

AGENDA

COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday 10 April 2012
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors: Mrs Blackmore (Chairman), Field,
FitzGerald (Vice-Chairman),
D Mortimer, Mrs Parvin, Paterson,
Mrs Stockell, Yates and Hinder

Page No.

1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.**
2. **Apologies.**
3. **Notification of Substitute Members.**
4. **Notification of Visiting Members.**

Continued Over/:

Issued on 02 April 2012

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Alison Broom

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ**

5. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

- a) Disclosures of interest.
- b) Disclosures of lobbying.
- c) Disclosures of whipping.

6. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.

7. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2012	1 - 8
8. Making Waste Work for Maidstone Review draft report	9 - 21
9. Work Programming 2012-13	22 - 23

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Blackmore (Chairman)
Councillors Field, FitzGerald, D Mortimer, Paterson,
Yates and Hinder

129. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.

It was resolved that all items be webcast.

130. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Parvin.

131. Notification of Substitute Members.

Councillor Butler substituted for Councillor Mrs Parvin.

132. Notification of Visiting Members.

Councillor Burton was present as a Visiting Member with an interest in Item 8, Neighbourhood Action Planning.

133. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

Members made the following disclosures of interest in relation to Item 8 Neighbourhood Action Planning:

- Councillor FitzGerald – Chairman and Trustee of Fusion Healthy Living Centre;
- Councillor Burton – Trustee of Fusion Healthy Living Centre; and
- Councillor Hinder – Former Director, Golding Homes.

Councillors Field, FitzGerald, Paterson, Mortimer and Hinder all made disclosures of lobbying in relation to Item 9, Community Development Strategy.

134. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.

It was agreed that all items should be taken in public as proposed.

135. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2012

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2012 should be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed.

136. Neighbourhood Action Planning

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Sara Hutchinson, Manager at Fusion Healthy Living Centre, Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager, Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager, Caroline McBride, Head of Community Development at Golding Homes, Richard Cannecot, Head of Regeneration at Golding Homes, Councillor Marion Ring, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Jackie Pye, Chairman, Bulk Buy Scheme at Park Wood and Jade Webster, Chairman, Parents is the Word.

The Chairman invited Caroline McBride and Richard Cannecott to give a presentation on behalf of Golding Homes. This detailed Golding Homes' involvement in Neighbourhood Action Planning following the Planning for Real process in Park Wood. As a strategic partner they had supported the process financially and additionally through staff involvement and consultation support. Members were informed that there had been 20 to 25 consultation sessions held at Park Wood.

The Committee were told that Park Wood was a priority area in terms of regeneration. It was explained that there had been significant regeneration in the area and the Planning for Real process had given the organisation an opportunity to engage with residents in a meaningful way and they had sought to build on this.

It was explained that Golding Homes had chosen to look at the whole of Park Wood and as a result the regeneration proposal was going to take place in 3 phases. Members were informed that Golding Homes had wanted to present the regeneration project to stakeholders and other parties. This desire had led to a recent four day exhibition. Golding Homes had used the exhibition as an opportunity to gather feedback from residents, completing 160 feedback forms. From this they were able to gauge whether the regeneration proposals were endorsed by residents. Mr Cannecot reported positive feedback in relation to the schemes design. Residents were said to favour houses to flats and the inclusion of external storage facilities with properties. CCTV was deemed to be important also.

Mr Cannecott explained that Golding Homes was focused on diversifying the tenure of its housing stock, that at present was mainly socially rented. Members were informed that if residents were living in an area they were happy they would be more likely to buy their property.

The Committee questioned the approach taken by Golding Homes with regards to setting time frames and informing residents. It was explained that in relation to the regeneration of Park Wood Golding Homes would not let areas of housing where residents would have to move after a short period of time. Residents had been informed on the entire regeneration

project and the 3 phases involved so that there was an awareness of the larger plan for the area. A five year timescale was set. Phase 1 would be completed by the end of the first year, Phase 2 in 18-24 months and Phase 3 in three years. Mr Cannecott explained that Government funding had disappeared after the initial engagement with the community but at the end of 2011 the situation changed which was why Golding Homes were currently in consultation with residents. The Committee was informed that the budget for the regeneration project was to be approved on the Thursday following the meeting.

Jackie Pye, Chairman, Bulk Buy Scheme at Park Wood and Jade Webster, Chairman, Parents is the Word sought clarification on rumours circulating amongst residents on the regeneration of Park Wood. These included residents being moved out of the area during the regeneration of the area, having to go through a bidding process to return to Park Wood and payments being made to residents for the inconvenience of being relocated. Mr Cannecott confirmed that these rumours were true. He explained that Golding Homes would not be seeking to recreate what already existed in the area. He informed the Committee that a need for 2 bedroom properties rather than the one bedroom flats that currently existed had been identified. The newly build properties would be let on an affordable rent which was 80% of open market rents rather than a social rent. He confirmed that this was in line with government policy. Ms Webster and Ms Pye raised concerns regarding this, explaining to the Committee that residents wanted to escape the poverty trap and support themselves and felt that this would be perceived badly by residents. They felt residents were being shown properties as part of the regeneration consultation that they would not be able to return to. Mr Cannecott offered assurances that properties would be ring fenced for the purpose of moving households out of Park Wood as part of its regeneration project and Golding Homes would try to find houses in areas where residents wanted to be. It was felt that the meeting was not the forum to continue the discussion and it should be continued by the Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee was keen to identify the successes of Planning for Real and the Neighbourhood Action Plan for Park Wood.

Councillor Ring felt told Members that initially £50,000 had been secured for Neighbourhood Action Planning by the Council for improvements to the area and £10,000 from the community chest which was specifically for residents and charities to spend in the area.

Ms Pye and Ms Webster addressed the Committee. They explained that they were keen to put themselves forward as representatives for Park Wood residents to engage with partners involved in Park Wood. Ms Pye and Ms Webster shared their vision with the Committee of making Park Wood and the facilities available to residents better with the aid of the many willing volunteers that they were coming forward all the time. Their ambition was to take over the running of Heather House at Park Wood. Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager explained, in relation to Heather House, that there was to be a review of all community halls and

areas that would be addressed would include community asset transfer and long term transfer. The Committee noted the invaluable offer of volunteer time highlighted by Ms Pye and Ms Webster. Councillor Ring advocated the resident's vision and told Members that support was needed.

Ms McBride noted that the involvement of children had been excellent and Bell Wood School had been involved in making the model of Park Wood which was then taken out on road shows to residents. This was identified as a key part of the Planning for Real process and part of its success. Members questioned the involvement of children currently. Ms Pye and Ms Webster explained that children came along to resident's meetings at the Meadows Centre and Fusion Health Living Centre and Arts and Crafts classes for children had recently started at Fusion. In addition to this 'Walk Out Wednesday's' picnics continued which residents attributed to Jim Boot's work in Park Wood in getting people together. Members were informed that Ms Pye and Ms Webster were utilising Facebook to communicate with other residents and they had just started working with Sara Hutchinson the new manager at Fusion. Ms Hutchinson told Members that Fusion's youth cafe, held on Thursday evenings attracted 25 teenagers and there were plans to extend this.

Visiting Member and Ward Member for Park Wood, Councillor Burton, felt that there was a need to scrutinise the Council and understand why actions to address the resident priorities, highlighted in the Park Wood Neighbourhood Action Plan, had not happened as quickly as the might have. Members considered the various reasons for delays in action. It was felt that often the Council and partners went into the community telling residents what they wanted rather than asking residents what they wanted. Some Members felt that developers could often be slow to deliver on section 106 agreements that would provide improvements to an area. The Committee reasoned that the correct approach would be to secure funding and then go to the community and ask them what was needed, once there was an ability to deliver.

The Committee sought to establish the lessons that had been learnt from the Neighbourhood Action Planning Pilot Scheme at Park Wood and the Planning for Real process with a view to it be rolled out to other areas. It was felt that the 20-25 consultations that had taken place demonstrated the lack of action that had been taken. Members saw this as a negative outcome of the process rather than a positive one.

The Committee addressed the priorities identified by residents as part of Planning for Real and detailed in the Park Wood Neighbour Action Plan 2010-15. One of the less successful aspects of this process highlighted to Members was the way in which the priorities of partner organisations were addressed as part of this. Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager, who had been involved in the consultation process with residents, explained that the process had been done backwards. When residents were initially engaged with the Officers involved went in with a blank sheet and asked residents for their priorities issues. It was only at the end of the process that the evidence based priority issues such as teenage

pregnancy, mortality and drugs and alcohol were addressed with residents. Ms Kershaw felt that the approach failed to inform residents on the clear parity between the issues they knew existed and the obvious links to partners who were attempting to address the same issues. Some Members disagreed, arguing that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the resulting priorities for statutory authorities should not be dealt with by Planning for Real. They felt that that the process should simply be residents identifying the problems as they saw them. Ms Pye and Ms Webster informed Members that it was the way in which information was presented to residents by organisations that caused confusion. They often used complicated language and confusing diagrams when simple, clear information was needed.

It was felt that a more coordinated approach was needed. The Committee considered Maidstone Borough Council's role in the process going forward. It was felt that residents needed information and guidance as there was an obvious willingness from residents to get involved and improve the area they lived in. It was highlighted that Park Wood continued to hold Multi Agency Partners (MAPs) meetings and therefore communication channels existed which could be utilised.

Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager felt that the Council's role was to help remove obstacles for residents so that they could have an empowered role in developing their own communities. She explained that the Community Development team could be utilised for this purpose.

Ms Pye and Ms Webster circulated a resident's newsletter to the Committee. Members felt that this was something that the Community Development Team and the Council could help produce. It was agreed that the format of a single, double sided sheet was something that could be progressed quickly. It was felt that it was important that all partners involved in Park Wood were represented on the newsletter. Mrs Robson confirmed that the Council could facilitate and assistance would be given with design and printing.

Ms Pye and Ms Webster highlighted the residents' fete they were organising. Members were informed that Councillor JA Wilson had levied the fee for the cost of the site to be used and Play Place were working with residents to help them obtain liability insurance.

Ms Hutchinson informed Members that Fusion's role was also one of facilitator. It was explained that Fusion would be used for the Bulk Buy Scheme in the summer holidays when access to the usual venue at Bell Wood School was an issue.

Members' questioned whether the lessons learnt at Park Wood would be taken on board before moving forward into other areas. Mrs Robson assured Members that they would be. She told Members any new model would include consultation with residents and key elements from the Planning for Real process could be maintained.

Miss Kershaw informed Members that the Council would be going back to residents to evaluate the pilot scheme in Park Wood. The Officer told Members that she hoped that Ms Pye and Mrs Webster would be involved in the process as it was taken forward to other areas.

The Committee questioned the planned timescales in taking Neighbourhood Action Planning to other areas. It was confirmed that Shepway would be the next area but there were no timescales set. Members were informed that there was some budget to carry forward from Park Wood. Mrs Robson told Members that a piece of work would be completed within the current Municipal Year on this.

The Committee queried the Neighbourhood Action Planning training that had been cancelled in 2011. It had been offered widely to Members, Staff and Partners but had been postponed due to problems with the trainer. Mrs Robson informed Members that this would be offered again 2012/13. It was clarified that this was not training in the Planning for Real methodology.

It was recommended that:

- a) The Community Halls Audit report is taken to the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to address the possibility of communities running facilities like Heather House in Park Wood;
- b) Golding Homes and residents from Park Wood are invited to Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny to address the issues that arose regarding the regeneration of Park Wood;
- c) Golding Homes clarify with residents how they can access new properties in Park Wood;
- d) The priorities arising from the Planning for Real process be coordinated better when evaluating residents' needs and the overarching priorities of the partners involved;
- e) Assistance be given by Will Solley from the Community Development Team to Park Wood residents in producing their newsletter;
- f) Case Studies should be used to convey the successes achieved in Park Wood when delivering Neighbourhood Action Planning in Shepway. This should be done with the involvement of established residents' groups in Park Wood and should include Jade Webster and Jackie Pye.

137. Draft Community Development Strategy

Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager, explained that the Community Development Strategy was out for consultation until the end of March. The document had been set around three priorities and against each priority there were action based outcomes.

Some Members were disappointed that as a Maidstone Borough Council the strategy said too little about what the Council would do, concentrating on Kent County Council and the Locality Board.

Members highlighted the information presented on Maidstone as a place. It was felt it read too much like a tourist brochure and should include the priorities and challenges faced by community.

Other areas highlighted included Community Commissioning, it was felt that this term should be explained and the section expanded further.

Where quantitative data was used it was noted that there was an inconsistency in the approach taken across the report. It was felt that the use of percentages could be misleading in terms of transparency and accessibility to the public. Members suggested that one uniform approach was taken.

With reference to worklessness, the Committee asked that youth unemployment be referenced within the document and addressed separately to include Anti Social Behaviour and how Maidstone hoped to address this with diversionary activities. Mrs Robson explained that the Community Development Team which included Community Partnerships and Community Safety would be less focused on sports and play activities in the future and would have the ability to develop a programme focused on this.

Members questioned whether homelessness should also be considered in the document. Miss Kershaw informed the Committee that this was already addressed within the Housing Strategy. Mrs Robson told Members that there was an opportunity to cross reference it within the document.

Members questioned how the consultation had been carried out. The Officer explained that the first stage had been to circulate the document internally to Parishes, staff and Councillors. The second stage had been to consult with the community and voluntary sector via Voluntary Action Maidstone. The document had been advertised to the public in the Kent Messenger and had also been taken to the Locality Board.

Some Members felt that with regards to consultation with parishes the consultation process had been too short as Parishes met on a monthly basis.

The Chairman invited Dr Speight, a member of the public in attendance, to speak. Dr Speight questioned the consultation process and the way in which the public had been consulted. Mrs Robson informed Dr Speight that the public had been consulted via the Kent Messenger, the Council's website and existing networks.

Dr Speight felt that the community had been excluded from the consultation process. He felt that there had been a lack of consultation with the public and it was made difficult for people to become involved.

The Chairman referred to Dr Speight's letter which had been used to lobby some Members. It was felt that it did not relate specifically to the Community Development Strategy but should be noted.

It was resolved that:

- a) The section describing Maidstone should be rewritten;
- b) Community Commissioning should be expanded and explained more fully;
- c) Data should be presented in a consistent way throughout the report;
- d) Reducing worklessness should include a separate section on youth unemployment; and
- e) Homelessness should be referenced in the report and cross-referenced to the Housing Strategy.

138. Future Work Programme and Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Committee considered its future work programme and the Forward plan of Key decisions. It was agreed that that the final meeting should be to approve the Committee's reports for the year.

It was resolved that the Committee should approve its review report at the April meeting.

139. Duration of Meeting

6.33 p.m. to 9.08 p.m.

Agenda Item 8

Maidstone Borough Council

Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 10 April 2012

Making Waste Work for Maidstone Review

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 June 2011, Members agreed to carry out a review of waste and recycling in relation to the new 10 year waste contract.
- 1.2 The Committee agreed to focus its review on two areas:
 - Waste reduction; and
 - the new waste and recycling contract
- 1.3 As the review progressed three main areas were identified where the Committee could add value:
 - Waste reduction;
 - Freighter Service and Bulky Waste Collection; and
 - Plastics.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are recommended to consider the draft report of Making Waste Work for Maidstone Review and make amendments and suggestions as appropriate.
- 2.2 Following any requested amendments to the report, Members are recommended to approve this for submission to the appropriate Cabinet Member and external bodies.

3. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 3.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the Council's priorities:
 - 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'
 - 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy'; and
 - 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live';
- 3.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Committee's work will contribute to the delivery of these key objectives over the next year.

Making Waste Work for Maidstone

Municipal Year 2011/12



Committee Membership:

Councillor Blackmore (Chairman)
Councillor English
Councillor Field
Councillor FitzGerald (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Hinder

Councillor D Mortimer
Councillor Mrs Parvin
Councillor Patterson
Councillor Yates

Chairman's Summary

Councillor Annabelle Blackmore



Waste collection and recycling is one of Maidstone Borough Council's most important and highly visible services to all the residents of Maidstone Borough. It has a significant impact on our visual environment and also our public health.

The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee recognises the tendering process for our waste and recycling will be highly competitive. This Review was set up because the Council's waste and recycling services contract is due for renewal in 2013, giving the Council an opportunity to re-examine how these important services are delivered across the Borough.

Currently Maidstone Borough Council retains a weekly collection system and although this may be the best option we must seek to improve our waste and recycling service where possible providing the benefits outweigh the potential costs. During our review councillors made visits to different recycling industry professionals to view the range of services which are available.

The Committee would like to thank all the organisations and individuals who have helped us by giving their evidence. In particular Paul Vanston from the Waste Resources and Action Programme who has provided significant support and guidance to the Committee. His approach with good humour was truly appreciated.

Finally I would like to record my thanks to Orla Sweeney, Overview & Scrutiny Officer, for her support during the creation of this report and also her tireless minute taking during our meetings. Her positive approach deserves our particular thanks.

Making Waste Work for Maidstone

Waste and recycling was chosen as a topic for review by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the knowledge that the Council's waste contract was due to go to out to tender for a 10 year period; a critical contract serving a core function of the Council. The Committee was satisfied that the model being used for determining the waste contract was the best available for Maidstone as it included extensive modelling and the project had received an investment of £65,000 from Kent County Council. The model to be adopted by Maidstone, Ashford, Swale and Canterbury (Mid Kent) was the same one used by Dover and Shepway (East Kent). As part of the new partnership contract arrangements Maidstone would retain its current recycling system, only adding an extra insert to its recycling bin. Maidstone's current weekly food collection arrangements were cited by Government as a preferred system.

The Committee decided to focus its investigations on three main areas where it could add value. These were waste reduction, the Freighter service and Bulky waste collection and Plastics.

This is inline with the principles applied by the Council in dealing with waste which are derived from the EU waste Framework Directive (WFD) and adopted into UK domestic legislation on 12 December 2010. The main features of this are the application of the waste hierarchy which put prevention, minimisation and reuse above recycling, energy recovery and disposal. It also cites a separate collection of paper, metal, plastic and glass by 2015 and a recycling target of 50% from household by 2020. Maidstone Borough Council's Waste and Recycling Strategy 2010-2015 supports the EU directive and recycling targets set.



Waste Hierarchy

The Committee was initially keen to pursue commercial waste collection opportunities and the potential revenue streams available to Maidstone Borough Council alone or in partnership with neighbouring authorities from collecting commercial waste from smaller businesses as this could lead to the development of a sustainable revenue stream. During the course of the review the Waste

team secured Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) funding to explore the viability of this. Gravesham Council has a commercial waste contract and the Committee feels that there is an opportunity work to with Gravesham as part of the feasibility study, utilising its experience and exploring possible partnership opportunities.

Recommendations

Waste Reduction

Reducing waste is the key to the Council continuing to move forward. The Committee's visit to Maidstone Prison's Recycling Unit helped demonstrate the financial benefits to an organisation in reducing its waste. As a result of the approach taken at Maidstone Prison with food waste and the use of a food composter, £26,000 is saved due to no longer needing a kitchen waste collection.

The Committee visited Aylesford Newsprint to gain an understanding of the benefits of paper recycling as paper will be collected separately as part of the new waste contract with the addition of an insert to the recycling bin. Aylesford Newsprint uses 100% recycled product and produced 500 tonnes of paper for white newsprint each year.

It is clear that there have been vast improvements in Maidstone in recent years and following the Best Value review in 2009 which resulted in the creation of a specific waste strategy for Maidstone and included an action plan. Maidstone is now one of the top performers in the country, on track to meet the Government's 50% recycling target in 2020 following the introduction of the food waste collection in 2011 (figure 1). Importantly too, there has been a reduction in the volume of household waste (figure 2). The National 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign has contributed to a 10% reduction in waste overall.

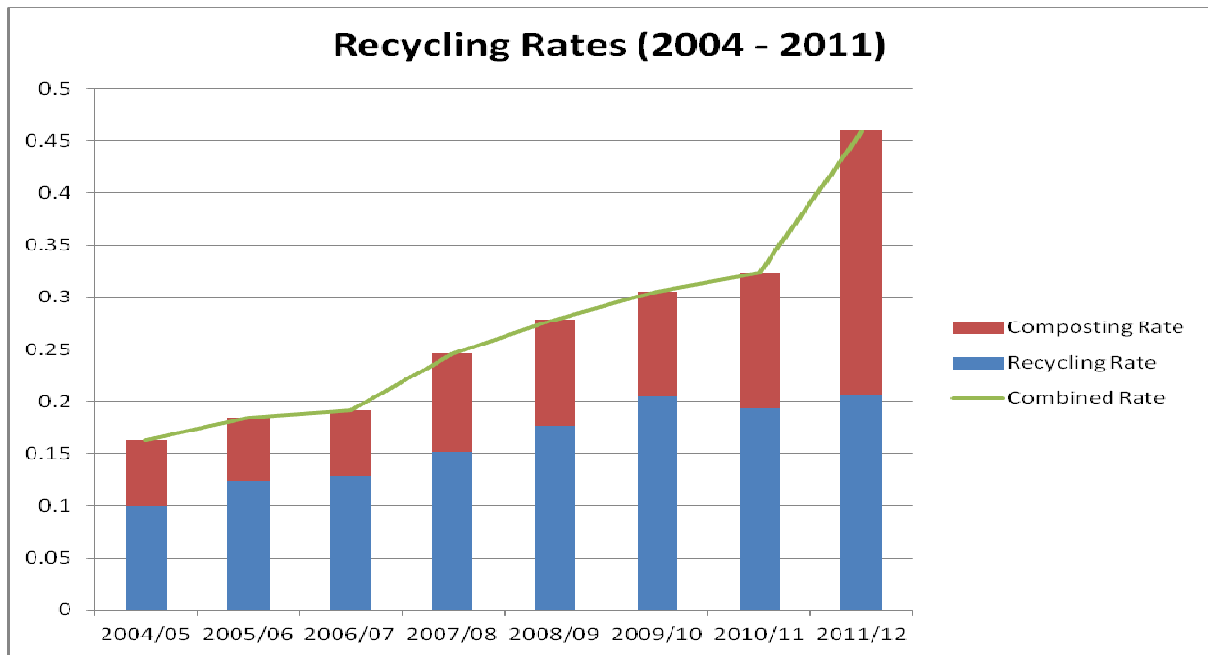


Figure 1 (supplied by Waste Team, Maidstone Borough Council)

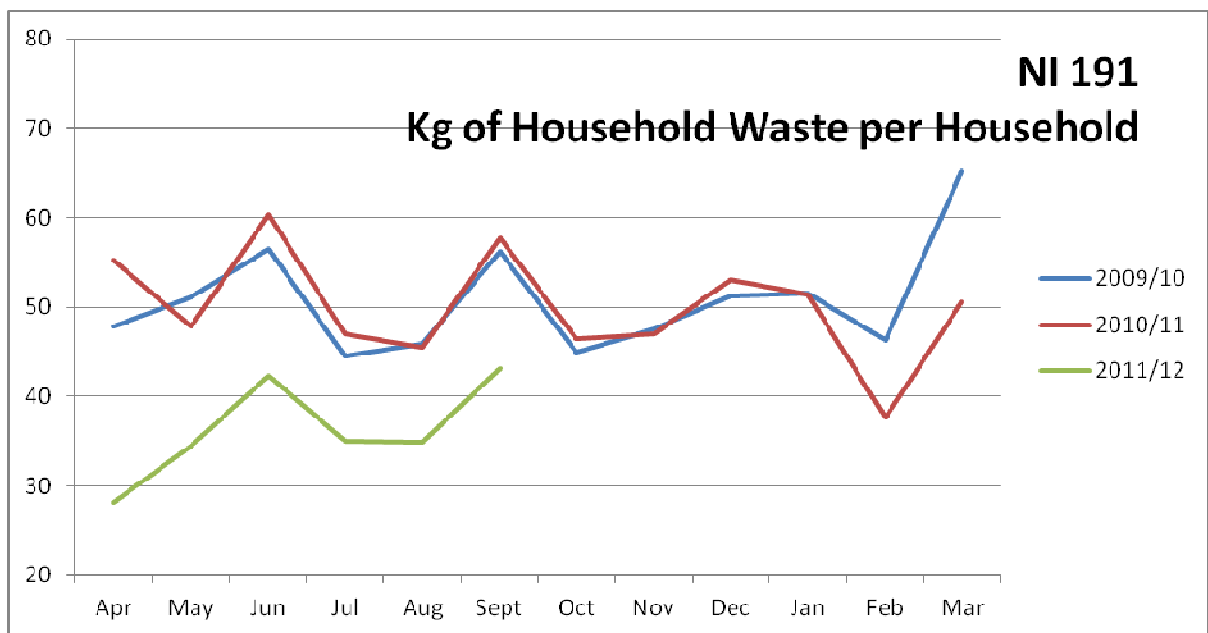


Figure 2 (supplied by Waste Team, Maidstone Borough Council)

The Best Value review of waste and recycling collection services in 2009 identified that Maidstone performed badly in comparison to other Kent authorities. £500,000 was invested to make changes to the service (including £300,000 from the Kent Waste Partnership) which included the addition of a separate food waste collection service. Steve Goulette, Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services informed the Committee that as a result of this, satisfaction levels had risen. The Residents Satisfaction Survey, an independent postal survey conducted by Lake Market Research from November 2011 to January 2012, records residents satisfaction with doorstep recycling at 78%.

The Waste team should be commended on their achievements thus far. The communications campaign for the implementation of the food waste collection received a Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) award in 2011.


The needs of flats, terraced housing and houses in multiple occupation are not accommodated as well as others in the borough for recycling and food waste collection. It has been suggested that there are problems, particularly in flats, with the contamination of bins when it is attempted. The Committee feels that residents should be engaged with to establish what they want to achieve. Consideration should be given to low literacy, colour blind, the elderly and those where English is not the first language when designing a system that works. It views these as possible obstacles that will need to be overcome when implementing a recycling system that caters essentially for a small community.

Opportunities should be sought through the planning process where conditions can be explicit in requirements for recycling provisions and there should be an emphasis on ward members to check planning permissions.

That the Waste Team to present the Cabinet Member with an options report regarding the replacement of bins for flats, terraced housing and houses of multiple occupancy to move forward with waste and recycling and food collection in line with the rest of the borough

The new waste contract will allow glass to be placed in the recycling bin and it will be then reused as road aggregate. If glass is brought to a bring site in the borough it will be recycled. Tetra Packsⁱ can only be recycled if brought to the bring sites in the borough. The Committee feels it is important that residents are aware of some of the limitations with the recycling collection to encourage participation with bring sites and increase recycling.

It is fully understood that the introduction of the food waste collection was a step towards reducing waste. In addressing this we begin to consider our buying habits which will impact on packaging and therefore household waste being reduced as a result. Retailers are addressing the issue of food waste and packaging. The culture of Buy One Get One Free (BOGOF) and unnecessary packaging are included in the aims of the Courtauld Commitment. To demonstrate their commitment to cutting waste from their products 35 of the major grocery retailers, suppliers and brands have signed up to this voluntary agreement which aims to:



'We waste £12bn a year on food which we buy and then just throw away. Understanding 'use by' dates and knowing the best way to store food to keep it fresher for longer can help save us pounds.'

LOVE FOOD hate waste

- Design out grocery packaging waste growth by 2008 - This first objective has been met despite increases in sales and population;
- Deliver absolute reductions in packaging waste by 2010; and
- Help reduce the amount of food the nation's householders throw away by 155,000 tonnes by 2010, against a 2008 baseline. Further information on the Courtauld Commitment can be found on the [WRAP](#)ⁱⁱ website.

That there is a continued education on food wastage and promotion of recycling and a feature in the Borough Update outlining how much food is thrown away in Maidstone

That flexible and cost effective options in relation to the use of new technologies and changes to collectables should be included in the terms of the new waste contract. It should also include a proactive clause for partners to explore opportunities in the market.

The Freighter Service & Bulky Collection

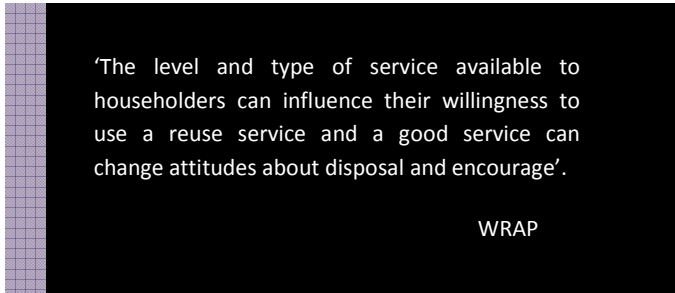
The prevention of waste going to landfill is key to reducing waste. The Committee investigated the current usage of the Freighter service and Bulky collection. Councillors spoke to residents and Officers and found the usage of the Freighter service had dropped since the collection of garden waste ceased. The Committee's findings in September 2011 when they monitored the service showed that what was collected now was mainly seasonal waste being disposed of by those unable to take it to a Household Recycling Site. The Weekend Freighter monitoring undertaken in March 2010 for a six week period had showed low usage at some sites. At this time garden waste and wood were the highest types of waste being disposed of. It was as a result of this monitoring exercise that garden waste was no longer collected in this way and since then it is understood that usage of the service had fallen further. The Council now provide a fortnightly garden waste collection service. Residents can recycle garden waste by hiring a garden waste bin or by purchasing garden waste sacks.

The Committee explored alternatives to the Freighter Service and Bulky Collection. The waste collected by the Bulky collection Service was estimated to be at least 33% reusable furniture. It was felt that the Bulky Collection could offer opportunities for charities or a social enterprise to reuse and resell what was collected. This would reduce the Council's waste overall. NOAH enterprise, a homeless charity and social enterprise based in Luton, Bedfordshire offered the Committee a viable alternative. The model they described was highly effective

and provided a win-win solution to the local authority and the charity supporting vulnerable people in the community. NOAH did not 'cherry-pick' when they made collections. They had a constructive relationship with the local authority providing a win-win solution for both parties. The local authority took away their rubbish free of charge and NOAH prevented goods going to landfill.

NOAH began in 1987 with little means, providing soup and sandwiches to the homeless. The charity received donations of furniture for those it was helping to re home and they found they had a surplus. This provided a starting point from which the organisation has grown. The charity now finds accommodation for over 300 people each year. It has established a training centre, providing accredited training course in woodwork and furniture restoration, white good and refurbishment, warehousing, IT skills and Life skills. The Social Enterprise contributes to its sustainability as a charity and includes:

- Three Luton-based retail outlets selling a variety of new and used furniture, kitchen appliances, clothing and household goods;
- Furniture and appliance restoration and repair at its two warehouse sites; and
- A second hand furniture and kitchen appliance collection and reuse service.



'The level and type of service available to householders can influence their willingness to use a reuse service and a good service can change attitudes about disposal and encourage'.

WRAP

The skills developed by those being rehabilitated through the charity were utilised in every aspect of NOAH enterprise. The organisation is comprised of 35 full time paid employees and 100 volunteers a year through the Social Enterprise.

NOAH enterprise were interested in working with Maidstone Borough Council, if furniture could be stored they would collect it.

Freighter Service

The reuse and recycling of waste collected by the Freighter Service should be investigated by the Waste Team.

That the current usage of the Freighter service is monitored and the delivery of the service re-evaluated

Bulky Collection

That reuse and recycling of waste collected by the Bulky Collection should be investigated by the Waste Team, diverting from landfill by working with charities and other social partnerships

That a service provided by NOAH enterprise for the collection of furniture and white goods from Maidstone Borough Council's bulky collection should be investigated

That the relevant select committee and department at Kent County Council be contacted and the model used by NOAH Enterprise should be highlighted

That the use of the Gateway as a collection point for small items such as batteries, ink cartridges, energy saving light bulbs (containing mercury), small electrical items and plastic bottles should be explored with the involvement of local voluntary and charitable organisations

Plastics

The lack of standardisation in plastics prevents Maidstone Borough Council and others pursuing this area of reuse and recycling at present. The technology is being developed for dealing with mixed plastics and during the course of the new waste contract it will be possible to consider this as an option. The insert in bins that will initially be used for paper has the versatility to be used for other 'valuable' materials in the future.

The Committee visited Closed Loop in Dagenham, Essex. Closed Loop has strong links with Marks and Spencer and other leading retailers and manufacturers. A standardisation of plastics used by manufacturers would make it easier for the public to recycle. Closed Loop is engaging with packaging designers and manufacturers to design for recycling and want to encourage the increased collection of plastic bottles across the UK; domestic, commercial and in public places. They saw the partnership of local authorities as of vital

'Closed Loop is capable of recycling 35,000 tonnes of bottles each year.

875 million bottles that would otherwise have been exported for recycling, or sent to landfill, will now be reprocessed and remain in the UK. This represents nearly 10% of the plastic bottles that are currently collected for recycling in the UK, saving approximately 52,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually'.

Closed Loop

importance to the future of plastic recycling; it was felt that local authorities could form partnerships where retailers could not. The Kent Waste Partnership is already an excellent example of 13 councils working together.

Plastics were described to Members as an untapped 'raw material' and Councils have influence and control on where plastics were collected and were described by Closed Loop as 'primary producers'.

Officers should continue to lobby for the standardisation of plastics in products to make it easier for residents to recycle

The following recommendations were made during the course of the review in relation to the tendering strategy for the new waste contract.

- a) The communities and Overview and Scrutiny Committee would like clauses 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3 to be considered by Cabinet in its decision making and in making this decision the ramification of these clauses within the IAA (Inter Authority Agreement – Appendix3); and
- b) That an explanation is provided in the column 'provide details' in the Equalities Impact Assessment under the characteristic 'Pregnancy and Maternity (Appendix 4)

Recommendations (a) and (b) were considered by Cabinet on 12 October 2012 as part of the decision on **Tendering Strategy – Waste and Recycling Contract 2013.**

The **Issue for Decision** was to consider the tendering strategy for the new waste and recycling contract, together with proposals for street cleansing due to start in August 2013 and approval to commit to a joint procurement with Ashford and Swale Borough Councils.

Included in the decision made was the following response: That the responses to the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), as attached at Appendix A, be agreed.

Thank you

The Committee considered evidence from a variety of stakeholders and would like to thank the following individuals and organisations who have personally contributed to this review:

Closed Loop

Nick Cliffe, Marketing Manager

Aylesford Newsprint

Gemma Barratt, Head of Recycling

Amanda Manning, Recycling Administrator

Maidstone Prison (Recycling Unit)

Ian Brightman, Recycling Manager

NOAH Enterprise

Jim O'Connor, Chief Executive

Steve McGill, Director

Kent County Council

Peter Horn, Waste Operations Manager

Maidstone Borough Council

Steve Goulette, Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services

Jennifer Gosling, Waste Manager

Kent Waste Partnership

Paul Vanston, Kent Waste Partnership Manager

The Committee would also like to thank the members of the public who took the time to offer their opinions and ideas on the Freighter service and Bulky Collection.

**This report is available in alternative formats.
For further information about this service please
contact the Scrutiny Section on 01622 602524.**

**The report is also available on the Council's
website:**

www.maidstone.gov.uk/osc

ⁱ Tetra pack is a multinational food processing and packaging company of Swedish origin. Tetra Pack's first product was a paper carton used for storing and transporting milk. The first product was a package in the shape of a triangular pyramid, called the Tetra Classic.

ⁱⁱ www.wrap.org.uk

Agenda Item 9

Maidstone Borough Council

Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 10 April 2012

Future Work Programme 2012-13

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Committee are invited to consider items for the Overview and Scrutiny work programme 2012-2013.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee suggests items for next year's Overview and Scrutiny work programme.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be meeting in June 2012 to agree their work programmes for the next municipal year. At each Committee meeting Members will consider the work programme suggestions from officers, members of the public, Councillors and the 2011/12 Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

3. Future Work Programme

- 3.1 Topics for the work programme must not include individual complaints or have been reviewed in the two years previously. Reviews carried out by Overview and Scrutiny in the last two municipal years have included:

- Customer Service Gateway;
- Rural Economy;
- Securing Water Supplies;
- Obesity;
- Domestic Violence;
- Neighborhood Action Planning;
- Mental Health Services (joint with Tunbridge Wells);
- Traffic Congestion; and
- Waste and Recycling and the New Waste contract.

- 3.2 The Committee could choose not to consider items for 2012-13 however this would mean that a valuable opportunity to suggest items from experienced scrutiny members would be lost.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 4.1 The Committee will consider, as part of the formal work programme planning process, whether potential items meet the council's corporate objectives.

- 4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the council's priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives may therefore include work that the Committee will consider over the next year.