

Committee: EXTRAORDINARY ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE

Agenda Item

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Title: UTTLESFORD WASTE MANAGEMENT
STRATEGY

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Item for decision

Summary

A municipal waste strategy has been developed for Uttlesford to address four key aims. We need to:

1. Improve recycling performance;
2. Minimise waste;
3. Maximise recycling credits
4. Minimise landfill tax and penalties

This requires step changes in the way we collect waste. The strategy uses a number of routes to aid community participation in achieving this aim. It offers a timely opportunity to restructure the service taking benefit from the flexibility of having an in house workforce.

There are improvements in service to be gained by asking residents to separate their waste differently and provide properties with wheeled bins for the three materials. These are a weekly collection of separated kitchen waste with an alternate weekly collection of dry recyclables and residual waste.

Recommendations

1. That Members adopt the Waste Strategy
2. That Members select their preferred model
3. Officers are required to implement the strategy in accordance with the implementation plan.
4. That a communications consultant is employed to prepare and deliver a campaign of education and community engagement.

Background Papers

The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

1. Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS)
2. Presentation to members by Indecon Ltd on 21.7.05
3. Essex Integrated Waste Management Strategy
4. Presentations to political groups November 2005.

Impact

<p>Communication/ Consultation</p>	<p>The residents of the district will be informed as defined in the waste management communication strategy.</p> <p>A number of recycling presentations have been made to community groups, which introduce the concept of wheelie bins and alternating collections.</p> <p>Uttlesford Life features an article on the need for change.</p> <p>First draft of the strategy was lodged on the internet for consultation in December 2004. This was followed by six opportunities to meet with Chairman and Vice Chairman of Environment Committee and the Services Officer.</p> <p>The Waste Strategy task group have been keeping an overview.</p> <p>Officers and Indecon Consultants undertook a presentation to Members in July 2005.</p> <p>Member/Officer visits to other authorities to view their waste collection methods.</p> <p>Officers made presentations to the three political groups in November 2005.</p>
<p>Community Safety</p>	<p>Safe working procedures are specified for the implementation process.</p>
<p>Equalities</p>	<p>Specific properties within the district will need to have the service adjusted to meet their needs. These will be those that need assisted collections, exemption from wheelie bins and non-standard sized wheelie bins.</p> <p>A set of policies will be brought forward for member approval.</p>
<p>Finance</p>	<p>The following spending pressures have been added to the Council's draft General Fund budget:</p>

	<p>2006/7 (part-year) £340,000 above current budget</p> <p>2007/8 (full-year) £420,000 above current budget</p> <p>Plus one-off implementation costs of £300,000.</p> <p>Each of these figures is being refined and will be re-considered at this Committee's meeting on 24 January 2006 as part of the budget process.</p>
Human Rights	There are no human rights issues.
Legal Implications	None
Ward-specific impacts	All.
Workforce/Work place	The transfer of the refuse contractor's employees is in the process of joining up the refuse and recycling operations into one team. There will be changes to all collection rounds and all teams will need to collect both recyclable waste and non-recyclable waste. The length of working day for the transferred refuse crews will increase but not their contracted hours.

Situation

1. Local authorities throughout the country are faced with the same issues as Uttlesford. Both EU and government targets and the system of penalties and credits require us to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill which is unsustainable, unnecessary and will become increasingly expensive.
2. Uttlesford is one of the highest producers of waste in Essex and our residents are keen to recycle more of their waste. Members have committed to deciding the future of waste collection by the end of 2005.
3. The Refuse Contractors staff will transfer to become directly employed in 2006; this offers flexibility to make changes in partnership with our staff without the need to negotiate with a Contractor.
4. We need to make step changes in the way we collect household waste and we need to further educate residents on how they can reduce and reuse.
5. The recycling industry is young; the range of materials we are able to collect and pass on to a developing marketplace has increased in the last five years. New technology will be provided within the Integrated Waste arrangements for Essex.
6. We need to roll out the new collection programme as quickly as possible to make best avoidance of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) penalties and reduce the environmental impact of the biodegradable waste going to landfill. An indicative implementation timetable is located at page 11 of this report, this timetable is challenging and is dependent upon being in a position to place orders and commission the restructuring of collection rounds by mid December 2005. The roll out programme would commence 1 May 2005 and complete by the end of 2006.

Targets

7. We have a recycling rate of 23% (2004/5) and we have a government target of 36% for 2006/7.
8. We have signed up to the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Essex and are committed to achieving a recycling rate of 33% as an average across the districts and an aspiration of achieving 60%.
9. The Waste Strategy prepares Uttlesford for the Joint Municipal Waste Management Contract for Essex, which brings the districts of Essex and the County Council together for procurement of collection and disposal services and facilities.

Options

Four models were identified and costed. They should be viewed against their ability to deliver the four key aims to:

- Improve recycling performance
- Minimise waste;
- Maximise recycling credits and
- Minimise landfill tax and LATS penalties

Model 1 - No Change

This assesses the market cost of the service we currently operate with separate rounds for refuse with recycling collected from 90% of households within the district. This model is not a sustainable option in terms of value for money and performance against targets.

Model 2 - Single Pass

This council has long had the aspiration to collect both recyclables and residual waste in a single collection. This also provides a limited collection of kitchen waste from 18,000 households. This model is also not a sustainable in terms of value for money and performance against targets.

Model 3 – Recyclables one week and residual the next.

This introduces the concept of wheelie bins and an alternating weekly collection of all dry recyclables (both green and black box materials) then general refuse. This gives real motivation to residents to separate their waste, as the volume of general refuse will be restricted by the container. This brings us within 2% of the 2006/7 recycling target but will not meet any future years targets. However, it does not address the penalties that will be incurred if we fail to divert biodegradable waste from landfill.

Model 4 – Weekly collection of separated kitchen waste with an alternate weekly collection of dry recyclables and residual waste.

This introduces wheelie bins and an alternating weekly collection as described in model 3 but adds a separate weekly collection of kitchen waste to all properties in the district. This is projected to achieve a recycling target of 48% and offers the opportunity to reduce our LATS penalties.

Summary/Analysis

This table shows the service summary and costs of each model and the financial impacts as presented to Members on the 17th July 2005. The models are based on costs as at 1st July 2005 and do not anticipate any potential for fluctuating markets such as fuel and disposal costs.

All models are based on collection from 30,000 properties (unless stated otherwise). Effects on the council tax level are based on a council tax base of 31,000. Such effects are

described as notional since capping will prevent actual increases at that level, meaning economies will be required in other council services.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	No Change	Single pass Weekly	Recyclables one week and residual the next	Weekly and alternating materials weekly.
Recycling Rate %	22	29	34	48
What will be collected weekly	Residual and (Dry recyclables 90% of households)	Residual and Dry recyclables. (Kitchen Waste from 18,000 properties).		Kitchen waste
What will be collected fortnightly			Residual then all dry recyclables	Residual then all dry recyclables
Wheeled bins	Boxes	Boxes	2	3
Full year cost of waste service	£1,413,000	£1,878,000	£1,432,000	£1,830,000
Total Cost of service at band D council tax level. (Notional increase in band D over current service in brackets)	45.58 (0)	60.58 (£15 or 12.2%)	46.19 (£0.61 or 0.5%)	59.03 (£13.45 or 11%)
Cost per household £	47	63	48	61
Increase per household over updated cost of no change.	£0	£16	£1	£14
Potential LATS penalties after 5 years trading for each model.	£3,404,009	£1,863,852	£1,484,375	£389,538

Pay-Offs/Penalties

Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS)

LATS was brought into force as a means of compliance with the Waste and Emissions Trading Act and the Landfill Directive by establishing a scheme whereby local authorities can bank, borrow or trade their allotted amount of landfill.

The landfill allowance decreases year on year up to 2020 for the amount of Bio-digestible Municipal Waste (BMW). The trading scheme and financial penalties commenced mid-2005.

The following table shows the influence of each of the models upon our “account”.

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Potential for LATS penalties payable over the next 5 years	2006/07	£273,566	£38,374 <i>cr</i>	£132,575 <i>cr</i>	£533,580 <i>cr</i>
	2007/08	£442,519	£128,707	£33,944	£369,470 <i>cr</i>
	2008/09	£649,931	£334,236	£238,905	£166,930 <i>cr</i>
	2009/10	£895,811	£578,222	£485,318	£74,049
	2010/11	£1,142,182	£822,687	£726,208	£315,489
	Net	£3,404,009	£1,863,852	£1,484,375	£389,538

10. The time is right for Uttlesford to prepare the route to take us forward into the Essex Integrated Contract.
11. This positive approach has the potential to achieve 48% recycling and divert us from the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) penalties, which could be applied costing an anticipated £3,500,000 over the next five years.
12. The use of wheelie bins would also anticipate any Health & Safety requirements to move away from the repetitive manual handling operations that are current practice within the refuse and recycling operations.
13. The environmental impact of continuing to landfill compostable waste can be measured as 300m³ of methane per tonne.

Risk Analysis

14. The following have been assessed as the potential risks associated with this issue.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Customers do not accept wheelie bins and/or alternate weekly collections.	Medium	High	A robust publicity and education campaign to inform customers of what is needed.
Members do not remain firm in their support of the changes.	Low	High	The publicity campaign must support members and explain why the changes are needed.
Residents in flats will not be able to participate.	High	Medium	Were storage space is available; the bin provision will be reviewed. And bins will be provided for recyclable materials.
Residents may associate a fortnightly collection of residual waste with bad smells and flies.	Medium	Medium	The kitchen waste will be collected weekly; it is generally food waste that is associated with this complaint. The wheelie bins, if kept closed, keep out flies and contain smells better than any other collection method.
Some properties have long drives and may be reluctant to take their bins to the kerbside.	Medium	Low	This would add to the costs and may incur claims for damage to private drives so an officer would undertake a site survey and discuss with the resident.
Customers may ask for a green waste doorstep collection.	Medium	Medium	The publicity campaign will include promotion of home composting and our green waste weekend skip service.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Customers may prefer sack collection	Low	Medium	Sack collections will not achieve waste minimisation so an officer will undertake a site survey and discuss with the resident.
There will be households in the community that will be unable to present their wheelie bins at the collection point.	High	Low	A policy will be developed for assisted collections.
There will be properties where it is impractical to place wheelie bins.	High	Low	A policy will be developed for all aspects of wheeled bins and presented for Member approval.
There will be properties with a large number of residents that may require more bin capacity.	High	Low	A policy will be developed for all aspects of wheeled bins and presented for Member approval.
If action is not taken to manage down the impact of LATS there will be a substantial impact upon the local tax payer and council services	High	High	Model 4 offers best practice control methods.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
If services are not aligned to what will be needed within the Essex Integrated Waste Contract then Essex County Council can use their powers of direction and instruct which materials should be collected.	High	High	The collection of kitchen waste and the householder diversion from residual waste will target the biodegradable waste currently going to landfill. This is compliant with the views of ECC.
The withdrawal of the some general waste skips may be unpopular with parishes.	Medium	Medium	A consultation will be undertaken with the Parish Councils.
Charging for bulky waste may be unpopular with residents.	Medium	Medium	This will not be introduced until a civic amenity site has been provided in the south of the district.
The Health and Safety Executive requires manual handling to be reduced.	High	High	The introduction of wheelie bins anticipates the requirement to move away from lifting and carrying of bins, bags and boxes.