

Committee: SCRUTINY 2 – RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

Date: 9 February 2005

Agenda Item No:

Title: BEST VALUE REVIEW OF REVENUES SERVICES –
PROGRESS REPORT

Author: Mike Brean (01799) 510330

MEMBER REFERENCE GROUP: Councillor Mrs C A Bayley, Councillor R
Lemon, Councillor V Lelliott and Councillor
Mrs S Schneider

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with an update on the progress of the Revenues Services Best Value Review Service Improvement Plan (SIP).

Service Improvement Plan

- 2 Resources Committee approved the SIP on 22 January 2004. The Member Reference Group agreed to meet every six months to monitor the SIP and a meeting was held on 3 June 2004 to review progress. Another meeting took place on 18 January 2005.
- 3 An updated SIP detailing progress is shown at appendix 1 to this report. One of the objectives in the SIP is to maximise take-up of benefit (item 1.5). There is a separate action plan for this, which is shown at appendix 2.
- 4 The Council was visited on 20 and 21 October 2004 by the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate on the steps taken by the authority to maximise take-up of Council Tax Benefit. This was a specialist inspection and the Council was one of only 12 selected at random throughout the country. The inspection report is still to be published and the outcome will be reported to this committee at a later date.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee note the progress of the Revenues Services Best Value Review Service Improvement Plan.

Background Papers: Best Value Review of Revenues Services file (held by Mike Brean)

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Aim 1	Improve access to services			
Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.1	Improve Revenues reception and interviewing facilities.	Interviewing and reception facilities were included in the scoping document for the Access to Services Best Value Review. A Member workshop was held on 8 December 2004 to discuss the options appraisal report. It is proposed to combine all the reception, counter enquiry and interviewing facilities into one face-to-face contact centre in the building. It is intended to submit a report to Resources Committee on 31 March 2005 on the way forward.	2005/2006	Access to Services Review (M Brean)
1.2	Increase office-opening hours. (based on 3 members of Revenues Services staff working 4 hrs on Sat morning for 1 year).	Office opening hours were included in the scoping document for the Access to Services Best Value Review. The report informed Members that most excellent CPA Councils did not have extended or weekend opening hours. A Member workshop was held on 8 December 2004 to discuss the options appraisal report. There was no support at the workshop for extended or weekend opening. There is scope to extend the weekday opening hours when the contact centre is set up. It is intended to submit a report to Resources Committee on 31 March 2005 on the way forward.	2005/2006	Access to Services Review (M Brean)

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.3	Increase telephone access hours and review use of voicemail/call diversion.	Telephone access hours and use of telephony were included in the scoping document for the Access to Services Best Value Review. The report informed Members that most excellent CPA Councils did not have increased access hours. A Member workshop was held on 8 December 2004 to discuss the options appraisal report. The introduction of a telephony contact centre was discussed. It is proposed to carry out further work to establish whether or not such a contact centre should be based here or in partnership with another organisation. There was no support at the workshop for increased access hours. There is scope to increase the access hours when the telephony contact centre is established. The use of the telephone and service standards will be included in the customer contact strategy. It is intended to submit a report to Resources Committee on 31 March 2005 on the way forward.	2005/2006	Access to Services Review (M Brean)
1.4	Provide staff presence at Dunmow CIC. Cost based on 1 member of Revenues Services staff present for one morning per week for 1 year.	It is now proposed to train the CIC staff at Dunmow to take more complex queries. The surgeries were to be held on one half day per week. With the new proposal, customers will be able to have their query dealt with at any time during the week. The new Customer Relationship Management system will be used to enable staff to deal with a wider range and more in depth queries.	2005/2006	S Adams S Ellis

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.5	Maximise take up of benefit.	See separate action plan. The Council was subject to a specialist inspection by the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate in October 2004 on the work done to maximise take-up of Council Tax Benefit. The report will be circulated when available.	Ongoing	S Adams
1.6	Publicise Council Tax discounts and exemptions.	<p>Advert regarding exemptions and discounts placed in Uttlesford leaflet issued with annual demand notices. Leaflets produced for Revenues counter on exemptions and discounts available to Council Tax customers.</p> <p>An article publicising Council Tax discounts, exemptions and Disabled Relief has appeared on the Saffron Walden Town Council website. Articles have appeared in the Parish magazines covering Hempstead, Radwinter, Great and Little Shelford and St Peter's Ugley.</p>	Ongoing	S Ellis
1.7	Provide facility for customers to receive information in large print, Braille or audiotape.	Arrangements are in place for customers to receive information in such format. An audit of all leaflets was conducted as part of the Access to Services Best Value Review. It is proposed to corporately brand all leaflets and have them available on line.	2004/2005	Access to Services Review (M Brean)
1.8	Improve the standard of Benefit decision letters.	A small group led by Cambridge City Council persuaded SX3 to re-write the Benefit Letters Software as they were of a poor standard and authorities did not have control of the wording of the text. A specification, which gave	28 February 2005	J Sayer

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
		authorities more control over text at a local level, was written and agreed. The old letters were due to be withdrawn on 1 September 2004, but the new letters were not functional at that time and no date has yet been given by SX3 as to when the current software will be withdrawn. St Edmundsbury have gone live on the new letters software and they are not at all happy with it, they are advising UDC to stay on the old software until the many bugs in the new software are corrected.		

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
2.1	Develop Revenues web page	Improvements have been made to the Council's web page to enable customers to complete a benefit claim form on-line. The web page also allows customers to carry out an on-line entitlement calculation or ready reckoner. Work is progressing to allow people to view personal details of their Council Tax and Business Rates.	Ongoing	IT section
2.2	Introduce 'workflow' technology to compliment document imaging system (including additional VDU flat screens)	DWP funding has been secured to enable this project to go ahead. Project meetings have taken place with Anite and Bromsgrove Borough Council to develop process maps. The project completion date is 31 March 2005.	31 March 2005	IT section S Adams S Mustill
2.3	Pilot the introduction of home working	DWP funding has been secured to enable this project to go ahead. Four members of staff have started to work from home doing various duties. One Benefits Assessor who works a	Ongoing	IT section S Adams

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
		<p>four-day week from home. A member of staff in the Council Tax section recently moved to Lincolnshire and is working from home. Home-working guidelines have been developed in partnership with Bromsgrove Borough Council.</p> <p>The MRG have asked to be kept up to date on this pilot as isolation from colleagues can prove to be a problem.</p>		
2.4	Develop management reporting reports to assist in the speed and accuracy of processing claims and the recovery of overpayments.	Negotiations have taken place with Brentwood Borough Council for the provision of enhanced management reporting to enable more detailed analysis of the speed of processing claims. The management reporting tool, or 'dashboard', will be available shortly.	2004/2005	M Brean J Sayer
2.5	Create an Intranet referral form and send out email to all staff	Completed.	October 2003	A Webb
2.6	Implementation of new server for Sx3 Revenues and Benefits computer system	Completed.	18 October 2004	FOX IT J Sayer

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Aim 3	Introduce new and improved methods of administering and making payment
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Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
3.1	Introduction of payment card for cash payers at Post Offices	<p>Meetings have taken place with plastic card suppliers. Costings have been produced, which will be considered by the MRG.</p> <p>Housing have been advised that payment cards are being considered for council tax payments. Although interested, Rents predict that the demand for rent payment cards will be low.</p> <p>The MRG decided that this should be included in the smart card project.</p>	31 March 2005	<p>S Ellis</p> <p>J Sayer</p> <p>C Croft</p>
3.2	Automated telephone payments (ATP)	Funding has been included in the IT Programme to enable the system to be installed during 2005/2006.	2005/2006	IT Section

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

3.3	Introduce automated Direct Debit set up (AUDDIS), amendments and cancellations (ADDACS).	BACSTEL IP project has been completed. ADDACS will be introduced first, followed by AUDDIS after the new BACS system has bedded in.	ADDACS 30 June 2005 AUDDIS 30 September 2005	J Sayer IT Section
3.4	Introduce direct payment of Housing Benefit	This is included in the second phase of the implementation of the new Financial Management system.	April 2005	IT Section P O'Dell J Sayer

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
Aim 4	Introduce the Department for Work and Pensions Performance Standards			
4.1	Implement DWP Performance Standards in benefits administration	The Council was assessed at being 99% compliant with the standards by the BFI. Areas where the Council was not 'at standard' are being addressed. Individual target for Benefits Team will be introduced as soon as the 'dashboard' is available. Resources Committee approved the Overpayment Recovery Policy on 24 June 2004.	2004/2005	M Brean S Adams S Mustill S Oxley
4.2	Submit Fraud Policy to Resources Committee for approval	Completed.	20 November 2003	J Mercer A Webb
4.3	Finalise and issue Code of Conduct to Investigators	Completed.	30 November 2003	J Mercer A Webb
4.4	Register all qualified Authorised Officers with Counter fraud Investigation Branch	Completed.	30 September 2003	A Webb

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
4.5	Produce an Authorised Officer request form with an area for the outcome of the authorisation.	Completed.	30 September 2003	A Webb
4.6	Analyse the Administrative Penalty recovery rate for 2002/03.	Completed.	31 October 2003	A Webb M Southall
4.7	Agree a policy with Revenues for regular feedback on the recovery of Administrative Penalty debts	Completed.	31 October 2003	A Webb M Southall
4.8	Review all fraud policies on an annual basis	Completed.	31 January 2004	A Webb

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
5.1	Pilot Revenues Services staff presence on mobile library service. One member of staff for 8 weeks.	It has been decided to look at other alternatives due to the short period of time spent by the mobile library at each venue. The MRG considered using Essex CC's mobile Toe Nail Cutting service, which stays in one place longer than the library and appointments are made for customers. The MRG decided that all options had been fully exhausted.	28 February 2005	S Ellis S Adams
5.2	Enable customers to pay Council Tax and other debts at Braintree, East Herts and South Cambs Councils.	Meeting held with 3 other L.A's only South Cambs willing to proceed.	2004/2005	C Croft S Ellis IT Section
5.3	Investigate the feasibility of Business Rates joint working arrangements.	Discussions still to take place.	2005/2006	M Brean A Marsh
5.4	Explore potential data matching partnership opportunities with neighbouring authorities	Ongoing - data matching exercises undertaken with East Herts District Council and CFIS during last few months. These exercises related to Stansted Airport & local care providers.	Ongoing	M Perry

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
5.5	Pursue joint working initiatives with Counter Fraud Investigation Service as appropriate	Ongoing. See 5.4	Ongoing	M Perry
5.6	Consider joint working arrangements for the Anti-Fraud Team.	It has been decided to retain the service in-house for the foreseeable future.	31 December 2003	M Perry

Revenues Services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan – Progress Report

Item	Objective	Progress to date	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
6.1	Fraud Awareness and Induction Training with 6 monthly follow-up sessions	This will be addressed when the new investigator is in post.	Ongoing	M Perry
6.2	Produce a quarterly fraud newsletter for Council staff	This was introduced but ceased after 2 issues because of time constraints. A re-launch is planned by 31 March 2005.	Ongoing	M Perry
6.3	Produce fraud referral source statistics on a quarterly basis and analyse for trends and good/poor levels of referrals.	Completed.	31 December 2003	A Webb
6.4	Submit an annual fraud report to Members	Included in Members Bulletin.	31 December 2003	J Mercer A Webb
6.5	Introduce the training evaluation documentation provided by Personnel	Completed.	30 September 2003	A Webb
6.6	Establish a corporate Anti Fraud training plan to include training provider and dates	Completed.	31 December 2003	A Webb

Maximising Benefit Take-up

Action Plan

Item	Action	Progress	Responsible officer	Target completion date
1.	Develop links with the CAB to maximise take-up of benefit.	The Council's e-Innovation Funding application bid was successful, which will enable more enquiries to be dealt with at the first point of contact and in a more joined up way. It is envisaged that CAB staff will be able to provide more information about benefits by the provision of e-services to citizens. A recent meeting with the CAB identified the information that was required to be accessed. A meeting has been held with the CRM supplier to develop a specification.	A Webb	31 March 2005
2.	Use of mobile library, Mobile Police Unit and Buffy Bus to promote take-up.	It has been decided to look at other alternatives due to the short period of time spent by the mobile library at each venue. The MRG considered using Essex CC's mobile Toe Nail Cutting service, which stays in one place longer than the library and appointments are made for customers. The MRG decided that all options had been fully exhausted.	S Adams	28 February 2005
3.	Web page development.	The Council's web page contains information on benefits. It also allows customers to carry out an on-line entitlement calculation or ready reckoner. Customers can also complete the benefit application form on-line.	A Webb	Ongoing
4.	Develop partnership working with other agencies.	The Access to Services Review will address the need for collaborative working with other agencies, such as the Pensions Service and the Inland Revenue.	M Brean	31 March 2006

Maximising Benefit Take-up

Action Plan

Item	Action	Progress	Responsible officer	Target completion date
		Discussions have already taken place with Jobcentre Plus about them holding surgeries at Council offices. This will be discussed further with them at the next liaison meeting.		
5.	Produce literature to explain and promote benefits.	A range of leaflets and posters has been produced, which have been distributed to Doctors' surgeries, libraries, day centres, Parish Councillors and the Primary Health Care Trust.	S Adams	Completed
6.	Use of day centres and library to provide help and guidance.	<p>Staff have already attended the day centre with the Department for Work and Pensions to provide advice on benefits.</p> <p>Benefits staff attended the day centre in Saffron Walden from 10.00 – 12.00 on 10, 17 and 31 August 2004. This was advertised in the SW Reporter. Other day centres have been targeted.</p> <p>Benefit staff attended a "Falls Prevention" day on 6 October 2004 at the local library in Saffron Walden. It was an all day event and attended by various voluntary and Public Sector groups. The benefits staff were on hand to answer any questions put to them by members of the public and participants of the event. As the benefits stand was situated close to the entrance, leaflets regarding Housing and Council Tax Benefit were given</p>	S Adams	Ongoing

Maximising Benefit Take-up

Action Plan

Item	Action	Progress	Responsible officer	Target completion date
		to all members of the public as they entered the building. The event was primarily for pensioners and disabled people.		
7.	Staff presence at Dunmow CIC.	Access to the computer system has been resolved. It is now proposed to train the CIC staff at Dunmow to take more complex queries. The surgeries were to be held on one half day per week. With the new proposal, customers will be able to have their query dealt with at any time during the week. The new CRM system will enable staff to deal with a wider range of more complex enquiries.	S Adams S Ellis	2005/2006
8.	Use management information to target areas of deprivation.	An analysis of the areas of deprivation in the district has been carried out and posters have been distributed to those areas.	S Adams	Completed
9.	Visit customers to provide help in completing benefit application form.	Customers requiring advice and help to complete the application form are visited within 7 days. During visits, customers are helped with other benefits like Pension Credit. 5% of customers visited this year have successfully made claims to PC following a visit.	S Adams S Ellis	Ongoing
10.	Use Parish magazines to publicise benefit and Council Tax discounts and exemptions.	This was requested by Cllr Mrs Catherine Dean at a recent meeting to review progress on the action plan.	S Adams S Ellis	Ongoing

Maximising Benefit Take-up

Action Plan

Item	Action	Progress	Responsible officer	Target completion date
		An article publicising Council Tax discounts, exemptions and Disabled Relief has appeared on the Saffron Walden Town Council website. Articles will be appearing in the Parish magazines covering Hempstead, Radwinter, Great and Little Shelford and St Peter's Ugley.		

Committee: SCRUTINY 2 – RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

Date: 9 February 2005

Agenda Item No:

Title: EVALUATION OF TELEPHONE AND INTERNET
REGISTRATION 2004/05

Author: Peter Snow (01799) 510431

Summary

- 1 This report explains the changes made last year that enabled entries on the electoral register to be confirmed by telephone or by internet without the need to return the annual registration form. It discusses the advantages and possible disadvantages of using this method of registration and the future implications.

Background

- 2 Until 2001, the annual register of electors was compiled by personal canvass. The forms were pre-printed with personalised data from the current register and hand-delivered to each address by an assistant registration officer (ARO). The majority of forms were returned by post and redirected to the various AROs who were responsible for sorting them into register order depending on whether they were change or no change forms.
- 3 The sorted forms were returned in batches for processing. Forms that contained no changes needed only to be recorded by swiping with a barcode reader. Forms that included additions, deletions or alterations were processed individually by keyboard to record the necessary details.
- 4 After the delivery of the initial form and two reminders, AROs were instructed to call on non-responding households and to obtain the information by personal interview.
- 5 This was a quite labour intensive process but also very thorough. The average rate of household return was generally in the region of 98-99% so it could be said that the register was as accurate and comprehensive as possible.
- 6 Cost saving measures were imposed that year and the registration method changed to one consisting wholly of postal deliveries and returns. As a result, costs reduced by some £9-10,000 annually but the rate of household return also declined to around 90%.
- 7 Postage costs have now been much reduced because it has been possible to utilise the Walksort system to obtain large discounts. Saving on personal canvass costs were partly offset because it was still necessary to employ part time clerical assistants to open and sort by hand the returned forms.

- 8 Two or three years ago, some authorities started to experiment with telephone registration. I was initially reluctant to try this method because it has always been an absolute principle that registrations must be supported by personal signature of the householder, or by someone on the householders' behalf.
- 9 Before last year's canvass I responded to pressure from my supplier to opt to use a form of telephone registration. This was on the basis of existing registrations only being confirmed. After further consideration it was decided to add the facility to confirm existing registration details by internet.

The 2004/05 Registration Experience

- 10 New regulations this year imposed two changes to the annual registration form. First, it has become regulatory for the householder to record his or her nationality. This was only required before in the case of European Union citizens resident in the UK so that those electors could be identified. Second, the Minister decided that the form must include a column to indicate whether individual electors wished to apply to vote by post. In practice, it was decided to limit the necessity to record nationality to those who were not British. Otherwise this would have limited the capacity to operate telephone registration.
- 11 The supplier company offered three levels of operation. For simplicity, it was decided to restrict telephone and internet registrations to those where no change at all was required to be made. The company advised that this option – level 0 – accounted for over 98% of all registrations. It was felt that total simplicity would limit the possibility for errors and/or misunderstanding to occur.
- 12 This streamlining of the registration process is considered to have proven successful. There were a total of 5369 successful registrations, 4144 of these by telephone and 1225 by internet. The total amounts to 19% of all completed registrations and about 25.5% of no-change registrations. A small number of people reported that they could not complete their registrations this way because their telephone receiver did not have a touch tone facility.
- 13 As a result some 5000 pieces of paper did not have to be received, opened and stored. Last year also saw the introduction of electronic scanning of forms. This meant that forms did not have to be sorted into register order as they could be viewed or retrieved either on screen or by reference to batch number details. This saved on clerical costs as the opening and sorting process was so much simpler and quicker.
- 14 The ability to build on these gains might be limited if the Government decides to press ahead with the requirement for individual registration but that is another topic. However, that will not happen immediately and the opportunity is available to continue with telephone/internet registration in 2005/06.
- 15 An analysis of costs seems to indicate a reduction from £17,700 in 2003 to £16,700 last year. It must be borne in mind though that the level of response has declined from the 98-99% achieved prior to 2002 to a figure of no more than 92-93% now but the response rates in 2003 and 2004 are broadly comparable. It is undoubtedly the case that national registration levels have

declined markedly in recent years. A survey by the LGC Elections Centre at Plymouth University indicates a reduction in the mean response rate from 91% in 2003 to 89.4% in 2004.

- 16 The telephone registration supplier has advised that the number of such registrations declined across all of his customers last year by about 10%. Recorded as a percentage of telephone/internet registrations per total number of forms issued, Uttlesford achieved a result of 17.6% as against an average figure of 15.9%.

Committee: Scrutiny 2
Date: 9 February 2005
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: Bulky Household Waste Collections
Author: Ron Pridham

Summary

This report outlines the future proposals and recommendations contained within the Waste Strategy for the collection of Bulky Household Waste and changes made as a result of a member workshop held on the 27 January 2005.

Background.

Bulky Household Waste Collections

Uttlesford has a statutory obligation to collect bulky household waste but it may recover a reasonable charge for the collection of this waste. However, in the past, this Council has chosen to provide this service, as well as the general waste skips, free of charge. This is as a result of two main drivers. Firstly, the desire to protect the environment and character of the district by preventing or minimising fly-tipping and general abandonment of waste in the countryside. Secondly, this district has only one civic amenity site, whereas other Districts, of a similar size, have two or three sites. This under-provision has for the past twenty years been met by providing these services.

The provision of CA sites is the responsibility of ECC and their policy is that residents should be within a 6 mile radius of the nearest site (as the crow flies). As previously stated Uttlesford has only one CA site in the District, in Saffron Walden. ECC has long had plans to develop a CA site in the Great Dunmow area. The estimated completion for this site is July 2006. When operational, all Uttlesford residents should be within the required distance of a CA site if you include the sites at Bishop Stortford, Harlow and Chelmsford.

Once two CA sites have been established, the Council can review its policy on providing these services free of charge, particularly as householders will have a free

alternative method of disposal. The table below illustrates the costs and restrictions applied to collections of bulky household waste by authorities in Essex.

BENCH MARKING OF BULKY HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTIONS

Bulky Household Waste Collections in Essex 2003/04

District	Price	Restriction on No. (up to....)	No. per year	No. properties (2002)	Collections per property
Harlow	None	3 large items or 8 bags	18,200	34019	0.535
Uttlesford	None	None	7,700	28,965	0.266
Basildon	None	5 items	19,000	72,095	0.264
Rochford	None	3 items, once per 3 months only	7,000	33,180	0.211
Brentwood	£12 min charge	For 2 items, £6 per item thereafter	3,000	30,182	0.099
Thurrock	£10.00, £17.50	3 & up to 10 respectively, >10 = quotable	5,153	61,018	0.084
Epping Forest	£22, £27, £37, £45	3, 7, 10, 15 items respectively	4,000	52,125	0.077
Chelmsford	£18.00	5 items, plus £12.10 for fridges, £24.20 for fix & fits	4,900	66,110	0.074
Braintree	£23.50	6 items	2,950	56,790	0.052
Southend	Individually priced	None	3,120	70,000	0.045
Maldon	£15 + VAT	3 items, contractor quotes, £23.50 if collect fridges	780	25,323	0.031
Castle Point	£25.00	5 items, free to OAP	1,000	35,461	0.028
Tendring	£16.50+VAT	3 items	1,645	63,751	0.026
Colchester	£21.54, £10.02, free	5 bulky items, up to two white goods items	1,300	66,403	0.020

UDC has provided this free service for a number of years and in 2003/04 there were over 9,000 collections carried out at a cost to this Council of £100,000 (this does not include the cost of administration of the service or the disposal cost to ECC).

Unfortunately, it is difficult to quantify the tonnage produced by this service, as the majority of it is collected co-mingled with domestic waste. An estimate would be from 650 to 1000 tonnes per year. The weight generated by this service has a direct impact on the total household waste collected and therefore the council's recycling rate.

The table clearly shows that those authorities that charge for special collections have lower collection ratios per property. Therefore, these authorities are collecting less household waste in terms of weight. If this Council's policy is to charge for this service and reduce the total number of collections to approximately 2000, there will be a reduction in waste collected of up to 700 tonnes, creating a financial saving to UDC of approximately £80,000 in collection costs and £21,000 in disposal costs to ECC. In addition, if this waste was taken to the CA site, then 50% of the waste could be recycled.

A popular assumption is that the introduction of a bulky waste collection charge will result in increased fly tipping across the District. However, in a response to a recent survey of Essex Authorities and the Daventry Group, little evidence was found to support this trend. This is shown in Table below.

CHANGES IN FLY TIPPING AS A RESULT OF CHARGING FOR BULKY COLLECTIONS.

Braintree	No substantial increase in fly tipping.
Tendering	Always charged no comment
Southend	Always charged no comment
Castle Point	No Information
Daventry	No noticeable increase
Hambleton	May have small increase nothing significant
Harbours	May have had a small increase when first introduced but not any more
Kennett	Has been a fee for 18 months caused increase in fly tipping to start no problem since new CA site opened
North Keveston	Carried out a survey before and after the introduction of a fee and found no increase in fly tipping
Bamburgh	No increase
Stratford	Fees in place for three years no increase in fly tipping
Tewsbury	Fees introduced 12 months ago, no increase.

It is clear from the benchmarking under taken that the introduction of charging for Bulky Waste Collections does not increase the amount of fly tipping within the district. In any case, if and when a charge is introduced, any changes in fly tipping will be recorded on a national database, termed "Fly Capture".

It is recommended that a reasonable charge will be levied on each Bulky Household Waste collection. This charge will come into force when all residents are within a reasonable distance of a Civic Amenity Site.

Changes made 27 January.

Charging for the bulky household waste collection service will be reviewed when all residents are within a reasonable distance of a CA site (pending completion of Dunmow CA site, estimated to be 2007).

In the interim, this Council will reduce the amount of household waste collected by introducing restrictions on the bulky waste collection service to:

- Restrict the number of items per collection.
- Restrict the number of collections per year.
- Restrict the items UDC collect. For example, kitchen and bathroom installations, sheds, greenhouses, patio heaters, boilers and carpets. Contractors

usually install these items. Therefore, it should be the contractor's responsibility to dispose of their waste under the Duty of Care.

It is recommended that these restrictions come into effect from April 2005.

Changes made 27 January

Restrict the number of items to three, at one collection per year. Also, restrict the type of items collected to "those that you would ordinarily move house with". For instance a bed or wardrobe will be accepted, but a boiler or kitchen refurbishment waste will not. Officers to compile a list of accepted items and advertise these to the public prior to these restrictions coming into force in April 2005.

Background Papers: Waste Strategy for Uttlesford.

Committee: Scrutiny 2
Date: 9 February 2005
Agenda Item No: 7
Title: Parking Fees and Fines – Analysis of Trends
Author: Alex Stewart (01799) 510555 & Sara Chapman (01799) 510312

Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a breakdown of car park usage and associated charge structures and provide information with regard to the numbers of Excess Charge Notices that have been issued since the introduction of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement (DPE) in October 2004.

Background

- 2 Car parking charges are considered during the budget making process on an annual basis; they have not been increased for the past two years. Prior to that increase, parking charges had not been increased since 1992.
- 3 Officers determine the potential income that is derived from car parks based on previous years usage. To this end, the table below sets out the number of tickets that were purchased in each car park and the income generated for the period 2003/04.

Car Park	Charge Tariff	No. of Tickets Issued	Income Generated
Faircroft	1 hour @ 40p	275,173	110,069
	2 hours @ 80p	99,006	79,204
	3 hours @ £1.60	20,228	32,364
Common	1 hour @ 40p	111,396	44,558
	2 hours @ 80p	62,059	49,647
	3 hours @ £1.60	18,606	29,769

Car Park	Charge Tariff	No. of Tickets Issued	Income Generated
Rose and Crown	1 hour @ 40p	31,976	12,790
	2 hours @ 80p	15,043	12,034
Swan Meadow	1 hour @ 40p	28,755	11,502
	2 hours @80p	32,303	25,842
	4 hours @ £1.40	18,297	25,615
	6 hours @ £2.00	6,661	13,322
	10 hours @£2.60	10,045	26,117
White Street	1 hour @ 30p	145,878	43,763
	3 hours @70p	27,181	19,026
	5 hours £1.10	9,251	10,176
	10 hours @£2.10	3,495	7,339
Chequers Lane	1 hour @ 30p	29,684	8,905
	3 hours @70p	8,143	5,700
	5 hours £1.10	3,493	3,842
	10 hours @£2.10	1,170	2,457
Angel Lane	1 hour @ 30p	32,902	9,870
	3 hours @70p	3,833	2,683
	5 hours £1.10	2,127	2,339
	10 hours @£2.10	1,073	2,253
Lower Street	1 hour @ 30p	11,627	3,488
	3 hours @70p	7,079	4,955
	5 hours £1.80	1,709	3,076
	10 hours @£2.10	1,229	2,580
Crafton Green	1 hour @ 30p	12,209	3,662
	3 hours @70p	4,851	3,395
	5 hours £1.80	1,094	1,969
	10 hours @£2.10	2,088	4,384
TOTAL INCOME GENERATED (INCL VAT)			618,695

- 4 The anticipated income for 2004/05 is expected to be similar as that generated in 2003/04. Similarly, the predicted income for 2005/06 is based on these figures and any proposed increase in tariffs is multiplied by the usage figures i.e. usage x tariff x additional 10p to derive predicted income for 2005/06. The effects of DPE on the use of car parks will be assessed at the end of this financial year as part of a comprehensive review of parking to be undertaken by the Decriminalisation Task Group.

Comparative Pricing Structures

- 5 The table below provides details of comparative charges made by neighbouring councils, please note that all the Councils listed are in the process of increasing their charges.

Name of Council	Tariff	Charge Made
Colchester	30 Minutes	80p
	1 Hour	£1.50
	2 Hours	£2.00
	3 Hours	£2.60
	4 Hours	£2.60
	6 Hours	£4.50
	9 Hours	£7.00
	12 Hours	£10.00
	24 Hours	£10.50

Epping	30 minutes	20p
	1 Hour	60p
	2 Hours	80p
	3 Hours	£1.80
	6 Hours	£5.00
	Over 6 Hours	£8.00
Braintree	1 Hour	40p
	1-3 Hours	£1.00
	3-6 hours	£2.00
	Over 6 Hours	£4.00
Harlow	2 Hours	70p
	3 Hours	£1.10
	4 Hours	£2.00
	Over 4 Hours	£6.00
Rochford	30 minutes	25p
	2 Hours	50p
	4 Hours	£1.00
	5 Hours	£1.50
	over 5 Hours	£2.50

Car Park Fines – Penalty Charge Notices (PCN)

- 6 The base budget for 2004/05 assumed that approximately 1,750 PCNs would be issued generating an income of £52,500 – this did not account for any income derived from DPE. Essex County Council (ECC) considered that with the introduction of DPE, it was necessary to revise this figure. The revised figure is £66,240 – an increase of 458 PCNs. It is anticipated, based on the ECC model, that 1,450 PCNs will be issued in 2005/06; the budget estimates reflect these figures.

On Street Penalty Charge Notices

- 7 The ECC model assumes for 2005/06 an income of approximately £73,000 (i.e. 2,430 PCNs at £30 each). Increasing in 2006/07 to approximately £97,000 (i.e. 3,230 PCNs @ £30 each). It must be remembered that these figures are based on the fact that some PCNs will be challenged justifiably, ergo, no payment will be received.
- 8 With regard to making comparisons with other Authorities in the County, it is considered that it is too early as DPE has only been operational for 4 months. This, will, however, be considered by the DPE Task Group when undertaking its review in the Spring of 2005. However, looking at the income generated to date from the issuing of PCNs, the Council is on target and has received full payment for 1,026 on street PCNs.

RECOMMENDED that members note the information contained within this report.

Background Papers: ECC Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Financial Model, Chipside Data Base