

**WASTE STRATEGY WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 2.30 pm on 17 JANUARY 2012**

Present: Councillor L Wells – Chairman.
Councillors S Barker, C Cant, E Godwin, K Mackman, E Parr,
H Rolfe and J Rose.

Officers: L Bunting (Democratic Services Officer), R Harborough (Director
of Public Services) and R Pridham (Head of Street Services).

WS11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Freeman and
S Howell.

WS12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2011 were agreed and signed by
the Chairman as a correct record.

WS13 HOUSEHOLD GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION COLLECTION SERVICE

The Head of Street Services updated Members on the current situation
regarding the new household garden waste collection service. He said that
approximately 2,500 residents had expressed an interest and letters with
standing order forms had been sent to those residents yesterday. A four-day
collection structure was currently being put together with collections in the south
of the District on week 1 and those in the north during week 2. 3,000 bins for
the purpose had now been ordered and should be delivered during the
beginning of March for the start of the project in April. Applications would
continue to be accepted with customers returning completed direct debit
mandates before 29 February qualifying for a bin free of charge.

Councillor Wells said that she had received reports from residents in Hatfield
Broad Oak and the Hallingburys that they had only seen information of the
scheme online and had not received the hangers that had been left with bins in
other parishes. Other members also commented that certain parishes were not
receiving enough information and it was considered that the hangers left with
bins were not a satisfactory way of circulating information. The Head of Street
Services said that he would contact the Assistant Director Corporate Services
to discuss circulating waste information to the District.

WS14 PARISH WEEKEND GARDEN WASTE BRING SERVICE

The Head of Street Services reported that letters were being sent to parish
clerks outlining the timetable for the collection of green waste for each parish.
Most parishes were being allocated their requested times, however he said that
Thaxted parish were only being allocated a one hour slot instead of the three
hours they had initially requested.

WS15

PROCUREMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES

The Director of Public Services informed members of progress with the procurement of new refuse vehicles and their maintenance. This was a joint procurement process with Braintree and Colchester councils. The consultants who had been engaged to advise the three authorities had appraised the final tender proposals that had been submitted following a competitive dialogue process with the three companies that had progressed to the final stage. Having identified the most advantageous tender against the evaluation criteria set out in the invitation to tender, the key issue for the council was whether, in the light of the tender proposals, to out source and enter into a contract hire arrangement. This could include vehicle maintenance with the contractor providing a workshop. The alternative was for the council to lease a replacement fleet and continue to maintain the vehicles. A separate tender process was underway to identify the costs of building a purpose built workshop facility and for procurement of the vehicles by the council. This would enable the costs of outsourcing to be compared with in house arrangements on a like for like basis. The specification against which the contract hire and maintenance tender lots had been submitted required a higher level of service than currently provided. Costs were still being confirmed through the new invitations to tender but it was likely that the difference in cost between in house and out sourcing approaches was not significant and therefore non financial factors would be important in making the decision. These were identified as business continuity, long term stability of budgets, ability to manage fleet size including a reduction in vehicles, provision on new purpose built workshops and depot facilities for the southern part of the district, training and apprenticeships, and impact of the feasibility of market testing a joint waste collection service with adjoining an authority. A report would be made to the Scrutiny Committee on 7 February and to Cabinet on 16 February.

Members raised several issues. It was confirmed that it would be possible to generate income from providing maintenance services to other authorities or companies. The most advantageous tender included an income sharing proposal. If the Council built its own workshop, spare capacity could be used to generate income, but the scope for this would be more limited. Using existing truck maintenance businesses had been considered and was likely for an interim period, whichever approach was selected, whilst a new workshop was built/ fitted out. A joint workshop with Braintree had been considered but the necessary information required from Braintree could not be provided within the timeframe to enable a proposal to be worked up. The respective costs of leasing and borrowing to fund purchase of a replacement fleet would be explained.

The Director of Public Services said that when a decision was made the new vehicles could be ordered. A meeting was to be held in February to discuss the future collection and delivery of bins.

WS16

ESSEX WASTE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The Director of Public Services submitted a report to members on the content of the Waste Development Document – Preferred Approach, which was being produced by the Essex waste disposal authorities. The closing date for comments was 19 January 2012. In order to make sure that the District

Council's views were represented a response would be sent to the County Council before the next cabinet date.

It was reported that Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council were working jointly to prepare the Waste Development Document (WDD), to replace the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan. The new plan had a base date of March 2010 and an end date of 31 March 2031. The previous stage of consultation on the Waste Development Document had been the Issues and Options stage which had been considered by Members at the Environment Committee in November 2010.

The current document included the spatial vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy, core policies, development management policies, and the monitoring framework. The document also asked for views on the preferred sites which the waste authorities had identified. Following the consultation the Waste Authorities would take the comments into consideration when preparing the submission version of the document. There would be further consultation towards the end of 2012 before the plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination.

The Director of Public Services considered the key issue to be the proposed allocation of a site for a waste transfer station at Hoblongs, Great Dunmow. It was important for this authority that this proposal be supported, in order to ensure that the county council had the option to designate it as a tipping point for waste collected by the district council. Councillor Barker said that the transfer station would be a large building and needed screening from nearby residents' homes and in views of this gateway to the town. A meeting would be held between Essex County Council and residents on site next week. She said that consultation letters had been sent to the residents concerned.

During the ensuing discussion members considered that strong representations should be made in the District Council's response to the plan.

WS17

COMMERCIAL WASTE CHARGES

The Head of Street Services presented a report concerning the charges currently levied by Essex County Council on Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs) for the disposal of commercial waste which was inadequate to cover the cost of the disposal of this waste. The Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) was required by law to arrange for disposal of such waste but needed to move towards the recovery of its costs.

The current charges were based on an assumption that 52 kg per 1000 ltr of waste was commercial. It had been widely accepted that this was an underestimate and recent survey work indicated that a more appropriate ratio would be 73 kg per 1000 ltr. Without any compensatory adjustments, the effect of moving to the new conversion factor for total waste tonnages would be a substantial increase in WCA costs which if passed on to local businesses would result in their charges being increased by 40%.

The Inter Authority Agreement allowed the WDA to implement changes to both the conversion factor and the cost per tonne on an annual basis. These changes needed to be confirmed by the end of the third quarter for implementation in the following financial year. In recognition of the potential impact of a substantial increase in charges ECC would reduce its admin charge

by £10 per tonne year on year from 2012/13, which was equivalent to £24,000 per annum, and give a rebate for one year of £22,000 to reduce the impact on the 2012/13 Budget. If the cost were then to be passed onto businesses charges would need to be increased by 6% for 2012/13. The Budget for 2012/13 already had a 3% increase built in.. If charges to businesses were only increased by 3% as planned, there would be a net 3% increase in costs for the 2012/13 Budget.

The report was then discussed in detail by Members and it was then

RECOMMENDED that

- (a) the new charges incurred by the Council as a Waste Collection Authority in 2012/13 to be imposed by the Waste Disposal Authority be reflected in the 2012/13 charge rate for businesses, and
- (b) further consideration be given during next autumn to budget planning for 2013/14 in order to offset the withdrawal of the ECC rebate in that year.

The meeting ended at 3.52 pm