



## **HERTFORDSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP**

### **MEMBERS' GROUP 26<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

#### **Item 8: Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Action Plan Review**

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#### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the annual review of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2007 Action Plan.

#### **2 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The last 12 months have seen significant progress made in a number of areas in pursuit of agreed targets detailed in the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, (JMWMS) and Action Plan.
- 2.2 By March 2009 the HWP's recycling rate had risen to 43.9% with new services, such as food waste collections now being rolled out in a number of areas to further improve performance.
- 2.3 In January 2009 the HWP agreed a new trade waste policy which attempts to join up thinking across the two-tiers with respect to how trade waste services are provided and has led to a number of proposals now being developed to tackle this issue.
- 2.4 Earlier in the year work was completed to integrate the residual waste communications strategy into the annual WasteAware campaign with a new brand being rolled out across the County. At the same time the WasteAware campaign has been successfully refocused to concentrate on food waste reduction including the establishment of partnerships with various external bodies which has resulted in £25,000 of additional direct and indirect funding being secured to expand the work of the campaign.
- 2.5 In line with objectives detailed in the JMWMS (core objectives 3 and 8) and Memorandum of Understanding (clauses 4.1 and 5.6) the constituent authorities have initiated a number of joint procurement initiatives this year including the joint purchase of kitchen caddies which achieved savings of over £150,000.

- 2.6 More recently work has also begun on putting together a new consortium (reported elsewhere on the agenda) for the sale of all packaging materials collected by the constituent authorities which through a joint approach is looking to derive greater value for the range of materials being collected.
- 2.7 In addition new in vessel composting capacity has recently come on line at the Cumberlow facility with the Ridge development also still on track to be fully operational by March 2010 making Hertfordshire more self sufficient when it comes to the reprocessing of organic wastes.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The JMWMS agreed in 2007 includes an action plan covering the period 2007/08 to 2011/12.
- 3.2 The action plan is broken down into 3 areas :-
- Waste Prevention & Re-Use
  - Residual Waste
  - Partnership

### **4 WASTE PREVENTION & RE-USE**

#### **4.1 Home Composting**

- 4.1.1 HCC continues to promote subsidised compost bins. Historically the promotion has taken advantage of competitive prices secured via national arrangements facilitated by WRAP. However, following a reprioritisation of WRAP's work programme this arrangement came to an end in September this year. Consequently HCC has let a short term contract to continue the supply of home composters with prices remaining the same for residents. This contract runs to the end of March 2010 at which time HCC will consider options based on whether or not to take advantage of new national arrangements being negotiated by the South-East Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership.
- 4.1.2 The continued promotion of compost bins has no direct impact on the HWP as the subsidy is fully funded by HCC. However, the HWP will keep the promotion under constant review and will table recommendations for changes if and when required.

#### **4.2 Real Nappy Promotion**

- 4.2.1 In 2008/09 384 families took advantage of the real nappy promotion. On the assumption that real nappy use is maintained in these families, in the region of 384 tonnes of waste will be diverted from landfill over the 2½ years that the average baby stays in nappies.
- 4.2.2 Whilst this is to be welcomed there are concerns over returns from the real nappy promotion versus the costs, including the subsidy and officer time required.

- 4.2.3 As a consequence a review of the campaign has been initiated by sending out surveys to 303 families who took advantage of the scheme in 2008/09. At the time of writing, the surveys had achieved a response of 65%. The results of the review were recently reported to the WasteAware sub group with a number of recommendations tabled and agreed ranging from the provision of additional training in the promotion of real nappies to re-organising which publications the initiative is advertised in.
- 4.2.4 In addition WasteAware has approached the County Council who, to reflect the increase in landfill costs since the scheme was first setup, whilst being mindful of the need to make savings has agreed to increase it's contribution towards the real nappy subsidy from £20 to £30 effective from April 2010.

### **4.3 Reuse Charities & Businesses**

- 4.3.1 Previously an online re-use directory was compiled and is now kept up to date by HCC officers with support from the constituent authorities.
- 4.3.2 The issue of re-use was also promoted in recent publications covering furniture and food waste.

### **4.4 Recycling Initiatives - Schools**

- 4.4.1 Previously the WasteAware group developed schools information packs for key stages 2 and 3 both of which can be downloaded via the WasteAware website. Both packs will be updated this year to reflect progress with the JMWMS as well as changes to the services now on offer to schools throughout Hertfordshire. This includes a new schools recycling service being offered free by Dacorum Borough Council to all schools in their area. The new service has been supported with funding of £12,510 from the Waste Infrastructure Capital Grant.
- 4.4.2 The HWP's work with schools was also recently supplemented by attendance at Hertfordshire's first Sustainable Schools Ambassadors' day during which pupils from across the County came to hear about various issues with a view to implementing practical ideas in their own schools to improve environmental performance.
- 4.4.3 To further develop the HWP's influence, officers have also recently joined the Hertfordshire Global & Sustainable Development Steering group.

### **4.5 Provision of General Recycling Information**

- 4.5.1 The provision of recycling information including, leaflets, adverts, posters, websites etc has and continues to be one of the main communication methods used by the HWP. The vast majority of leaflets produced by the constituent authorities are available from the WasteAware extranet.
- 4.5.2 Increasingly and where possible information on local recycling initiatives is being linked to national campaigns such as WRAP's 'Love Food Hate Waste' initiative.

## 4.6 Waste Disposal Awareness

- 4.6.1 Linked to commitments in the JMWMS and action plan, work was recently undertaken to integrate messages relevant to waste recovery into the WasteAware campaign.
- 4.6.2 To support this transition the WasteAware group supported by HCC's communication consultants developed revised branding to accommodate recovery as the 4<sup>th</sup> 'R', which received final approval at the HWP Member meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009. The new branding has now been deployed and is being used by the constituent authorities.
- 4.6.3 This ensures messages about recovery will be presented as part of wider communications about the need to first reduce, re-use and then recycle wastes as part of an integrated waste management strategy. To manage the dissemination of such messages the WasteAware group has been expanded to accommodate an officer from HCC's Communications & Customer Services Unit (Environment) who will ensure opportunities to disseminate appropriate information are taken.
- 4.6.4 The final strand of this work is now taking place to embed the new brand and its underlying principles within a (draft) media protocol being developed by the WasteAware group to ensure a consistent response to external enquiries across the HWP.

## 5 RESIDUAL WASTE ACTION PLAN

### 5.1 Detailed Residual Waste & LATS Strategy

- 5.1.1 Development of a strategy for the management of residual waste and LATS has been facilitated through the implementation of the Hertfordshire Waste Procurement Programme which includes 7 distinct work streams designed to deliver the overall programme.
- 5.1.2 Key among these is the Primary Waste Project which covers the procurement of the residual waste treatment facilities / services. This project has generated the output specification and associated evaluation criteria and is led by officers with procurement, waste management, finance and legal expertise.
- 5.1.3 The programme has recently reached the end of the '**Invitation to Submit Outline Solutions**' stage, (ISOS). Consequently following a period of assessment 3 to 4 of the 6 bidders that made it into ISOS will be '**Invited to Submit Detailed Solutions**' (ISDS).
- 5.1.4 Final tenders are scheduled for October 2010 with the preferred bidder appointed in January 2011. Any planning applications linked to the establishment of new waste treatment facilities as part of the PFI contract are anticipated to be submitted by April 2011.
- 5.1.5 Based on the timescales outlined above, taking into account recent changes in tonnages, and following the results of the recent tendering exercise to award

interim waste disposal contracts, it is anticipated that HCC will not need to purchase LATS allowances prior to the new treatment facilities coming online.

## **5.2 Procurement for Residual Waste Treatment & Final Disposal**

- 5.2.1 With the exception of a second ABPR composting facility, each of the actions listed under the procurement for residual waste treatment and final disposal have been achieved within the timescales detailed in the original Action Plan. This includes establishment of a Procurement Project Team; and development and approval of a procurement strategy as reported on regularly to Directors' and Members.
- 5.2.2 The latest position with respect to the establishment of additional ABPR facilities is that the new capacity at Cumberlow Green is now online with material being processed through the expanded facility. In addition the new IVC facility at Ridge is scheduled to be fully operational by March 2010.
- 5.2.3 Weekly updates for the Ridge project will continue to be sent out by HCC's waste management unit who will alert the Partnership to any slippage against the anticipated timescale.
- 5.2.4 As mentioned above interim contracts for the receipt, processing and final disposal of residual wastes have been awarded which will ensure LATS compliance in the period 2010 to the anticipated start up date for the main waste treatment facility due to be operational by 2015. The interim contracts contain options for annual extensions up to 2017 to allow for any delays in planning and / or financial closure.

## **5.3 Residual Waste Reduction Targets**

- 5.3.1 The JMWMS includes a series of targets for residual household waste per head that reduce to a level of 285kgs by 2012.
- 5.3.2 However, results for 2008/09 indicate that this has already been achieved as a result of the significant improvements in recycling since the JMWMS was approved as well as the effect of the recession which is having a major impact on residual waste levels.
- 5.3.3 New targets will need to be agreed as part of any changes to the JMWMS stemming from the review which is due to take place next year. In the interim, constituent authorities will need to consider how to maintain the general downward trend in residual waste levels as and when the economy picks up.

## **6 PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN**

### **6.1 Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy & Action Plan**

- 6.1.1 With respect to the action plan the HWP's primary responsibilities are linked to the co-ordination and support of the JMWMS and action plan.

6.1.2 Later this year HWP officers will be tabling a report which will map out the process for reviewing the JMWMS, taking account of progress since the strategy was agreed. This debate will need to cover issues ranging from exactly what is to be reviewed, what external support might be needed to complete the review, the current and likely future legislative context etc. Whilst this will be fully reported on later, initial consideration of the issue is that the review will be a low-key affair given the proximity of next year's general election which could result in significant changes to the national waste strategy and associated frameworks.

## **6.2 Review of the HWP Structure (Governance)**

6.2.1 HWP officers are also responsible for managing governance arrangements for the Partnership as whole. With this in mind the action plan does include a commitment to have considered and agreed by now options for moving towards some form of joint decision making body.

6.2.2 However, following presentation of a 'Strengths & Weaknesses' analysis in January this year it is clear that there is a degree of difficulty with this concept and as a consequence the target dates for this work to be completed have not been achieved.

6.2.3 Instead information continues to be gathered on a range of options for evolving governance options to be presented at some future date. In addition a series of 1:1s with HWP Members and Directors during August and September indicate no clear sense of direction with respect to how governance arrangements should evolve, with concerns over local sovereignty often cited as a barrier preventing movement on this issue.

6.2.4 Presentation of this report to the Directors' group in September resulted in agreement that in order to try and make progress in this area the Directors' group would form a sub group to look at the issues and present options for consideration by Members. The sub group would be aided in this by a report to be put together by the Partnership Development Manager which would explore what the future direction might look like under an alternative government after the next general election.

## **6.3 Funding Arrangements**

6.3.1 The JMWMS Action Plan includes a commitment to review the 'financial transfers' between the County Council and the constituent waste collection authorities on annual basis.

6.3.2 Under the context of financial transfers in addition to the payment of recycling credits the HWP previously agreed to implement the Alternative Financial Model (AFM) which looks to reward overall reductions in residual waste.

6.3.3 Each constituent authority has been given residual waste targets between now and 2012. Taken together with projected credit values the AFM becomes a tool which constituent authorities can use to project income from credits based on the impact of new waste minimisation, reduction and recycling initiatives.

- 6.3.4 In doing so the model is innovative in that it looks to reward reductions in the amount of residual household waste per head which in turn emphasises the need to target a range of 'waste behaviours' as opposed to concentrating solely on recycling initiatives. However, the model was agreed on the basis that it would be reviewed after the first 2 years.
- 6.3.5 In response to concerns in some quarters about the operation of the AFM the Heads of Waste group received reports in July and August looking at issues that needed to be addressed as part of a Terms of Reference, (TOR) for a formal review.
- 6.3.6 The TOR for the review were finally agreed at the August meeting following which, using proprietary procurement procedures, the Lindal Waste Consultancy has been retained to undertake a formal review of the AFM.
- 6.3.7 Lindal's have carried out similar consultancies for other two-tier areas addressing the same issues identified above. The consultancy is also already well known to some of Hertfordshire's waste authorities with experience in range of waste related projects.
- 6.3.8 The consultancy commenced in mid September with interim findings due by the end of November. A final report with recommendations is due by the end of January 2010.
- 6.3.9 The specification provides for regular updates to be made to HCC and the Partnership Development Manager. In addition the specification also requires 2 presentations to be made to the HoWG with interim findings and final recommendations.
- 6.3.10 Also included is a requirement to present the final findings and report to the Directors' group when ready. It will then be for the Directors' group to present the final report and recommendations to the next relevant HWP Members group.
- 6.3.11 Following discussion of the issue an additional report will also be made to the Directors' group in December detailing interim findings.

## **6.4 External Partnerships**

- 6.4.1 Over the last 12 months the HWP has established links with a number of different organisations with a view to accessing best practice, extending the influence of the HWP, and keeping abreast of the ever changing legislative context in which we operate.
- 6.4.2 The organisations include the Lead Officers for Waste Management group - a regional assembly of WDA and partnership officers from across the Eastern region. In turn this group feeds into the Regional Waste Forum which is a Member based assembly at which Members representing waste collection authorities are also represented.
- 6.4.3 Partnership officers also attend DEFRA's Waste Partnership Forum which provides a regular chance to interact with DEFRA officials as they prepare new

policy initiatives for consultation thereby affording the HWP the chance to influence the national perspective.

6.4.4 HWP officers also regularly attend meetings of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management as well as the Waste Improvement Network with information being disseminated back to the constituent authorities as and when appropriate.

6.4.5 In addition to the above, recent discussions have also taken place with a representative from one of the local transition town projects to see how the HWP could become involved with a view to possible future promotion of the initiative where it links to the remit of the HWP and relevant actions under the JMWMS.

## **6.5 Economic Development**

6.5.1 Progress with the JMWMS has in many areas led to the expansion of collection services and the creation of jobs.

6.5.2 At the same time the establishment of new reprocessing facilities such as the Ridge IVC facility will also contribute to expansion of the 'green economy' in Hertfordshire.

6.5.3 In addition officers keep under constant review potential opportunities to develop markets for new materials such as mixed plastics further driving economic development. The new packaging consortium contract now being procured is an example of this type of work, (reported elsewhere on the agenda).

6.5.4 Whilst these developments are clearly welcome, to date they have taken place without formal reference to any of the economic development agencies in Hertfordshire as was originally detailed in the Action Plan.

6.5.5 HWP officers intend to develop this theme through the review of the JMWMS next year.

## **7 Recommendations**

7.1 That the Members' group note the report.

7.2 That the Members' group highlight any areas of concern which they believe may warrant additional work / require further clarification.