

**WASTE STRATEGY PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 10.30am on MONDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2015**

Present: Councillor L Wells (Chairman)
Councillor G Barker, S Barker, C Cant, E Godwin and J Rose

Officers in attendance: C Chapman (Street Services Operations Manager), R
Harborough (Director of Public Services) and A Rees (Democratic
and Electoral Services Officer).

WS1 ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN

Councillor Wells was elected Chairman.

WS2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Howell and Rolfe.

**WS3 COMPLIANCE WITH THE DRY WASTE REGULATIONS IN RELATION TO
SEPARATE COLLECTIONS OF DRY RECYCLABLES**

Members received a report about compliance with dry waste regulations in relation to separate collections of dry recyclables. The Director of Public Services informed members that Waste Regulations stated authorities should collect dry recycling separately, unless it could be demonstrated why this would not be technically, economically or environmentally practicable to do so. The Council currently collected dry recycling on a co-mingled basis. An assessment was attached to the report which concluded that the Council's current arrangements were more beneficial to collecting dry recycling separately.

Currently the Government had issued no guidance on implementation of the Waste Regulations and therefore the local authority would be subject to any challenge as to whether its system complied, not the Government.

The Director of Public Services said Uttlesford had a relatively low level of total waste arisings and a higher than average rate of dry recycling. Currently the Council had a dry recycling contract, which aimed to achieve recycling of at least 95% of collected material. This target was very close to being met.

In response to questions by Councillor Godwin, the Director of Public Services said the current contract had been let at a time when the market was buoyant and attractive financial terms had been secured. Difficulties had been experienced in securing compliance with the agreed terms. The next contract was expected to result in costs being incurred for MRF services. Regarding contamination of the dry recyclables collected, independent analysis said contamination levels were between 7-9%. The current contractor's claim that the level was up to 40% was not accepted by the council.

The Director of Public Services drew members' attention to Figure 1 of the assessment which showed that generally the authorities which operated a fully co-mingled collection including glass performed better at collecting dry recycling.

Members discussed ways the Council could improve its rate of dry recycling collection. It was suggested that further educational material could be sent to residents. The Panel agreed it was important the Council ensured that people who had moved from authorities which operated different dry recycling collection schemes were made aware of Uttlesford's collection scheme.

The Director of Public Services said the assessment highlighted that if the Council moved to a kerbside sort scheme, the level of dry recycling would drop.

In response to a question by Councillor G Barker, the Street Services Operations Manager said it had been shown that when operating a separate collection scheme, it was more effective to have weekly collections instead of fortnightly, although even if Uttlesford operated a weekly separate collection scheme, the drop in the recycling rate would still be significant. Often, separate collection schemes were viewed as too complicated and put people off recycling.

The Director of Public Services outlined the Council's current collection scheme. There were currently 34,182 properties throughout the district. Dry recycling was currently collected on a fortnightly basis, using six and a half rounds with driver and three loaders. There would be a significant cost increase if the Council switched to a separate collection scheme, with collections on a fortnightly basis. However, if the Council switched to a separate collection scheme, it would probably have to operate weekly collections which would result in an even higher net cost.

Members agreed a co-mingled collection scheme was more beneficial. Any lowering of contamination rates caused by switching to a separate collection scheme was more than off-set by a reduction in recycling rate and the increased emissions caused by operating a larger collection fleet.

The Director of Public Services said the current recycling contract was due to run to 2016/17. However, the council was currently participating in a joint procurement exercise led by Basildon Council with a view to early termination of the current contract by mutual agreement and letting a new contract.

AGREED to recommend to Cabinet that it approves the TEEP assessment.

The meeting ended at 11.30am.