

CABINET - 18 JUNE 2019
JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR
OXFORDSHIRE

Report by Director – Planning and Place

RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) note the contents and challenges of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Oxfordshire**
- (b) adopt the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Oxfordshire.**

Executive Summary

1. Oxfordshire Environment Partnership represents the City, District and County Council's in Oxfordshire and works with other groups with responsibility for the environment to share best practice and ideas and discuss policy.
2. Between April 2007 and March 2014, the partnership operated as the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership and agreed the first Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) for Oxfordshire in 2007. The strategy is updated every 5 years and is due for its second review.
3. The JMWMS for Oxfordshire (Appendix 1) sets out how the Council's will work together to deliver sustainable waste management services. It runs from 2018-2023 and focuses on local authority collected waste.
4. OEP wants to continue to be amongst the very best in the country at waste reduction, reuse and recycling, helping economic and population growth while using our resources sustainably. Some targets in the JMWMS are aspirational and may be challenging to achieve. Its overarching aims are:
 - Keep household waste growth to zero (per person per year)
 - Increase the amount of household waste we recycle to 70% by 2030
 - Send less than 3% of our household rubbish to landfill by 2020

Introduction

5. Under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003, authorities in two tier areas have a duty to create and update a shared waste strategy. In 2007 the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP), the forerunner of the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP) agreed the first Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS). The strategy set out the steps that the

Partnership wished to take to move from a recycling rate of around 33% to 55% in 2020 and detailed the infrastructure and collection changes that were needed. The strategy was highly successful, and Oxfordshire reached a recycling rate of over 60% in 2011/12 - one of the best in England.

6. The strategy is updated every five years and is due for its second review. Changes in legislation, along with public confusion and apathy means recycling rates have slipped to around 57% (this slip is in line with national trends but is still one of the highest rates in England.) In early 2018 the public was consulted to determine their priorities for the service, and this fed into a draft Strategy discussed by OEP Members in July 2018. It was then announced that the National Resources and Waste Strategy was due to be published that autumn, sign off and adoption was delayed in order to ensure it did not contradict any of Oxfordshire's proposed policies.
7. The national strategy was published on 18 December 2018 and the potential implications of this were presented at the last OEP meeting in late January 2019. At that meeting OEP agreed Oxfordshire's JMWMS as presented in Appendix 1, and this is now being presented to all partners for adoption.
8. Cherwell District Council adopted Oxfordshire's JMWMS on 4 March 2019. The other councils have it scheduled for after Purdah.

National Resources and Waste Strategy

9. The National Resources and Waste Strategy is bold and ambitious and has the potential to transform the waste industry. Government is keen to preserve our stock of material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. The Strategy addresses some well-known issues in the waste industry and embraces the circular economy approach of keeping products in use for as long as possible, and making it easier to reuse, repair, refurbish, or recycle them.
10. Subject to consultation there are several policies within the strategy that have the potential to impact the types and quantities of materials Local Authorities (LA) collect and change how they are funded for the waste management services provided. It is proposed that:
 - a. producers of packaging will need to pay the full net cost of managing the products that they place on the market. LAs will receive funding to manage packaging through a central body (Extended Producer Responsibility)
 - b. a deposit recovery scheme is introduced for drinks containers so residents will need to return them to a specific location rather than place them in their kerbside bin;
 - c. service standards will be set for LA waste services, detailing what materials are collected, how and how often.

It has been stated that the net cost of any new burdens on LA will be met by Government. These policies in their infancy and will be developed through consultation over 2019/20. Once developed, implementation dates stretch through to 2023.

11. Oxfordshire's ability to reach the recycling targets proposed in the JMWMS may be affected by the national changes. Oxfordshire's JMWMS proposes a 65% recycling rate by 2025, but national changes are not set to be implemented until 2023 and there may be a time lag before recycling rates rise. Alternatively, new policies and legislation may remove recyclable material from local authority control, and while more material will be recycled nationally, it may no longer count towards our figures and therefore lower Oxfordshire LA recycling rates.
12. Our ability to reach the less than 3% to landfill target is currently being impacted by several external factors, including Brexit, the global commodities markets, and the appetite for cost effective waste contracts in the industry. A recent contract to provide a bulky waste shredding service that would have reduced our landfill to less than 1% was not awarded following a change in risk profile and cost increases that rendered it undeliverable. We are continuing to explore other avenues and monitoring market developments and may revisit this contract in due course.
13. OEP has stated that they wish Oxfordshire's strategy to be ambitious, helping economic and population growth while using our resources sustainably. The targets in the JMWMS have been set to demonstrate Oxfordshire's commitment to reducing waste arisings and increasing recycling, but it should be noted that the JMWMS will be reviewed in 2023/2024 (in accordance with the 5-year review cycle), and that targets may be adjusted then to reflect the changing situation.

Financial and Staff Implications

14. There are no direct immediate financial implications with adopting this strategy. The legislative and policy changes proposed (subject to consultation) in the National Resources and Waste Strategy will be considered in future business planning cycles when further detail is known.
15. Recycling and composting materials costs around half the price of disposing of it at the EfW plant or landfill. We know that if all of the recyclable materials in the residual bin were recycled then we could save around £3million/year. As the county's population grows the waste bill for all authorities will increase and keeping that as low as possible will help to fund other essential services.

Equalities Implications

16. There are no direct immediate equalities implications with adopting this strategy. Any changes in the collection services which result from the new waste strategy, or changes in national policy/legislation will be considered at the time.

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Background papers: Oxfordshire’s Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy

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