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## Environment Board

17 March 2010

Integra North Energy Recovery Facility, Chineham, Basingstoke

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## Note of Decisions Taken and Actions

### Present

**Deputy Chairs:** Cllr Mike Haines, Deputy Chair and acting Chair for this meeting (Independent, Teignbridge DC); Mayor Dorothy Thornhill (Liberal Democrat, Watford BC)

**Conservative:** Cllr Peter Britcliffe (Hyndburn BC); Cllr Clare Whelan (Lambeth LBC)

**Labour:** Cllr Derek Bateman (Cheshire West and Chester Council); Cllr Ed Turner (Oxford City Council)

**Lib Democrat:** Cllr Paula Baker (Basingstoke and Deane BC)

**Substitute:** Cllr Neil Clarke (Conservative, Rushcliffe BC)

**Also present:** Speakers: Paul Levett (Veolia Environmental Services); Cllr Roger Arthur (Cabinet Member for Operational Services) and Ian Jopling, Horsham District Council

**Apologies:** Cllr Gary Porter, Chairman (Conservative, South Holland DC); Cllr Linda Thomas, Vice Chair (Bolton MBC); Cllr Andrew Gravells (Gloucestershire CC and Gloucester City); Cllr David Potts (South Tyneside MBC); Cllr Berni Turner (Liverpool City Council);

**Absent:** Cllr Jason Stacey (Conservative, Ealing LBC); Cllr Tony Newman (Labour, Croydon LB)

**LGA Group Officers:** Martin Wheatley; Abigail Burridge; Jennifer Watson; Clive Harris; Fatima de Abreu (LGA)

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Haines welcomed members to the meeting and Cllr Baker also added her welcome to Basingstoke. Cllr Haines then introduced Mr Paul Levett from Veolia Environmental Services and thanked Mr Ian Jopling and Councillor Roger Arthur (Horsham District Council) who had been invited to contribute to the discussion on waste.

Cllr Haines reminded members that two separate tours had been arranged to follow the Board meeting, incorporating either a) a visit to North Basingstoke and Oakbridge to witness new development and examples of regeneration, or b) a presentation and tour of the facility.

### 2. Waste

Mr Levett welcomed members to the facility and gave them an overview of its operations as an alternative to landfill with the added benefit of being able to generate electricity from non-recyclable waste. Members heard how councils would be affected by the rising cost of sending waste to landfill with increases in landfill taxes, together with pressures of compliance with EU and Government targets and the need to find alternatives.

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Reacting to the announcement on the day of the meeting of Government proposals to ban certain materials from landfill, Members said that they were supportive of the objectives of sending waste to landfill and appreciated there would be issues if alternatives were not in place. Discussion continued on the efforts councils could take immediately to mitigate the effects of increased costs.

They raised the following concerns:

- There would be problems with enforcement – the issue of who would be responsible for policing was unclear;
- Obtaining planning consent would be a big barrier;
- Incentives need to be in place to encourage more effective recycling in households and businesses;
- Better clarification of the Waste Framework Directive was needed;
- Local measuring of municipal waste would be problematic.

Members heard from Mr Jopling (Horsham District Council), about an innovative recycling scheme used by the district entitled 'Acorn Plus' aimed at improving the rate of recycling from 38% to 60%, thus lowering the amount of waste sent to landfill. The scheme had been welcomed by residents and included the introduction of one-fill wheelie bins and new side-loading vehicles, which were more CO2 efficient and provided better safety conditions for its collectors. He told members that partnership working was vital to securing long-term efficiencies and informed them that the Council worked alongside other local authorities in West Sussex to create better recycling in the area as a whole.

Cllr Haines thanked the speakers for an informative and interesting presentation, and for providing the opportunity to discuss important issues around waste management. Presentations can be found at:

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelId=9436006>

#### **Decisions:**

- The Board noted the discussion.

#### **Actions:**

- Officers to take forward members' concerns in responding to Defra consultations.

**LGA Officers**

### **3. Local Carbon Frameworks**

Abigail Burrige (LGA) provided members with an update of developments and referred to 9 pilot councils which would be exploring and identifying limitations in delivery of energy efficiencies with an aim to shaping methods which would be replicable across the country. Members were informed that although there had been a lot of support, issues had been raised by Friends of the Earth who had stated that they were keen on having statutory targets set and making local authorities accountable for 80% of lowering local carbon emissions. They had incorrectly indicated that the LGA was in support of this. Members were displeased and suggested the Board Chairman should write to the FoE's Chairman to clarify the LGA's position, asking that inaccurate references be

removed from any publication.

**Decision:**

- Members noted the report and **agreed** the actions proposed.

**Actions:**

- Write on behalf of Cllr Porter to the Friends of the Earth Chief Executive summarising the key issues, circulated to other Lead Members for comment

**Abigail BurrIDGE**

**4. Campaign to raise the Profile of Council Action on Climate Change**

Ms BurrIDGE updated members on arrangements to link the LGA's 2009 'Small Change, Big Difference' campaign with the 10:10 campaign, to create a new campaign for 2010. She informed members that the 10:10 campaign supported linking the LGA campaign with their campaign. So far, 144 member councils had signed up to the 10:10 campaign, from a range of political parties, and that councils would represent the largest contribution to the 10:10 target.

Members were pleased with progress and agreed that it was more coherent to link in with the 10:10 campaign. They supported the proposed recommendations to have the campaign in October to compliment the 10:10 campaign and asked that a more detailed paper on the LGA Group itself signing up to the 10:10 campaign be put to the LGA Executive. This would be the Group signing up to reduce the emissions from its estate, not signing up on behalf of all its member councils. Members discussed whether the adoption of a blanket target such as reducing emissions by 10% by 2010 did not reflect local circumstances and much of what the LGA was arguing for, but agreed that the 10% target is an aspirational one and that the aim of the campaign was to acknowledge general emissions reductions. Ms BurrIDGE agreed to continue to provide members with further details as it became available.

**Decision:**

- Members noted the report and **agreed** the actions proposed.

**Actions:**

- Cllr Gary Porter to submit a paper to the LGA Executive about the LGA Group itself signing up to the 10:10 campaign to be examined and a decision made.

**Abigail BurrIDGE**

**5. Self-financing**

Martin Wheatley updated members on work being undertaken to support councils in preparation of the impending offer from the Government in managing housing debt with the abolition of the HRA and its replacement with a form of self-financing.

He told members that the issue was of particular interest to Dame Margaret Eaton (Chairman, LGA). She had recently written to John Healey MP on this subject. Members were assured that the LGA would continue to ensure that the expectations of members are conveyed to Government and that any redistribution of debt be supported by the subsidy system.

Mr Wheatley told members that because the offer was not yet available, the

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planned meeting with the HRA Member Group on this subject had been postponed. CLG had said that information on the proposals to councils would be ready by February – however this had been delayed. He assured the Board that any information received in the meantime would be sent to members, and that it was hoped that an indication of the offer would be available before the Easter recess, perhaps with the Budget announcement.

**Decision:**

- The Board **noted** the report.

**Action:**

- Officers to continue to report on progress and post-election, take forward lobbying as directed by members

**Ruth Lucas**

## 6. **WEEE Directive Recast Update Permission**

Jennifer Watson (LGA) provided an update of the LGA's work in addressing the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive and its impact on councils. She asked that members consider and acknowledge key issues within the report. The Board was supportive of the ongoing work and requested that they be permitted to provide input as it progressed.

Members are asked to note the deletion of this section of **paragraph 12** of the report subsequent to the meeting since the oral update confirmed that the yearly target is acceptable:

*The European Parliament draft report initially indicated that the target would be calculated on a monthly rather than yearly target and so advice received from LGA advisers were in relation to this monthly target. An oral update on the revised yearly target will be given following a meeting with waste advisers.*

**Decision:**

- The Board **noted** the report and endorsed the key issues raised.

## 7. **Inland Flood Risk Management Group**

Cllr Haines he said that he had chaired the first meeting of the Group and Cllr Derek Bateman had also attended. The key issue was whether to invite one or two representatives from each region. After discussions, Members agreed two would be appropriate. Members were asked to note a change in the draft Terms of Reference to reflect this, and that the membership information should read:

“The Group will link to a wider network, open to all **LGA member** local authorities...”

**Decision:**

- The Board **agreed** the recommendations, including the invitation of two members from each region.

**Action:**

- Amend Terms of Reference as above, and take forward agreed

arrangements

**Vanessa Goodchild-Bradley**

**8. Air Quality**

Members noted the report.

**9. Update on other Board business**

Members received the Chair's reports to the LGAX for January and February 2010.

It was agreed that Members would only provide reports on attendance at other meetings in instances where an officer had not been present.

Cllr Whelan notified members that there had been delays in the European Commission's work programme and would provide further information as it progressed.

**10. Decisions and actions from previous meeting**

Members agreed the note of the last meeting.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 26 May, 2010 at 11am, Local Government House.**