

Policy Review and Development Panel

Grand Jury Room, Town Hall

16 June 2008 at 6:00pm

The Policy Review Panel deals with

reviewing policies and issues at the request of the Cabinet or Portfolio Holder, or pro-actively identifying issues that may require review; dealing with those issues either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups, monitoring progress of these Groups and assessing their final reports.

Terms of Reference

Policy Review and Development Panel

- To review strategies and policies at the request of the Cabinet either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups, and to make recommendations back to Cabinet for decision.
- To review issues at the request of a Portfolio Holder either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups and to make recommendations back to the Portfolio Holder for decision.
- To monitor progress of Task and Finish Groups and assess their final reports prior to their submission to either the Cabinet or the Portfolio Holder.
- To proactively identify issues that may require review and improvement and to seek Cabinet's agreement as to whether and how they should be examined.

Material Planning Considerations

The following are issues which the Planning Committee can take into consideration in reaching a decision:-

- planning policy such as local and structure plans, other local planning policies, government guidance, case law, previous decisions of the Council
- design, appearance and layout
- impact on visual or residential amenity including potential loss of daylight or sunlight or overshadowing, loss of privacy, noise disturbance, smell or nuisance
- impact on trees, listed buildings or a conservation area
- highway safety and traffic
- health and safety
- crime and fear of crime
- economic impact – job creation, employment market and prosperity

The following are **not** relevant planning issues and the Planning Committee cannot take these issues into account in reaching a decision:-

- land ownership issues including private property rights, boundary or access disputes, restrictive covenants, rights of way, ancient rights to light
- effects on property values
- loss of a private view
- identity of the applicant, their personality, or a developer's motives
- competition
- the possibility of a "better" site or "better" use
- anything covered by other types of legislation

Human Rights Implications

All applications are considered against a background of the Human Rights Act 1998 and in accordance with Article 22(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2003 there is a requirement to give reasons for the grant of planning permission. Reasons always have to be given where planning permission is refused. These reasons are always set out on the decision notice. Unless any report specifically indicates otherwise all decisions of this Committee will accord with the requirements of the above Act and Order.

Community Safety Implications

All applications are considered against a background of the implications of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and in particular Section 17. Where necessary, consultations have taken place with the Crime Prevention Officer and any comments received are referred to in the reports under the heading Consultations.

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
16 June 2008 at 6:00pm**

Members

Chairman : Young
Deputy Chairman : Barlow
Councillors Bentley, Davies, Hardy and Knight

Substitute Members : All members of the Council who are not Cabinet members or members of this Panel.

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the press)

Members of the public may wish to note that Agenda items 1 to 6 are normally brief and the last Agenda Item is a standard one for which there may be no business to consider.

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

(a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

(b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched to off or to silent;
- location of toilets;
- introduction of members of the meeting.

2. Substitutions

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

3. Urgent Items

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent and to give reasons for the urgency.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any personal interests they may have in the items on the agenda.

If the personal interest arises because of a Councillor's membership of or position of control or management on:

- any body to which the Councillor has been appointed or nominated by the Council; or
- another public body

then the interest need only be declared if the Councillor intends to speak on that item.

If a Councillor declares a personal interest they must also consider whether they have a prejudicial interest. If they have a prejudicial interest they must leave the room for that item.

If a Councillor wishes to make representations on an item on which they have a prejudicial interest they may do so if members of the public are allowed to make representations. In such circumstances a Councillor must leave the room immediately once they have finished speaking.

An interest is considered to be prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.

Councillors should consult paragraph 7 of the Meetings General Procedure Rules for further guidance.

5. Have Your Say!

(a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter not on this agenda.

6. Minutes

1 - 4

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Review Panel held on 3 March 2008.

7. Waste and Recycling Review

The Panel to receive a presentation from:

- Matthew Young, Head of Housing and Environmental Policy and
- Chris Dowsing, Strategic Waste and Sustainability Manager.

| | |
|--|----------------|
| a. Colchester Borough Council Waste to Resources Policy | 5 - 27 |
| b. IDeA Peer Review on the Waste and Recycling Service | 28 - 46 |
| 8. Work Programme | 47 - 50 |
| 9. Exclusion of the public | |

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

POLICY REVIEW PANEL

3 MARCH 2008

Present:- Councillor Ellis (Chairman)
Councillors Fairley-Crowe, Harris, Knight, Lissimore
and Spyvee

21. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

Councillors Fairley-Crowe, (in respect of her membership of Colchester Borough Homes Board and her status as a Private Sector Landlord), Knight (in respect of his residence in Colchester Borough Homes temporary accommodation), Lissimore (in respect of her membership of Colchester Borough Homes Board) and Spyvee (in respect of his Trusteeship of Beacon Housing) declared their personal interests in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(2).

22. Review of Housing Strategy

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Housing and Environmental Policy on the progress made to develop a local housing strategy for the Colchester Borough.

Matthew Young, Head of Housing and Environmental Policy, Tina Hinson, Strategic Housing Manager and Richard Hughes, Housing Strategy and Research Co-ordinator, attended the meeting to assist members in their discussions.

It was explained that at the Panel's meeting on 5 June 2006 it requested an update on progress made on developing a housing strategy. In order to develop a housing strategy a robust evidence base was required and with the completion of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Borough and emerging findings available from a number of other research projects, such as the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, Colchester Borough Council was now in a position to develop a housing strategy involving partners, stakeholders and residents. Additionally, the Department for Communities and Local Government had recently begun a consultation exercise on the guidance necessary to develop a housing strategy for local authorities and housing sub regions.

The business benefits of a local housing strategy are principally in the areas of setting out clear priorities for housing in the borough, clear service planning, and investment of resources in ways that meet Colchester Borough Council's strategic priorities. A new local housing strategy would also make clear the Council's methods of involving partners and service users which would be determined by the Housing Strategy Partnership.

The report set out a timetable for the development and adoption of a housing strategy for Colchester, together with a plan setting out the clear tasks necessary to develop a housing strategy and includes, developing a robust evidence base, determining priorities and goals, understanding what resources of the Council and its partners may be available to meet them and developing clear SMART action plans.

This document would also show its linkages to a number of other plans and strategies, such as the Local Area Agreement, the Greater Haven Gateway Housing Strategy, the Community Strategy, the Strategic Plan and the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

It was proposed to develop an electronic strategy held on Colchester Borough Council's website which would ensure that the document remained an effective and relevant tool to tackle Colchester's housing priorities because it would be easily updateable over time.

At the meeting the Panel received a presentation by Richard Hughes, during the course of which members were asked to consider the following questions:

- What are the key issues arising from the evidence base?
- What are the gaps in the evidence base which need addressing?
- What are the consultation and involvement needs of the Housing Strategy both in terms of relevant groups and subject matters?
- What are the priorities for the Housing Strategy to address?
- What time period should the strategy cover, in terms of the priorities and action plans?

The Panel gave particular consideration to the following issues:

- Mechanisms to improve and speed up the delivery of Affordable Housing within Housing developments;
- Suitability standards for temporary housing stock;
- Rural Exceptions Sites;
- Homes for Life and the Whole Lifetime Standard;
- The achievement of the Decent Homes standard for all Colchester Borough Homes stock by the 2010 deadline;
- The strategies being used, including the development of an Empty Homes Strategy, to reduce the number of empty Colchester Borough Homes properties for periods over six months;
- Recent work being undertaken by officers with Registered Social Landlords to enable the Council to more directly influence fundraising for the development of land;
- The number of properties currently comprising Colchester Borough Homes' housing stock (6,200) compared to the peak figure (12,000) in the 1980s.

RESOLVED that –

- (i) Matthew Young, Tina Hinson and Richard Hughes be thanked for their very informative presentation to the Panel;
- (ii) Any further comments from individual members in response to the questions posed to the Panel be submitted to Richard Hughes before the end of March 2008;
- (iii) Consideration be given to the submission of the draft Housing Strategy to the Policy Review Panel in due course.

23. Strategic Assessment of Crime and Partnership Plan

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Enterprise and Communities on the progress towards the development of a Strategic Assessment of crime and implementation of an Annual Partnership Plan undertaken by the Colchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CCDRP).

Peter Carrington, Community Safety Co-ordinator, attended the meeting to assist members in their discussions.

It was explained that the CCDRP was a strong partnership between Essex Police, Colchester Borough Council and several other organisations such as Essex County Council, North East Essex Primary Care Trust, Essex Police Authority, Essex Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Fire Authority.

All CDRPs were required to conduct a Strategic Assessment of crime and identify priorities for crime reduction and safer communities known as an Annual Partnership Plan by April 2008.

Matters which the Strategic Assessment should cover included:

- Levels, patterns and reasons for changes of crime, disorder and substance misuse;
- Issues which the CDRP and local people consider to be a priority and
- The extent to which the previous partnership plan has been implemented.

Once this Strategic Assessment was complete, the CDRP was required to publish an Annual Partnership Plan which detailed its priorities to reduce crime. This plan should cover:

- A strategy to reduce crime, disorder and substance misuse;
- The priorities identified in the strategic assessment;
- The steps to achieve this strategy and these priorities;
- How the Responsible Authority Group thinks resources should be deployed;
- How success will be measured and
- How the CDRP will consult with the public and keep them informed.

The Home Office had recommended that at least five key areas for priority be considered as they emerge from our assessment:

- Reducing crime;
- Tackling environmental crime;
- Reducing anti-social behaviour;
- Tackling drugs and
- Reducing the impact of alcohol.

The Panel gave particular consideration to the following issues:

- The inclusion of Berechurch with the wards targeted for a 5% reduction in Anti Social Behaviour;
- The feasibility of building statistics regarding the fluidity of incidences of different crimes in different wards;
- The possibility of the Council offering to the local police free accommodation within

- community areas;
- Problems associated with alcohol misuse in the town centre and the need to resolve the root causes rather than the consequences;
 - The limited funds available to the CDRPs to undertake the initiatives and priorities identified;
 - The low cost and ready accessibility of alcohol for sale in supermarkets;
 - The extent of partnership work undertaken by the CDRP with local schools, school children, local businesses and the Garrison;
 - The feasibility of introducing similar measures to those used successfully elsewhere to deal with problems in the town centre at night such as a cooling off period between 6 and 7pm, later evening shop opening and half hour chill-out times before pubs close for the night.

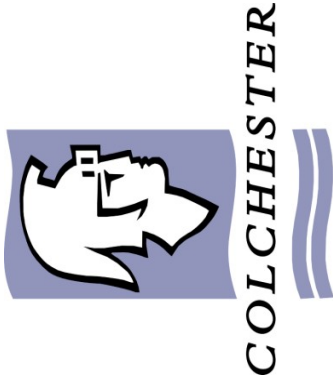
RESOLVED that the progress towards the development of a Strategic Assessment of crime and the implementation of an Annual Partnership Plan undertaken by the Colchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership be noted.

24. Work Programme

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Corporate Services appended to which was the Panel's work programme.

It was explained that the timetable for the Staff Wellbeing Strategy had been realigned to link with the People Strategy which was now planned for submission to this Panel in June 2008, or thereabouts whilst the Leisure Policy Framework has been embraced by the Local Cultural Strategy which was a 10 year plan, approved in 2003, with a commitment to a mid term review. It was unlikely that this would take place before the Autumn of 2008;

RESOLVED that the updating of the work programme to reflect the changes set out above be noted.



Colchester Borough Council

Waste to resources policy

www.colchester.gov.uk

Colchester Borough Council

Vision

The Council's vision for the future of waste management in the Borough is one where:

- **Less waste is produced by everyone**
- **There is an active reuse culture**
- **Home composting is 'the norm'**
- **Being able to recycle is easy for everyone**
- **More waste is recycled and composted than sent to landfill**
- **The collection service is high quality**
- **There is high customer satisfaction with the service**

To achieve this vision it will require

Behaviour change Increased opportunities Joint working

Dealing with the waste produced within the Borough of Colchester is one of the major environmental challenges the authority faces. This is fully recognised by the Council, which embraces its role as a community leader and seeks to build on its record in recycling, composting and waste minimisation to further improve the public's attitude towards waste and recycling.

One of the Council's three corporate objectives, as set out in the Councils strategic plan 2006–2009, is “to be the cleanest and greenest Borough in the Country”. One of the ways of achieving this is by reducing waste arisings and increasing the



percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted. This desire to be clean and green reflects the priorities of local residents and their views of what makes somewhere a good place to live.

The Council is committed to providing a **recycling service** rather than a waste service to its customers. The Council currently enables its customers to recycle glass, cans, foil, paper, cardboard, textiles, plastic bottles, beverage cartons and garden waste either through kerbside collections or by using local recycling centres. Investments already made by the Council to increase the capacity of the waste and recycling service have resulted in improvements in service reliability and performance.

As part of their local leadership role, local authorities are being asked by the Government to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in their area reduce and recycle their waste. The current recycling service offered to the Council's trade waste customers consists of a regular paper and cardboard collection. The Council is investigating how it could develop the advice and service it offers to businesses in the Borough to help them manage their waste streams so that they can minimise the waste they produce and recycle more.

The most important factor in reducing waste and increasing reuse and recycling is **behaviour change**. It will require a commitment from everyone in the Borough to participate in minimising their waste, reusing materials and recycling and composting as much as possible. The Council is committed to supporting people in order to bring about the changes required in behaviour.

The Council recognises that there are many of our customers within the Borough that are already fully committed to doing all they can to minimise, reuse, recycle and compost their waste. It is a fact, however, that within the Borough levels of household participation in the Council's kerbside recycling collections vary. We have already identified through the compositional analysis that a significant amount of recyclable material is being placed in black sacks and going to landfill.

If we are to achieve higher recycling targets and divert more waste away from landfill, then the level of participation in the services provided by the Council by householders needs to be high across the whole of the Borough and more materials need to be taken out of the black sack and put into recycling collections. Without this change in behaviour that results in high levels of participation and high levels of capture for materials that can be recycled, the vision will not be achieved. Each time a recycling vehicle passes a household, it is able to collect material for recycling. If there is no recycling put out for collection, then it is an opportunity missed and a cost incurred.



Failure to achieve the vision will impact not only on the environment, but it will also have a direct financial impact from having to send more waste for treatment and disposal, which results in higher costs.

We understand, however, that to achieve this change in behaviour we, as a Council, must provide our customers with up-to-date, informative and consistent information and help on what can be recycled, how to minimise waste and opportunities for reuse. The Council is committed to working with anyone who shares the aspirations and vision outlined in this document such as the five households that took part in the Rubbish Recyclers project.

Alongside this information and help, the Council also recognises that our customers would benefit from **increased opportunities** to recycle. The Council wants to make it as easy as possible for all of its customers to recycle. This includes for example working to require developers to provide adequate facilities inside and outside new homes to allow user-friendly separation of recyclable material and waste by householders and unhindered collection of separate material streams by recycling and refuse vehicles; and installing recycling bins in the town centre for residents and visitors to separate their litter so that it can be recycled and to continue recycling outside of their homes.

The Council also wishes to explore different types of containers for materials which could contribute to making it easier for our customers to recycle and secondly provide them with the opportunity to recycle more. This will be a crucial element, if the Council is to achieve its vision.

The Council recognises that it cannot achieve its vision without the support of others. This is why it is committed to **joint working** with a wide variety of stakeholders, but particularly its customers. The way in which the Council works with a variety of stakeholders will depend on the circumstances of each relationship and could vary from direct action, support and communication with groups and individuals, through to negotiation and lobbying of other authorities and government to ensure support and delivery of the vision. The Council is also keen to explore the possible benefits of joint working directly with others to achieve the vision of this waste to resources action plan.



Context

As a society, we are consuming natural resources at an unsustainable rate. If every country consumed natural resources at the rate the UK does, we would need three planets to live on. The most crucial threat is from dangerous climate change. Using the planet's resources within the limits of its eco-systems is vital to the survival, health and prosperity of future generations. Each year, the UK generates about 100 million tonnes of waste from households, commerce and industry. Most of this ends up in landfill where the biodegradable part generates methane (a potent greenhouse gas), while valuable energy is used in extracting and processing new raw materials to replace those buried in landfill.

Sustainable waste management is quickly moving up the political agenda and includes issues of waste growth and rising costs, as well as implications for greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change. The most crucial threat from exceeding environmental limits is from dangerous climate change. Increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have caused the temperature of the earth to rise by 0.6°C over the last 100 years. The 10 warmest years of the 20th century all occurred in the last 15 years of the century and 1998 was the warmest year on record.

The scale of the challenge means that all sectors of the community have to be involved if we are to meet targets for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change. The recent Stern Review shows that the cost of tackling this threat now will be far less than the damaging costs of climate change later if we fail to take prompt action. Local Authorities in particular have a crucial role to play in responding to this challenge. Colchester has shown its commitment to tackling climate change by signing the Nottingham Declaration. In signing the declaration, the council has acknowledged the increasing impact that climate change will have on our community during the 21st century and has committed to helping tackle the causes and effects of a changing climate on the borough.

The council will work with local communities, businesses and service providers to develop a plan that will look to take a lead in addressing the causes and effects of climate change and provide us with realistic and achievable targets. This will build on other work in this area including taking part in the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme to establish a number of sustainable projects that will reduce the Council's carbon footprint.



Waste management generates carbon dioxide and methane, which are both greenhouse gases. **Methane emissions** from (biodegradable waste in) landfill account for 40% of all UK methane emissions and **3% of all UK greenhouse gas emissions**. Methane is 23 times as damaging a greenhouse gas as carbon dioxide.

Everyday waste contains readily biodegradable carbon-based organic matter, such as kitchen waste, garden waste and paper, and slowly biodegradable organic materials, such as lignin (wood-like material). Some products such as plastics contain carbon derived from the fossil fuels that are used as a feedstock (oil). The treatment and disposal of these wastes has a direct influence on the emissions of greenhouse gases. Current UK recycling of paper, glass, plastics, aluminium and steel is estimated to **save more than 18 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year** through avoided primary material production. This is **equivalent to the annual use of 5 million cars** or 14% of UK transport sector emissions.

Better management of waste can contribute to:

- reducing **greenhouse gases** – notably methane from landfill sites, but also carbon dioxide emission (through reuse and recycling);
- improving **resource efficiency** – saving energy and reducing material use through waste prevention, reuse, recycling and renewable energy recovery;
- protecting **public health** through safe management of potentially hazardous substances;
- protecting **ecosystems** - soils, groundwater, emissions to air; and
- safeguarding social **amenity** – by ensuring household waste is collected, reducing fly-tipping by households and businesses, and limiting local nuisances from waste facilities.



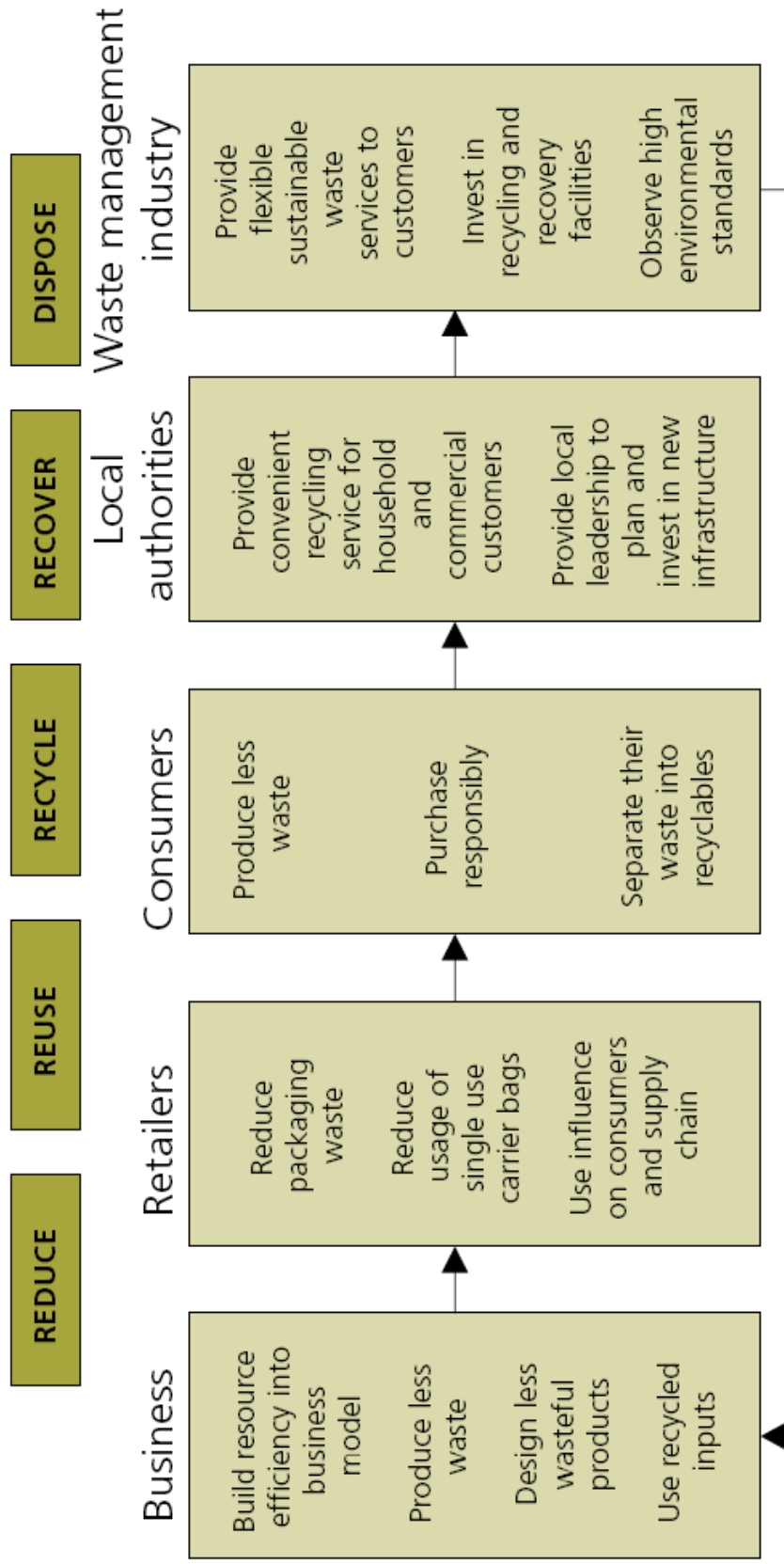
In May 2007 the Government published a new waste strategy for England. Within the strategy there is a clear desire to show that all parts of society will have to share responsibility to improve how waste is managed:

- **Producers** will have to make products using more recycled materials and less newly-extracted raw materials. They will have to design products that are less wasteful and take responsibility for the environmental impact of their products throughout their life;
- **Retailers** will have to reduce packaging, source and market products that are less wasteful, and help their consumers to be less wasteful; as well as improving their own levels of recycling.
- **Consumers** – both businesses and individual households – will have the opportunity to reduce their own waste, purchase products and services that generate less waste and reduce environmental impacts, and separate their waste for recycling;
- **Local Authorities** will have to commission or provide convenient recycling services for their residents and commercial customers, and advice and information on how to reduce waste. They will also have to work with their communities to plan and to invest in new collection and reprocessing facilities; and
- **The waste management industry** will have to invest in facilities to recycle and to recover waste, and provide convenient waste services to their customers to recycle and to recover their waste.

The chart below shows how the various stakeholders involved with managing resources can do so in a more sustainable way to ensure that waste is minimised, and materials and products are able to be reused and then easily recycled at the end of their lives or energy recovered.



Stakeholder Involvement through the waste hierarchy



This waste to resources policy forms part of Colchester Borough Council's commitment to play its part in giving community leadership on resource use within the Borough. The Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003 introduced a statutory duty on local authorities in two tier areas, subject to certain exemptions, to have a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) in place.

Colchester Borough Council falls within the exemptions because the authority was categorised as “**excellent**” through its Comprehensive Performance Assessment and also because as an authority we met one of our most recent statutory performance standards for waste which was to recycle 30% of waste in 2006/07.

However, due to our commitment to better resource use and as part of the ongoing Essex county-wide waste management project, the Council is active in the development of a joint, Essex-wide municipal waste management strategy (JMWMS) through the Essex Waste Management Advisory Board, an elected member body. Colchester Borough Council is represented on the board by the Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Environment.

The draft JMWMS for Essex favours an approach led by waste minimisation and high levels of recycling with bio treatment.

Colchester Borough Council in line with the draft joint strategy favours an approach to waste management based on a desire, firstly to reduce the amount of waste produced within the Borough, then secondly to see materials and resources reused as much as possible, with as much as possible of the waste that remains, being recycled and composted, so that the minimum amount possible is sent for disposal. The Council's vision for the service is expanded on further later in this document.

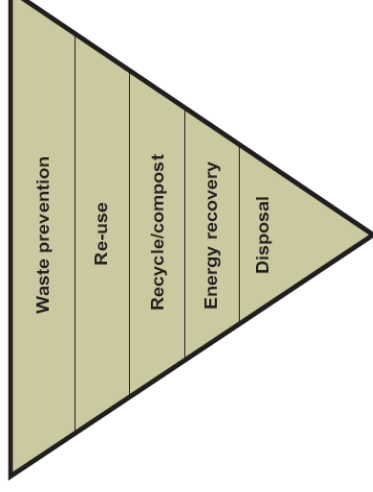
Colchester Borough Council also recognises that providing continuous improvement on its record of waste minimisation, reuse, recycling and composting is an important issue for its customers.



This waste to resources action plan has strong relationships with other key documents that have the same vision for the better use of resources. These are set out below.



The waste hierarchy



Waste prevention sits at the top of the waste hierarchy because it has a direct impact on the avoidance of emissions. Avoiding unnecessary waste, for example excessive packaging, reduces the demand for raw materials that would otherwise have been extracted. Waste prevention is therefore the most important aspect of waste management in terms of greenhouse gas reduction.

Reuse is a way of prolonging the life of resources. There are many ways in which we can reuse things or pass them on for others to use rather than throw them away which achieves similar benefits to those of waste reduction.

Recycling and composting can allow valuable resources to be used again and save energy in the process. Amazingly, recycling an aluminium can requires only 5% of the energy it takes to make new aluminium and each tonne of aluminium recycled saves 11 tonnes of CO₂. In terms of glass the energy saving from recycling one bottle will power a 100 watt light bulb for almost an hour or power a washing machine for 10 minutes.

Energy recovery Recent sharp increases in energy prices, and continuing instability in a number of supplier countries, underline the importance of maximising energy recovery from the portion of waste which cannot be recycled. This means using the most efficient technology for the job, and recovering heat as well as electricity where practicable. The Government's Energy White Paper, published May 2007, places energy from waste in a wider energy policy context. In



relation to Colchester energy recovery would be achieved through partnership with others who would be responsible for the delivery of energy recovery infrastructure.

The main driver nationally for changes in the way waste is managed is the EC Landfill Directive which sets mandatory targets for the reduction of biodegradable waste sent to landfill. The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) is the government's key measure to meet the demands of the European Landfill Directive in England, and it commenced on April 1, 2005.

Landfill allowances have been allocated by the government so that nationally, the UK reaches the targets set by the Landfill Directive for reducing the amount of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill. These Directive targets are to reduce landfilling of biodegradable waste to:

- 75% of 1995 levels by 2010;
- 50% of 1995 levels by 2013; and
- 35% of 1995 levels by 2020.

Financially the treatment plants that provide the alternative to landfill required to meet these new targets and divert biodegradable waste from landfill will be more expensive than current systems. The landfill allowance trading scheme allows for fines to be imposed on waste disposal authorities for every tonne of waste above their allowance that is sent to landfill. The fine is £150 per tonne. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has estimated that waste spending will have to more than double up to 2012/13 nationally from £2bn to £4.2bn to meet the second target year, increasing approximately by 10% each year.

To respond to this challenge local government as a whole recognises that it will need to seek innovative solutions to change behaviour and minimise waste. Authorities will increasingly need to work more closely together to ensure that the systems being introduced to meet the challenge, particularly waste collection and disposal, are efficient and sustainable, and are able to meet the levels of performance required. This process is underway in Essex through the development of a joint strategy and the formation of three Joint Committee's. These Joint Committees will manage the procurement of new treatment plants that will allow LATS targets to be met and provide a sustainable waste system for the future in Essex.



What are we currently doing?

The council collects residual waste (black sacks) on a weekly basis and on a fortnightly basis collects a wide range of recyclables from the kerbside including glass bottles and jars, steel and aluminium cans and foil, newspapers and magazines, grey and brown cardboard, PET and HDPE plastic bottles and textiles. The Council also collects garden waste for composting every other week. The Council also operates a network of 50 'bring sites' where recyclable materials can be deposited. The ranges of materials collected across these sites are glass, cans, paper, textiles, plastics and beverage cartons.

Colchester recycled 18.47% (11,539 tonnes) of all the waste produced by households in the borough in 2006/07 and composted 12.50% (7,784 tonnes) giving an overall recycling rate of 30.97%. This was a slight increase in the recycling rate for 2005/06 of 30.09%. 43,132 tonnes of waste were landfilled. Looking at the impact of waste management on climate change the total amount of Colchester's household waste going to landfill is responsible for 22,127 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents. The total amount of household waste produced in the Borough in 2006/07 was 62,456 tonnes.

The Council promotes home composting as its preferred and the most environmentally sustainable way of dealing with green waste. In 2006 a further 2,659 home compost bins were distributed to residents within the Borough. Figures for the diversion of waste to home composting vary. However an average of 200kg per household per annum is used as a standard multiplier. This means that an extra 532 tonnes of waste was diverted into home composting in 2006. At the present time home composting does not contribute towards recycling targets however it is a major tool for driving down waste.

The collection of garden waste contributes towards the achievement of our overall recycling targets however we would much prefer not to collect it and for it to be managed where it arises. We have calculated the carbon impact of collecting garden waste and the garden waste collection service generates about 110 tonnes of CO₂. The Council is also promoting kitchen composters that can compost all food waste, including cooked food, to complement the promotion of home composters and further reduce waste arisings.

In 2006/07 the Council collected 382 kilograms of waste from each person in the Borough, 9 kilogram's per head less than it did in 2005/06. Using the mid-2006 population estimates for the Borough which showed that the Borough's population was 170,800 we managed to reduce our waste arisings in the Borough by 1,537 tonnes.



What more can we do?

In order to understand how we can improve our performance further and identify materials for recycling not currently being captured, a study of the composition of the waste stream collected at the kerbside was undertaken in March 2007 with a further study carried out in September to account for seasonal variations. This composition study is being carried out for all of the 12 waste collection authorities in Essex.

It is commonly accepted that the types and quantities of waste that households produce is directly related to their socio-economic group and specifically spending power. Similarly, whether there are children in a household and the age of the children will also have a direct effect on quantities and types of waste and levels of recycling and participation in kerbside schemes. In order to reflect this, the ACORN classification system is used which sorts households into five broad categories 1- 5 with 1 the most affluent and 5 the least affluent. The ACORN spread for the Borough of Colchester is set out below:

Table 1. ACORN classifications

| | % |
|------------------------------|-------|
| ACORN 1 'Affluent achievers' | 33.83 |
| ACORN 2 'Urban prosperity' | 9.19 |
| ACORN 3 'Comfortably off' | 33.42 |
| ACORN 4 'Moderate means' | 5.68 |
| ACORN 5 'Hard pressed' | 16.16 |
| Unclassified | 1.71 |

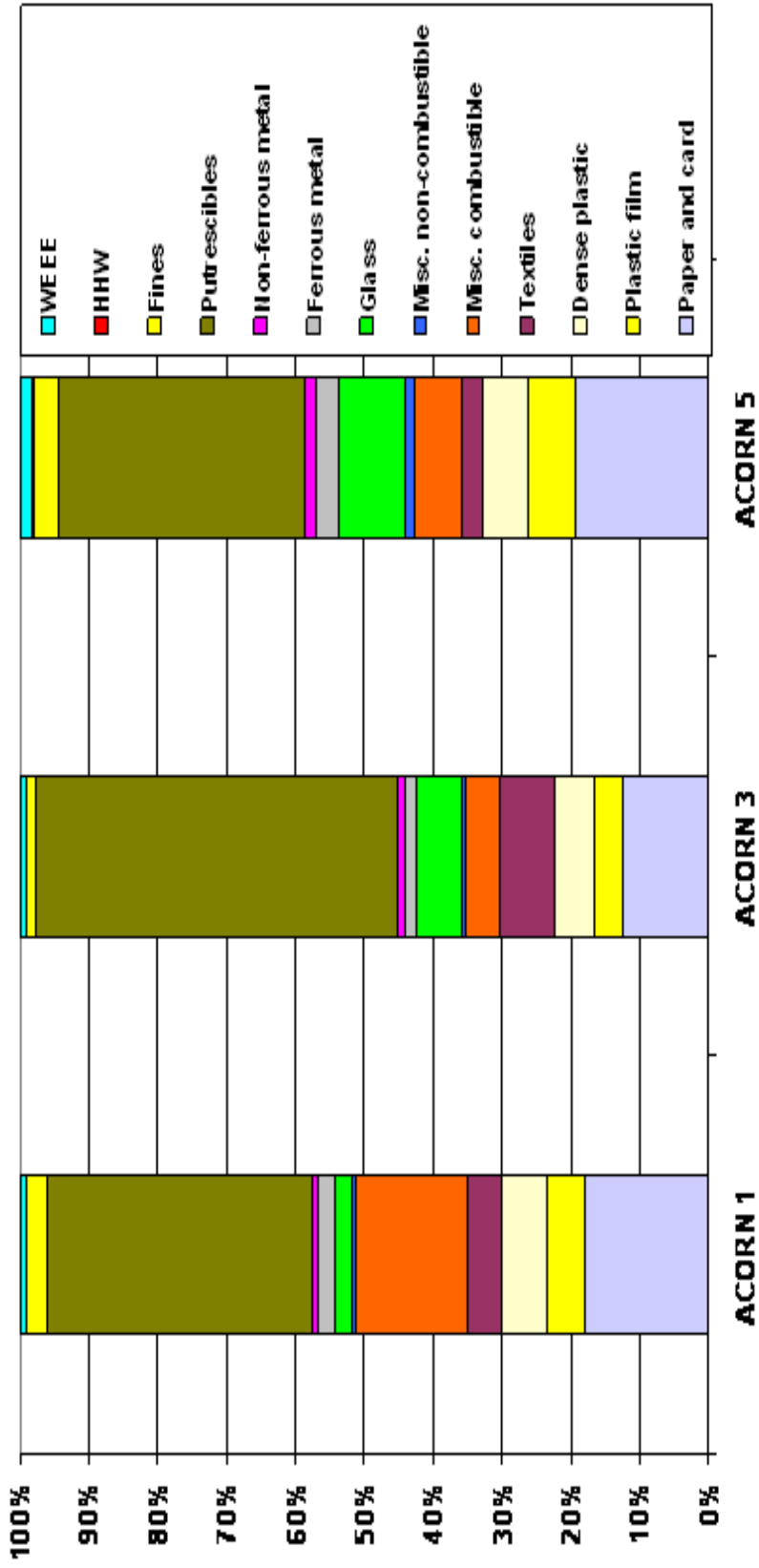
For the sampling process a street from the three dominant categories was selected and each street had its residual waste and recyclables collected. These were then sorted and classified into various categories.

The results from the study show that many households within the Borough are placing materials that could be recycled into their black sacks through the kerbside scheme operated in the Borough. Concentrations of recyclables within the black sacks varied across the Acorn groups. Acorn 1 residents had the lowest recyclable proportion of 20.4% which



equates to 2.23kg/hh/wk. For Acorn 3 households a third, 32.6% of the materials placed in the black sack were recyclable and for Acorn 5 households this rises to 40%. The table below shows the percentages of the various fractions of materials found in the residual waste black sacks of Acorn groups 1, 3 and 5.

Table 2. Composition of the Residual Waste stream for ACORNS 1, 3 AND 5.



By looking at table 2 it can be seen that putrescible waste forms the largest category in all the samples. Most residents have access to a fortnightly collection of green waste which covers garden clippings. Very low levels of garden waste were present in the residual waste of Acorn 1 households where nearly all the putrescible waste was derived from food waste. In Acorn 3 and 5 areas there was however a significant quantity of garden waste in the residual sacks accounting for 5.8% and 6.6% of the total respectively. Table 3 below sets out the percentage fractions of putrescible waste found in black sacks.

Table 3. Composition of the Putrescible Content of the Residual Waste

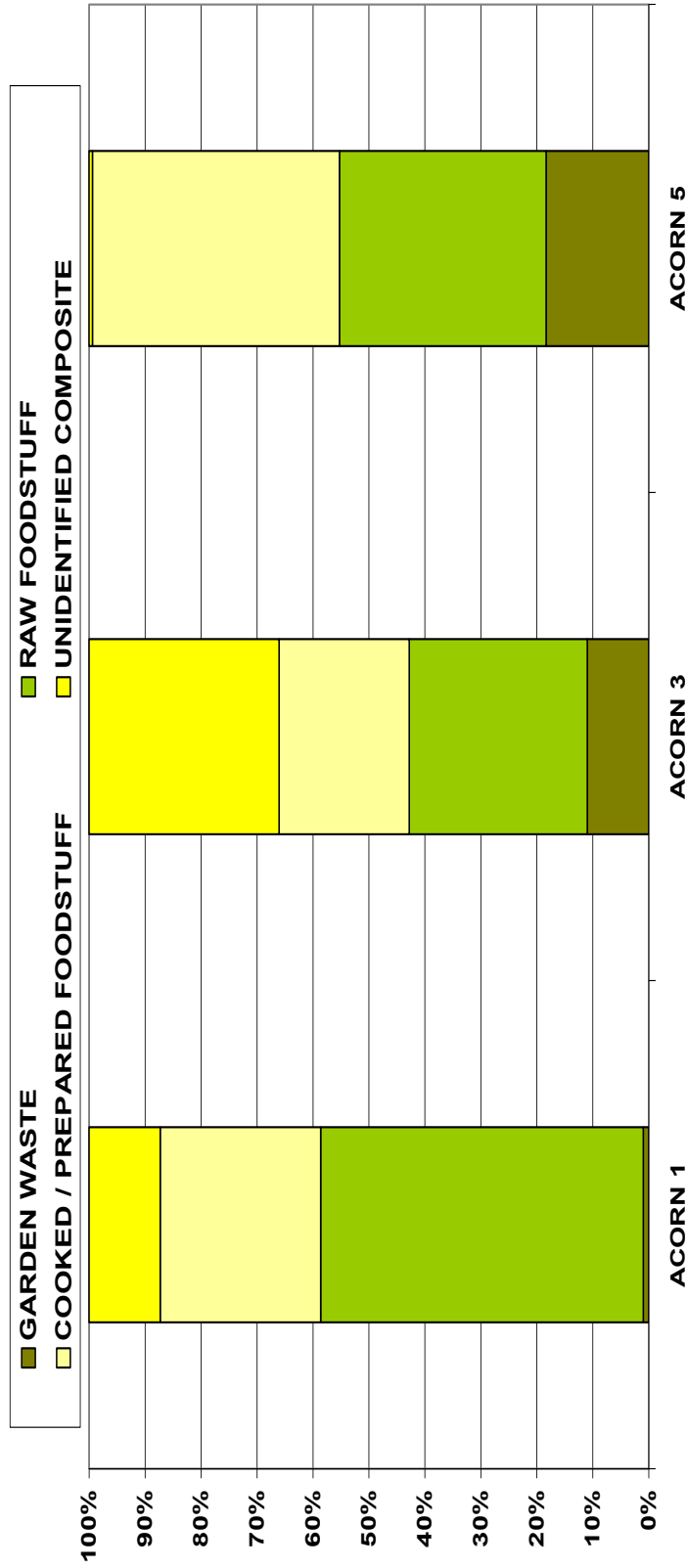


Table 3 shows that a major element of the putrescible waste found in the black sack is food waste both raw and cooked. From the sampling of residual waste it has been identified that 17.4% of the content of the black sack across Acorn groups 1, 3 and 5 is raw food waste. Cooked food waste makes up 13% of the black sack. Both of these combined means that **30.4% of residual waste found in the black sack is food waste.**

Across the Borough households will vary in the amount of food waste thrown away but in the sample an average of 1.62 kilograms of raw food waste per household per week was put into the black sack, along with 1.2 kilograms of cooked food waste. Combined this equates to an average across the sample of 2.82 kilograms of food waste per household per week.

When we throw food away, we also waste all the carbon generated as it was produced, processed, transported and stored. This is particularly important given that the whole food supply chain accounts for around 20% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. We could make carbon savings equivalent to taking an estimated 1 in 5 cars off the road if we avoided throwing away all the food that we could have eaten.

Apart from damage to the environment, throwing away food that could have been eaten is also a considerable waste of money. Figures produced by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) suggest that **a typical household throws away between £250-£400 worth of food a year that could have been eaten.** Not only have we paid for the food we also pay for its collection and disposal, through council tax.

Paper and card was the second highest fraction in the black sacks. Acorn 5 households had the highest amount of paper and card in their black sack at 19.4%. Across all the households sampled an average of **76% of all paper and card in the black sack could have been recycled.**

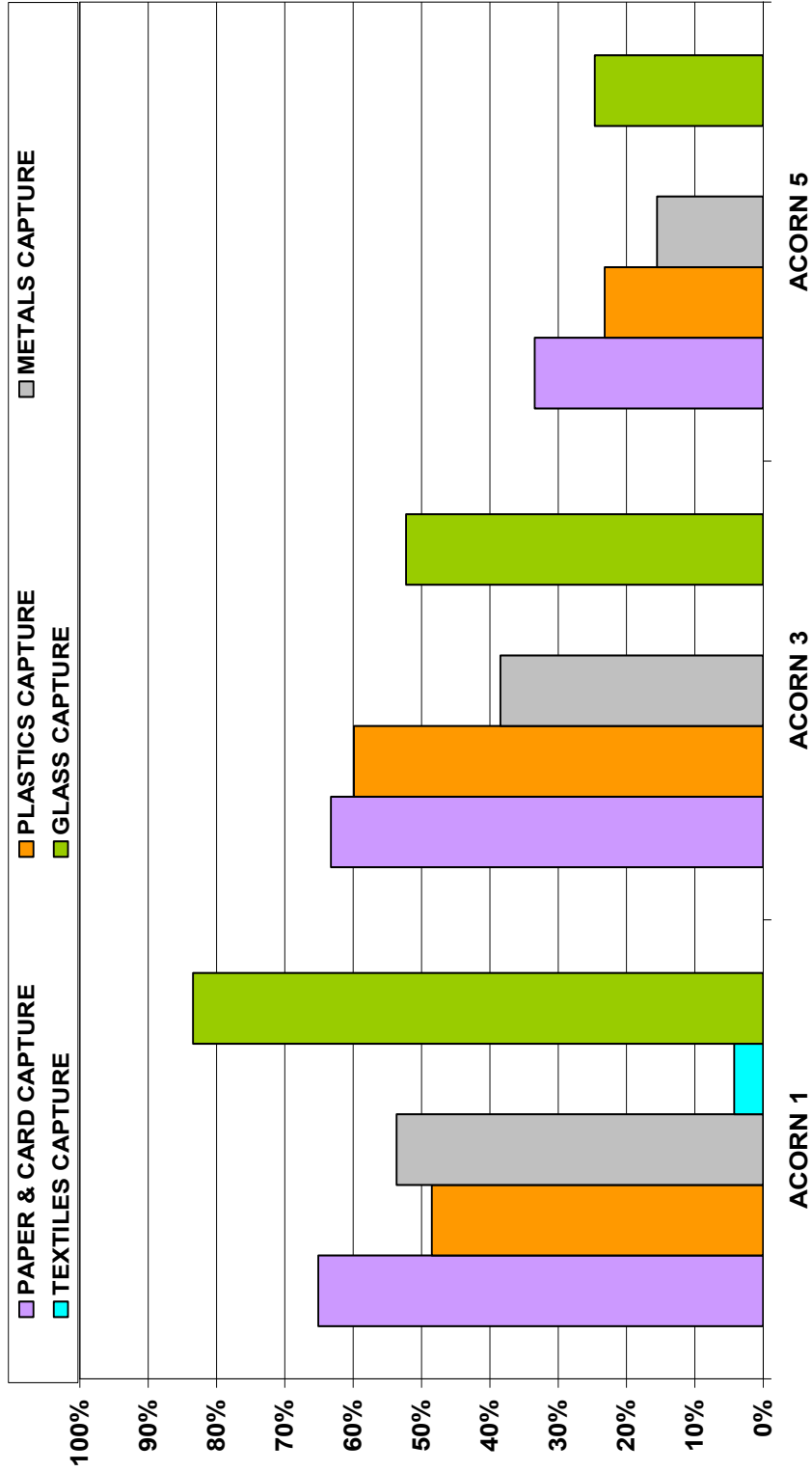
The situation for cans in Acorn's 3 and 5 shows that **86% of all ferrous and non ferrous cans in the black sack could have been recycled** by being placed in the green box collected at the kerbside. The figure for Acorn 1 households was 44%.

Glass is the other material that is collected in the green box. The amounts of glass found in the black sacks varied from 2.4% for Acorn 1 to 9.5% for Acorn 5. **Between 92.8% (Acorn 1) and 99.8% (Acorn 5) of the glass in the black sacks could have been recycled.**



Table 4 below shows the current capture rates for all the dry recyclable materials surveyed being collected at the kerbside within the sample. Capture rate is the quantity of materials put out for collection in the kerbside scheme compared to the total amount of that material that was available to be recycled.

Table 4. Capture Rates for Recyclable Materials in Colchester



By looking at the results of the survey we believe that small changes in behaviour could bring great results in the amount of waste that is being recycled rather than these valuable resources ending up in landfill. By achieving a greater number of households placing the core materials such as paper, card, glass, cans and plastics out for the recycling collection we could dramatically improve the quantity of material being recycled and reduce the amount of valuable resource being dumped in landfill.

Evidence of what can be achieved was seen by the results of the Rubbish Recyclers project conducted by the Council's Strategic Waste team in partnership with 5 households in the Borough who admitted that they were rubbish at recycling. The six week programme took place between April and June 2007.

At the start of the six weeks, each of the households waste was audited which showed that they were producing a combined weight of residual waste going into their black sacks of 67.1 kilograms. At the end of the programme the waste was audited again and only 6.4 kilograms of waste was going into their black sacks and into landfill, a reduction of 90.5%.

Also at the start of the programme only 5.1% of their waste was being diverted from landfill via the recycling of some glass. By the end of the six weeks 43.5% of their waste was being recycled and 39.4% of their waste was being composted at home. This gave a total diversion figure of 82.9% which was previously going into black sacks and into landfill.

These rubbish recyclers have become not only accomplished recyclers and composters but also committed advocates, enthusiastically helping spread the 3Rs message by word of mouth to friends, relatives, colleagues and other Colchester residents.

You can find out more about the experiences and activities of the five households who took part in the programme at www.colchester.gov.uk/rubbishrecyclers



Targets

In April 2007, the Government set performance standards on recycling and composting for all local authorities for the year 2007/08, setting a minimum performance standard of 20% across the country. These are the final set of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for waste. The Council's last BVPI target for waste was set for 2005/06 to recycle 30% which was achieved.

The Government is developing proposals for local authority waste performance indicators to be included in the new performance framework. The main feature of the new framework will be a set of national outcomes and 200 mandatory indicators, set by central government and to be announced in conjunction with the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007. Every local area – led by the local authority – will have to report against all 200 indicators and agree up to 35 of these as “local improvement targets”.

The indicators will monitor local authorities' contributions to an overall waste outcome that leads towards sustainable management of waste in England. The proposed indicators focus on **the amounts of municipal and household waste produced, recycled and landfilled**. It is envisaged that one focus for local improvement targets will be local authorities' performance on the **average amount of household waste per person that is not reused, recycled or composted**. This would measure an authority's achievements in both reducing waste and in increasing reuse, recycling and composting of the waste that is produced. The final agreed performance package will be published later in 2007.

In the longer-term, the Government is considering developing a **greenhouse gas emissions performance indicator for local authority performance on waste**. This would reflect total greenhouse gas emissions from a local authority's waste management activity and fit within the new performance framework.



The Government has set out in its waste strategy new national targets, which are set out in the table 5 below.

Table 5. Waste Strategy for England 2007 Targets

| | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Household waste after re-use, recycling and composting (million tonnes-mt) (percentage reduction from 22.2 mt in 2000) <i>equivalent per person figures (percentage reduction from 450kg per head in 2000)</i> | 18.6 mt (16%) 370 kg (18%) | 15.8 mt (29%) 310 kg (32%) | 14.3 mt (35%) 270 kg (40%) | 12.2 mt (45%) 225 kg (50%) |
| Household re-use, recycling and composting | 27% | 40% | 45% | 50% |
| Municipal waste recovery⁷⁸ | 38% | 53% | 67% | 75% |
| Source: Defra | | | | |

Colchester Borough Council has regard to the newly developed Local Area Agreement (LAA) within Essex and the targets within it that reflect on the vision of the waste to resources policy.

This Local Area Agreement has been made between the Government and the Essex Partnership of public, private and third sector organisations to serve the overarching vision of the Essex Strategy:

"To support Essex people to liberate their potential to enjoy the best quality of life in Britain "

Within the LAA are agreed performance targets and action plans for the issues that, over the next three years, will be the most important and urgent in turning that vision into reality.

This waste to resources policy and the targets that relate to it are detailed within the Our World section of the LAA.



OUR WORLD

We want to promote sustainability and protect the county's physical environment. Achieving this will involve:

- Protecting the environment by reducing our domestic, business and public sector carbon footprint
- Reducing, reusing and recycling waste
- Managing the environment
- Using our natural resources efficiently

The targets within the LAA are based around the new national indicators effective from April 2008 which replace the previous Best Value Performance Indicators. The targets for Colchester in relation to waste over the period of LAA 2 are set out below.

| | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Recycling rate | 21.00% | 22.00% | 26.00% |
| Composting Rate | 13.00% | 13.00% | 14.00% |
| Total Diversion (NI192) | 34.00% | 35.00% | 40.00% |

Residual waste per Household Kg (NI191) 583 570 508



Objectives

Behaviour change Increased opportunities Joint working

To ensure that

- Less waste is produced by everyone
- There is an active reuse culture
- Home composting is ‘the norm’
- Being able to recycle is easy for everyone
- More waste is recycled and composted than sent to landfill
- The collection service is high quality
- There is high customer satisfaction with the service

 reduce  reuse  recycle for Colchester



Waste and recycling service peer review

Colchester Borough Council
15- 17 January 2008

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Executive summary and key recommendations

Summary

Colchester Borough Council (CBC) has set itself an ambition to be the *Cleanest and Greenest Borough in the country*. This is one of three corporate objectives to deliver the vision for the borough to develop as a prestigious regional centre. Developing the waste management, recycling and street cleansing services will make a vital contribution to this overall ambition. The service is keen to ensure long term sustainable improvement and there is a set of strategies and policy frameworks in place to deliver these aspirations.

CBC is committed to organisational learning to improve services to the community. The review team found a number of examples of service improvement through learning from pilot schemes, and difficult experiences have been utilised to shape future plans. Frontline staff are committed to further improvements and performance against BVPIs has improved.

The service is working successfully with key stakeholders, there is a shared long term vision with the county, and improvements in data management are helping to inform the decision making process. The corporate drive for excellence in customer service has been utilised to raise service standards and CBC works with the Environment Agency and other authorities to influence thinking in addressing future challenges. The joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (MWMS) is in place and members are keen to ensure greater alignment between policy and service delivery.

A number of key building blocks are in place in terms of positioning the service for the future, for example, kerbside analysis tool (KAT) modelling and ECO schools. The service maintains good relationships with contractors and commercial waste operators and improved links between street care and the waste management service auger well for further improvement. The Braintree procurement hub is an exemplar of good practice, the additional resources made available to the waste management service and the council's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration show the corporate commitment to improvement in this area.

However, the service faces a number of challenges in achieving its aspirations. Stronger political leadership is required to provide long term clarity and direction for the service. There is a need to take hard decisions and members need to address the strategic policy issues that impact on the ability of the service to plan for the future. Greater engagement of all members through the Scrutiny process could result in more cross party working to resolve contentious issues, for the long term benefit of the community.

The review team were concerned that existing resources did not match CBC ambitions and could impact on the ability of the service to deliver sustainable improvement. The Improvement Plan needs a full financial evaluation and the service strategy needs an integrated financial framework which includes risk management, procurement options and income streams. Costs will rise and developing more service delivery options with like authorities may be the most effective method of ensuring value for money.

There are more opportunities for cross team working on performance management and ensuring clearer links between strategy, policy development and service delivery. Working with external stakeholders to act as ambassadors for what the service wants to achieve is critical, given the need to educate the community and change behaviour.

The Waste management services need to ensure stronger links with other regulatory services in CBC and take a lead role in championing good practice across the council to maximise sustainable resource management. Policy and practice need to promote sustainability. Linking a corporate waste minimisation plan to the draft Nottingham strategy would ensure the waste hierarchy guides the acquisition and consumption of goods, whether they are provided directly or commissioned by the council.

In commissioning the peer review, the service demonstrated a desire critically to evaluate its performance and to keep on track with the journey of continuous improvement. However, if it is to achieve its ambitions, it now needs to tackle a number of critical issues that are fundamental to success. These are expanded under the themes of the benchmark of the 'ideal waste service' that the review team used to assess the service, and to present the key messages, at the end of the review.

Key Recommendations

The recommendations of the peer review team are set out under the headings of the IDeA benchmark of the 'ideal' waste service.

Corporate processes

- Members need to provide strategic policy direction to address barriers to service improvement including;
 - focussing on political leadership rather than operational detail
 - more cross party work to engage all members in policy and service development
 - developing more work streams with other authorities to maximise economies of scale and effective use of resourcesThis will ensure that all key stakeholders are engaged at appropriate levels and that the council is seen as a leading authority in the area
- Implement an integrated financial framework, including a full medium to long term evaluation of the Improvement Plan to ensure the service reflects the council's strategic objectives, and that it can adequately respond to changing circumstances.

Managing waste - the service provider role

- Review and clarify the alignment between all strategies, service plans and other policy documents. This will ensure that policy development work is informed by service delivery, that residents are fully informed of any changes to the service, and that the rationale for these changes are fully understood by all
- Ensure there is a holistic, crosscutting approach to develop a better understanding of customer participation and behaviour. This could include;
 - making more explicit the ways residents can contribute to service development
 - interrogating data to identify patterns of where the recycling service is improving and barriers to improvement
 - applying the learning from pilot schemes and providing feedback to participants
 - exploring opportunities to work with commercial and non household waste
 - ensuring that staff suggestions for improvements are acted uponThis will assist CBC to review and develop its services to accommodate new requirements in a fast changing environment.

Managing waste - the community leadership role

- In order to move beyond re-use and recycle processes CBC needs to;
 - deal with the difficult decisions now to ensure policies are in place to address the challenges facing the service in the near future
 - encourage members to increase their visibility as champions for the service within their communities
 - engage with a wider spectrum of community groups, service users' panels and the voluntary sector to better co-ordinate efforts to change resident's behaviour
 - work with the other public service bodies to ensure the waste hierarchy is shaping their approach to the acquisition and consumption of goods and services

Ultimately this will make a significant contribution to Colchester being the cleanest and greenest borough in the country.

Positioning waste for the future

- Political leaders within the council need to provide long term clarity and direction to ensure the future sustainability of the service. This includes;
 - adequately resourcing the service to aid medium and longer term planning
 - focusing on the critical step changes through the delivery of the strategy which pose the highest risk to service improvement
 - exploring options for partnership working and joint procurement with a range of authorities
 - aligning the methods of collection to achieve your strategic objectives and those of the Waste Disposal authority
 - considering proposals for waste minimisation that go beyond the waste education work at present, perhaps by introducing incentive schemes.

Managing the councils own waste

- CBC needs to rise to the challenge of reducing its own waste production across all services and buildings and educating other departments on sustainability issues. This can be achieved by;
 - linking the Nottingham Strategy to a corporate waste minimisation implementation plan
 - ensuring stronger links with other regulatory services within the council
 - greater alignment between all corporate plans and strategies to ensure a joined up approach.

This will ensure the service is acting as an exemplar of good practice across the council and with its external partners.

Report

Background

1. Colchester Borough Council commissioned this peer review as part of the Building Capacity East programme. A peer review is designed to help an authority assess its current achievements and its capacity to change. It is not an inspection, it offers a supportive approach, undertaken by friends, albeit 'critical friends,' and its intention is to help a council identify its current strengths as much as what it needs to improve.
2. The benchmark of the 'ideal' waste service was used to provide the basis for this assessment.

The Benchmark Framework;

| Themes | 1. Corporate Processes | 2. Managing Waste | 3. Positioning waste for the future | 4. Managing the council's own waste |
|----------|------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Elements | | 2.1 The service provider role 2.2 The community leadership role | | |

This Benchmark was developed as a description of how the 'ideal' local authority delivers the 'ideal' waste management service. It describes the attitudes, relationships and structures that are displayed by the ideal local authority. It sets the ultimate standard for the delivery of waste management. The peer review covered the Waste and Recycling service within the context of the whole council.

3. The members of the peer review team were:
 - Councillor Mike Carver, East Hertfordshire District council, Executive member for Planning, Policy and Transport
 - Peter Jones, Deputy Chief Executive, Gloucestershire County council
 - Des Waters, Head of Public Realm, London Borough of Southwark
 - Carmel Gallagher, Review Manager, IDeA
4. The programme for the visit was organised in advance and included a variety of activities designed to enable members of the peer review team to meet and talk to a spectrum of internal and external stakeholders. Examples of activities the team undertook were:
 - Discussions with the political leadership, senior management of the council and of the service.
 - Discussions with Portfolio members, opposition group leaders and Chairs of the relevant Scrutiny Committees.
 - Workshops for a cross section of frontline staff and an overview tour of the depot.

- Meetings with other council officers to enhance the team's understanding of issues within the self assessment.
 - Discussions with key stakeholders, including senior managers from neighbouring local authorities, Cleanest and Greenest Community Panel and the voluntary sector.
 - Pre-reading of materials produced by the council, prior to the on-site working.
5. The team was on site between 15th and 17th January 2008. The programme for the three days was extremely well organised and co-ordinated and the team received excellent support and co-operation from everyone that they met. The review team was very appreciative of the warm welcome and excellent hospitality provided by the council during their stay, and would like to thank all involved for their valuable contributions throughout the process.
6. The feedback given to the council on the last day of the review gave an overview of the key messages. This report builds on the initial findings and gives a detailed account of the review structured around the benchmark of the 'ideal waste service'.

Context

7. CBC is the sixth largest borough in England, situated on the border between Essex and Suffolk and 54 miles north east of London. It has a population of 170,800 people housed in approximately 71,078 properties. The main urban centres of population are Colchester, Stanway, Wivenhoe, West Mersea and Tiptree. There are some 3,000 multi-occupancy properties in the Borough.
8. The modern borough of Colchester has a large rural hinterland, many historic buildings, attractive open spaces, and a stretch of coastline at Mersea and Wivenhoe. Colchester with a population of 95,000 is Britain's oldest recorded town and was its first capital. It is 45 minutes by train from the City of London and Stansted airport. The town is strategically positioned on the A12 and is close to the Haven ports of Harwich and Felixstowe.
9. The eastern region is predicted to grow faster than any other region over the next 15 years. Colchester has been earmarked to grow sustainably in response to this with 17,000 new homes and 14,000 jobs by 2021. Much of this growth is around the 4 regeneration projects; North Colchester, the Garrison, St Botolphs Quarter and East Colchester. There has been a change in the structure and type of employment with a move away from manufacturing and agriculture towards the service industry which accounted for 79.9% of jobs in 2001.
10. The area is relatively affluent, ranking 224 out of 354 districts and unemployment is low. However, there are pockets of deprivation: three wards have small areas in the top 20% most deprived in the country. There are small pockets of serious deprivation in Colchester. 5% of people in the borough live in seriously deprived small areas (L-SOAs). (Indices of Deprivation, 2007). A third of local people live in the rural villages and 3.8% of residents are of black or minority ethnic origin. Colchester's educational and training institutions include high performing schools, a technology college, and a university. It is also a garrison town and has been a major military centre since the first millennium. More than 5 million people visit Colchester every year bringing in £173.3 million a year.
11. The council elects 60 members in 27 wards. The council adopted a Cabinet and Leader model in 2000, which has been regularly revised since then. There are 32 Conservative, 19 Liberal Democrat, 6 Labour and 3 Independent councillors. The Conservatives formed a majority administration in July 2007 and have held all the Cabinet/portfolio seats since 2004 when they formed a minority administration. Elections are by thirds. The leader of the council is Cllr Robert Davidson and the Cabinet is made up of 8 portfolio holders. Cllr Christopher Arnold is the portfolio holder for culture and the environment and Cllr Roger Buston is the portfolio holder for the street services portfolio.
12. The executive management team, termed EMT, includes the Chief Executive and three Executive Directors, but most strategic decisions are taken by the Senior Management Team, which includes the Heads of Service (HoS). The Head of Street and Leisure Services leads on operational matters, the Head of Housing and Environmental Policy leads on waste policy, sustainability and carbon reduction measures.

Corporate processes

Strengths

- CBC has an ambitious policy of being the '*Cleanest and Greenest Borough in the country*' and there is a good set of policy frameworks in place to support this
- Waste to Resources draft policy paper is a sound basis for the next steps forward
- The service is keen to ensure long term sustainability rather than quick wins
- CBC is moving forward positively to introduce a performance reward scheme due 2008
- The service has contributed to the Local Development Framework (LDF)

Areas for consideration

- Members need to focus and lead at the strategic level
- A more effective Scrutiny process is required, given the complexity of the proposed policies
- There appear to be gaps between policy development and operational delivery
- The service strategy needs an integrated financial framework which includes risk management, procurement options and income streams
- The Improvement Plan needs a full financial evaluation together with SMART targets
- CBC needs to evaluate options for more shared service delivery, procurement and policy development with like authorities to ensure value for money

13. CBC is an ambitious authority with a long term vision to make the Borough a prestigious regional centre. The three corporate objectives are;

- To promote economic prosperity, tackle deprivation and foster social inclusion
- To ensure the quality of life expected of a prestigious regional centre
- To be the cleanest and greenest borough in the country.

The Waste and recycling service are determined to play a key role in helping to deliver these objectives and there is a good set of policy frameworks in place. The Strategic Plan 2006-2009 identifies the immediate priorities to deliver the vision for the Borough. There is an integrated service planning process to ensure that service priorities reflect the corporate objectives. The Sustainable Community Strategy, Colchester 2020 (the local strategic partnership) has an overarching priority of carbon reduction and building sustainability into all partners' priorities. The corporate drive for excellence in customer service has supported staff to develop new skills and good ideas on how to link the corporate vision to their role.

14. The Waste to Resources draft policy paper provides a vehicle to ensure national priorities are widely understood and that options for the future are debated and explored. The service is committed to minimising waste and to working in partnership to achieve this objective. Staff are keen to explore new ways of doing things and are committed to finding innovative ways of educating the public to keep the borough clean and green.

15. CBC has invested in the service to ensure sustainable improvement in performance. The confidence of staff has been impacted by previous problems and there is a determination to ensure long term sustainability, rather than quick wins. The review team were impressed by the managerial commitment to learn from experience and to work collaboratively for continuous improvement. CBC has plans to corporately introduce performance related pay, staff in the Waste and recycling service are happy to support this initiative to ensure that good performance is recognised.

16. The service has contributed to the LDF which is a new approach to spatial planning that will set an overarching framework for the borough in the future. This has the potential to make sure that planning policies for waste are followed through with developers and to guarantee that developments are designed and built to facilitate sustainable waste management.
17. Stronger political leadership is required on strategic policy issues to provide long term clarity and direction for the service. Some difficult decisions will be tested by conflicting priorities, for example, changing the doorstep collection method. However failure to address these challenges, in a timely manner, will impact on the achievement of continuous improvement. Given the high profile of the service within the community and the increased national interest in waste and sustainability issues, it is critical to secure wider commitment to the delivery of ambitions and key strategies.
18. The Scrutiny process needs to be more robust to ensure all members are well informed and that all the resources of the organisation are engaged in finding solutions to complex issues, for the benefit of the wider community. It is important that all stakeholders explore the challenges facing the service in a way that enables honest discussion and sharing of ideas. This would help the service to be more outward facing, overcome gaps in knowledge and avoid misunderstanding, as was clearly evident to the peer review team, when speaking with some stakeholders.
19. There are gaps between policy development and operational service delivery; this is acknowledged within the service, and at a corporate level. This represents missed opportunities at the operational stage and would be of particular benefit to frontline staff. Policy development and educational initiatives could be refined using the knowledge of collection crews. The review team were also concerned about missed opportunities to integrate policy at a strategic level, for example shaping the Local Area Agreement. There is more to do to link the MWMS to the wider council agenda, however in the time available it was not possible to explore this in greater detail.
20. The team found evidence that resources do not match the current aspirations of the service. The service strategy needs an integrated financial framework which includes risk management, procurement options and income streams. Increases in population are predicted, and changes in demography which impact on costs, are scenarios that need to be costed and prepared for. The Improvement Plan, **which at the time of the review was at an early draft stage**, needs a full financial evaluation together with SMART targets. This will ensure that resource allocation is flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances, without endangering priorities. This is another example of where hard decisions need to be taken in the light of resources available, and the level of service the authority wishes to provide.
21. There are more opportunities for shared service delivery, procurement and policy development work with like authorities to ensure value for money and to optimise resources. This will require political will and the investment to build relationships, however the return could yield rich dividends. The review team were of the view that the service leadership could be more proactive in working with the county (and with other collection authorities) to ensure more joined up approaches to waste management in the future. Members have a key role in developing a shared understanding to facilitate more effective partnership working, for the benefit of all.

Managing waste - the service provider role

Strengths

- Frontline staff are well motivated and committed to improvement
- Positive organisational learning through experience, bulletin board, Hub etc
- Operational teams understand what they have to deliver
- Performance against BVPIs is improving
- Willing to innovate, successful pilot schemes, with improvements in promotional activities.

Areas for consideration

- Links between strategy, operational and service delivery are not always clear
- Need for more systematic and shared performance management
- Lack of follow through from pilot work
- The service needs to exploit non municipal waste from SMEs
- More work to do on understanding behaviour and customer profiles
- Staff suggestion scheme - make it real.

22. The review team were impressed by the commitment of staff within the service. Morale is good, frontline staff are knowledgeable about their contribution to service improvement and keen to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction. CBC is committed to reducing the amount of household waste as a key part of its approach to service planning, this decreased by 2.30% in the last year and by 2.49% in 2005/06. The service is currently achieving recycling rates in excess of 30% which places CBC among the higher performing authorities in Essex. The MWMS includes a commitment to increase recycling to 60% across all Essex authorities, which exceeds the current government target.

23. The approach to organisational learning is a model of good practice which other authorities are learning from. There are excellent arrangements for joint working with the Customer Service Centre. The service is developing intelligence about customer needs and using this to implement changes where appropriate. Staff are self monitoring and report concerns which are fed through to the Customer Service Centre. The bulletin board is used to feed back operational problems e.g. putting notices on incorrectly presented waste, this is a good example where operational experience has led to service improvements.

24. There is significant evidence that CBC provides a good level of service for the community and operational teams understand what they have to deliver. Residents are provided with a weekly collection service, via black plastic sacks collected on the boundary of their property. Provision is made for larger, multi occupancy properties through large wheelie bins and assisted collections are made by arrangement. 98% of the households in the borough are offered a weekly kerbside sorted dry recyclables collection at the kerbside, a 55 litre reusable box is provided by the council. Residents are asked to place mixed cans, glass bottles and jars and aluminium foil in these receptacles. Paper cardboard is collected bundled or contained in carrier bags. Plastic similarly.

25. Performance against BVPIs is improving, although this has plateaued recently as other authorities have significantly improved their performance. CBC promotes a full range of waste minimisation measures, there are 49 bring sites where residents can take their recyclable materials. These bring sites are almost all situated in locations accessible to the public, and there are 113 recycling banks distributed across the sites where residents can

deposit newspapers and magazines, cans, plastic bottles, green glass, brown glass, clear glass, books, shoes, textiles and beverage containers.

26. The service is willing to innovate, learn from a number of different approaches and CBC has run a number of promotional activities designed to educate the public on good practice in recycling. The review team were impressed by the quality of publicity and the range of communication channels designed to increase participation levels in recycling services.
27. However the links between strategy, operational and service delivery were not always clear to the review team. Operational questions on changing to clear sacks remain unanswered and there is a need for more alignment between the MWMS, for example, and mechanisms to deliver the required outcomes. There is evidence of work to support key objectives and a number of good ideas were articulated to the team, for example, closer working between street scene and policy development, but these need to be brought together in a holistic manner.
28. There is a need for a more systematic and shared approach to performance management. The monthly performance report is not discussed within teams and there are opportunities to develop more 'real time' service information. This is not just about monitoring data and reviewing trends but about creating opportunities for managers to sit together and explore patterns, the impact of changes in services as well exploring the implications of future plans for all strands of activity.
29. The review team found evidence of a lack of follow through from pilot work. The reasons for this are not always understood by stakeholders, this can lead to frustration and misinformation about what the service is really committed to. It may be appropriate to test any new scheme for longevity and to develop a communication strategy to ensure the public are kept informed of the rationale for particular actions as a result of pilot work. This is particularly important given the stated desire to educate public opinion and change behaviour.
30. The service needs to engage more with Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to exploit opportunities from non municipal waste. This is an important part of the community and it will provide a positive image of the service if CBC can provide a range of solutions for enquiries. This could be another means to promote good practice as well as a potential income stream. There are opportunities to learn about the needs of the wider communities and to consider these in service development plans. Although there may not be immediate returns from this work, it could in the long term, contribute to waste minimisation, in line with priorities.
31. There is more to do on understanding behaviour and customer profiles. Data analysis needs to be updated and interrogated to identify patterns of where the recycling service is improving and barriers to improvement. There are opportunities to measure and monitor the impact of the new interventions, for example the clear sacks. The key areas that need to be explored are; behaviour change, home composting, collection containers and KAT modelling.
32. Whilst there is a staff suggestion scheme in place, there is a perception that not all ideas for service improvement are fed through the system. There are opportunities for policy development staff to check out new plans and approaches before implementation, frontline staff have practical experience of what will work and customer intelligence to inform service delivery. Building on staff suggestions is also an important method of motivating staff and engaging everyone in all aspects of service improvement.

Managing waste - the Community Leadership role

Strengths

- Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (MWMS) in place and political commitment to the Area Committee structure.
- Shared long term vision with County.
- Members are driving for better alignment between policy and delivery within the council.
- The council is improving its data and knowledge of the service to inform decision making.

Areas for consideration

- The status quo is not a sustainable option to achieve service aspirations.
- CBC needs to engage and learn from services users' panel, voluntary sector and other community groups to assist in behavioural change.
- Deliver the waste hierarchy with other public bodies and their staff to act as ambassadors

33. The joint MWMS is in place and there is political commitment to the Area Committee structure. The strategy was developed as a result of an extensive consultation process and input from a range of stakeholders. It is in line with DEFRA guidance and is consistent with the regional strategy for waste.

34. CBC has a shared long term vision with Essex County Council (ECC) for the waste and recycling service. There are good relationships both at member and officer level and one of the Area Committees is chaired by CBC. The service makes a positive contribution to joint policy development and CBC is supportive of a number of ECC policies, e.g. no incineration. This has the potential to support further partnership working and ensure efficiency and consistency of approach.

35. Members are keen to ensure better alignment between policy and service delivery within the service. There is strong political support for the customer excellence project which has the potential to drive up service standards across the council. Staff in the Waste and recycling service now attend corporate induction programmes and customer excellence training.

36. CBC is improving its data and knowledge of the service to inform decision making. Information from the kerbside analysis tool (KAT) and social and economic profiling data is used to explore barriers to recycling and to bring all aspects of the service together. The policy to reduce the amount of waste collected has resulted in improvement, despite population increases.

37. The status quo is not a sustainable option to achieve service aspirations and the long term ambition of the council. Despite recent improvement, the service is facing a number of challenges and hard decisions need to be taken to ensure sustainable improvement. The Improvement Plan sets out a number of options to achieve step change in performance, however there was little political consensus or support for changes to collection methods. Feedback to the team indicated the service needed to be more proactive, there is a view that other Essex DCs were more forward looking, and the BVPI data supports the fact that similar authorities are improving at a faster pace than CBC. Using task and finish groups to explore new policies or approaches to service delivery could lead to consensus and greater engagement across all parties.

38. The service needs to systematically engage and learn from services users, voluntary sector and other community groups to assist in behavioural change. CBC needs to understand the importance of an 'up stream' approach and the contribution that other stakeholders can make in planning for the future. There is a need to reinvigorate the service users panel and identify more community champions as advocates for what needs to be achieved. There may be opportunities to commission work through the voluntary sector and members have a vital role in 'selling' new initiatives to residents. A higher profile for members as champions of waste minimisation, especially for new initiatives would help to develop understanding and support, internally and externally. The service also needs to feedback consistently on outcomes and progress, to maintain the commitment and ongoing support from the community.
39. The review considered there were further opportunities to deliver the waste hierarchy with other public bodies and their staff. The NHS, Police, College and the Garrison are major local employers and there are opportunities to utilise these as partners and as routes into the wider community. They could act as ambassadors for new ideas, promote mechanisms for service improvement and provide rich intelligence to aid overall improvement. Further work with schools and ECC on waste minimisation could be a conduit to families and perhaps become an income stream for schools.

Positioning waste for the future

Strengths

- Service leadership is committed to sustainable improvement – no quick fixes
- KAT modelling, collaborative working, Eco schools and organisational learning are important building blocks for the future
- Satisfactory relationships with contractors

Areas for consideration

- Political leadership needs to provide long term clarity and direction
- Resources currently do not match ambition
- Focus on the critical step changes through the delivery of the strategy

40. The service leadership is committed to sustainable improvement and are working to make this a reality. Forward plans are in place that reflects corporate priorities and linked to service needs, staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and how this contributes to strategic objectives. The Improvement Plan builds towards a common end and there has been collaborative working to produce plans and strategies. The waste management facilities have been improved and there are plans for further upgrade work.

41. KAT modelling, collaborative working and organisational learning are important building blocks for the future. The service learns from its success and staff have worked hard to recover from an earlier dip in performance. There is a culture of acting on feedback, of service improvement as a result of complaints, and systems are in place to ensure lessons are learned and applied. Eco schools is a good initiative where 30 schools in the district are participating in an eco project based on recycling, environmental responsibility and street care. The value of sound data is recognised and there are plans to enhance collection methods and utilise the information to get insights into customer behaviour and improve the service.

42. The team were impressed with the positive relationships with contractors. There were a number of examples of maximising the economic benefits of recycling, dialogue with waste management operators and forward planning to ensure that future needs of the service are planned and prepared for. The service is working with ECC and other districts to improve data collection across the county.

43. A key theme from the review was the need to ensure long term clarity and strategic direction for the service. CBC needs to be proactive in planning for the future and it is critical that timely decisions are taken to ensure the future sustainability of the service. This will involve difficult choices about collection methods, working with other authorities and further investment in the service.

44. The team found evidence that resources do not match the current ambition for the service. Given the stated ambition to be the cleanest and greenest borough in the country, there is scope for significant improvement to become the best performing district in the county. Although the service is achieving parity within the family of like authorities, it failed to achieve the target for recycling that it set itself. If the council is really committed to achieving this ambition, a more cohesive and robust approach to planning for the future is needed.

45. CBC needs to focus on the critical step changes through the delivery of the strategy which pose the highest risk to service improvement. There was no clear action plan to link policy

and strategy through to service delivery; there was little evidence of a golden thread that linked plans and policies to implementation. There is a tendency to have too many initiatives at the same time and sometimes a lack of follow through from these initiatives. From their experience the review team would suggest that high performing authorities provide wheelie bins, collect kitchen waste, alternative collection arrangements and promote home composting. Officers need to help members to understand the implications of proposed changes and most importantly, the impact of not taking these vital steps in order to position waste for the future.

Managing the council's own waste

Strengths

- Braintree procurement hub
- Improved links between street care and waste management service
- Commitment to Nottingham Declaration
- Good IT minimises use of paper

Areas for consideration

- Rising to the challenge – need to lift your game
- Ensure stronger links with other regulatory services
- Link draft Nottingham Strategy to a corporate waste minimisation implementation plan
- Need to ensure greater alignment between all corporate plans and strategies

46. The Braintree procurement hub is an exemplar of good practice in joint working and the review team saw evidence of plans for further joint work. There is close collaboration between waste management and street services to promote waste reduction and encourage good practice with the public. Morale has improved, the sickness absence trend is falling and changes to contracts have been introduced to improve collection times, flexibility and operational effectiveness.
47. CBC has signed the Nottingham Declaration which commits the council to carbon reduction and good practice in sustainability. There are some corporate practices aimed at waste minimisation, for example, good IT minimises the use of paper. CBC has a partnership with the Environment Agency on fly tipping, the number of street care officers has increased and enforcement action is taken more frequently.
48. In order to achieve its ambitions CBC needs to raise its game and become an exemplar of good practice in how it works corporately and with external partners. There is no corporately held data on waste generated internally and there are more opportunities to educate other service areas on good practice. The Waste and recycling service needs to proactively champion good practice to ensure that CBC is reducing its own waste across all services and buildings. This includes ensuring good practice in sustainability and that waste minimisation drives key decisions, at every level. There may also be opportunities for service staff to run promotional events to educate corporate colleagues on changes that could be implemented within CBC.
49. Following on from this, the service needs to ensure stronger links with other regulatory services, for example, using Environmental Health officers to help businesses and service outlets understand good practice in sustainability and waste minimisation. There is more work to do with spatial planning to ensure that new developments are designed to facilitate good practice and that roads are accessible for the collection vehicles.
50. The draft Nottingham strategy needs to be linked to a corporate waste minimisation implementation plan. CBC needs strong links between waste and other environmental functions to ensure services in these areas are working effectively to support the overall priorities for what the council wants to achieve. This may include realigning portfolios to ensure closer links between strategic waste and operational service delivery.
51. CBC needs to ensure greater alignment between all corporate plans and strategies. There was no evidence of procurement options being considered in the waste strategy or of waste

minimisation being included in corporate contracts. Policy and practice need to promote sustainability and the waste hierarchy needs to guide the acquisition and consumption of goods and services across the council, whether they are provided directly or commissioned externally.

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If you would like to receive this report in large print, Braille or another format please e-mail matt.maher@idea.gov.uk

16 June 2008

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|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Report of | Head of Corporate Services | Author | Amanda Chidgey |
| Title | Work Programme 2008/09 | | ☎ 282227 |
| Wards affected | Not applicable | | |

This report seeks consideration of issues to comprise the 2008/09 Work Programme for the Policy Review and Development Panel.

1. Decision Required

- 1.1 The Policy Review and Development Panel is asked to consider issues to formulate the Panel's work programme for 2008/09.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 At the end of the last Municipal Year the former Policy Review Panel had effectively completed its work programme with no substantive business required to be carried forward to 2008/09.

- 2.2 Following the appointment of the new Panel's Chairman, Executive Director Ian Vipond, the Panel's lead officer, took the opportunity to discuss future work initiatives for the Panel with Councillor Young. In addition Heads of Service were asked to look at likely policy areas that would need to come to the Panel as part of their review or development.

- 2.3 The following issues emerged from these discussions:

- Community Cohesion / Neighbourhood Working (NAPs) / Localism
- Climate Change /Sustainability Issues
- Waste and Recycling Review (separate report on agenda)
- Housing Strategy
- Night time Economy (SOS bus / Anti-Social Behaviour)
- Street Wardens
- Historic Town Centre Improvements
- Strategic Needs Assessment and LAA Targets
- Secondary Education / Links with Schools /Community Use of Buildings
- Services for the Elderly
- Strategic Plan
- Flexible Working (timescales suggest consideration in September)

- 2.4 Proper consideration of each subject matter is likely to necessitate an initial fact finding report/presentation followed by an update report after a period of two to three months with a final report to the Panel after a further period of six to eight weeks.

- 2.5 Panel members will be able to see from the attached schedule that there are six scheduled meetings for the current year which provides an opportunity for the Panel to identify a limited number of priorities from the issues identified at paragraph 2.3 above and for these priorities to be provisionally scheduled into the work programme at appropriate meeting dates throughout the year.
- 2.6 In addition to the issues identified it is likely that various corporate strategies or policies will come forward to be reviewed by the Panel. In that context it is important to consider the capacity of the Panel and the organisation in setting its work programme. One option is also to consider the use of member groups outside of the formal panel meetings to do some of the work on key priorities.

3. Alternative options

- 3.1 This function forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference and, as such, no alternative options are presented.

4. Standard References

- 4.1 There are no specific strategic plan references or financial, equality, diversity and human rights, community safety, health and safety, publicity and risk management implications in this matter.

Policy Review and Development Panel
WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09

| | <u>16 June 2008</u> | <u>18 August 2008</u> | <u>30 September 2008</u> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Policy Initiatives | | | |
| Review of Corporate Policies | | | |
| Task and Finish Groups | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| | <u>3 November 2008</u> | <u>19 January 2009</u> | <u>2 March 2009</u> |
| Policy Initiatives | | | |
| Review of Corporate Policies | | | |
| Task and Finish Groups | | | |

Our vision is for Colchester to develop as a prestigious regional centre

Our goal is to be a high performing Council

Our corporate objectives for 2006-2009 are:



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