconded by Cllr Mrs M J Webster it was:-

### **Resolved**

That an article be included in *Rochford District Matters* informing residents of various products in use that are composed of recyclables. (CD(F&ES))

## **474 ESSEX WASTE STRATEGY AND JOINT WASTE CONTRACTS**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) updating Members on the progress of the Joint Essex Municipal Waste Strategy and the Essex Waste Management Contracts and which also highlighted the key decisions required by all District and Borough Councils for the contract procurement process to progress.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Draft Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy be adopted.

- (2) That this Council agrees to enter into the Joint Procurement Process for long term waste management solutions, with a view to utilising PFI credits to support three area contracts.
- (3) That, subject to satisfactory contract procurement outcome, contractual integration of some or all of the relevant services is envisaged. Relevant services for these purposes may be regarded as refuse collection, recycling and street cleansing.
- (4) That the establishment of an Area Joint Committee to manage the procurement process be agreed.
- (5) That the financial contribution to the procurement process, as previously detailed in section 4.3.4 of the report, be agreed.
- (6) That the Draft Communications Plan be agreed.
- (7) That the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to reconstitute the Recycling Sub-Committee with terms of reference as detailed in section 4.7 of the report. (CD(F&ES))

### **475 CHRISTMAS REFUSE COLLECTION**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) asking Members to consider timetabling proposals for the refuse collection service during the Christmas and New Year period.

#### **Resolved**

That proposal (A), as outlined in the officer's report, be approved for the timetable of refuse collection over the Christmas and New Year period.  
(CD(F&ES))

### **476 PROPOSED DIVERSION OF FOOTPATH 8, GREAT WAKERING**

**(Note:** Cllr C G Seagers declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being a Member of Great Wakering Parish Council.)

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services on an application to divert public footpath 8, Great Wakering.

#### **Resolved**

That, subject to the residents of 64a, 66, 68, 70 and 72 Alexander Road, Great Wakering bearing the cost of all the Council's expenses, recoverable under the Local Government (Recovery of Costs for Public Path Orders) Regulations 1993 as amended, the proposal to divert footpath 8, as indicated on the plan appended to the report, be approved in principle and that the

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Head of Legal Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to secure the making and confirmation without modification, of the Public Path Diversion Order. (HLS)

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....