

TERMS OF REFERENCE - ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANNING SERVICES

Status: as at August 2006

1. To keep under review the activity and decisions of the West Essex Joint Waste Committee with respect to:
 - (a) the procurement of the integrated waste collection and disposal contract for the West Essex area (Epping Forest, Braintree, Harlow, Brentwood & Uttlesford);
 - (b) the monitoring of contract performance; and
 - (c) the annual review of the Joint Waste Committee business plan.
2. To consider what changes are practical and desirable to Council policies concerning the reuse of redundant and other buildings in the Metropolitan Green Belt; in particular, are further restrictions necessary (changes in policy required) to ensure that such developments are truly sustainable and;
3. To consider the arrangements by which the new Local Development Scheme is being brought into operation. In particular, to consider how new requirements for community consultation and strategic environmental assessment work in practice.
4. To consider matters which arise through the process that the Government is driving to bring in an East Of England Plan; these may range from arrangements concerning the Examination in Public, how to respond to the initiatives or views of those who support or oppose us, and how we may support or oppose the views taken by others. In particular, this is to allow the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development to remain tuned in to local views, and supersedes previous advisory group arrangements.
5. In the context of the DERA 'Cleaner Neighbourhoods Consultation document' to consider the viability of employing uniformed wardens, the formulation of a response to the document and the financial consequences of these matters.
6. In relation to Traveller issues to consider and monitor:
 - (a) the measures previously agreed by the Council to secure the clearance of the top level of the sites at Paynes Lane and the actions agreed for Birchfield;
 - (b) the position regarding tolerated sites and;
 - (c) the management of travellers who enter onto land within the district with a view to unauthorised encampments, with particular reference to the legal remedies available, interactions with other agencies such as Essex Police and Essex County Council and the provision of emergency and/or transit sites within the district;
 - (d) Government's guidance on the needs of travellers in the context of the Council's review of its District Local Plan and the Essex Housing Needs Assessment;
 - (e) the results of the Commission for Racial Equality's study on traveller issues in which this Council participated, once published;

(f) That the draft list of current and past sites within the District produced by Planning Services be completed and updated and made available to the Environmental and Panel Services Standing Panel.