



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

C150

Council 27 September 2011

CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

Written report by Cllr Peter Stevens, Environment & Street Scene Portfolio

Portfolio includes:

- Maintenance of the urban realm;
- Street naming and numbering;
- Grounds maintenance;
- Waste management and recycling;
- Abandoned vehicles;
- Cleansing;
- Environmental sustainability;
- Environmental management systems;
- Nature conservation;
- Climate change and energy action plan; and
- Public Toilets.

1. Waste and Street Scene Services

1.1 Acquisition of County Mulch Composting Operations

1.1.1 On 4 August 2011, Countrystyle Group and Material Change Limited announced the successful acquisition of the green and food waste composting businesses and assets of County Mulch Limited, out of administration. For West Suffolk, this deal has seen Countrystyle take control of operations at Stanton and Lackford. Officers are working with new management at Countrystyle and there has been no impact to our residents.

1.2 Cleansing Review

1.2.1 The Cleansing Review in partnership with Forest Heath District Council has delivered savings to both Councils through sharing a single rural sweeping operation. This new arrangement has been working successfully and is already delivering savings which will be in excess of £36,000 for both organisations each year.

1.3 Joint Vehicle Procurement Programme

1.3.1 In conjunction with our partners in the Suffolk Waste Partnership, we are undertaking a vehicle procurement programme which will see an investment in our combined fleet of over £2 million. Combining the purchasing of these vehicles should deliver savings to both organisations as well as standardising and modernising our fleet with newer, more efficient vehicles. The vehicles include 13 Refuse Collection Vehicles, 3 Road Sweepers and 1 Gulley Tanker.

1.4 Cost of Waste Collection per Household

1.4.1 The cost of collecting waste for each household in St Edmundsbury has fallen again for a second successive year. In 2010/2011 the cost fell to £41.90 per household compared to £44.44 in 2009/2010 (a fall of over 5%). This has been achieved through efficiency savings, such as through the Waste Collection Round Reorganisation, as well as improving our performance across a range of our charged services.

1.5 Community Group Visits to the Material Recycling Facility at Gt Blakenham

1.5.1 The Material Recycling Facility (MRF) at Great Blakenham near Ipswich separates recyclable waste for re-processing that comes from the blue bins of six Suffolk Councils including St Edmundsbury. Using a variety of different processes and technologies this facility sorts over 10,000 tonnes of recyclable waste from the Borough Council every year. The MRF, which is operated by Viridor Waste Management, has an educational facility and viewing area where the fascinating processes involved in separating and sorting this waste can be explained and viewed.

1.5.2 The Educational Officer at the MRF is prioritising visits from groups and parish councils in West Suffolk and as published in the Members' Bulletin last week, any such interested groups can contact the Education Officer directly to make arrangements for visits. Important details about these visits are:-

- (a) the trips are free of charge;
- (b) standard visits are limited to groups of 10 people of 18 years and over;
- (c) trips are arranged on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, morning and afternoon, and last between two to two and a half hours.

For further information, and to make arrangements for a visit, please contact Carole Locke, Education Officer, Viridor Limited, telephone: (01473) 836903 or email clocke@viridor.co.uk

1.6 Community Litter Picks

1.6.1 We are keen to encourage and assist community groups in organising litter picks in their area. Waste and Street Scene Services can loan protective equipment, litter picking sticks and provide sacks in which to dispose of the litter collected. A recent community litter pick near the Hardwick precinct was organised by Ward Members and attended by David Ruffley, MP. A good turn-out of local residents collected several sacks of waste which were segregated into general waste, recyclable waste and glass.

1.6.2 We are always keen to assist local residents who would like to organise litter picks in their area. For further information, please contact Waste and Street Scene Services on telephone: (01284) 757320 or email waste.management@stedsb.gov.uk.

1.7 Waste and Recycling Education: Community Events

1.7.1 We regularly attend community events in order to provide information and education about our waste collection services. Our presence at these events includes advice and literature about recycling, (for example what goes in what bin), waste reduction, composting and small 'give-aways' for children and adults. Our stands always attract a lot of interest from residents and over recent months we have exhibited at the Nowton Country Fair in Bury St Edmunds, the Haverhill Big Day Out and the Great Whelnetham Car Rally. Our attendance at the Haverhill Big Day Out included a free compost give-away which went down very well with local gardeners.

1.8 **Waste and Recycling Education: Talks to Resident Groups**

- 1.8.1 We regularly provide educational talks to resident groups about our waste collection service. These are aimed at helping residents to understand our 3-bin collection scheme and put their waste in the right bins. This helps us to maximise recycling and minimise contamination where material is put in the wrong bin. Over the last few months we have given talks to residents with learning difficulties at a residential home in Bury St Edmunds as well as a talk to a drug rehabilitation group in Haverhill.
- 1.8.2 We regularly provide educational talks to servicemen in the residential blocks at RAF Honington. In recent months we have talked to over 320 troops from the RAF regiment about how to recycle their waste and avoid contamination. This communication particularly helps us to ensure that recycling performance remains at acceptable levels.

2. **Environmental Sustainability**

2.1 **Generating Income from Renewable Energy**

- 2.1.1 Previously, full Council approved a capital allocation of up to £410,000 to invest in renewable energy generation as a means of generating income and cutting CO₂ emissions by utilising the Government-backed Clean Energy Cashback (Report B317 refers). The introduction of Cashback in the UK has made installing smaller scale renewable electricity generation financially attractive.
- 2.1.2 A set of schemes has been out to tender which has revealed firstly that the unit cost of solar photovoltaic installation is less than originally estimated and secondly the property covered by the tender could support larger generating capacity i.e. more panels.
- 2.1.3 Based on the tendering process, Cabinet approved generating capacity up to the current capital allocation, with a predicted average annual income to the Council in the region of £37,300 with an Internal Rate of Return on investment of 13%, payback of 7 years, and equivalent CO₂ saving of 1,800 tonnes.
- 2.1.4 Cabinet is now recommending to Council (see Report C144, Schedule of Referrals Item (B) (5)), a further capital allocation to fund an enhanced option, with the predicted average annual income to the Council increasing to approximately £53,000 with Internal Rate of Return on Investment of 12%, payback of 8 years, and equivalent CO₂ saving of 2,700 tonnes.
- 2.1.5 The schemes remain subject to structural survey and planning permission and are built into a timetable for completion by the end of March 2012.