ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

29th September 2005

PRESENT:-

Labour Group
Councillor Taylor (Chair), Councillor Lauro (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Bell, Carroll, Isham, Shepherd, Stone and Whyman, M.B.E.

Conservative Group
Councillors Atkin, Bale and Ford.

Independent Member
Councillor Mrs. Walton.

APOLOGY

An apology for absence from the Meeting was received from Councillor Mrs. Hall (Conservative Group).

EDS/26. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th August 2005 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

EDS/27. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND REPORTS**

The Chair reported that the Council had recently received notification that it's bid to the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership for funding for a tourism facility, based at the Sharpe's Pottery Centre had been successful. The scheme, in partnership with the District Council would provide a significant improvement in tourism for the area.

The Chair also reported on primary school visits, where Timothy Wenk was providing a "magic show", which demonstrated the benefits of waste reduction and recycling. The Chair had recently attended one such show; he felt that the children had enjoyed and clearly understood the recycling message. He congratulated Officers on this initiative.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

EDS/28. **HERITAGE GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Heritage Grants Sub-Committee held on 7th June 2005, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes at Annexe 'A', be received and noted.

EDS/29. **DERBYSHIRE'S JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – FINAL CONSULTATION DRAFT**

It was reported that over the last year, a working group comprising representatives of all Local Authorities in Derbyshire had been developing a joint municipal waste strategy for Derby and Derbyshire. The strategy would provide a framework for decisions to be taken on the management of municipal solid waste in the County and City areas over the next twenty years. Appended to the report was a summary of the draft strategy. In parallel with the strategy's development, a strategic environmental assessment was being prepared, to ensure compliance with recent European legislation. Government guidance required meaningful and wide-ranging consultation on the strategy. Each local authority had to determine how this would be undertaken in the light of local circumstances.

The report explained those key elements on which the proposed strategy would be based. The consultation exercise would aim to engage a wide range of local organisations, agencies and stakeholders over the period September to December 2005 and examples were provided.

The Chair recognised that the partnership work undertaken had been productive in bringing the strategy forward. The Leader of the Council sought information on the relative recycling performance of this Authority as compared to others within the County. He also asked about possible sanctions against either the District or County Councils if they did not achieve the stated targets. In reply, the Head of Environmental Services confirmed that this Authority's performance was similar to the average across the County. The Deputy Chief Executive understood that Derby City Council was currently achieving the highest recycling performance in the County at around 30%. He felt it was easier to achieve a higher rate of recycling within a city area than a rural area like South Derbyshire. The Council was ahead of its targets in terms of recycling. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that penalties could be levied against the disposal authority, for failing to achieve recycling targets. The Government was about to issue a further consultation on proposed requirements for collection authorities.

The Chair explained that this Council was participating actively in rolling out the strategy. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that currently South Derbyshire chaired the County-wide Officer group and there was now a project board with Member representatives, which would look at delivery of the strategy, amongst other things. The Officer commented on a recent board meeting, the likely costs of delivering the strategy and the potential way forward.

The Leader questioned whether this Council could learn from Lichfield District Council, which he understood had the best recycling rate in the Country. The Chair spoke about the links between recycling performance and investment. The Deputy Chief Executive added that the approach taken by South Derbyshire was very similar to that of Lichfield District Council, but that authority had invested more, to implement recycling more fully throughout its area. The Head of Environmental Services also commented on an approach from a kerbside collection contractor to

establish an enhanced scheme within South Derbyshire. He offered to report proposals and costings to the next Committee Meeting.

Councillor Ford spoke of the need to educate residents, to help the Council to meet these targets and to reduce the landfill of waste. Councillor Lauro sought further information about waste minimisation and he referred to the problems caused through excessive packaging materials. He felt that local authorities had an important lobbying role in this regard. This point was acknowledged by Officers and could be referred to the County Board. There were proposals within the strategy about waste minimisation.

Councillor Bale sought further information about the consultation exercise and the Head of Environmental Services confirmed that such consultation would include town and parish councils throughout the County, together with focus group work.

RESOLVED:-

(1) That the Council endorses the draft waste management strategy.

(2) That the Committee approves the commencement of a public consultation exercise.

EDS/30. **PERFORMANCE REPORT**

A report was submitted to inform Members of the first quarter's performance within Environmental Services. This was shown by the available performance indicators and 100% of all available Environmental Services Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) were on target. In addition, 59% of all local indicators were within target and 78% were either on target or within 5% of that target.

Data was available for 5 BVPIs, to allow comparison with quartile performance information for 2003/04. The report explained the position on each of these BVPIs. The Council was striving corporately to achieve 70% of all BVPIs being within the top quartile performance. Overall, current performance levels appeared set to achieve this. Additional indicators were being introduced, giving the potential to be compared against 20 BVPIs from this year onwards. There was a high degree of uncertainty as to how the Council's Environmental Services performance would compare with other authorities when this information was published in approximately 18 months time.

Local performance indicators also showed a generally positive picture, subject to accepting that the targets set for waste management and cleansing were ambitiously high and the principle that even getting close to such targets was a significant achievement. Food hygiene inspections for high risk premises was a notable exception, with poor performance due to extended staff vacancies.

Members gave consideration to the performance report and the Chair confirmed those indicators that related to the Housing and Community Services Committee. Councillor Atkin referred to BVPI 199 and whilst

appreciating that these were new indicators, he asked about the plans to report on them. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that future performance reports would include figures for these areas.

There was a discussion about fly posting and Officers were not aware of a particular problem within the District. Fly posting could be affixed to premises, street furniture or even fastened to stakes in roadside verges. The Leader was aware of an imaginative approach used elsewhere, to affix "cancelled" stickers over posters advertising events. The Head of Environmental Services added that if there was a perceived problem, Officers could investigate this and undertake a campaign.

Reference was also made to graffiti and the action taken was dependent on ownership of the property. On Council owned property, action was taken to remove the graffiti as quickly as possible. With privately owned property, the Council could serve Notice to require the removal of the graffiti. Officers explained powers under new legislation and the opportunity to enforce this through use of the Environmental Wardens. Councillor Atkin asked whether a service could be provided to remove graffiti from private properties. Whilst the Council was not yet able to deliver such a service, requests could be monitored and the Council could either try to help such property owners or publicise details of suitable contractors. The Deputy Chief Executive also felt that complaints about fly posting should be submitted to the Head of Environmental Services, via the Clean Team. These could be logged and action taken to monitor the incidents of fly posting.

Councillor Shepherd felt there was a problem with fly posting in Stenson Fields, particularly on street furniture. The Leader of the Council commented on the impressive statistics in responding to fly tipping problems. He wondered if there was evidence that the Clean Team's workload was increasing or statistics showing the types of fly tipped rubbish that was being removed. The Head of Environmental Services responded that calls for service had been fairly static, but there were no recent statistics. The Leader explained that he passed an area where there was a persistent problem with fly tipping and he wondered whether residents made use of this area, in the knowledge that the Council would clear the waste. He questioned whether surveillance could be undertaken and the Officer outlined proposals for such surveillance. The Leader felt there was a need to publicise that the Council would not tolerate this behaviour and it would prosecute offenders. This point was reinforced by the Chair.

Councillor Ford highlighted particular indicators, which the Council was achieving, but were just above bottom quartile performance. The Officer confirmed that these indicators were being achieved, but the target was relatively low. He also spoke of a service development bid for further initiatives, which would be considered as part of the next budget round.

Councillor Isham referred to complaints about street cleaning from the public. In practice, residents usually contacted their local Member. The Head of Environmental Services commented that this was an interesting indicator, but it was less that helpful. He provided further information that this stemmed from the former Compulsory Competitive Tendering regime. The indicator was felt to be misleading and hence there was the

planned review of indicators for future performance reports. Members were asked to report any such complaints via the Call Centre, so that statistics could be maintained.

Councillor Bell referred to the local performance indicators, on which the Officer had seemed apologetic. He felt that the indicators were already excellent and there were endeavours to increase performance further. He commended Officers for setting challenging targets and this point was echoed by the Deputy Chief Executive, who referred to "stretch targets".

Councillor Mrs Walton referred to the single-sided colour copies provided in this Performance Report. She repeated her concerns from an earlier meeting about this. The Vice-Chair agreed, referring to the duplication of this report. The Chair and Deputy Chief Executive explained that the format of the Performance Report would be reviewed. This would enable focusing on certain areas where action was required, whilst also celebrating successful performance.

The Committee considered the report's recommendations and particularly Members' comments on reviewing the performance indicators, to ensure realistic, but challenging targets. The Deputy Chief Executive commented that there would be a need to discuss with Heads of Service if targets were changed mid-year. He acknowledged a point from the Head of Environmental Services that if targets were not achievable, this could be de-motivating and therefore a change of target could provide motivation to staff.

RESOLVED:-

(1) That the first quarter performance levels be noted.

(2) That a revised set of Local Performance Indicators for Waste and Cleansing be devised for the next Performance Report, incorporating Members comments and to offer more realistic targets.

EDS/31. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

MINUTES

The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th August 2005 were received.

S. TAYLOR

CHAIR