

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C/015/2007-08.

Date of meeting: 11 June 2007.



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Environmental Protection.

Subject: Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy – Memorandum of Understanding.

Officer contact for further information: John Gilbert (01992 - 564062).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 - 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Protection be authorised to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Council

Report:

1. The Council has been working collaborately with the County Council and the other Essex districts and boroughs towards the development of the Essex Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS). It has achieved this through its participation in the Waste Management Advisory Board and its membership of the Constitutionally formed West Essex Waste Management Joint Committee. Other members of the Committee are Harlow, Brentwood, Braintree and Uttlesford Districts.

2. The County, with Southend Unitary Authority is making an application to Government for PFI funding to assist in meeting the costs of new capital infrastructure that will be required to achieve the high recycling strategy, which has been adopted for waste management in the County. The total costs are estimated to be in the region of £300 million pounds and Government have set aside £90 million of PFI credits.

3. For the strategy and the PFI bid to be successful it is essential that the County Council, its partner districts and boroughs and Southend Unitary Authority can demonstrate their commitment to partnership working in terms of delivering the agreed JMWMS. This will be demonstrated in two ways:

(a) a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by each of the twelve constituent waste collection authorities; and

(b) a letter of support from each of the three Area Waste Management Joint Committees (East, West and Thames Gateway) signed by the Joint Committee Chairman on behalf of each of the constituent waste collection authorities demonstrating district and borough councils' support and commitment to the PFI Reference Project

Item (b) will be the subject of a future report to Cabinet.

4. The MoU, which is attached is not a legally binding document, but it does clearly demonstrate the commitment of this Council to remain engaged in the development of the JMWMS and to work in partnership with the County in terms of its own recycling strategies and the delivery of materials to its waste disposal plants, once constructed. The key elements are set out in para. 3.2 (a to e) of the MoU.

5. This is the second MoU. The first was agreed to by way of a Portfolio Holder decision in February 2006. Whilst the wording in this version has changed a little, it does not

materially alter the commitment of the Council. This version was unanimously adopted by the West Essex Waste Management Joint Committee at its meeting on 18 April 2007. The Districts have been requested to sign the document no later than the end of July 2007.

Statement in Support of Recommended Action:

6. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a key element of the Joint Waste Management Strategy, which is already part of the Council's agreed policy framework. The MoU underpins the County Council's and The West Essex Joint Waste Committee's overall strategy for the future management of waste within the County.

7. If the PFI and the JMWMS are to be successful, the MoU (and later the letter of support) is essential in demonstrating partnership working between the County and the district and boroughs.

Other Options for Action:

8. The only option is not to sign the MoU at this time, or indeed at any time. Given the Council's own agreed waste strategy and its membership of the West Essex Joint Committee, this is not an option that can be recommended.

Consultation Undertaken:

9. None.

Resource Implications:

Budget Provision: Nil.

Personnel: Nil.

Land: Nil.

Council Plan 2006-10/BVPP Reference: Continued improvement to levels of recycling of household waste: "Green & Unique".

Relevant Statutory Powers: The Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Background Papers: Previous Portfolio Holder decision, reports to the Environment Standing Scrutiny panel, minutes of West Essex Waste Management Joint Committee.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Enhanced levels of recycling plus contribution to the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Key Decision Reference (if required): N/A.