

Report to	Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee
Date	21 November 2007
Report By	Director of Transport and Environment
Title of Report	Best Value Review of a Waste Authority
Purpose of Report	To provide information on the actions taken, and update on potential joint working options by all authorities in East Sussex following the scrutiny review held in 2006/2007.

RECOMMENDATION: To note the report

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 At this stage there are no specific financial implications, but there may be savings in the future, if joint working is achieved between authorities.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 A Best Value Review was carried out in 2006/07, exploring the feasibility of a Joint Waste Partnership/Organisation for East Sussex. The recommendation was to explore the creation of a consortium of all authorities, which was agreed at East Sussex County Council's Cabinet meeting on the 30 January 2007.

2.2 Since then, the authorities have continued to work together, and have achieved the following:

- developed a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (MWMS) for East Sussex;
- elected members at the East Sussex Local Government Association (ESLGA) Waste Committee on 7 March 2007 approved the MWMS as the adopted waste strategy for East Sussex;
- East Sussex County Council (ESCC) adopted the MWMS at Cabinet on 10 July 2007;
- all authorities have taken a report to their cabinet committees, and have adopted the strategy, but with caveats that the recycling credits position is resolved;
- MWMS position statement and strategy sent to Defra by the 13 October 2007 deadline;
- ESCC held meetings with all the Waste Collection Authorities on closer working, sharing a predictive Waste Forecast Model, future waste arisings and recycling;
- three Borough & District councils are bringing recyclate material to contract facilities for onward processing, providing the authorities with an alternative to managing this material themselves.

2.3 There are a number of issues that are preventing joint working from being as effective as possible. The main issue is the amount of Recycling Credit paid by ESCC to the Districts & Boroughs for recycling. The County, however, maintains that this issue, and the level to which recycling credits will be paid, are not linked to strategic partnership working.

2.4 All the authorities realise that progress must be made, and have agreed to an away day on 24 January 2008 to consider the way forward. The day will be facilitated by IDeA's Regional Associate Director and a colleague. It will provide an opportunity to agree on shared objectives, barriers to working together, identifying contract restrictions, joint benefits that could be achieved, and possible new ways of managing waste.

2.5 Prior to this event, the ESLGA meeting on 14 November 2007 will receive a presentation from Defra on their proposals for Joint Waste Authorities, including the possibility of funding pilot schemes to test out this new way of working together on waste management.

3. Environmental Issues

3.1 Working together on the management of waste will enable all of the authorities to look after the local environment, and help identify, and address any future environmental issues.

4 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

4.1 Progression of joint working principles between all East Sussex authorities has continued. The Councils are exploring the creation of a consortium of all authorities, and there have been closer and better working relations at officer level, which will be further enhanced through the activities highlighted above.

4.2 The next progress update will be reported to the Scrutiny Committee in June 2008.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None