

CABINET COMMITTEE – 19 MARCH 2013

REVIEW OF THE OXFORDSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Report by Director for Environment and Economy

Introduction

1. The current Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (prepared by the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership) was adopted in 2007; it is a high level policy document and commits to a five-yearly review to ensure that it remains current. Partner councils are free to develop their own strategies and plans to implement the Strategy.
2. In 2011/12 Oxfordshire had the best recycling rate and composting rate in the country at over 60%, Oxfordshire also produced the lowest amount of residual waste per household. Investment by the members of the Partnership in collection systems has been delivered and investment made in infrastructure to manage our wastes, including Anaerobic digestion plants and an Energy from Waste facility.
3. The review took account of this progress and the changing drivers for waste management nationally. A draft strategy document was produced and approved by Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP) for public consultation in June 2012. Consultation feedback was incorporated into the strategy and a final version presented to OWP for sign off in January 2013. Following this agreement at OWP each Partner council is asked to consider and formally adopt the strategy.

Changes in the 5 year review

4. The Strategy review celebrates the Partners' success and reaffirms our 2007 policies. It accounts for legislative and national policy changes, aiming for improvement and cost efficiency. The Strategy review focuses on reduction and reuse and improving our current recycling systems.
5. The majority of the changes are minor. Policy wording has been updated to reflect the removal of the Landfill Allowances and Trading Scheme, and the procurement of Ardley Energy from Waste facility. Policies on household and commercial waste reduction have been separated, emphasising OWP's commitment to helping businesses reduce and manage their wastes. A policy on Local Environmental Quality (including litter, and graffiti) has been added to reflect OWPs role in this area.
6. Importantly, it is proposed that the county wide recycling and composting targets are revised (as all authorities are already out-performing the current

targets) and raised to 65% in 2020 and 70% in 2025. These are realistic, but stretching given the current technology and infrastructure in place.

7. Oxfordshire's achievements through the Partnership are a major success of the last 5 years. The updating of the Strategy sets the strategic direction for waste management until 2030 and demonstrates our commitment to the waste hierarchy; working to encourage waste reduction, increasing our reuse activity, continuing to improve our recycling and composting rates and sending any non-recyclable waste for energy recovery.

Consultation

8. A public consultation was carried out on the reviewed strategy in July and August 2012, and a further consultation exercise was carried out in December 2012. A separate exercise with secondary school eco councils through the Oxfordshire Green Schools programme ensured that younger residents were also represented. Over 250 responses were received in total.
9. The responses showed widespread support for the reviewed strategy. Respondents supported waste reduction and reuse efforts and wished to see further improvement to our high recycling and composting rates. Respondents were keen that the Partnership's members worked closely with local communities and with third sector organisations. They want OWP to help businesses reduce their waste and supported the inclusion of Local Environmental Quality issues within the strategy. Respondents thought it important for the Partnership to continue its communications work to promote sustainable waste management and indicated the type of communications that they found useful.
10. Some helpful comments were received on the draft wording of some policies. For example respondents suggested the retention of a 'per person' or 'per household' based waste reduction target rather than a broader tonnage based target in the consultation draft. They also favoured the continued inclusion of countywide recycling targets. It was also suggested that the wording of some of the other policies could be made simpler and more meaningful. These suggestions were taken on board and included within the revised strategy in Appendix 1.

Equalities

11. The strategy has been subject to a Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) and any equalities issues identified and included within the Action Plan.

Implications for Oxfordshire County Council

12. The revised policies are very much high level and a continuation of current priorities. The detail of implementation is left to individual partners to exercise their responsibilities – for example, the County Council is responsible for

determining and implementing a strategy for delivering Household Waste Recycling Centres.

13. Moving forward, working together through the OWP, the revised targets in the Waste Strategy will secure Oxfordshire's position as leading the agenda on waste and resource management nationally.

Financial, Risk and Staff Implications

14. The reviewed strategy takes account of current OWP budgets and partner contributions and can be delivered within present funding and staffing levels. Strategy implementation may be at risk if budgets are reduced in the future.
15. The targets within the Strategy have previously been linked to the non-statutory incentive payments between partners. The leaders of the County and District councils have agreed an exit strategy that will see this scheme withdrawn over the next 4 years. A formal deed of variation to that effect is currently being prepared by OCC legal services to be signed by all partner councils.

RECOMMENDATION

16. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - (a) **approve and adopt the revised Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy; and**
 - (b) **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to delegate authority to the Director for Environment and Economy to authorise the financial arrangement deed of variation in consultation with the Leader.**

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