

ADOPTION OF A JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR ESSEX

Agenda Item 4a..

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Background Papers:- Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Essex and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Draft Post Adoption Environmental Statement

Financial Implications:-

Equalities Implications:-

Legal Implications:-

Options: None

Risks:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached report outlines the development of the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy for Essex (2007 to 2032) and seeks the Council's adoption of the strategy which is available to view on the Council's website.

The Waste Emission Trading Act 2003 requires all waste authorities for two-tier areas of England to draw up joint municipal waste management strategies. Essex authorities have been developing a joint strategy since 2002. This has developed following extensive public and stakeholder consultations in 2002, 2005 and 2008, and a Strategic Environmental Assessment in 2008. The strategy sets out the objectives, options and context for the future management of waste in the District and County.

DECISION

That the Cabinet **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Essex be adopted by Braintree District Council.

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Introduction

The Strategy sets out the key targets and objectives of the Essex Waste Partnership for the management of municipal waste. Essex needs to change how it deals with waste in the future and the strategy is the countywide plan for achieving that change.

It is a legal requirement under the waste and emissions Trading Act 2003 for all waste authorities for two-tier areas of England to draw up joint municipal waste management strategies.

The strategy has been developed in a lengthy iterative process, which has included three periods of public and stakeholder consultation in 2002, 2005 and 2008. In 2007 and 2008 a strategic environmental assessment of the strategy was also undertaken to assess the sustainability impact of the available collection and disposal options.

Summary of the Strategy

The Strategy includes a number of key themes for the management of municipal waste in Essex:

- to work hard to **reduce** the amount of waste produced in the first place and **re-use** more of the waste that is produced.
- to achieve 60% **recycling** of household waste by 2020. This could be achieved through a combination of further improvement in the performance of recycling and composting kerbside collection schemes and the Recycling Centres for Household Waste, and the recovery of recyclable materials through new treatment plants.
- to favour **composting** technologies such as **anaerobic digestion** (AD), for source segregated organic wastes. AD is a form of biotreatment and produces a gas which can be used to generate 100% renewable electricity.
- recognising that whilst we can work on reducing the amount of waste produced and recycling as much of it as possible, there will always be some waste that still needs to be disposed of. For this reason, we propose to introduce new treatment plants using **Mechanical Biological Treatment** (MBT). MBT processes any residual waste and recovers further material for recycling. Part of the remaining material can either be manufactured into a fuel for energy production or can be sent to landfill.

Consultation

The current Strategy has been developed by the Essex Waste Partnership over a number of years. This process commenced in 2002 with the first public consultation on options for dealing with municipal waste in Essex, called the 'War on Waste' campaign. 1,748 members of the public submitted their comments as part of this consultation. Results indicated that the majority view was that the Strategy should focus on waste reduction and high levels of recycling and composting.

Following this a draft strategy was produced and adopted by Braintree District Council in 2005 before a further round of public consultation. This demonstrated broad support across a range of stakeholders and the public for waste reduction, high recycling and the biotreatment of residual waste.

The draft Strategy (2005) was reviewed and updated to reflect the consultation results and brought up to date with the latest key targets, objectives and technology options for Essex. It was also updated to take into account the most recent national strategies such as Waste Strategy 2007. This resulted in the Final

Draft Strategy 2008 being produced. This was approved by the Waste Management Advisory Board for Essex (WMAB) and released for a final round of public consultation that the District Council responded to earlier this year.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was undertaken on the draft strategy to assess the environmental and sustainability impacts of the options proposed within the Strategy. This is a legal requirement on all statutory plans or strategies.

A key output of the SEA process is an Environmental Report and this must be consulted on at the same time as the Strategy.

The SEA process has been conducted by Eunomia Research and Consulting. All comments received on the SEA were submitted to Eunomia for collation and consideration. A Post Adoption Environmental Statement has been prepared and can be viewed on the County Council's website. This will be finalised and published, along with a revised Environmental Report, after the adoption process is complete.

Adoption and Future Action Plan

Essex County Council adopted the strategy at Full Council on the 15 July 2008. All District and Borough Councils are required to consider the Strategy for adoption through their governance processes by the end of 2008.

A key aspect to the implementation of the Strategy will be the development of an Action Plan to provide more details on how Essex authorities will deliver the key targets and activities outlined in the Strategy. This action plan will be supported by service delivery plans for each authority and the Essex Waste Partnership is currently addressing this issue. The action plan will be subject to annual monitoring and reviews, reported to the Partnership through the Waste Management Advisory Board and the Area Waste Management Joint Committees.

The Strategy itself will also be subject to review every three to five years. Significant changes to the Strategy, its objectives or targets, would need to be agreed by each partner authority through their relevant governance process and may involve further public consultation.

Finance and Resources Implications

The County Council, jointly with Southend Borough Council, is in the process of making a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) application to Government to seek PFI credits as a contribution towards the cost of building and operating new recycling, composting and treatment infrastructure. The Outline Business Case produced for the PFI application, sets out the affordability position of delivering a new sustainable waste management system for Essex which is compatible with the objectives outlined in the Strategy. It also includes £100m (over the life of the project's 25 year operational term) towards recycling initiatives to support the high recycling objectives of the Strategy, which will require future investment (as appropriate) in collection services and promotions. The extent of this future investment is yet to be determined, although Braintree's well developed alternate weekly infrastructure goes a considerable way towards meeting the future requirements.

Paul Partridge
Head of Operations

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