Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet Date: 22 February 2011

Subject: Environment Portfolio Item: 6(c)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mary Sartin

Recommending: That the report of the Environment Portfolio Holder be noted

Waste Management

The disruption to waste and recycling collections during the Christmas and New Year period was caught up reasonably quickly. The weather disruption and catch up arrangements were managed without activating the contingency plan of opening up the Civic Offices in Epping.

A new door step textile collection service is being launched on the 1st of April. The current waste and recycling calendars will have details of the scheme. There is no charge for this collection service and all income from the sale of items collected will be donated to the Chairman of Council's charities.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind members that a visit has been arranged to the SITA Material Recycling Facility (MRF) in Barking on Tuesday 8 March. This is the site that receives most of our dry recycling. Please refer to the Council Bulletin of 4 February for further details.

Bobbingworth

I reported at the last meeting on the setting up of a local liaison group for the overview on the way forward for this site. The first meeting of the group took place on 16 December with myself, as the Portfolio Holder, in the chair and local representatives from Bobbingworth and Ongar as well EFDC officers.

One of the key issues is the date of opening the site for public access. No decision has yet been made in this respect and as soon as it is possible to open the site I will inform members.

Fixed Penalty Notices

As of 29 November accredited officers have been able to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for a range of environmental offences. These provide an alternative to prosecution in the courts for offences such as littering, graffiti and fly-posting, excessive noise, inadequate waste transfer documentation, abandoned vehicles and dog fouling. Fixed penalties range from £50 to £300, a full list being available on the Council's website. Officers issuing the notices do not themselves collect the fines but for some offences these will be reduced by 50% if paid within 10 days of issue. If a

Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid we will pursue the matter through the courts to obtain a conviction.

A campaign to raise awareness prior to the introduction of this new tool in the Council's fight against those who commit these offences has been underway over the last three months. There are a minority of residents and visitors to the district who choose not to respect the local environment but they cost local council tax payers many thousands of pounds in clean-up costs.

The initial period when FPNs can be issued will be more about education but I will update members on numbers of notices issued at the Council meeting. Three FPNs have been issued to date.

Enforcement

Four stop and check operations have been carried out with Essex Police with a number of warnings issued.

Two joint operations have been carried out, one with Essex Police checking tyre fitters for correct tyre disposal and the other with British Transport Police checking scrap metal dealers for LUL cable stolen from the underground system.