

**WASTE STRATEGY PROJECT TEAM held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 9.30 am on 2 DECEMBER 2008**

Present: - Councillor S Barker (Chairman).
Councillors C Cant, C Down, C Dean and E Godwin.

Officers in attendance: - D Johnson (Street Services Supervisor), D
Burridge (Director of Operations), R Clark (Waste and Recycling
Officer), R Pridham (Head of Street Services), R Procter
(Democratic Services Officer).

WS16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Cheetham.

WS17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2008 were amended to show apologies given by Councillor C Dean. Subject to this amendment, the Minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

WS18 KITCHEN CADDY TRIAL

The Group noted that the recommendation to proceed with a trial of kitchen caddies had been supported by the Environment Committee.

Officers explained that approximately 1,400 homes in the following areas had been selected for the trial: Wendens Ambo, certain areas within Saffron Walden, and part of Woodlands Park in Great Dunmow.

The Group considered a draft letter and questionnaire to be sent to participants in the trial. Members suggested some amendments.

In response to a question from Councillor C Dean, the Chairman said that in cases where the trial bin was not large enough for a particular household's needs, additional kitchen waste could be collected, whether in an additional bag or container left by the side of the caddy. Councillor Cant noted that the letter asked people to leave the bins with the handle in the unlocked position. She warned against leaving unlocked bins outside, to deter animals. It was noted that those requiring assistance with their collections would continue to be able to request such help, and that Officers' contact details would be set out in the questionnaire.

The Chairman said that an early survey would provide the basis for an interim report to Environment Committee in March. Participants should be invited to complete the survey online via the Council's website, as a cost-effective option. In order to assess the results of the trial, it would be essential to compare the outcomes with current data held, such as current time taken on rounds and the tonnage of kitchen waste for the trial area. The Director of Operations said that it would also be important to monitor black lidded bin

performance to be aware of any change in use or tonnage. Councillor C Dean said the trial should aim to reveal levels of customer satisfaction and any changes to tonnage of kitchen waste, time and labour.

The Group then considered the draft notice to be embossed on caddies.

Further discussion took place on practical aspects of the trial, including the potential for confusion over the type of bags which could be used in the bins. It was noted that it was not obligatory to wrap kitchen waste, but very few people did not do so. Figures for plastic bag contamination were low. The Chairman said that the majority of households in Uttlesford were used to recycling, and participants in the trial should continue to treat their kitchen waste as they did at present.

Councillor Cant said that there would be some people taking part in the trial who were not currently recycling. It was easy to confuse degradable bags with compostable bags. It was agreed that if possible, the embossed notice on caddies should show the compostable logo, and that Officers would investigate this possibility with the manufacturer.

It was noted that the cost of the caddies was approximately £4, compared to £15 per wheeled bin.

Councillor Barker confirmed that £10K funding for the trial from Essex County Council had been confirmed. She had received favourable assurances that capital funding would be available if the outcome of the trial showed improved levels of recycling.

There was discussion of alternative uses for brown lidded bins if caddies replaced the bins, to ensure this resource was not wasted.

WS19

UPDATE ON WASTE STRATEGY AND IAA

The head of Street Services said that a question and answer session for Members had been arranged on 8 December at 6 pm. The Group noted that the discussion would focus on the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) process, the end product of which was a material which could be used as fuel. Of the three ultimate options for all waste processed, incineration, composting ??? or landfill, the use of MBT fuel should be seen as the lesser evil.

Councillor Barker referred to the fact that Uttlesford would be signing up to the Inter Authority Agreement for a period of 28 years. She said there were two issues to be considered. It would be better to minimise the distance Uttlesford's waste had to travel; and there must be no financial pressure on Uttlesford as a result of the IAA.

Councillor Cant said she was concerned that new technology could supersede the IAA. The Director of Operations reminded the Group that there were serious financial implications for the County of £1m per month if there were to be delay in entering into the IAA.

The Head of Street Services reported that many authorities were at the same stage as Uttlesford in terms of signing up to the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. Six or seven authorities had already done so.

He said that an independent solicitor funded by the County Council was providing very good advice on the IAA, and that the Council's solicitor saw no difficulties with the proposals. The main point to note was that the agreement should contain a break clause pending receipt of the PFI bids.

He went on to say that all councils had received assurances from Lord Hanningfield that they would not be financially worse off by entering into the agreement, as Essex County Council would meet gate fees. The primary obligation for this Council was to transport waste to the designated site.

In conclusion he said that the IAA had to be signed off by Officers before the end of the year, and that a forward plan would proceed to the Environment Committee and Council in the New Year.

In reply to a question from Members, the Waste and Recycling Officer said that whilst the market for recyclables such as cardboard had dropped, buyers were still taking such materials.

The Chairman thanked all present.

WS20

NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was set for Monday 12 January at 9.30 am.

The meeting ended at 2.50 pm.