

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 24 MAY 2006

INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT – THE FUTURE

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the Chair's participation in a Study Tour to Denmark organised by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the Scottish Executive has required the three Ayrshire Councils to prepare a Strategic Outline Case for developing long term residual waste treatment and disposal facilities to ensure compliance with the waste diversion targets set out in the EU Directive in Landfill. Councillor O'Neill chairs the Ayrshire Options Group, the Vice Chair is Councillor Sam Taylor, North Ayrshire Council and H Blair Thomson, South Ayrshire Council is Lead Officer for the Group.
- 2.2 Strategic Outline Cases for all Scottish Options Groups had to be lodged by the Scottish Executive by 31 January 2006 and as a consequence, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) arranged a Study Tour to Denmark on 25-27 April 2006. Councillor O'Neill accompanied by an Officer from South Ayrshire Council took part in the tour, his fellow delegates being Senior Politicians and Waste Management Officers from Fife, Aberdeenshire, North Lanarkshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire and the Moray Council. Senior Officers from the Scottish Executive and SEPA were also in attendance.
- 2.3 The Tour comprised a number of visits to waste management centres; and energy from waste facilities in Holbaek, Aarhus and Herning in Denmark.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The capacity of the plants inspected ranged from 40,000 tonnes to 200,000 tonnes per annum (it is worth noting that the estimated capacity for residual waste treatment plan for Ayrshire would be around 125,000 – 150,000 tonnes per annum).

- 3.2 The facilities visited ranged from combined composting and anaerobic digestion of organic kitchen waste together with some garden waste to produce biogas and compost, to an energy from waste facility which combines the composting of garden waste and the processing of construction waste and the resulting district heating system.
- 3.3 Denmark currently has recycling performance levels of 65% and only landfills around 10-12% of its municipal waste arisings. These performances are achieved by a combination of public participation and a landfill tonnage of £50 per tonne.
- 3.4 Although energy from waste is currently considered as one of the fore-runners in residual waste treatment, it emerged during a visit that the process can incur significant additional capital and maintenance costs associated with the distribution of heat from the process.
- 3.5 All in all, the tour has provided valuable information which will be of critical assistance in evaluating the eventual proposals which are submitted for providing a residual waste treatment plan to ensure the three Ayrshire Councils can meet their obligations in terms of the waste diversion targets set out in the EU Directive in Landfill.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The total cost of the tour was £575 and was met by the department's budget.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The EU Directive on Landfill.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Compliance with the EU Directive in Landfill is consistent with the aims of the Community Plan in terms of improving the environment.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Following submission of the Strategic Outline Case for the three Ayrshire Councils to develop proposals to meet the obligations set out in the EU Directive in Landfill, SEPA organised a Study Tour to Denmark to look at suitable waste treatment facilities including energy from waste plants.
- 7.2 The tour was from 25-27 April 2006 and Councillor O'Neill as Chair of the Ayrshire Joint Working Group attended accompanied by an Elected member and an Officer from South Ayrshire Council.

7.3 The tour provided Councillor O'Neill with a considerable amount of information which will be particularly helpful in the evaluation of proposals to allow the three Ayrshire Councils to meet their waste diversion obligations in terms of the EU Directive in Landfill.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Committee are recommended to note the contents of the report.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JFC/SD

10 May 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Itinerary and Programme for Denmark Study Tour, 25-27 April 2006 - SEPA

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone (01563) 576111 and ask for John F Crawford.

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