

## SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN

**MEETING:** Environment and Economy Select Committee  
Monday 21 October 2013 Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors: J Hollywell (Chair), L Bell, P Bibby, J Brown, J Mead and J Gardner (Portfolio Holder Environment and Regeneration)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Duncan Jones (Hertfordshire Waste Partnership)  
Craig Thorpe (Dacorum Borough Council) – ‘Critical Friend’

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	ACTION/LEAD
<p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Parker CC, P Stuart and B Underwood.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	<p>G Moody Ext 2203</p>
2. MINUTES –30 SEPTEMBER 2013	
<p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment &amp; Economy Select Committee held on 30 September 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>	<p>G Moody Ext 2203</p>
3. INTERVIEWS FOR THE REVIEW INTO REFUSE AND RECYCLING	
<p>Introductions were made and the Chair welcomed the three interviewees to the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee then asked a number of questions relating to waste and refuse service delivery in Dacorum Borough Council and the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership.</p>	

## Comments

### **Craig Thorpe - Dacorum**

- There has been a higher take up of text messaging / alert service than in Stevenage.
- The refuse collection service maintains close links with the Customer Service Centre and updates the website regularly during periods of adverse weather.
- During periods of adverse weather, collections are made in whole or part where possible. Use of the Bartech system allows management to determine which areas have been covered on a real time basis
- Cardboard has yet to be removed from green recycling and it is planned to mix all dry recyclables together in the near future
- Recycling is offered to those in flat blocks although there is often difficulty in deciding where the recycling collection points should be located
- Missed bins are split justified/unjustified (where the bins are put out after the collection has been made). New technology enables real time reporting back to the Customer Service Centre and unjustified missed bins are collected when time allows rather than as a matter of priority.
- Unlike SBC there is no dedicated disposable nappy collection service and reward vouchers are offered for the use of terry nappies as per SBC
- There are opportunities for more joint working, such as procurement services.

### **Duncan Jones (Herts Waste Partnership)**

- There is pressure to remove cardboard from materials sent for composting
- There is a need to scope out exactly what is needed for future contracts by taking input from all partners
- Feedback from 2 of the 3 authorities that have made changes to their cardboard collection regimes had been positive with improvements in their assessment scores
- View that the planning case for avoiding landfill was well made but ultimately the decision rests with the Secretary of State.
- Transport costs are the largest determinant in refuse disposal.
- Authorities that have used microchipping, using systems such as Waste Dataflow, have seen some increases in recycling rates, but typically these rates remain below the levels seen for Hertfordshire

authorities.

- Believes there is a reluctance to engage in joint working in some quarters.
- Reducing the size of the bin for residual refuse (ie non recyclables) from 240 litres will reduce the amount generated.
- Evidence and a robust business case is essential before making changes to any collection / disposal contract.
- An incinerator is the most efficient means of waste disposal.
- A recycling rate of 75% is realistic and achievable.

### **Councillor John Gardner**

- The cardboard/composting contract requires scrutiny at County level.
- Outsourcing to private companies would prove to be more costly in the longer term.
- Benchmarking with other authorities is essential.
- The County Council should be considering disposal arrangements other than landfill.
- Should aim to minimise the amount collected and people should be encouraged to generate less waste.
- Industry generates more waste than households.
- Lessons to be learned:
  - better methods of collection should be investigated
  - new developments should allow plenty of room for bin storage / collection vehicles.
- Is interested in Dacorum's missed bin policy.
- Overall sees the Herts Waste Partnership as 'a force for good'.
- Comparison costings across differing authorities are difficult to make.
- Home composting is economical.
- Nappy collection is a desirable service and would wish to see incentives for the use of terry nappies continue.

### **Actions**

The Scrutiny Officer undertook to circulate possible dates for the next meeting

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<p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the comments and suggestions of the interviewees be noted for future reference and incorporated into the recommendations to the Portfolio Holder as required.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the interviewees for their input into the meeting</p>	
<p><b>4. URGENT BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p>None</p>	
<p><b>5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p>	
<p>Not required.</p>	<p>G Moody Ext 2203</p>
<p><b>PART II</b></p>	
<p><b>6. URGENT PART II BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p>None.</p>	<p>G Moody Ext 2203</p>