

Budget Consultation – People and Places

Wednesday, 14th January 2009 at Wychwood Park

Notes of Group Discussion – Waste and Other Services

Facilitator:	Chris McCarthy	Interim Director (Places) – Cheshire East Council
Co-Facilitator:	Joanne Wilcox	Financial Services Manager – Macclesfield Borough Council

Key Points from Discussion

Waste

- Waste Minimisation
 - Education
 - Engagement with retailers and suppliers to reduce packaging
- Recycling
 - Re-use materials locally
 - Actively promote recycling
 - Encourage home composting
- Strategy
 - Keep up the good work already in place
 - Maintain partnership arrangements with CWAC

Economic Development

- Sustainability
 - Energy efficiency, carbon footprint
- Use unitary status to link into national initiatives
- Keep a local vision, use LSP effectively

Questions:

Are there any Waste issues that you feel we should have given a higher priority?

How could we generally work more effectively with our partners on Waste Issues?

Ged Edwards – Blacon Community Trust

There are currently a number of projects working closely with the waste strategy. These include the re-useable furniture projects where bulky waste is taken out of landfill and used within the local area. It is important that Cheshire East continues to work in partnership.

Cllr Steve Hogben – Crewe & Nantwich LSP

The decision to no longer charge for the green waste bins in Crewe & Nantwich borough goes against the existing policy which was made to encourage home composting. This feels like a backward step.

Congleton Partnership

It is important that the public see recyclables turned into products. It is possible to create jobs through local recycling projects.

Education is key in changing the mindset of the public into reducing waste. A number of schools in Cheshire have signed up to the eco-schools project and this is where it needs to start with very young children.

Crewe & Nantwich BC

Fly-tipping is a particular problem in the area and Streetwise are effective in dealing with this problem.

There are currently volunteers on the Parish Councils who act as recycling champions and there is a lot of goodwill and positivity towards waste minimisation. Cheshire East Council needs to quickly take on the role to continue with the current good work and tap into existing resources.

Recycling credits are available to fund projects which lead to recycling and waste minimisation.

Chairman – LSP

There needs to be more planning to reduce food waste.

Certain areas find recycling difficult such as the flats in Crewe which have communal bins, this makes it difficult to separate waste. Solutions are required for areas such as this.

There are a number of good initiatives already in place such as the re-use of furniture and each of the Council's currently has an arrangement in place with local groups.

It is important that Cheshire East has a clear direction of travel on waste policy and does not lose momentum and divert resources from those initiatives already in place.

Landfill will not be an option for much longer with the closure of Danes Moss, the strategy will need to consider the use of incinerators in the future.

It is important that Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester continue to work in partnership on waste disposal issues.

Recycling is currently receiving a lot of negative publicity as recyclable materials are being hoarded. Part of the response could be an end user program so that the public can see what happens to their waste and how it is re-used. The furniture recycling is a good example of this.

Tanya Sayer – Energy Products Plus

The initial approach must be waste minimisation, there are a number of initiatives in place already, this needs to be built on in schools and education projects. The message needs to be co-ordinated so there is a single voice on the education agenda.

Pressure should be put on suppliers to reduce packaging, the consumer often has little choice. Pressure is required at a local and a regional level.

The recycling credits model could be extended to offer encouragements and pay back schemes.

Food packaging is a complex area and councils need to engage with food manufacturers. It is important to get the balance right as packaging is necessary. Educating consumers is also key to reducing food packaging.

Environmental Development

The shape of the economy is very different across East Cheshire, for example the economic make-up of Crewe is very different to that of Congleton and Macclesfield. What should be the emphasis for Cheshire East.

It is very important for the Council to support the local economy including agriculture.

Cheshire East has the opportunity to set the agenda as a new authority.

The approach to climate change, energy efficiency, reducing the carbon footprint etc are key challenges for the new authority.

The emphasis for Cheshire East should include:

- Sustainability
- Making the best use of employment sites.
- Investment in the local economy
- Making sure towns don't lose their voice within a large authority

- Take the opportunity to engage with national and regional schemes, for example , CABE
- Use nationally recognised techniques
- Build on good projects that are already working
- Undertake a lobbying and campaigning role.

Chris McCarthy

The cabinet portfolio's are designed to be cross-cutting and thematic, they will therefore work with and test a number of services. It is important that the Council does not reinvent silos. The appointment of senior posts is key to the culture of the new authority and being able to look at the bigger picture.

Chamber of Commerce

Businesses are concerned with all aspects of sustainability and the carbon footprint. It sees its role as bringing the voice of the private sector to the Council.

Cllr Fitzgerald

It is important for Cheshire East to have a local vision. The Local Strategic Partnership is there to actively involve the voluntary and private sector, but it is important to make it strategic and realistic, i.e., understand the big picture.