



## Council 26 February 2013

### CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

#### ***Report by Cllr Peter Stevens, Environment and Waste Management Portfolio***

**Portfolio includes:**

- Conservation, Climate Change and Energy Action;
- Environmental Sustainability and the Environmental Management System;
- Public Toilets;
- Street Names and Numbering;
- Street Scene, Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance; and
- Waste and Recycling.

#### **1. Environmental Sustainability**

##### **1.1 Domestic Energy Efficiency Programme**

- 1.1.1 The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership, of which the Council is a member, has successfully bid for £98,000 to fund a trial of the Green Deal in Suffolk.
- 1.1.2 Through the Green Deal, energy efficiency improvements are funded by a loan which is repaid through a charge on the consumer's electricity bill on the basis that the cost does not exceed the energy savings. It also enables additional subsidies direct from energy suppliers for more expensive measures and to assist vulnerable households.
- 1.1.3 Using the funding, the Partnership plans to create a series of local '*Pioneer Places*' across Suffolk, where Green Deal promotion and uptake will be concentrated, with installations used as case studies to promote and instil confidence in the scheme. Green Deal assessments will be offered free to up to 500 customers through this programme, to maximise early take-up.
- 1.1.4 Although the offer will be open to anyone in Suffolk, Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill will host a Green Deal Pioneer roadshows to promote and trial the scheme.
- 1.1.5 The project will run until the end of March 2013, after which feedback will be given to the Department of Climate Change and Energy.

## **1.2 Revision to the Council's Contaminated Land Strategy**

- 1.2.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to publish their strategic approach to tackle land contamination. Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) adopted their current Contaminated Land Strategies in 2011 and 2005 respectively. Each council is the lead regulator in their respective administrative areas for contaminated land.
- 1.2.2 To achieve a shared approach to policy and service delivery for the people of West Suffolk and meet their statutory obligations the two councils have developed a draft West Suffolk Contaminated Land Strategy. This draft Strategy will be subject to stakeholder consultation prior to adoption. Once adopted this will replace the councils' current strategies.

## **2. Waste and Street Scene Services**

### **2.1 Textile Recycling Scheme**

- 2.1.1 A refresher textiles recycling campaign was launched in the lead-up to Christmas. It aimed to raise general awareness of the new scheme, especially to those residents who were still unaware of the scheme or how it works. Specific messages were focused on:
- (1) how to obtain a replacement textile bag - to minimise the risk of disengagement from the scheme; and
  - (2) textiles being placed in the bin loose, which requires additional sorting at the Materials Recycling Facility and thus increases costs.
- 2.1.2 The key campaign activities involved:
- high profile Suffolk wide 'Dressing a Statue' events;
  - textile roadshows (Apex and Merry Mildenhall);
  - a press advert and radio releases; and
  - a replacement bag poster campaign.
- 2.1.3 The success of the scheme is highlighted by the 508 tonnes of textiles that has already been collected Suffolk-wide (Aug 12 to Dec 12 figures). Of this, West Suffolk has collected 137 tonnes (91 tonnes SEBC and 46 tonnes FHDC).
- 2.1.4 In addition to Brandon, Mildenhall Newmarket, West Suffolk House, Haverhill House and Bury St Edmunds Tourist Information Centre, residents can now collect replacement bags from all Suffolk libraries.

### **2.2 Suffolk Spring Clean Fortnight 2013**

- 2.2.1 This year's Spring Clean fortnight is likely to take place from Monday 25 March to Sunday 7 April 2013.
- 2.2.2 The Spring Clean campaign encourages people to participate in local clean up events across West Suffolk and the County to reduce litter and improve the local environment. It forms part of Suffolk County Council's 'Creating the Greenest County' initiative which aims to respond to climate change and enhance the natural and historic environment.

2.2.3 The co-ordinated litter picks have proved to be very successful in the past. They enable people to improve the look and feel of their local community and remove litter that could otherwise harm wildlife and damage the environment. It is also an educational experience, opening people's eyes to the sheer volume of rubbish that is needlessly dropped in our Borough.

2.2.4 West Suffolk will provide interested groups and individuals with litter pickers, black refuse sacks for the litter collected, disposable rubber gloves and arrange for the collection and disposal of the rubbish collected. Although it is called 'Spring Clean', litter picks can be carried out at any time of the year.

### **2.3 Municipal Vehicle Operator and Plant Review Magazine Article (MVO)**

2.3.1 The West Suffolk waste team features prominently in this month's Municipal Vehicle Operator and Plant Review (MVO) magazine. A glowing four-page feature talks about how our two councils have combined the waste and recycling operations, the benefits of doing so over using commercial contractors, and the new fleet of refuse vehicles.

2.3.2 This has resulted in the successful delivery and implementation of the 18 new fleet vehicles, and for ensuring the continued success of the joint waste service.

2.3.3 You can read the whole article, '*They're In It Together*', here: <http://goldintranet.stedsbc.gov.uk/gold/News/Wavelength/upload/MunicipalVehicleOperator-PlantReviewFeb2013.pdf>. Alternatively, copies can be made available on request.

### **2.4 Progress in Waste Recycling and Composting**

2.4.1 St Edmundsbury's recycling and composting performance up to December 2012 is extremely positive and exceeded that achieved during the same period last year.

2.4.2 This is due predominately to two key factors:

- an increase of 413 tonnes of material collected for recycling and composting; and
- a reduction of 109 tonnes of residual household waste collected.

2.4.3 The cumulative impact is a recycling rate of 55%.

### **2.5 The Branding of Waste and Street Scene Vehicles**

2.5.1 Phase one of the vehicle side branding project, involving the new West Suffolk refuse collection vehicles used for our commercial waste services, has been completed.

2.5.2 The branding specifically focuses on the promotion of the commercial services and has a design integrating three key aspects:

- (1) The vehicles are identified as the Council – promoting community visibility of frontline services;
- (2) The full range of commercial waste and street scene services are listed, maximising service exposure to local businesses; and

- (3) The use of the commercially focused message 'JOB DONE' is intended to appeal to the business community to denote service efficiency and reliability.

2.5.3 The next phase will involve household waste and recycling services and street cleansing vehicles.

## **2.6 Minimising Service Disruption**

2.6.1 Despite severe weather in January, service disruption was kept to a minimum across West Suffolk.

2.6.2 Operational crews worked hard to catch up on collections following the cancellation of bin collections for one day due to heavy snow and ice making travel and access difficult. The brown bin service was postponed for one week to support crews and counter issues with frozen bins.

2.6.3 Waste and Street Scene Customer Service staff managed the customer calls during this period, and overall the vast majority of residents contacting us appreciated the situation we were faced with.

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