

Committee:	Environment Committee	Agenda Item
Date:	17 March 2009	5
Title:	Lead officer's Report	
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Summary

This report updates matters that are not covered elsewhere on the agenda. It advises of the current position on flood risk management at Ashdon, NATS proposed changes to airspace, the inter-authority waste agreement and proposed transfer of amenities to local councils.

Flood risk management at Ashdon

Officers wrote to the Environment Agency following the Committee's resolution in January. The Agency has replied reiterating that "the justification for works has to be based on flood risk and a robust costs benefit cost ratio to strict Treasury rules and Defra guidance, otherwise funding from Government grant is not forthcoming." It also points out that designation of a watercourse as a main river does not automatically mean that the Agency will provide a flood alleviation scheme or undertake river maintenance works. It confirms that the River Bourn does not satisfy the main river criterion (25 house equivalents per kilometre of watercourse affected by flooding). However, it does draw attention to a property level flood protection grant scheme announced by the government in December, intended to help properties in areas at high risk of flooding but not benefiting from community level defences. This provides an opportunity for local authorities to apply for funding for individual property level flood protection and resistance measures. The window for making an application has been narrowed effectively to between 27 February and 25 March. Officers will be applying for funding before the deadline.

NATS Proposed changes to airspace

NATS has announced that there will be consultation on revised proposals to redraw the aircraft route map in the area of south east England known as Terminal Control North.

The second consultation will be later this year. The dates are not yet decided, but it will not be before July. New design rules have been introduced for the use of Precision Area Navigation (P-RNAV) technology, which means that new options for some routes in the TCN are can now be considered. In some areas, NATS says, it hopes to present an alternative route for consideration, to allow a degree of choice for those in the area affected. NATS stresses that these proposals are not associated with any proposed airport development such as Stansted G2. Members will be aware that the Council's response to the initial consultation criticised the lack of real alternatives to the proposals presented. NATS agreed before its latest announcement to a meeting with Members if it needed to carry out further consultation.

Inter Authority Waste Agreement

The final version of the Agreement is still not available. The Waste Strategy Project Team met on 9 March. The deadline for consideration of the Agreement has been extended by the County Council again, to the end of June. It is anticipated that a report will be brought to the Committee in June with a resolution of the Council in July.

Transfer of amenities to local councils

Discussions have opened with Saffron Walden Town Council regarding the transfer of some local amenities from the Council to the Town Council at its request. Once officers have identified if this option is possible and assessed the implications a report will be brought to the appropriate committee in respect of the matters within its terms of delegation.