NOTICE OF MEETING: Environment & Transport Committee
TIME: 4.00pm
DATE: Tuesday 13 November 2001
VENUE: Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely
COMMITTEE OFFICER: Adrian Stokes EXTENSION: 6281

Liberal Democrat Members
Councillor Ian Allen (Ch)
Councillor Donald Adey
Councillor James Coppola
Councillor Fiona McKay-Rae
Councillor Neil Morrison

Independent Members
Councillor Colin Fordham
Councillor Liz Garner
Councillor Alan White

Labour Members
Councillor Graham Steward

Substitute
Councillor John Abbott
Councillor Cyril Durrant
Councillor Dil Owen

Deputy Substitute
Councillor Simon Higginson
Councillor Owen Bethell
Councillor Dil Owen

Lead Officer: Stephen Clements Quorum: 4 Members

AGENDA

1. Public Question Time
   The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes public question time

2. Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee meeting held 11 September 2001

3. Apologies and Substitutions

4. Corporate Plan Update

ITEMS FOR DECISION/RECOMMENDATION – PUBLIC
5. Best Value Review - Waste Management
(Report herewith – Paper A29)

6. ECDC Energy and Water Audit - Results and Proposed Actions
(Report herewith – Paper A30)

7. ECDC Biodiversity Action Plan
(Report herewith – Paper A31)

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS

ITEMS FOR DECISION WHICH IS ANTICIPATED WILL BE DEBATED IN PRIVATE

9. Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee meeting held 11 September 2001 relating to confidential minutes
BEST VALUE REVIEW - WASTE MANAGEMENT

To: Environment & Transport Committee

Date: 13th November 2001

From: Executive Director (Environmental Services)

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To receive the final report of the Best Value Inspectorate in respect of the review of waste management services in East Cambridgeshire.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended:-

1. that the contents of the Best Value Inspectors report (Appendix 1) be noted and accepted.

2. that Government be requested to review the funding arrangements for Waste Management activities and move to a regime of mainstream funding through the Rate Support Grant.

3.0 COSTS

3.1 There are no costs associated with the recommendation.

4.0 OPTIONS

4.1 At this stage in the inspection process the final report at Appendix 1 has been agreed and published. Any options are therefore limited to the Council's approach to the implementation of the Best Value Inspectors' recommendations.

5.0 ARGUMENTS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The BV inspection assessed the Council's Waste Management Services as providing a "Good" two star service which "will probably improve".

5.2 The second part of this assessment is based on the fact that the BV Improvement Plan included appropriate challenging targets and that there was a rigorous system in place
for monitoring implementation. More importantly, the Inspectors recognised the commitment from Members and Officers to improve the service and to meet overarching statutory targets; partly by working in partnership through a County-Wide Waste Strategy.

5.3 The Inspectors made a number of recommendations in their report as follows:

We recommend that East Cambridgeshire District Council:

1. Develop and implement plans that will ensure top quartile performance and statutory targets are met.

2. Undertake consultation with service users to ensure customer requirements are met.

3. Utilise all public information options to inform users of service standards.

4. Establish clear objectives and targets for education and awareness activities.

5. Ensure that the full financial impact of improvements is reflected in the improvement plan.

6. Ensure that the development of performance management capacity includes close monitoring of delivery and outcomes of the improvement plan.

5.4 The majority of these issues will be delivered through joint working on the County-Wide Waste Strategy and, as such, were already included within the Best Value Improvement Plan and subsequently within the Environmental Services Service Plan. This latter document will shortly be revised for 2002/03 and, again, will include actions to deliver improvements in the service with appropriate monitoring of targets.

5.5 With respect to their fifth recommendation, the Inspectors expressed some concern that the full financial provision necessary to meet both the statutory and aspirational targets had not been clearly identified. From experience this is a similar situation for other local authorities all faced with high level statutory targets for recycling and waste diversion and facing the need for massive increases in both capital and revenue expenditure.

5.6 Members may wish to consider seeking assurances from Government on the future Exchequer resources to be made available for waste management issues. The existing allocation, for bidding in the next two years, totals only £140 million and the Cambridgeshire authorities have already prepared bids for a share of this money. In addition, many authorities, East Cambridgeshire included, are submitting other bids to
a variety of funding sources, in order to supplement the resources made available internally.

5.7 Members may consider that the Government funding of such a mainstream statutory service; with national and regional targets for improvement, should be included within the RSG and be ring fenced. In addition, Members may consider that the full value of recycling credits, paid in respect of waste diverted from the household waste stream, should be hypothecated in total to local authorities for further work on waste management activities.

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Waste Management Strategy

6.2 National Waste Strategy
ECDC ENERGY AND WATER AUDIT – RESULTS AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

To: Environment and Transport Committee

Date: 13th November 2001

From: Corporate Strategy Officer (LA21)

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider a revised draft of East Cambridgeshire District Council’s (ECDC’s) Energy and Water Action Report and Plan attached at Appendix A.

1.2 The action plan was originally presented to the Environment and Transport Committee on 11th September 2001. The chairman felt that further information regarding costings and the impact of implementing actions in years 2-5 should be received and deferred consideration of a revised action plan to the next committee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are recommended:

1. to adopt the attached revised action plan for ECDC.

2. to ring fence any savings made and use these to provide investment during subsequent years.

3. to agree that a written resource policy be adapted by the council, which will act as a public expression of the council’s commitment to resource conservation as well as a working document to guide resource management practices in the council.

3.0 COSTS

3.1 Page 19 of Appendix A outlines the cost of the revised action plan.

3.2 Some of the actions within the plan have no associated capital costs and will save money from the outset. However, other measures will have an initial cost and will not pay for themselves for a number of years, after which time they will start to save the council money. Cost savings and environmental savings have been
maximised by including measures, which will involve long term, spend to save investment as well as no cost measures.

3.3 The measures to be undertaken pre-year 1 (i.e. between January - April 2001) will cost approximately £5,700. From then onwards the capital cost of each year’s action plan is approximately £10,000 and the total 5-year action plan (excluding year 5 refurbishment and repair costs) is £49,050. Funding of the capital costs for actions to be undertaken in pre-year 1, year 1 and year 2 can be accommodated for by re-scheduling some of the LA21 budget originally set aside to fund a scheme to encourage local businesses to reduce their energy use. Actions in years 3 and 4 will need to be funded from savings made in previous years and savings to be made in year 5. It is therefore recommend that any savings made are ring-fenced and used for providing investment during subsequent years. This makes an accurate and methodical collection of utility expenditure essential. Year 5 measures involve refurbishment measures only and will need to come out of the council’s refurbishment and repairs budget.

3.4 It is difficult to estimate the cost savings of the action plan because a combination of measures will not necessarily result in the total savings being the sum of each individual measure. This is because each saving is based on the current consumption and therefore savings go down at each stage of consumption reduction. Furthermore, in the future, there are likely to be reductions in technology costs and increases in energy bills, which make it difficult to estimate cost savings. Bearing these issues in mind the total cost savings of the action plan over 5 years is predicted to be around £49,895. If this is off set against the capital costs of the measures (£49,050) the action plan will have broken even in 5 years and from then onwards will provide overall cost savings to the council.

4.0 OPTIONS

4.1 Members have the options to:

1. accept or amend the action plan

2. ring fence any savings made and use these to provide investment during subsequent years or not

3. agree that a written resource policy be adapted by the Council or not

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 Please refer to the report to the committee on 11th September 2001.
6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 Please refer to the report to the committee on 11\textsuperscript{th} September 2001.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Report to Environment and Transport Panel on 11\textsuperscript{th} September 2001 “ECDC Energy and water Audit – Results and Proposed Actions”

7.2 Report to Environment and Transport Panel on 27\textsuperscript{th} July 2000 “Energy Audit of East Cambridgeshire District Council”
To: Environment and Transport Committee  
Date: 13th November 2001  
From: Corporate Strategy Officer (LA21) and LA21 Student Placement

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the East Cambridgeshire District Council Local Biodiversity Action Plan attached at Appendix 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are recommended to:

1. adopt the attached Local Biodiversity Action plan for East Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. adopt the attached aims and objectives of the Action Plan as the guidelines driving the District’s work on biodiversity.

3.0 COSTS

3.1 The cost of the East Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan will be approximately £3K per year for 3 years. The first 2 years of the plan i.e. between April 2002 and April 2003, and April 2003 and April 2004 can be accommodated for within the LA21 budget. After April 2004, the plan will need financing from additional resources.

4.0 OPTIONS

4.1 Members have 3 options available:

1. Adopt the action plan as outlined in Appendix 1.
2. Adopt the action plan with changes and recommendations.
3. Reject the action plan.
5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council has already resolved to support the Cambridgeshire County Council’s Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The East Cambridgeshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan will document the Council's own response to the actions in the County Biodiversity Action Plan and allow our work to be specific to East Cambridgeshire.

5.2 It is anticipated that the adoption of a plan specific to East Cambridgeshire will generate other opportunities for continued partnership work on biodiversity in the future as other organisations recognise that East Cambridgeshire is taking positive action towards conserving and enhancing its local biodiversity.

5.3 Cambridgeshire County Biodiversity Action Plan has made news headlines in its pioneering initiatives, such as the “Developers Checklist” produced in late summer 2001. It would be appropriate for East Cambridgeshire to be recognised for its work towards biodiversity in conjunction with the County work.

5.4 In 1992 the UK signed up to the Rio Biodiversity Charter and produced the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, confirming the Government's recognition of the importance of biodiversity in the work towards a sustainable future. National governments are ultimately reliant on local authorities to carry out such work and bring it to the local communities.

5.5 The Countryside Rights of Way Act implemented statutory responsibility for biodiversity within government departments. Although not specific to Local Authorities, it is considered probable that increasing responsibility for biodiversity will rest with county and district councils. With a local biodiversity action plan in place specific to East Cambridgeshire, the District will be able to respond to increasing obligations more effectively.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The adoption of the East Cambridgeshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan will underline East Cambridgeshire’s commitment to the Cambridgeshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan and Partnership, and to the local, national and international work in conserving, enhancing and sustaining biodiversity.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Cambridgeshire County Council and the BAP Partnership’s Cambridgeshire’s Local Biodiversity Action Plan 1999

7.2 Biodiversity: the UK Steering Report Volume 1: Meeting the Challenge