

## REPORT FROM REPRESENTATIVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES COUNCILLOR TONY AUSTIN

### WASTE PARTNERSHIP MEETING

I attended a Waste Partnership Meeting at Preston on 28<sup>th</sup> March.

We heard that an LA trade organisation called WRAP would be helping boroughs deal with upcoming government legislative requirements. They would be setting up waste performance benchmarks with the initial support of Lancaster City Council. They will also be advising councils generally, including an imminent meeting with RVBC before the Community Services meeting.

However, much of the meeting was taken up with reviewing how both borough and county might introduce weekly food waste collections over the next two years, a statutory government requirement. A Chorley officer gave an account of a supplier day he had hosted to look at bin liners for communal bins, kitchen food caddies, kerbside food bins and various sizes of collection lorries.

John Birch from LCC outlined some of the more challenging aspects of food waste. Lancashire Renewables Ltd. would be setting up a community scheme at Farrington, where food waste would be hydrolysed and digested to produce methane for community heating. For our part, we would need to collect food waste weekly from every household (and commercial address where applicable) and then Renewables would transport from our depot to Farrington.

To date, the Government have offered RVBC capital funding to buy some vehicles and equipment for food waste collection, but nothing yet for the revenue costs of staffing, fuel and vehicle maintenance. I reiterated to the meeting that, compared with other boroughs, we had a particular funding issue in relation to the sparsity of a smaller population with a longer collection mileage. Unfortunately, as it stands, we will need to find extra revenue for an extra round to all premises in the borough every week to collect food waste, a substantial six-figure sum of money! Some other top tier authorities, but not Lancashire, are able to process commingled green and food waste; it is possible that a strategy could be designed around this to reduce the extra revenue costs of the weekly food waste collection. Committee may like to explore this possibility.