

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 12 FEBRUARY 2010

**Statement from: Cllr C L Strange, Executive Councillor for
Waste Services & LSP Coordination**

WASTE SERVICES

As the recent blast from Siberia has now changed into cold, dank winter days, may I pay tribute to the waste collection teams who have gallantly 'got on with the job', often in appalling conditions. They, like our gritting teams, will be the unsung heroes, and might yet be out again in atrocious weather as spring is still weeks away.

Work on our waste service campaigns rolls on a pace. The major project, the procurement of our Energy from Waste plant to be built at Teal Park, is on target to be in operation by the summer of 2013. Six detailed bids have now been received from three companies, each company submitting a bid for a designated Lincolnshire County Council and partners design, and also a bid for their own suggested design. All these bids are to be subject to the very highest value for money tests and scrutiny, ensuring our ratepayers get the very best deal possible.

By mid April 2010 all the bids will be fully evaluated, leaving just two to go forward. These will then be scrutinised even further during the summer months, with bidders finally submitting their final offers by August of this year. Only after that period, will the final figure for this plant be disclosed, as so many options are open to the council and the International bidders concerned. It will be appreciated that these are very delicate matters, and any disclosure on figures would throw the scheme back a year and incur government fines in the region of millions of pounds.

The EfW plant needs four more Waste Transfer (bulking up) Stations countywide, and work is proceeding to obtain sites with landowners.

A report will be put before the Executive meeting on 2 March 2010, outlining the proposed Household Recycling Centre, sited just to the West of Market Rasen. Hopefully, this will then go to the next Value for Money Scrutiny meeting. We expect to commence build within the next three months, and to open January 2011. This will fill a huge void in the north of the county.

Work is ongoing on the provision of a Stamford site and, by the next full council meeting, we should have some positive news with regard to an expected timetable. We would dearly like to see the first sod being cut at Stamford on the opening of the Market Rasen site, anticipating a completion date in the autumn of 2011.

This will complete a necklace of centres countywide, whereby 97% of all residents will live within 12 miles of a household recycling site. We aim to modernise several sites over the next three years, with compactors to reduce lorry movements and

provide better facilities for residents. However, even on the older sites, our teams are praised for their friendly attitude to householders. Recycling rates at the twelve existing centres is in excess of 66%.

The Joint Waste Partnership, under the chairmanship of Councillor Hazelwood from North Kesteven, is working well, with our officers exchanging knowledge across districts, city and county. We are computer modelling to ascertain where we can eliminate wasteful practices. For example, in future a district collecting from a village which lies nearer their own disposal site, will use that site rather than the site belonging to that village's actual district council! Undreamed, and unthinkable of five years ago – typically, the new breed of officers working with waste are up for the best answers.

LSPs

As mentioned in my December Statement, a six month review meeting with all our Member representatives has taken place, with the specific aim of re-defining their role at the Local Strategic Partnership meetings, and looking at suggestions for improvement. Although all Partnerships appear to have identified key outcomes and priorities and their linkage to the countywide Sustainable Community Strategy, there does appear to be a tendency for partnership meetings to stray away from these key issues. Too often, valuable partnership time can be taken up discussing non-related topics – nice to mention, but delivering little!

The County Council has made it absolutely clear that it is our intention to do all we can to ensure LSP meetings are a really worthwhile attempt to increase the joint working agenda. We appreciate that we represent the LCC as 'a partner' and, in this respect, we do not run the meetings nor are we able to provide a bag of cash for specific projects. However, what we are able to do is look for alternative ways of providing solutions through partnership working. Member representatives have reported that there is a genuine desire to work together, which is encouraging.

In order to extend the reach of matters of interest discussed at LSPs, county LSP Member representatives have been asked to feedback to all county councillors in their district on any problems/matters arising at the LSP meeting. This will be especially useful for the portfolio holders when matters fall within their particular area of responsibility.

In the coming year, I will attend a meeting at each of the partnerships as your councillor with overall responsibility for LSPs.