

**Environment Portfolio Holder Report****1. The Consumer Environment**

The **Suffolk Waste Partnership** (SWP) held a workshop on 15 July 2016 to discuss the future of waste services in Suffolk. The workshop was initiated from a 2015 report that went to the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders, who then asked the SWP to undertake a whole system review of waste services across the county.

The SWP Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, which has successfully supported the development of waste services in Suffolk and acted as a driver for continuous joint working between the eight Councils of Suffolk, is due to expire in 2020. The SWP has created a strategic opportunity to consider future waste service provision for the next 10-15 years, having established a co-terminus end-date for a number of key waste contracts in 2019.

The workshop considered a number of alternative service delivery options that had been identified through a process of investigating and evaluating what would constitute efficient, cost effective and compliant kerbside waste collection services, whilst also ensuring that Suffolk maintains its position as a top performing authority area.

SWP officers have also been working closely with the Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP). At the request of Defra Minister Rory Stewart, WRAP is currently undertaking a cross industry project to examine ways to bring greater consistency to household waste and recycling collections in England, working with local authorities, waste management contractors, recyclers, producers and the retail sector.

Further work will now be undertaken by the SWP to refine some of the options and provide more detailed figures. This work will be presented to the SWP in the autumn.

The winning entrant and 2<sup>nd</sup> prizewinner of our annual **Litter Awareness Poster Competition** both came from Claydon Primary School and 3<sup>rd</sup> place went to Stradbroke CEVC School. The competition is the culmination of school visits by one of our Public Realm officers to promote litter awareness at a receptive age. The competition was kindly sponsored by Tesco in Stowmarket, whose support is much appreciated. Their manager Andrew and community champion Amanda joined in the prize-giving at the school in Claydon on 14 July, which was also attended by Councillors Burn, Barker, Caston and Whitehead, and Public Realm officer Sarah Carter who organises this annual event. Part of the prize is for the winning poster to be reproduced on the side of one of our street cleansing vans, which was also on show at the school.

**2. The Business Environment**

One of the objectives of the **Open for Business** project is to fully incorporate the Regulators Code. This code is mandatory for Environmental Health and Licensing and places an emphasis on supporting business growth. The revised policy is intended to apply the Regulators Code across all the regulatory services the Councils provide.

The revised enforcement policy is now available for public consultation until the end of September and we are using appropriate databases of both businesses and individuals to try and get a good cross section of our communities to give us an opinion on the objectives and principles behind it as follows:

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Assist businesses and others in meeting their legal obligations without unnecessary expense
- Focus on prevention rather than cure
- Ensure that we enforce the law in a fair, equitable and consistent manner
- Take firm action when it is necessary and appropriate to do so.
- Carry out enforcement that is risk-based, consistent, proportionate and effective.

The policy sets out the principles that must be followed when making enforcement decisions, which are:

- Courtesy and helpfulness
- Openness
- Clear standards and practices
- Proportionality
- Consistency
- Training of staff

The policy for consultation and the link to the survey can be found on both Council websites.

On the Babergh website it is: <http://www.babergh.gov.uk/council-business/council-and-democracy/corporate-enforcement-statement-of-policy/>

On the Mid Suffolk website it is here: <http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/council-business/council-and-democracy/corporate-enforcement-statement-of-policy/>

### **3. The Modern Built Environment**

Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils are working in partnership with Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury District Council and have commissioned the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) to work with us to produce a business case and provide project management support to consolidate the building control services of the Councils and establish a Local Authority Trading Company through which the service will be delivered.

LABC is the umbrella organisation which represent and promotes all Local Authority Building Control services across England and Wales. They provide a wide range of support services including technical, legislative and management guidance, marketing and commercial business development support along with a bespoke consultancy service covering performance, productivity, structure, commercial development and transformation.

The objective is to develop a partnership working arrangement to create a sustainable and resilient building control service that can retain and increase market share of building control fee earning work. This will benefit in increased fee income, improved staff retention

and the creation of financial and time efficiencies through partnering. There is also the opportunity to develop add on services that make us attractive to external customers and create additional fee income.

The business case should be completed by October 2016.

#### **4. Renewable Energy**

Construction of the **East Anglia ONE** offshore wind farm, which received approval from the Secretary of State in 2014, will be starting shortly. This is a £2.5 billion investment and the turbines will be constructed by Siemens in Hull. Scottish Power Renewables is currently in discussion with officers over the discharge of the relevant requirements, including the proposals for a new substation at Bramford, which will be extensively landscaped. Once constructed the farm of 102 wind turbines will generate around 714MW.

An Examination into the **East Anglia THREE** offshore wind farm opened on 29 June. This project will provide for the generation of 1,200MW (about 170 turbines) utilising infrastructure constructed as part of the East Anglia ONE project. A further substation would be constructed at Bramford and officers are working with Scottish Power Renewables to minimise the impact of this aspect of the proposal.

Our Environmental Protection team is liaising closely with officers Nick Ward and Ben Elvin as we endeavour to ensure that appropriate controls will be put in place to mitigate potential environmental impacts associated with the substation developments, especially noise, dust and air quality.

David Burn