

# POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

## 1 MARCH 2010

*Present :-* Councillor Julie Young (Chairman)  
Councillors Nigel Chapman, Mike Hardy and  
Lesley Scott-Boutell

*Substitute Members :-* Councillor Mary Blandon  
for Councillor Justin Knight  
Councillor Sonia Lewis for Councillor Jill Tod

*Also in Attendance :-* Councillor Peter Chillingworth  
Councillor Tim Young

### **27. Have Your Say! Development in North Colchester**

Parish Councillor John Gili-Ross addressed the Panel, pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1), on the consultation on the development of North Station as part of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document. The Council was seeking people's views on priorities for the area, opinions about proposed improvements and redesign and about development of existing services in the area. Mr Gili-Ross was a member of the Council's 20mph Task and Finish Group and was aware of the effective contributions such Groups could make to the decision making of the Council. He was of the view that the Panel members should consider setting up a Task and Finish Group to look into the implications of residential development in the North of Colchester. He felt that the setting up of a Task and Finish Group would be of great benefit to the residents of North Colchester.

The Chairman thanked Mr Gili-Ross for his representations and confirmed that his request would be included in the Panel's consideration of items for the work programme for the following municipal year.

### **28. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **29. Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal Task and Finish Group // Progress Report**

Paula Whitney addressed the Panel, pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). She referred to the options appraisal undertaken at the end of 2009 and asked the Panel to bear in mind the introduction of food waste collections and the supply of a sufficient quantity of containers would both have a significant positive impact on recycling activity. She did not support alternate weekly recycling of materials, especially in respect of garden waste in the Spring and Summer months. She also supported kerbside collection and separation and voiced her concerns regarding the adequate availability of vehicles with flexibility to be used for the collection of various materials.

Councillor Chillingworth attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel. He stated that he was very supportive of the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group and he felt it was particularly important to obtain the views of local residents. He agreed that the introduction of a weekly collection of food waste was crucial with the other area of concern being whether the residual waste was to be collected weekly or fortnightly. He felt that issues relating to the delivery of the Courier had been unfortunate in terms of the impact this may have had on the consultation. He requested the Panel to endorse the findings of the Task and Finish Group and he welcomed the opportunity for trials to be introduced and for the Group to then continue its work.

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Street Services summarising the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group. The group had been asked to narrow down the range of options presented in the original options appraisal to a number that they could consider in more detail and the following criteria were considered to be important in their considerations:

- To identify options that remained reasonably close to the way in which the service was currently delivered;
- To include at least one wheeled bin option by way of comparison.

The Group had agreed that the following four options would be taken forward for further consideration:

- Option A – fortnightly residual, garden waste and recycling collections with weekly food waste collections;
- Option B – fortnightly garden waste and recycling collections with weekly residual and food waste collections;
- Option C – fortnightly residual and garden waste collections with weekly recycling and food waste collections;
- Option D – fortnightly separate residual and garden waste wheeled bins with recycling boxes and weekly food waste collections.

Further modelling work had been undertaken on each of the options to ensure that the latest information was being analysed. The group also received information regarding the performance levels being achieved by the highest performing authorities and details on the types of collection schemes being used.

It was agreed by the group that the four options would form the basis for a public consultation alongside questions relating to investment by the Council to reduce waste going to landfill, increasing recycling rates, enforcing recycling standards, introducing food waste collections and the frequency of residual waste collection.

Councillor Barlow, the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group attended the Panel to assist members in their discussions. He explained that his participation in the Task and Finish Group had been one of his best experiences as a Councillor. The meetings had sometimes been long but a large amount of work had been accomplished. He wished to place on record his thanks to all the members of the Group, to residents for responding and participating in the consultation and to officers for the work they put in and their dedication to the process.

Chris Dowsing, Colchester Borough Council Strategic Waste and Sustainability Manager, undertook a formal presentation including details of the 'Express Your View on Waste' consultation which took place between 2 November 2009 and 15 January 2010 (11 weeks). The consultation was then extended for two weeks until 29 January 2010. A total of 1,171 people responded to the survey either through the Courier or online; 821 of whom left comments. A further 128 comments were received via the comments slips available at the launch event, Customer Service Centre and Essex University. It is estimated that 45% of surveys were completed online.

The results of the questions posed in the Consultation showed that:

- 91% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should be investing money to reduce waste going to landfill.
- 84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should be investing money to increase recycling rates.
- 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should enforce recycling standards across the Borough.
- 83% of respondents stated that they would be satisfied or very satisfied with a weekly food collection service.
- 50% of respondents stated that they would be satisfied or very satisfied

with fortnightly collections of remaining waste. 44% however were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

The Task and Finish Group wished to explore how the Council could more strongly encourage participation in recycling services. Responses to the consultation showed that there was strong support for the Council enforcing recycling standards across the Borough. There are many ways that this could be achieved and the Group wished to explore this area in more detail.

The Task and Finish Group therefore wished to continue their work so that a programme could be devised that would take into account their recommendations as well as ensuring best practice could be explored and applied or modified. This would help to ensure that any schemes that improved participation levels and increased levels of recycling introduced in the Borough would be suitable and achieve high levels of customer satisfaction.

The Panel congratulated the members of the Task and Finish Group on the work they had undertaken, discussed the findings of the Group and gave particular consideration to the following issues:-

- Many comments on the consultation were very complimentary of the current service and did not wish to see it change;
- Possible methods to address the potential problem of disposable nappies in residual waste sacks;
- The need to ensure electronic consultation methods were fully functional prior to a consultation launch;
- How the use and amount of clear plastic sacks for residual waste would work in practice;
- The likely amount of resources to be directed to education and support for residents in respect of recycling;
- The methods to determine the locations for the recycling trials and the likely cost of implementing these;
- The views of the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services on Essex County Council's Waste Strategy and the location of Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facilities in the County;
- The need to ensure the work of the Task and Finish Group is adequately communicated to the public by means of, for example, prompt and regular publication of the notes of the meetings.

Councillor T. Young, Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel. Councillor Young praised the Council's refuse service, paid tribute to the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group and offered his support for its continued work but on a time limited basis, confirmed the need for the Group to research and determine trial locations and repeated his opposition to the siting of an MBT facility in Colchester.

*RESOLVED* that the recommendations of the Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Task and Finish Group, as set out below, be endorsed:

(i) The work of the Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Task and Finish Group be continued and a new work programme developed to allow recommendations to be made to the Cabinet on future waste and recycling services;

(ii) The Task and Finish Group look specifically at ways of strongly encouraging participation in the Council's recycling collection schemes.

*RECOMMENDED* to Cabinet that the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services be authorised to establish trials to test the acceptability and performance of different collection systems, including food waste collection.

### **30. Work Programme 2009/10**

The Panel considered a report from the Head of Corporate Management setting out the current situation regarding the Panel's work programme for 2009/10.

The Panel had completed a number of very important tasks and received presentations on very interesting and stimulating subjects. However the following issues remained outstanding which and would need to be included in the work programme for the next municipal year:

- Community development/ neighbourhoods;
- Town Centre Improvements // Joint Presentation with Essex County Council;
- 20mph speed limit // Engagement Plan
- Night Time Economy // Final Report

*RESOLVED* that the contents of the work programme for 2009/10 be noted.