

Waste Management & Recycling Sub-Committee – 25 November 2005

Minutes of the meeting of the **Waste Management & Recycling Sub-Committee** held on **25 November 2005** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr P K Savill

Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr C A Hungate
Cllr C J Lumley

Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr M G B Starke

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts	- Corporate Director (Finance and External Services)
J Bourne	- Leisure and Contracts Manager
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

ALSO PRESENT

G Such, Serviceteam
D Lester, Serviceteam

24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 FUTURE KERBSIDE RECYCLING EXPANSION

The Sub-Committee welcomed Mr Such and Mr Lester from Serviceteam, who had been invited to attend the meeting to outline possibilities relating to the expansion of the current kerbside recycling service.

The Serviceteam representatives identified three potential areas that could be targeted in order to expand the kerbside recycling scheme.

The first option would be to increase the amount of paper that was collected, as it was perceived that collection rates should be higher. It was noted that, since the introduction of the kerbside recycling scheme, bring bank paper tonnages had not plummeted, although there had been some decrease. It was further noted that the bring bank contracts were not long term and, as such, there could be scope for Serviceteam to take on the paper bring bank contract at a future date.

During debate, Members drew attention to the size of the red bags, which for many residents were not large enough to contain a fortnight's supply of papers. In addition, the red bags were easily lost. It was felt that a larger bag might help to increase paper collection rates, although the weight of paper in the bag would be difficult to carry. There were a number of residents who were reluctant to put papers out for collection in supermarket carrier bags.

Waste Management & Recycling Sub-Committee

– 25 November 2005

The Serviceteam representatives advised Members that, in their opinion, residents would be encouraged to recycle more assiduously by introducing a fortnightly collection of domestic waste and a weekly collection of dry, recyclable materials. Members, while recognising that this issue would need to be investigated in the future, nevertheless considered that this would not be well received by residents at present, and, in particular by those residents who had been on the previous recycling scheme during which there had been a fortnightly collection of domestic waste.

The Serviceteam representatives reported that, with respect to the composition of paper collected within the District, only a small percentage was of magazines. It was noted that, in other Districts, when a new edition of the Argos catalogue was published, there was a noticeable increase in paper recycling tonnages as residents recycled the previous edition. This was not, however, the case within Rochford District. It was apparent that many residents were unaware that catalogues and magazines could be recycled. This clearly pointed to the potential for increasing the paper tonnages.

The second option discussed for improving the recycling scheme was that of increased marketing and education. Increased education would aim to reduce the waste stream by reinforcing to residents the importance of recycling in terms of protecting the environment and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. It was noted that improved marketing of the service, illustrating to residents exactly how much they have recycled during the year, with a breakdown of the materials recycled would help to raise the profile of the scheme. The marketing should include pictures of items that could be recycled, as well as text. The vehicles themselves could feature marketing as they travelled around the District, as well as the website and *Rochford District Matters*.

During debate Members concurred that there would be merit in leaflets being developed advising residents that they could put out magazines and Argos and mail order catalogues for collection. The schools could also be targeted in terms of educating the children on the importance of recycling in both environmental and financial benefits.

The third option identified by Serviceteam for expanding the scheme was to increase the number of recyclable materials collected. The recycling vehicle bays could be increased from three to four and it might be possible to accommodate a collection of cardboard. Serviceteam had recently completed a successful cardboard trial in Stroud, which had highlighted the fact that, if corrugated cardboard was excluded, most household cardboard waste was not bulky.

During debate, Members concurred that if this option was to be pursued, it should be done on the basis of a short-term trial for a specific area. It was recognised that there was currently capacity during week 2 collection rounds and, as such, there could be merit in identifying one round from week 2 for

such a trial.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the collection of cardboard, Serviceteam representatives advised that it would not be possible to use a trailer for collecting cardboard, because of the high weight of paper and glass currently collected by the vehicles. It was further noted that the best means of collection would be to encourage residents to place flattened cardboard inside the blue boxes or bags already used for the scheme.

Responding to a an additional query relating to a possible timetable for introducing such a trial, officers confirmed that it would be advisable to allow time for a settling down period for the new kerbside recycling round due to commence in January with the smaller vehicle, and that April 2006, accordingly would be the earliest that such a trial might commence.

It was noted that additional information should be sought with respect to the Stroud trial to assess how successful it had been and what effect the cardboard trial had had on recycling tonnages.

Concluding the debate, Members concurred that there would be merit in investigating the feasibility of introducing cardboard bring banks at the District sites, to which residents could take corrugated cardboard and in assessing whether more textile bring banks should be provided and possibly emptied more frequently.

26 WASTE RECYCLING AND STREET SCENE INSPECTION

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) apprising Members of the self assessment recently submitted to the Audit Commission and the proposed timetable for the inspection.

Officers thanked Serviceteam representatives for their help in working through the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE). It was noted that there would be a meeting with the Audit Commission on 14 December and it was requested that Cllr T G Cutmore and Cllr M G B Starke and Serviceteam representatives might attend the meeting, together with officers. The inspection would take place during the week commencing 9 January 2006 and the inspectors would seek meetings with Cllrs P A Capon, T G Cutmore, K H Hudson, P K Savill and M G B Starke and with Serviceteam, as well as officers, partners, stakeholders and service users. There would be a further meeting on either 1 or 2 March 2006, following the inspection.

Officers had considered each of the items contained within the KLOE document to assess whether or not the Council's service met the 2* standard of service and to identify any areas of weakness. Further work on the KLOE would be conducted before the inspection in January.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to the targeting of 'hot spots' for additional cleaning, officers advised that hot spots were identified in a variety of ways, including reports by the general public, by Serviceteam operatives, by Council monitoring officers and by Members. It was recognised that litter was prevalent in town centres after Saturday evenings and Members concurred that there would be merit in establishing whether there were any references to clearing litter in the licensing conditions of, for example, take away food outlets.

It was recognised that it was difficult to enforce environmental contraventions, such as fly tipping, as it was necessary to be on the scene when such offences were committed. However, the launch of the environmental campaign within the District had resulted in more members of the public notifying the Council of environmental 'hot spots'.

In conclusion it was noted that an important element of the inspection would be to provide proof of a vision for improvements to the service. It was clear that the Council's active involvement in the Essex joint procurement process was an important element of any forward plans.

The next meeting of this Sub-Committee, on 5 January 2006, would consider an updated version of the Key Lines of Enquiry document.

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.

27 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 a meeting of the Thames Gateway Joint Committee held on 2 November had determined that the procurement process should proceed on the basis of a 2-area approach for waste disposal and a 3-area approach for collection. During debate, Members expressed concern at the tight timescale for the process, particularly in light of the 2008 expiry date for the Rochford waste and recycling contracts. If the timetable was to slip, consideration should be given to developing interim waste collection arrangements.

Officers apprised Members of the contents of a draft response, prepared by the County Council on behalf of the partner Local Authorities, to the Defra consultation paper, "Options for Local Authority Statutory Performance

Waste Management & Recycling Sub-Committee

– 25 November 2005

Standards on Recycling and Composting in 2007/8". The proposals to cap recycling credits, with subsequent rises to 3% each year were noted. The proposal to maintain the 2005/6 recycling targets for 2007/8, but to increase the floor target from 18% to 20% was also noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and closed at 12.50 pm.

Chairman

Date