

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT – 10TH MARCH 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

PLASTICS RECYCLING

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with a final report on plastics recycling.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Committee has previously received an initial report on the subject of plastics recycling. The report provided background details on this topic, and indicated that guidance would be sought from DEFRA through a best practice event, together with an examination of plastics recycling practices in the local area.
- 2.2 All of the Authorities examined that were undertaking plastics collections for recycling were doing it as part of a fortnightly collection process. These were exclusively district councils in mainly rural areas utilizing a fortnightly wheeled bin collection of residual domestic waste, coupled with recycling collections of recyclable materials on alternate weeks. The reduction in household waste collection frequency has been employed to subsidise the cost of the recycling collections. This could include a separate collection for green waste, and also paper. In some cases households were receiving 4 separate collections in as fortnight.
- 2.3 In conclusion it would appear that authorities carrying out plastics recycling collections do so as part of a fortnightly waste collection service. This could not be undertaken in Dudley while the weekly black plastic sack collection system is being used as householders would have insufficient storage capacity. Fortnightly household waste collections have not become established in metropolitan areas.
- 2.4 Plastics recycling collection in Dudley would require an additional collection service. This would increase costs, and could not be funded from present budgets. If such a service was introduced it would need local outlets for the collected material to avoid undue transportation over long distances. The Council is working with its Black Country neighbouring Councils on waste planning for the medium to long term, and one of the issues is the provision of strategically located facilities within the conurbation. This would meet the need for the proximity principle, i.e. communities dealing with their waste in the locality, in accordance with the requirements of the National Waste Strategy, and current waste planning guidance under consultation.
- 2.5 Alternatively plastics recycling banks could be used, however because of the low density of plastics these would contribute very little to the overall quantity of recyclate recovered. In addition there is also a risk with vandalism and arson. A number of the Councils waste paper banks at recycling centres have had to be removed because of this problem.

2.6 Plastics recycling is an issue, however it cannot be accommodated at this point in time given the Councils available resources. The current priority is to fully implement the kerbside recycling service for paper, cans and glass cullet. Thereafter plastics collection can be considered as a service enhancement, requiring additional collection resources. Planning for plastics collection should include the necessary local storage and recovery infrastructure, and this should be taken into account in the joint waste study being undertaken.

### **3.0 PROPOSAL**

3.1 It is proposed that Committee notes the report, and considers whether it has any further recommendations on the issue of plastics recycling.

### **4.0 FINANCE**

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The report is provided to the Committee for information purposes only.

### **5.0 LAW**

5.1 Section 44A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) makes provision for a National Waste Strategy. This sets targets for sustainable waste management including increased recycling, composting, and reduced land filling of wastes. The Council has specific targets of 10% and 18% respectively for the recycling and composting of household waste in 2003/4 and 2005/6.

5.2 Section 45A of the EPA requires Councils to make arrangements for the collection of at least two types of recyclable waste, as part of its household waste collection duties by the end of 2010.

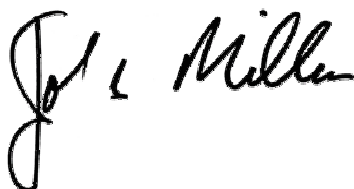
5.3 Other Council duties and powers relating to waste and recycling are set out in Part II of the EPA 1990.

### **6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

6.1 This report takes into account the Council's policy on Equal Opportunities

### **7.0 RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 That the Committee approves the proposals set out in paragraph 3.1 of this report.



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**Background documents used in the preparation of this report:-**