

**Agenda Item No:**

**NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY**

**REPORT TITLE:**

**DEFRA CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON WASTE PREVENTION**

**REPORT OF:**

**HEAD OF WASTE STRATEGY & CONTRACTS**

**FOR SUBMISSION TO:**

**AUTHORITY MEETING**

**DATE:**

**16<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2013**

**SUMMARY OF REPORT:**

DEFRA has published a Call for Evidence in relation to the effectiveness and perception of a wide range of waste prevention activities that extend far beyond the municipal waste stream. This report notes the key themes and requests of DEFRA, and seeks delegated authority to submit a full response by the end of April.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Authority is recommended to delegate authority to the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts, in consultation with the Chair, to submit a response to DEFRA's Call for Evidence on Waste Prevention.

**Signed by: Head of Waste Strategy &  
Contracts**

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**Date: .....8<sup>th</sup> April 2013.....**

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Government will publish the first Waste Prevention Programme for England by December 2013. The Programme takes forward a commitment made by the Government in its Review of Waste Policy in England 2011 and is expected to fulfill a requirement of the revised Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC). The Call for Evidence published by the Government sets out the evidence it has, its perceived priorities, barriers, opportunities and ongoing actions, and includes an invitation to submit views and information to help inform the Programme.
- 1.2 DEFRA notes that the global environment is changing at an unprecedented rate, and that within decades we are likely to face significant pressures on energy, resources and the natural environment. Its analysis shows that the UK uses approximately 470 million tonnes (Mt) of material resources annually, with over 250Mt of resources becoming waste each year. Although around half of this waste is recovered for recycling, this still results in the loss of large quantities of valuable materials.
- 1.3 Work undertaken for DEFRA in 2009 showed that simple measures to produce less waste which pay back within a year, could save UK businesses around £17bn and avoid greenhouse gas emissions of 16 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent annually. This represents around 3% of UK emissions and nearly 4% of gross UK business profits. These figures could be greater when longer term investments are considered.
- 1.4 Waste production is gradually declining in England, as below. Commercial and industrial waste accounts for 27%, construction and demolition waste 44% and household waste for 13% of waste generated in England by weight according to DEFRA.

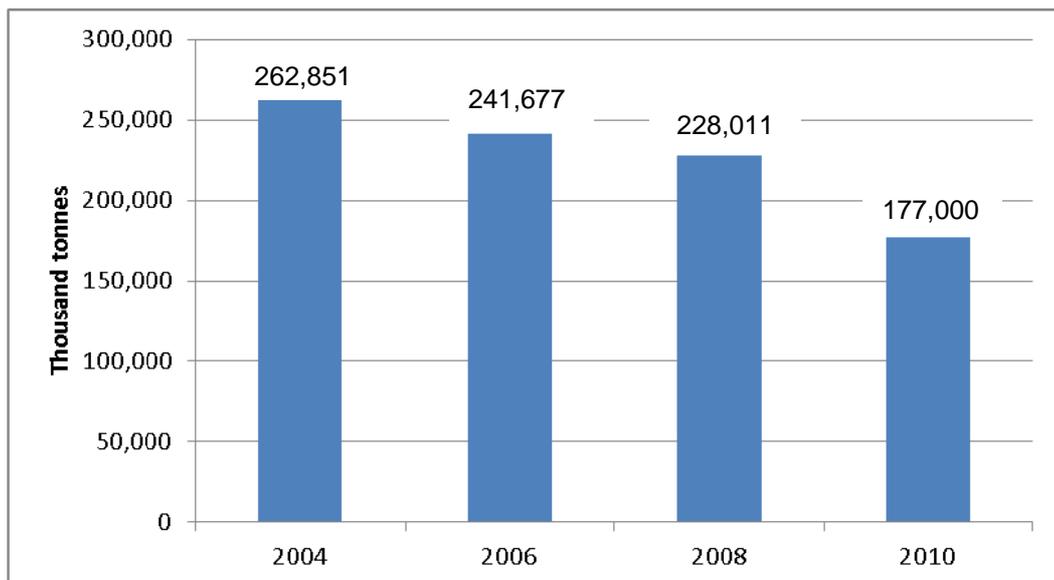


Figure 1. Waste Production in England (tonnes)

- 1.5 DEFRA identified as priority areas for waste prevention or reuse activity the following:
- food;
  - textiles;
  - construction and demolition sector;
  - chemical and healthcare sector;
  - paper and card;
  - electronic and electrical equipment; and
  - furniture and other bulky items (particularly from households).
- 1.6 From the Authority's perspective, the third and fourth areas (construction and demolition, and the chemical and healthcare sectors) are almost wholly outside the scope of normal municipal waste services. DEFRA has not, however, included packaging as a priority area, other than to the extent that it is made from paper and card; this may be because it believes action under the Packaging Directive will suffice.

## **2.0 THE CALL FOR EVIDENCE**

- 2.1 The government will publish the first Waste Prevention Programme for England by December 2013, taking forward a commitment in the Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011, and fulfilling a requirement of the revised Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC).
- 2.2 The Waste Prevention Programme will:
- help businesses recognise and act upon potential savings through better resource efficiency and preventing waste, to contribute to a more sustainable economy;
  - make it easier for people to find out how to reduce their waste, and how to reuse items they no longer want; and
  - support action by local and central government.
- 2.3 The purpose of this Call for Evidence is to inform the Waste Prevention Programme for England. It sets out DEFRA's understanding of available data and its other insights into the current situation, together with barriers to reducing waste arisings in England through waste prevention, reuse and repair. It contains a series of questions aimed at gathering additional evidence to expand DEFRA's knowledge base and explore some practical issues.
- 2.4 The scope of the work extends beyond the municipal waste stream and includes material waste produced within England, but does not explicitly include wasted water or energy on their own (although DEFRA notes that savings in these areas would generally be additional benefits of any waste prevention activities).

2.5 The focus is on 'prevention' and 'preparation for re-use' within the waste hierarchy.

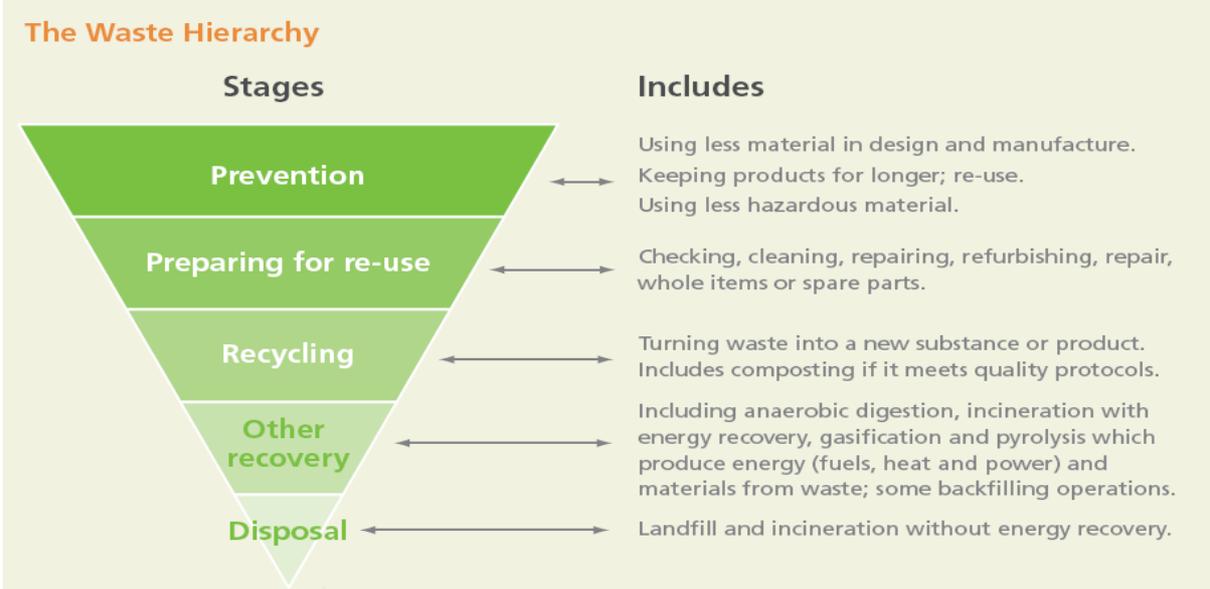


Figure 2. The Waste Hierarchy

2.6 DEFRA notes that preventing waste from occurring delivers the best environmental and economic outcome, and is key to moving towards a more sustainable economy; and that the term 'waste prevention' includes many different activities, from designing products so they last longer, are easily repaired and use fewer or less hazardous resources, to ensuring services are available so that unwanted items get a second life through re-use.



**Figure 3. Waste prevention activities at different product lifecycle stages, WRAP**

- 2.7 From the Authority's perspective, our contribution will lie principally in the top-left segment of the figure above that sets out the various stages of a product's lifecycle at which various waste prevention activities can occur; although in relation to food waste the stages are slightly different, and here we aim to influence people's purchasing and cooking habits such that they avoid food waste as much as possible and save themselves money at the same time.
- 2.8 The Authority has been co-ordinating and increasingly delivering a wide range of waste prevention activities across its area over the last five to six years, all of which have been planned and justified using business cases based on either national research or local analyses.
- 2.9 The Authority's Waste Prevention Programme for 2012-14 was highlighted in DEFRA's Call for Evidence as a good practice example on a local level that encourages consumers, communities and businesses to take action in reducing waste generation. The Government also indicated the Re-use and Recycling Credit scheme as an effective initiative for incentivising local re-use and repair, activity which the Authority is already undertaking. Thus, delivery of special re-use events and supporting local communities to take action were illustrated in the Call for Evidence. The Authority already implements such activity, and community engagement will be taken further into consideration when planning the Authority's waste prevention activity for 2013-14.

2.10 At the time of writing this report, however, it has not been possible to compile the evidence of this work into a full draft response to the Government's Call for Evidence. Consequently, it is recommended that authority is delegated for this to be done as below.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 The Authority is recommended to delegate authority to the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts, in consultation with the Chair, to submit a response to DEFRA's Call for Evidence on Waste Prevention.

### **4.0 COMMENTS OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISER**

4.1 The Financial Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comments to add.

### **5.0 COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER**

5.1 The Legal Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comments to add.

### **Local Government Act 1972 – Access to information**

**Documents used:** DEFRA, Waste Prevention Programme for England, Call for Evidence, 2013  
DEFRA, Waste Data Overview, 2011  
DEFRA, Household Waste Prevention Evidence Review, 2009

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**REPORT ENDS**