

Maidstone Borough Council

Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 9 August 2011

'Making Waste Work for Maidstone' Review

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At their meeting on 12 July 2011, the Committee agreed that an informal meeting should be arranged to discuss the review with relevant Officers and expert witness, Paul Vanston who had been invited to attend their next meeting. A meeting was held on Tuesday 26 July with Paul Vanston, Kent Waste Partnership Manager, Jennifer Gosling, Waste Manager, Jonathan Scott, Street Scene Manager and Steve Goulette, Assistant Director Environment and Regulatory Services.
- 1.2 The meeting gave members the opportunity to discuss the topic at length, revisiting the best value review and the recent achievements of the Waste Team. It gave Paul Vanston the opportunity to discuss the scoping document and provide Members with a detailed background regarding the Kent Waste Partnership and his role, supporting 12 other councils.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee interview Paul Vanston, Kent Waste Partnership and Steve Goulette, Assistant Director Environment and Regulatory Services.
- 2.2 Areas of questioning could include but are not limited to:
 - What value can be found currently in waste materials such as metals, wood, plastics and glass?
 - What organisations are there in Kent that have the possibility to offer a 'collect all service' for Bulky Waste and the Freighter Service?
 - Which councils, if known, have arrangements currently with 'Closed Loop' to recycle plastics?
 - What solutions can be found to make it easier for residents to recycle plastics; by the retailers and by the council?
 - Does the key to waste reduction begin with consumer purchasing habits and subsequent food and packaging waste?

- What sort of engagement with manufacturers and retailers would be beneficial, is there an organisation currently leading the way in this area?

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 Following their pre meeting with Officers and Paul Vanston Members have made revisions to their scoping document (Appendix A). Three main areas were identified at the meeting as areas where the Committee could focus and add value:

- Waste Reduction;
- Freighter Service and Bulky Waste Collections; and
- Plastics.

3.2 Members will be visiting Closed Loop, a recycling plant in Dagenham on 12 August; Paul Vanston will be accompanying Members on this outing. It will give the Committee the opportunity to understand some of the value that can be found in plastic recycling.

3.3 Members have volunteered to follow the Freighter Service and identify what waste is being collected and begin to identify possible ways to reuse or recycle what is being collected

3.4 The Tendering Strategy – Waste and recycling contract from 2013 will be coming to the Committee's September meeting. Members will be able to make recommendations that will be taken to Cabinet the following day (14 September 2011)

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

4.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priorities:

- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence' and 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live.'

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.

