

**WASTE STRATEGY PROJECT TEAM held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 9.30 am on 12 JANUARY 2009**

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

Officers: - 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).

WS21 **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting on 2 December 2008 were confirmed and signed by
the Chairman as a correct record.

WS22 **MATTERS ARISING**

(i) Minute WS17 – Minutes

Members discussed whether Minutes of the Project Team were made public.
It was confirmed that whilst its meetings were not public, it was a working
group and its Minutes were published on the Council's website.

(ii) Minute WS18 – Caddy trial

Caddies had been distributed and the trial had started this week. Of 1,428
surveys sent out, 458 responses had been received. The Waste and
Recycling Officer tabled a sample analysis.

There was a discussion of availability of caddy bags from suppliers other than
from the main supermarkets.

ACTION: Officers would check the outlet list was still available
in the internet.

A number of people had called to say they had already filled up their caddy.
Officers would consult Bedford Borough Council on this point, in view of their
experience of operating the service. When the results of the Council's interim
survey were known, a decision would need to be made as to whether dual
service would be possible operationally.

Councillor Down joined the meeting at this point. She apologised for being
late, as she had been detained by a caller.

Methods were discussed for monitoring levels of kitchen waste not put into
caddies. Officers advised writing to those continuing to use brown wheeled
bins. It was not possible to assess levels of kitchen waste being disposed of
in the black wheeled bins other than by total tonnage. Running a dual service
would lose the benefit of cost savings.

INTER AUTHORITIES AGREEMENT

The Head of Street Services tabled a briefing note prepared by Sharpe Pritchard, legal representatives acting for local authorities. The first of three issues covered by the IAA was a commitment to working in partnership and in accordance with the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy. The Chairman reported that the Council had last week agreed to sign up in principle to this strategy.

The Chairman then gave an overview of the meetings she had attended at Essex County Council. The outcome of extensive negotiations on funding was awaited later today. Different levels of funding were being discussed, including revenue and possibly capital funding. Negotiations included efforts to ensure this authority was not disadvantaged in securing additional support, since it already recycled kitchen waste. As a rural authority Uttlesford had different needs to other authorities. It was important to secure adequate revenue funding, as this element was adjusted year on year.

Councillor Cheetham said it was essential that assurances were received before Uttlesford signed up.

The Head of Street Services said the deadline for concluding these negotiations was today, as a recommendation would have to be made to Members for signing off in March.

Regarding the second area covered by the IAA, Councillor C Dean queried whether some authorities could opt out of running a kitchen waste collection service. Councillor Barker said it was possible to sort kitchen waste from all waste collected at the plant. Separation of waste had a significant impact on the composition of residual waste. For this reason, authorities were required to give an early commitment regarding kitchen waste, to enable ECC to commence PFI procurement. If the prevailing system run by an authority changed, the provider would need compensation.

The project team then referred to the third area covered by the IAA, the Service Delivery Plan (SDP). This related to anticipated collection. Councillor Barker said Uttlesford was already fulfilling its SDP.

In conclusion Councillor Barker said that the first and third areas of the IAA were acceptable, but that unfortunately negotiations around the funding for the separate collection of kitchen waste continued to be a source of concern. ECC would incur costs of £1m for every month by which the agreement was delayed. The final figures determined by ECC would be published in their budget on 10 February.

Councillor Cheetham acknowledged Councillor Barker's hard work, and said a tough stance should be taken.

ACTION: it was agreed that an extraordinary meeting of Environment Committee was required in order for Members to

consider the Inter Authority Agreement, and that Officers would pursue this action with the Lead Officer for Environment Committee.

Councillor C Dean asked about material feeding the facility being procured. If this was black bag waste, would it detract from recycling? Councillor Barker said this aspect would be flexible and was predicated on a reality check.

Councillor Dean then asked about the potential impact of new build on the IAA. The Head of Street Services replied that ECC would allow flexibility between tonnage levels, and would pick up the risk of rises or falls.

Councillor Cheetham said that if Crumps Farm were to be given permission to build an MBT plant, Uttlesford's waste would only have to travel a short distance. But if we signed up to the IAA and ECC then built another site further away, would Uttlesford suffer a disadvantage? Councillor Barker replied that the Waste Disposal Authority would direct authorities where to take their waste, and would then be responsible for it and pay mileage. Therefore, whilst these costs would be met, scheduling times, and implications for indirect costs for increased distances would have to be taken into account.

WS24

DISCONTINUATION OF RECYCLING BOXES

The Director of Operations said there were approximately 2,000 households not in the wheeled bin scheme, still using recycling boxes. Boxes were occasionally lost in the hopper. She wished to suggest possible revisions to the scheme, as it could be wasteful to order replacement boxes.

Members asked a number of questions and various suggestions were discussed. Councillor C Dean asked for an update on collection from flats. The Director of Operations said regarding flats, there was no risk of losing boxes in the hopper, as boxes were decanted into a communal bin.

ACTION: it was agreed that people should be invited either to put items out in a non-black bag or to request the smallest wheeled bin (the lid of which would be labelled green).

WS25

CADDY CONSULTATION

Officers planned to base the second survey on the first one, together with questions arising from feedback. Councillor Cant suggested including questions on what people did with their residual waste if they found the caddy too small; and whether it would be sufficient for their needs at Christmas.

Members made further suggestions, including asking people to put additional food waste in a cardboard box on top of the caddy. Councillor Barker asked Officers to seek comments from Bedford Borough Council on these aspects of the service.

The Waste and Recycling Officer said there had been a good response to the invitation to participate in an online survey. Paper copies would be sent to those requesting them. The survey would go out at the end of February.

WS25

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Tesco recycling banks

The Waste and Recycling Officer reported that Tesco were asking the Council to remove its recycling banks from its Saffron Walden store, as it intended to install its own recycling facilities. He had taken part in initial discussions with the supermarket's recycling staff.

Members were concerned that tonnages were not reduced for the Council as a consequence of this change. Officers explained that Uttlesford could retain £10 out of each £50 recycling credit, and could keep the tonnage figures. However, there would be no saving to the Council, as the vehicle would still need to empty other recycling banks, located across the district..

(ii) Christmas trees

Councillor C Dean said the date for recycling Christmas trees for Stansted had not been widely publicised, and that 4 January was too early, as it preceded Twelfth Night.

Officers agreed that these comments would be taken into account.

(iii) Light bulbs

In reply to a question regarding disposal of low energy light bulbs, which contained mercury, Officers explained the requirements applicable to businesses for special disposal were not imposed on households. Some stores had collection points. DEFRA had advised that where people did not have access to a special collection point, light bulbs could be put in the black bins.

A trial regarding battery disposal by producers had been conducted in Harlow. It had been inconclusive, but a second trial was now underway.

(iv) Calendar

In reply to a question regarding distribution of the recycling calendar, Officers said this had been included in the Green Guide to Uttlesford and in the December edition of 'Uttlesford Life', local press and website as well as being emailed to Members, Parish Clerks and an email list of customers. Councillors asked that the calendar be sent to all parish magazine editors which could be achieved through Councillors.

WS26

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was set for Monday 2 February at 9.30 am.

The meeting ended at 11.05 am.