

# ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item 37

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Waste Management Strategy Review</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>CABINET 8 December 2011 Item 141 ECSOSC 23 January 2012</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Strategic Director, Place</b>		
<b>Lead Member:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Environment &amp; Sustainability</b>		
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Jan Jonker</b>	<b>Tel: 29-4722</b>
	<b>E-mail:</b>	<b>jan.jonker@brighon-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Forward Plan No: CAB24613</b>	
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

This report to 8 December Cabinet is being presented to ECSOSC for comment before the matter is considered again by Cabinet in Spring 2012.

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 The council adopted its Municipal Waste Management Strategy in March 2010. Since then a number of drivers for the strategy have changed, in particular:

- The council's priorities and the city's One Planet Framework
- The Government's national review of waste policy published in June 2011
- Proposed changes to waste legislation including the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS)
- Proposed EU recycling targets for the UK which may have implications for local authorities.

1.2 The existing strategy also sets out a commitment to carrying out further research on food waste collections to inform any future decisions.

1.3 In light of these developments the waste strategy has been reviewed. This report seeks permission to consult on the revised strategy which is attached as Appendix 1. It also seeks agreement on a number of key decisions prior to final sign off of the review post consultation.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That ECSOSC comment on the proposals.

2.1 That Cabinet grants permission to consult on the revised Municipal Waste Strategy as set out in Section 4 and that on completion of the consultation the revised strategy be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

- 2.2 That Cabinet notes the evidence base which has been collated to inform the development of a food waste trial.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approves in principle the submission of a bid for Interreg funding for 50% of the costs of a food waste trial in 2013/14. Should funding be required in 2012/13 to meet Interreg timescales a further report identifying sources of finance will be brought to Cabinet.
- 2.4 That Cabinet agrees that officers pursue further potential funding streams for food waste collections, including Interreg funding and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) funding and that the Strategic Director, Place is given delegated authority to submit funding applications in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability, and the Cabinet Member for Finance.
- 2.5 That Cabinet notes on going emphasis on waste minimisation, focussing particularly on food waste continuing to work with the Food Partnership.
- 2.6 That Cabinet grants approval for the development of a business case for the collection of commercial waste and recycling.

### **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

#### **Progress on Existing Strategy**

- 3.1 The existing Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan were adopted in March 2010. Since then a lot of progress has been made in implementing the plan including:
  - Improvements in customer satisfaction, which are at their highest levels for street cleansing, refuse collection and recycling
  - Roll out of recycling bring sites for drinks cartons and small electrical items
  - Improvement of recycling bring sites
  - The establishment of a Waste Advisory Group and Community Waste Forum to assist in the implementation of the strategy
  - Consultation is under way on proposals to trial communal recycling in the city centre. Depending on the outcome of the consultation the trial will be implemented in the spring of 2012.
- 3.2 Recycling rates at the Household Waste and Recycling Sites have increased from 48% to 52% but overall recycling and composting rates have declined slightly since 2008/09 from 29.5% to 27.7%. While many councils have seen recycling rates drop, believed to be largely due to the economic downturn, Brighton & Hove's performance is low when compared to many other cities.
- 3.3 Reducing waste is the most sustainable option for waste management. Total waste arisings have declined and total residual waste per household has dropped from 610kg per household in 2008/09 to 602kg/hh in 2010/11.
- 3.4 The strategy considered options for food waste as it comprises a third of the waste thrown away by weight and is key to significantly improving recycling rates. Further research has been done to inform future management of this waste

stream and this report seeks approval to pursue external funding for a food waste collection trial.

### **Drivers for Review**

- 3.5 The strategy is being reviewed in light of some of the changes set out below.
- 3.6 The One Planet Framework developed by the City Sustainability Partnership which the council as a key partner is working towards. It sets out priorities for the city in relation to sustainability and identifies actions to deliver improvements. It is based around ten principles:
- Zero carbon
  - Zero waste
  - Sustainable transport
  - Local and sustainable materials
  - Local and sustainable food
  - Sustainable water
  - Natural habitats and wildlife
  - Culture and heritage
  - Equity and fair trade
  - Health and happiness
- 3.7 The strategy review seeks to incorporate the principles and actions surrounding *zero waste* and local and *sustainable materials* so that it becomes the delivery mechanism for these two aspects of the One Planet Framework.
- 3.8 The government waste review and changes to legislation all seek to encourage greater integration of the management of household and commercial waste. Fines for councils for disposing of too much waste to landfill under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme are due to be abolished by 2012/13. Landfill tax, which applies to waste collected by the private sector as well as councils, will be the main fiscal incentive to discourage landfill disposal. These changes create a more level playing field for the private and public sector in providing commercial waste service.
- 3.9 The EU framework directive on waste requires member states to achieve 50% recycling of household waste by 2020. In the UK individual local authorities have not been set individual recycling targets. However Part 2 of the proposed Localism Bill gives ministers power to pass EU fines down to local authorities, although these provisions have been significantly tightened to ensure that this will only happen after a full review by an independent panel.

### **Changes as Result of Review**

- 3.10 The revised strategy continues to focus on waste minimisation recycling and composting and the action plan has been updated to reflect this. The two main changes as a result of the review are:
- Increase recycling rates for household waste further to help deliver the OPL framework targets on waste and reduce risks of fines being passed down to the council for not having done enough to increase recycling rates in line with the EU waste framework directive
  - Assess the feasibility of the council providing commercial refuse and recycling collections as well as collections from schools and council offices. Previously

LATS meant it was not financially viable for the council to be involved in delivery of these services.

- 3.11 The targets in the strategy have been increased from 45% to 50% by 2020/21 and to 70% by 2025. These targets are ambitious, more than doubling the existing recycling rate. The 2025 target is in line with the One Planet Framework targets for household waste. The UK Targets for One Planet Regions state:

“By 2025 at least 70% of domestic waste by weight will be reclaimed, recycled or composted. Ideally no more than 2% of waste by weight will be sent to landfill”

### **Increasing Recycling Rates & Food Waste Collection**

- 3.12 While some further increases in recycling can be delivered through the existing service, a significant increase can now only be achieved by targeting new materials. Options to collect more dry recycling on the kerbside (particularly mixed plastics) are being explored and are dependent on reliable, sustainable end markets for the material.
- 3.13 Food waste minimisation will continue to be a focus of the strategy working with the Food Partnership. However food waste makes up a third of the waste stream by weight and needs to be collected separately in order to achieve the targets in the original strategy, and those set out as part of this review. In order to inform a decision on food waste collections, extensive research has been carried out which has been reviewed by an independent consultant. Because many authorities are now collecting food waste a significant evidence base exists to help inform development of this service. Advice from Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has also been received. The council has been working with Lewes District Council sharing research and data.
- 3.14 An updated Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) has also been carried out. The research and the LCA are attached as Appendices 2 and 3.
- 3.15 The main findings of the research are that:
- Food waste collections are now widespread throughout the UK; many authorities collect food waste weekly and residual waste fortnightly
  - Anecdotal evidence suggests that collecting food waste separately results in waste minimisation as householders become more aware of how much food they throw away
  - The amount of food waste collected per household is higher, and participation rates are higher if residual waste is collected fortnightly
  - Recycling rates increase if residual waste is collected weekly
  - The tonnage of food waste collected per household is generally lower on more densely populated areas and in more deprived areas.

- 3.16 The LCA compared two scenarios for food waste collection and treatment – one using anaerobic digestion and one using in vessel composting - against the baseline of no separate collection with waste being treated at the Energy from Waste facility in Newhaven. The model assumed food waste is collected from suburban properties which currently have a weekly refuse collection. The revised collection service would consist of weekly food waste collection and fortnightly refuse and recycling collection.
- 3.17 The LCA concluded the difference between separate collection and treatment of food waste through anaerobic digestion or in vessel composting compared to the baseline is low because residual waste is not sent to landfill.
- 3.18 In summary the research has shown that food waste collections are well established and effective at increasing recycling rates and can have a further beneficial impact on dry recycling rates and overall waste arisings. Food waste collections would result in a net limited environmental benefit. It is therefore proposed that a trial is carried out to assess the impact of food waste collections locally.
- 3.19 Based on the research it is considered that food waste collections are most likely to be successful in the more suburban areas rather than in the city centre communal bin area. It is therefore proposed that a trial is implemented in the suburban areas in the first instance.
- 3.20 In the suburban areas the following collection scheme is considered to be the most efficient and yield the highest recycling rates:

	<b>Current Service</b>	<b>Proposed Service</b>
<b>Week 1</b>	Refuse Dry Recycling	Food Dry Recycling
<b>Week 2</b>	Refuse	Food Refuse
<b>Average Collections/ Week</b>	1.5	2

- 3.21 The London Borough of Bromley has implemented a similar service which has helped it reach a 51% recycling composting target in 2010/11.
- 3.22 It is estimated that a trial covering 6,000 households will cost up to £500,000 including set up costs and capital. A detailed, costed proposal and business case is being developed which will be presented to a future Environment Transport and Sustainability Cabinet Member Meeting for sign off. External funding to part fund the trial is being pursued.
- 3.23 The council has been working closely with Lewes District Council sharing research and data and further joint working will continue in areas of procurement, communication campaigns and sharing experience.

**Commercial refuse & recycling collections/ collections from schools & council offices**

- 3.24 Under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) councils are at a financial disadvantage compared to the private sector. Under LATS local authorities have a number of permits for the amount of waste they send to landfill. If they exceed this amount they must purchase additional permits or face fines. The scheme discourages authorities from taking on additional waste collection services as the cost of fines exceeds any reasonable charge that can be made for the waste collection service. LATS does not apply to the private sector and its abolition in 2012/13 will make it financially more viable for the council to provide commercial waste and recycling services.
- 3.25 Informal discussion with businesses suggests many would be interested in a service provided by the council. The advantage of an in house service is that it will reduce the number of refuse and recycling vehicles in the busy city centre. Collections can be managed to more easily minimise the number of waste containers in the street and reduce problems associated with trade waste sacks being left out overnight and ripped open by wildlife. Businesses would have one point of contact.
- 3.26 The feasibility of providing a commercial service needs to be assessed.
- 3.27 LATS is also the main reason the council does not collect waste and recycling from schools or its own offices. Abolition of the scheme means bringing this service in house can be explored once the existing contract comes to an end in 2013. An in house service would have the advantage that it could mirror the household collection service and thus help communicating messages regarding waste minimisation and recycling.

#### **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The existing strategy was subject to extensive consultation in 2009. The Waste Advisory Group (WAG) has been consulted on the first draft of this review and their initial comments have been incorporated in to the draft document. Subject to the outcome of this meeting the review will be subject to wider consultation.
- 4.2 The consultation will be available on line and advertised through various channels including the web, social media and the press. Hard to reach groups will be specifically targeted as part of the consultation to get their views.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the consultation will run in January and February 2012.
- 4.3 Where service changes are proposed (as is currently the case with communal recycling) detailed consultation will be undertaken with the residents directly affected at the appropriate time.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The strategy set out in this report seeks to reduce the amount of waste collected and increase waste recycling levels both of which will reduce the cost of future waste disposal to the council. The budget update report elsewhere on the agenda proposes making a provision of up to £0.5m in the 2013/14 budget for a

food waste collection trial. It also refers to the £250m fund set aside by the Government for a weekly collection support scheme announced by the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government in September. Further details of the scheme and bidding process are due to be announced shortly but it may also provide some funding to support a weekly food waste collection trial. Should a successful bid for Interreg funding to support a food waste trial give rise to additional costs being incurred in 2012/13 then a further report will be submitted to Cabinet to identify appropriate funding sources in next year including ways to bring forward funding from 2013/14. Any future proposals to introduce a commercial waste collection will be backed by a full business case and would as a minimum be at no cost to the council.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Mark Ireland Date: 24 November 2011*

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Municipal Waste Management Strategy seeks to improve the Council's performance within the legal framework which governs the Council as a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority. In relation to commercial waste, s45 1(b) of the Environmental Protection Act enables Councils to collect and make a reasonable charge for collection and disposal of commercial waste.

*Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date: 15/11/11*

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 A screening Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been produced for the strategy review. Specific aspects of the action plan will subject to detailed EIAs.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The strategy review identifies opportunities to significantly improve recycling and composting in the city and is critical to improving overall sustainability. It is also one of the delivery mechanisms for the OPL Framework targets on waste and sustainable materials.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The strategy review has no significant implications for crime or disorder.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Section 4 of the Waste Strategy Review sets out risks and opportunities which the action plan seeks to address.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The strategy review has no implications for public health. Any service changes will be subject to a detailed risk assessment.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.8 The proposals in the review are critical to help deliver improvements to the city's sustainability which is a corporate priority.

## **6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

6.1 Options for food waste collection have been considered in detail as evidenced in this report and the appendices. Proposals for a trial will be presented to a future Environment Transport and Sustainability Cabinet Member Meeting.

6.2 Options for commercial waste collections and collections from school and office buildings will be evaluated as part of the development of the business plan.

## **7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the body of the report.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Brighton & Hove City Council Waste Strategy Review
2. Food Waste Research Document
3. Food Waste Life Cycle Analysis

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

### **Background Documents**

1. One Planet Regions – UK Targets - Bio Regional March 2011
2. One Planet Living Framework for Brighton & Hove City Sustainability Partnership/ Best Foot Forward.
3. Screening Equalities Impact Assessment – Waste Review
4. Food Waste Strategy (see elsewhere on Cabinet agenda)