

**WASTE STRATEGY PROJECT TEAM held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 9.30 am on 9 MARCH 2009**

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

Officers: - D Burrige (Director of Operations), R Clark (Waste and Recycling Officer), C Demmer (Departmental Co-ordinator – Operations), D Johnson (Street Services Supervisor), C Nicholson (Solicitor), R Pridham (Head of Street Services), R Procter (Democratic Services Officer).

WS27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Cheetham and C Dean.

WS28 MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting on 12 January 2009 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

WS29 MATTERS ARISING

(i) Minute WS25 – Caddy Trial

The Waste and Recycling Officer said a second questionnaire was to be sent out this week. A number of comments on the small size of the caddies had been received, which the second survey had taken into account. Initial indications from the trial were being monitored, but it was too early to draw conclusions.

WS30 INTER AUTHORITIES AGREEMENT

A briefing document on the Inter Authorities Agreement was considered. Councillor Barker gave a brief update on her recent meetings with Essex County Council and the other Waste Collection Authorities. She said Rochford had expressed dissatisfaction with the arrangements at present, and Uttlesford was therefore not the only council to have concerns.

Members went on to discuss various aspects of the IAA, as follows:

- The timetable for signing off the agreement had slipped from March to June.
- Only three authorities in Essex currently collected kitchen waste: Braintree, Rochford and Uttlesford; although Harlow and Epping were due to start doing so.
- There was concern at the current lack of transparency of funding for all districts over the next 5 years.

- Details of transfer stations would not be known until the conclusion of the tender process.
- If transfer stations were beyond 5 miles from the District boundary, the Council would get compensation per mile.
- Authorities collecting kitchen waste would receive a level of capital and revenue funding to support their food waste collection service.

The Head of Street Services then referred to the briefing note prepared by Sharpe Pritchard, the Solicitors representing the districts.

Members asked about implications arising from changes to tonnage. Officers explained that if changes were externally led they would not incur costs for districts, and that it was only where it was proposed to change the waste collection service that the County Council would expect compensatory costs.

The Solicitor emphasised that signing up to the agreement was a two stage process: to sign up to the principle in the first instance and then once the unknown factors dependent on the PPP process were finalised following the return of the tender documents, Uttlesford could decide to terminate the IAA without penalty; although depending on the reason for termination, ECC could reconsider the additional funding that Uttlesford had been offered in respect of the organic waste service.

Members discussed the lack of progress on the application for a waste amenity site at Hoblongs, Dunmow. The application had been withdrawn once more, in order to allow a flood risk assessment to be carried out. This was unwelcome news as extensive time had already elapsed since the proposal had first been considered.

ACTION: Officers to write to officers at Essex County Council to request that the flood risk assessment for the Hoblongs waste amenity application be expedited.

Members considered the possibilities for using landfill sites under the County Council's forward plan for extraction of sand and gravel. There were various sites across the County which could provide an interim solution.

The Council's Solicitor referred Members to the provision in the IAA for reviews and a break clause which would permit opting out of certain areas of the agreement at certain times, for a variety of reasons, including where the proposals put forward under the PPP did not represent market practice. The timing of such reviews would need to be taken into account within the committee cycle for budget setting purposes.

The Group then discussed briefly the baseline requirements and Service Delivery Plan for Uttlesford.

Discussion moved on to the service currently provided by Uttlesford for dealing with dog waste. The District had 250 bins, but it was preferable not to install further bins, as there was an environmental impact in terms of vehicle

use for servicing them. Councillor Godwin outlined her Parish Council's approach to being dog bin free. The possibility of reviewing this service at a future point was raised.

Capital and revenue funding arrangements were discussed. It was important that funding should be balanced across all parties. It was not for Uttlesford to subsidise other areas in Essex. Members were concerned that the Council should not commit to the IAA without reassurance on the County Council's budget for the next three years.

ACTION: Officers to ask for details of the County Council's three year forward plan.

Members noted that targets set out in the Local Area Agreement required updating.

ACTION: Officers to ask that a note be inserted below the table showing targets in Local Area Agreements to explain that the figures had now been superseded.

WS31

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the County Council would consider the draft IAA at the end of March. The agreement would therefore be considered by this Council's Environment Committee in June, and would go to Full Council in July.

The next meeting of this group was set for Tuesday 7 April at 9.30 am.

The meeting ended at 11.00 am.