

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY, LEISURE SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2014**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM**

**Report prepared by Jennifer Shepherd**

**1. WASTE UPDATE**

**1.1 Issue for Consideration**

- 1.1.1 To review the progress made following the "Making Waste Work for Maidstone Review" carried out by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and update on the objectives set out in the Council's Waste Strategy 2010-2015.

**1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Environment and Public Realm**

It is recommended:

- 1.2.1 That the Committee notes the update provided in the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (Appendix A); and
- 1.2.2 That the Committee notes the progress made following the report to the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding complaints following the start of the new contract; and
- 1.2.3 That the Committee notes the progress made regarding the objectives set out in the Council's Waste Strategy 2010-2015 (Appendix B and Appendix C); and
- 1.2.4 That the Committee considers the proposals for the Council's new Waste Strategy and makes recommendations as appropriate.
- 1.3 Reasons for Recommendation**
- 1.3.1 In 2010, Maidstone Borough Council adopted its first Waste Strategy. This set out key objectives for the Council over the following 5 years based on the principles of the Waste Hierarchy.

- 1.3.2 The principles of the Waste Hierarchy are to consider the most sustainable options for waste first. This means reducing, reusing and recycling waste above energy recovery or landfill.
- 1.3.3 As part of the Strategy, Maidstone introduced weekly food waste collections, made changes to the garden collections and increased glass recycling.
- 1.3.4 Following the implementation of the Strategy, the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee carried out a waste review entitled "Making Waste Work for Maidstone." This review considered all aspects of the services and made recommendations relating particularly to improving recycling and reuse within borough and developing new opportunities through the new waste contract.
- 1.3.5 The new Mid Kent Joint Waste Contract started in Maidstone in August 2013 and as part of this, significant improvements have been made to the service offered to local residents.
- 1.3.6 Making Waste Work for Maidstone Update - The progress made following the recommendations set out in the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan is included in Appendix A.
- 1.3.7 The key successes have been the inclusion of glass, additional plastic and cartons in the kerbside collections, the introduction of textile and small electrical item collections as well as improvements in the use of technology.
- 1.3.8 One area of recommendations from the Committee was regarding reuse and recycling of bulky items and waste collected at the Saturday freighter. Unfortunately progress with regard to this has been slow due to the difficulties encountered separating this waste and identifying a stable outlet for the material.
- 1.3.9 Ongoing work is being carried out to develop this further and identify new opportunities. The bulky collection and Saturday freighter services are one of the areas which will be considered as part of the Council's new strategy.
- 1.3.10 It is recommended that the update is noted and that the recommendations for the Bulky Waste Service and Saturday freighter are considered as part of the new Waste Strategy.
- 1.3.11 Complaints - In December 2013, a report regarding the level of complaints received by the Council was taken to the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

This report noted that the level of complaints for the Quarter was higher than normal due to the changes to the collection contract.

- 1.3.12 Following this report, the Council has worked with Biffa Municipal to address the issues with performance. This has resulted in extra supervisory staff at Biffa, additional training being provided and collections crews being required to take more responsibility for service failures.
- 1.3.13 As a result the level of complaints has dropped significantly with only four complaints received in February 2014 regarding collection issues and a further two regarding Council policy.
- 1.3.14 The level of missed collections is also steadily decreasing and performance is returning to an acceptable state. Ongoing work is still be made to improve performance further.
- 1.3.15 Waste Strategy Update - In February 2014, the Council reported progress against the objectives of the Waste Strategy. This is included in Appendix B and the Waste Strategy 2010-2015 is included in Appendix C.
- 1.3.16 Since 2010 when the Strategy was adopted, the Council has achieved the objectives set including reducing overall waste arisings by 10% compared with the 2005-2010 average, increasing glass recycling, improving customer satisfaction and improving the service's value for money.
- 1.3.17 One of the key targets of the strategy was to achieve a recycling rate of 50% by 2015. With the inclusion of glass in the recycling collection and the addition of textile and small electrical item collections, the Council's recycling rate has increased to nearly 50%. With the expected increase of garden waste during the peak months, March – July, it is projected the Council will achieve a recycling rate of 50%.
- 1.3.18 It is recommended that the Committee note the progress outlined in Appendix B.
- 1.3.19 Future Plans – The Council is now looking to produce a new Waste Strategy for 2014 - 2019 to set new objectives and ensure continuous improvement throughout the new contract.
- 1.3.20 The report to the Cabinet Member for the Environment in February 2014 recommended the new Strategy considers the following:
- A target of 60% recycling by 2019
  - Recycling in flats and from communal collection points

- Communication campaigns to increase capture rates for new materials including glass and plastics
- Public engagement through door-knocking
- Options for bulky waste
- Recycling of street litter
- Current waste and recycling policies

1.3.21 These will enable the Council to identify opportunities to reduce service costs as well as having a clear strategy which will enable the Council to attract external funding.

1.3.22 An informational visit was carried out to South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils as they have achieved a recycling rate of 65% with a similar service to Maidstone.

1.3.23 This visit identified the areas mentioned above as potential opportunities to increase recycling, reduce waste arisings and improve the service offered to residents.

1.3.24 It is recommended that the Committee consider these suggested areas and make recommendations as appropriate.

#### 1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could choose not to consider proposals for the new Waste Strategy, however this is not recommended as it is essential this Strategy offers value for money and which meets the needs of local taxpayers.

#### 1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The recommendations of this report support the Council's priority of Corporate and Customer Excellence.

#### 1.6 Other Implications

##### 1.6.1

1. Financial
2. Staffing
3. Legal
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development
6. Community Safety


7. Human Rights Act
8. Procurement
9. Asset Management


1.6.2 Whilst the recommendations of this report do not have any specific implications, the adoption of a new five year strategy with further aspirations is likely to have financial and staffing requirements.

1.6.3 These implications will be considered as part of the adoption of a new five year waste strategy.

#### 1.7 Relevant Documents

##### 1.7.1 Appendices

1.7.2 Appendix A – Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan

1.7.3 Appendix B – Cabinet Member Report – Review and Progress Update of Waste Strategy

1.7.4 Appendix C – Waste Strategy 2010-2015

##### 1.7.5 Background Documents

1.7.6 Waste Strategy 2010-2015

<p><b><u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u></b></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, this is a Key Decision because: .....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Wards/Parishes affected: .....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><b><u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u></b></p>
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