

# **Economy and Environment Policy Committee**

## **Agenda**

### **Members of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee:**

Cllr J Knight (Chairman)  
Cllr C Brown  
Cllr D Elmer  
Cllr J Overton  
Cllr R Savage

Cllr G Francis (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr F Curson  
Cllr K Hurn  
Cllr S Nuri-Nixon

### **Date & Time:**

Friday 28 January 2022  
2.00pm

### **Place:**

Council Chamber, South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2XE

### **Contact:**

Jessica Hammond tel (01508) 505298  
Email: [democracy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](http://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE:**

If a member of the public would like to observe the meeting, or speak on an agenda item, please email your request to [democracy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk), no later than 5.00pm on Tuesday 25 January 2022.

### **Large print version can be made available**

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance.

## Public Speaking and Attendance at Meetings

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# **AGENDA**

- 1. To report apologies for absence and to identify substitute members;**
- 2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, “by reason of special circumstances” (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency;**
- 3. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members;**  
(Please see guidance form and flow chart attached – page 4)
- 4. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee held on Friday 19 November 2021**  
(attached – page 6)
- 5. Recycling Projects Update and Future Plans** (report attached – page 13)

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

<p>Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.</p>
<p>Does the interest directly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position?</li> <li>2. relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner?</li> <li>3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council</li> <li>4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own</li> <li>5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in</li> </ol> <p>If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.</p>
<p>Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?</p> <p>If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but you should not partake in general discussion or vote.</p>
<p>Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.</p>
<p>Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.</p>

**FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF.  
PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST  
INSTANCE**

## DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



**Agenda Item: 4**

## **ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council, held on Friday 19 November 2021 at 2pm.**

<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	Councillors: J Knight (Vice Chairman, Chaired the meeting), C Brown, J Easter, J Hornby, K Hurn, S Nuri-Nixon and R Savage
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	Councillors: V Clifford-Jackson, F Curson, D Elmer, G Francis and L Glover
<b>Officers in Attendance:</b>	The Assistant Director for Regulatory (N Howard) and the Democratic Services Officer (J Hammond)

### **23 MINUTES**

Members noted that Cllr L Glover had given her apologies for the meeting on the 15 October, and requested that this be added to the minutes.

The minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee held on 15 October 2021 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the above amendment.

### **24 CHANGE OF ORDER**

The Chairman announced a change in order of the agenda items. He advised the Committee that Agenda Item 6 – Review of Environmental Enforcement Penalties would be considered before Agenda Item 5 – Referrals from Council.

### **25 REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT PENALTIES**

The Assistant Director for Regulatory introduced the report, which set out the proposed amounts of fixed penalty notice charges for specified environmental

and anti-social behaviour offences. The Committee was advised that this report was a continuation of the discussion at the last Economy and Environment Policy Committee on 15 October 2021. He explained that there had been no changes to the proposed fixed penalty charges since the last meeting.

Members were advised that the Council as a regulatory authority had arrangements in place for enforcement by way of serving fixed penalties. The importance of setting the fixed penalties at the right level was noted, if set too high fines might be challenged in court, and if set too low they would not be a deterrent. The Assistant Director for Regulatory explained to the Committee that fixed penalties were a last resort, and that an escalating series of steps were often carried out before the fixed penalty was issued. He also explained that there were a few exceptions to this where necessary, for example in cases of fly-tipping.

The Committee noted that the collaboration with Broadland District Council had led to the need for the alignment of fees to create a simple process that applied to both Councils.

In response to a question regarding the public perception of fixed penalty notices being used as an income stream for the Council, the Assistant Director of Regulatory explained that it cost the Council more to carry out environment enforcement than they received in fixed penalty notice charges. He also explained that all proceeds of the paid fixed penalties were reinvested into the respective service area.

One member requested clarification on the offence of 'repairing a vehicle on the road', and the Assistant Director for Regulatory explained that this offence related to businesses that carried out their trade on the side of the road instead of at a designated business premises. This did not apply to members of the public having to repair their vehicles on the side of the road, in cases of vehicle breakdowns.

In response to a query on the offence of failing to produce a waste transfer note, the Assistant Director for Regulatory advised that legitimate traders who carried out waste disposal must follow a lawfulness paper chain and possess a license to carry out the work. He explained that officers worked alongside the police to carry out spot checks and investigate individuals suspected of operating without a licence, and he further explained that when stopped the trader had up to seven days to provide evidence of their licence to the environmental enforcement team. One member queried whether officers worked alongside / liaised with local skip hire companies. The Assistant Director for Regulatory explained that the majority of work on waste enforcement cases was carried out by the Environmental Agency.

In relation to the offences of exceeded permitted noise levels, the Assistant Director for Regulatory informed members that South Norfolk Council had not adopted the Noise Act 1996 as it had been felt that it was not a regular issue across the district, and as such no enforcement was carried out in this area. He explained that a fixed penalty notice charge had been set in case there was a need to adopt the Noise Act 1996 in the future.

Members expressed support for the policy and proposed penalty charges, outlined in the report and after further discussion it was;

## **RESOLVED**

To recommend that Cabinet:

- 1) Agree the setting of fixed penalty notice charge levels for specified environmental and anti-social behaviour offences as proposed in Appendix 1.
- 2) Agree that the proceeds of paid fixed penalty notice charges be reinvested in the respective service area's revenue expenditure budgets to support further service delivery.

## **26 REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL**

The Chairman, Cllr Knight, introduced the item and reminded members of the two motions referred to the Economy and Environment Policy Committee by full Council at its last meeting on 11 October 2021.

He explained that it was his intention that both motions be considered together and for the Committee to provide Council with one concise motion which focussed on the responsibility of the Council and the emergency of the situation.

He then proposed the following motion, seconded by Cllr K Hurn (a hard copy of the new proposed motion was then circulated to members of the Committee).

*Following the global agreement reached at COP26 to accelerate action on climate change, this Council re-affirms its commitment to taking urgent action to protect our local environment, by preparing positively for and delivering a zero carbon future.*

*This Council further accepts the urgency of meeting the challenges that the Environment Act 2001 will place on every council, every business and every household.*



*We commit ourselves to achieving the twin objectives of reducing carbon emissions in our area and raising awareness of all environmental issues to enable everyone to play their part in protecting both the global and our local environments.*

*We therefore propose to take an urgent, balanced and positive approach to all environmental issues, focussing on three main themes:*

*Building upon our Environmental Strategy, and based upon the upcoming results of the Council's recently commissioned Carbon Audit, we will consider the initiation of a Decarbonisation Strategy for the Council to help the Council be more efficient, cost-effective and prepare for a post-carbon world.*

*Helping our residents and businesses play their part by easing recycling, enabling adoption of electric vehicles and ensuring that their homes and business premises can adapt to changes in the economy and expectations for energy efficiency.*

*Strengthening our commitment to a Clean and Safe Environment for our residents to enjoy and where our businesses can thrive. This includes enhancing our local natural environment and maintaining clean streets, air quality and clean water, reducing contamination, and cracking-down on all types of environmental crime such as fly-tipping.*

*We endorse positive planning for a post-carbon economy which is sustainable, generates wealth and helps us all achieve net zero emissions.*

*Everyone in South Norfolk can play an important part in limiting global temperature increases to less than 1.5 degrees and the Council is fully committed to this objective and recognises that the need for action is urgent.*

A typographical error was noted, that the motion should read "the Environmental Act 2021" not "2001"

One member noted that whilst the draft motion was concise and sounded positive, it lacked targets and measurement methods for the Council to aim toward, nor did it call for the Council to declare a Climate Emergency, or make reference to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, which was due to receive a second reading by the Government on 10 December 2021.

Some members suggested that the majority of the contents of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill was already included within the Environmental Act 2021, with the remainder of the contents not actionable or enforceable by District Councils.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director for Regulatory informed members that there was no target date set within the Environmental Strategy for the Council to become carbon net zero. He advised the Committee that the Council had commissioned a Carbon Audit, which was due to be completed in early 2022, and he explained that once completed, the Carbon Audit would allow the Council to set a clear and achievable target date for the Council to become carbon neutral, instead of an aspiration date.

Members queried whether officers were aware of the carbon footprint of the Council. The Assistant Director for Regulatory responded that the Council did not know its carbon footprint, however it would be aware of it once the Carbon Audit had been completed. He added that the Council had endeavoured to adopt low environmental activity, but noted that work was still needed to make the Council carbon net zero. After further discussion, the majority of members agreed that it was premature for the Council to set specific targets and target dates before the Carbon Audit was complete.

One member highlighted the importance not only of achieving carbon net zero, but of the need to enhance the local natural environment and increase biodiversity. After further discussion, where a number of methods to promote biodiversity were suggested, such as tree planting initiatives and re-wilding projects, the majority of members agreed on the importance of improving biodiversity alongside achieving carbon net zero.

Some members expressed their disappointment that the proposed draft motion did not declare a Climate Emergency; they stated that it placed South Norfolk Council behind other authorities who had already declared an emergency, which included central Government. Another member felt that it was not the place of individual district councils to declare a Climate Emergency on behalf of the whole country.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that they were asked to put forward a motion that all members could agree on. Members further discussed the use of the word “emergency” as well as the connotations and public perceptions behind it. One member highlighted a report by the Environment Agency which stated that “hundreds of people have died due to flooding caused by climate change” and reiterated their belief that a climate emergency should be declared. Another member stated that declaring an emergency would not result in any change, as only actions could do that, not words. Some members felt that use of the term “emergency” was important as it showed residents and businesses that the Council was taking climate change seriously. Other members however, felt that the actions taken by the Council along with a commitment to initiate a Decarbonisation Strategy with defined targets and actions, based on the findings of the commissioned carbon audit, already showed residents and businesses that the Council was taking climate change seriously.

Members discussed support for green projects such as the instillation of smart chargers, solar panels, heat source pump heating and insulation when building new homes. One member queried whether the Council could offer incentives to developers and it was also noted that some developers were already looking ahead to consider future environmental needs.

The Committee agreed that the Assistant Director of Planning, or a nominated representative, be invited to a future meeting of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee to advise on what was being done, in planning terms, and what further could be done to mandate the installation of lower carbon and higher sustainability measures into new housing developments.

Referring back to the contents of the draft motion, members agreed that the following changes were required:

- Clarify that the Council's commitment was to deliver a net zero carbon future.
- State that following the results of the commissioned carbon audit, the Council would initiate a Decarbonisation Strategy and implement targets and required actions to become carbon neutral.
- Firmly state that the Council would help residents and businesses by actively promoting recycling, enabling adoption of electric vehicles and ensuring that their homes and business premises can adapt to changes in the economy and expectations for energy efficiency.
- Promote the improvement of biodiversity as part of the enhancement of the local natural environment.
- Remove the specific examples of environmental crimes, to make it clearer that there would be a crack-down on all types of environmental crimes.

One member indicated that whilst they were pleased with the work undertaken by the Committee at this meeting and of the changes made to the initial draft motion proposed by Cllr Knight, they felt that they could not support this motion as fundamental aspects of the original motion submitted to Council missing.

The Chairman read out the new substantive motion, which was then proposed by Cllr Easter, and seconded by Cllr Hornby.

A vote was then taken, and with 4 in favour, 1 against and with 1 abstention, it was;

## **RESOLVED**

To recommend that the Council adopts the following motion:

Following the global agreement reached at COP26 to accelerate action on climate change, this Council re-affirms its commitment to taking urgent action to protect our local environment, by preparing positively for and delivering a net zero carbon future.

This Council further accepts the urgency of meeting the challenges that the Environment Act 2021 will place on every council, every business and every household, through the 25 year Environment Plan.

We commit ourselves to achieving the twin objectives of reducing carbon emissions in our area and raising awareness of all environmental issues to enable everyone to play their part in protecting both the global and our local environments.

We therefore propose to take an urgent, balanced and positive approach to all environmental issues, focussing on three main themes:

Building upon our Environmental Strategy, and based upon the upcoming results of the Council's recently commissioned Carbon Audit, we will initiate a Decarbonisation Strategy for the Council to become more efficient and cost-effective, and to implement targets and required actions to become carbon neutral.

Helping our residents and businesses play their part by actively promoting recycling, enabling adoption of electric vehicles and ensuring that their homes and business premises can adapt to changes in the economy and expectations for energy efficiency.

Strengthening our commitment to a Clean and Safe Environment for our residents to enjoy and where our businesses can thrive. This includes enhancing our local natural environment through improving biodiversity, maintaining clean streets, reducing contamination, and cracking-down on all types of environmental crime.

We endorse positive planning for a post-carbon economy which is sustainable, generates wealth and helps us all to achieve net zero emissions.

Everyone in South Norfolk can play an important part in limiting global temperature increases to less than 1.5 degrees and the Council is fully committed to this objective and recognises that the need for action is urgent.

(The meeting concluded at 4.00 pm)

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Chairman

## **Recycling Projects Update and Future Plans**

**Report Author(s):** Naegeen Noorani  
Recycling and Partnerships Officer  
01508 500873  
[Naegeen.noorani@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:Naegeen.noorani@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

Lisa Fountain  
Recycling and Partnerships Officer  
01508 533641  
[Lisa.fountain@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.fountain@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

Michaela Beaumont  
Recycling and Partnerships Officer  
01508 533665  
[Michaela.beaumont@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:Michaela.beaumont@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

**Portfolio:** Clean and Safe Environment

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

### **Purpose of the Report:**

This report provides the Committee with an overview of campaigns undertaken by the Recycling and Partnerships Officers over the past year and provides an outline of proposed projects for the coming year.

### **Recommendation:**

1. Committee to note and support the proposed programme with the aim of increasing the recycling rate to meet the Council's 60% recycling rate target by 2025.

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the various campaigns and activities undertaken over the past year in order to contribute to the Council's priority of increasing the recycling rate to 60% by 2025.
- 1.2 Proposed projects for the upcoming year are also outlined with the aim of increasing recycling and decreasing residual waste.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 South Norfolk Council has an aspiration to increase the recycling rate from the current 41.8% (2020/21) to 60% in 2025.
- 2.2 Officers began exploring best practice in 2020 and presented the Committee with proposals to aid in increasing the recycling rate. Proposals included:
  - Trial of smaller residual waste bins
  - Trial of three weekly collection of residual waste
  - No longer accepting side waste
  - Expanding the garden waste service
  - A food waste collection service in suitable areas of the District
  - Behaviour change campaigns with clear and consistent communications
- 2.3 Nationally, Central Government has set out measures in the Environment Act 2021 to increase recycling and decrease residual waste.

## **3. Current position/findings**

- 3.1 South Norfolk's recycling rate was 41.8% at the end of 2020/21, 21.9% of which is made up of dry recycling and 19.8% compostable material (garden waste).
- 3.2 Although this is a reduction from the 42.5% recycling rate in 2019/20, South Norfolk remains the district with the second highest recycling rate in Norfolk. The pandemic has resulted in higher levels of residual waste (32,544t in 2020/21 compared to 29,505t in 2019/20). This has an impact on the recycling rate even though the tonnage of material being recycled actually increased (23,336t in 2020/21 compared to 21,839t in 2019/20).
- 3.3 England's national recycling rate has also seen a reduction as it fell by 1.5% from 45.5% in 2019/20 to 44% in 2020/21. The national trend also shows an increase in residual waste by 5.1% compared to last year, however the total amount of waste recycled decreased nationally by 1.2%.
- 3.4 The following table illustrates a range of projects that were undertaken in the past year in order to maintain and increase current recycling levels. Most of these initiatives are part of long-term behaviour change messaging that will take time to

show results and at best will continue to sustain current recycling rates. In order to reach the 60% target by 2025 Members will need to consider significant service changes

<b>Project</b>	<b>Intervention / Detail</b>	<b>Duration / Timeline</b>	<b>Actual / anticipated outcome</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Food Waste Action Week (FWAW)	Social media used to support WRAP in their first ever FWAW.	March 1-7 2021 (Worked on Jan – Mar)	Raise resident awareness on food waste.	LF, MB, NN
Respond to Government Consultations	Desktop research undertaken. Consultation responses discussed with Portfolio Holder and shared with Economy and Environment Policy Committee.	June + July 2021 (Worked on Mar – Jul)	Consultations were submitted in full and on time.	NN + MB
Side waste reduction project	Desktop research.	June + July 2021 (Worked on Jan-Jul)	Report written and presented to Economy and Environment Policy Committee and Informal Cabinet.	MB
Home composter promotion	Digital leaflet shared with parish clerks.	September 2021	Residents encouraged to use home composters.	NN
Garden waste contamination campaign	Social media.	August 2021 (Worked on Jun – Aug)	Raise resident awareness on what can't go in the brown bin.	NN
Recycle Week	Social media campaign to support WRAP.	September 2021	Remind residents to recycle the right things.	LF
Food waste reduction campaign	Social media campaign and website.	September – October 2021 (Worked on Jul-Sept)	Encourage residents to waste less food at home. 6,196 residents were reached through Facebook and Twitter posts.	NN
Norfolk-wide waste compositional analysis	Analysis of residual and dry recycling. First phase completed.	September – October 2021 (Worked on Jun-ongoing)	Raw data on what residents place in their containers to inform effective and targeted communication.	LF
Christmas leaflet	Leaflet sent to all households.	December 2021 (Worked on Nov – Dec)	Remind residents of collection dates and what can and can't be recycled.	NN

Christmas recycling communications	Social media, website, The Link magazine	December 2021 (Worked on Sept – Dec)	Remind residents of best recycling practice at Christmas.	LF, MB, NN
Winter garden waste contamination campaign	Social media	December 2021 (Worked on Nov-Dec)	To address common winter garden waste contamination.	NN
Talks, Events + Education		Ongoing		LF, MB, NN

#### 4. Proposed action

4.1 In order to continue working to increase the recycling rate, the projects in the table below are being proposed to be undertaken over the next 12 months.

Issue	Intervention	Duration / Timeline	Anticipated outcome	Lead
Garden waste / composting participation and contamination	Leaflets/printed material, specific garden waste livery, social media.	Spring 2022 – ongoing	Increase subscribers by 1,000 and therefore overall tonnage by the end of the year. Aim to have zero rejected loads.	NN
Dry recycling contamination	Bin stickers, bags, door knocking, work with housing associations.	2022	Raise awareness of main contaminants and reduction in contamination.	LF
Communal recycling bin contamination	Bin stickers, bags and work with housing associations.	2022	Improve residents' knowledge of how to properly recycle. Improved quality of recyclate and a reduction in contamination.	LF
Rubbish prevention	Social media, leaflets	2022	Raise awareness of how to reduce rubbish and alternative disposal methods. Reduction in fly tipping, excess waste and residual waste tonnage. This will prepare residents for future projects	MB



			such as restricted side waste.	
Phase 2 of compositional analysis	Analysis of residual and dry recycling.	May 2022	Gather precise data on what residents place in their bins to inform effective and targeted communications.	LF
Collect / collate information on recycling and waste behaviour	Conduct a district-wide resident survey.	2022	Gather waste insights that will inform effective and targeted communications.	LF
Communications plan	Develop an annual plan	2022	Yearly plan so both Comms and Recycling team can plan ahead.	LF, MB, NN
Reduction of food being wasted at home	Social media, leaflets, bin hangers / stickers.	2022	Reduction in residual waste (as less food is being wasted/thrown away).	NN
Excess residual waste	Targeted leaflets, stickers, door knocking, etc.	2022	To reduce excess residual waste with the view of stopping collecting it in the future.	MB
Reduce bin capacity	Targeted trial replacing 240 litre black refuse bin with 180 litre black refuse bin following the rubbish prevention campaign and an intensive education campaign to the residents involved.	2023/4	Reduction in residual waste tonnage, and successful uptake of smaller bins by residents. This can only be introduced once excess waste is no longer collected.	MB
Environment Act	Develop initiatives as required in response to changes to Government's waste and recycling policies.	2022	Understand the operational and resource implications.	TBA

## 5. Issues and risks

- 5.1 **Resource Implications** – The majority of the proposed initiatives can be funded from within existing resources, however, there are a number of the proposals that will have resource implications which are not currently funded, this particularly relates to any new requirements or burdens that arise from the Environment Act.

Additionally, there will be sufficient resource implications on the Council's Communications Team.

- 5.2 **Legal Implications** – The Government has given a clear indication on the ambitions for waste collection and recycling services in the future, however statutory guidance will not be available for local authorities until government responses to the consultations have been released.
- 5.3 **Equality Implications** – The activities contained within this report are designed to have a positive impact on the community including for those who may have one, or more, of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- 5.4 **Environmental Impact** – In reducing waste and increasing recycling the council is following the waste hierarchy (Prevention, Preparing for Re-use/repair, Recycling, Other recovery, and then Disposal) and reducing the amount for incineration. Recycling enables us to conserve resources by reducing the need for energy intensive production of additional resources using new materials. We are committed to increasing recycling and reducing waste as per the Environmental Strategy and Government requirements.
- 5.5 **Crime and Disorder** – Consideration has been given as to whether measures to reduce residual waste such as smaller waste bins could lead to an increase in fly-tipping and excess waste. This would need to be considered in more depth and as part of the monitoring of any pilot schemes. However, evidence suggests that the measures Rochford council put in place did not result in a fly-tipping increase.

## 6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The aspiration to achieve a 60% recycling rate is ambitious and will require large-scale service changes. Until the Council have a clear picture of the statutory requirements resulting from the Environment Act, the proposed projects will work towards maintaining current levels of recycling and gradually increasing our recycling rate through behaviour change messaging.

## 7 Recommendations

- 7.1 Committee to note and support the proposed programme with the goal of increasing the recycling rate to meet the Council's 60% recycling rate target by 2025.