

Agenda Item No:

**NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY**

**REPORT TITLE:**

**JOINT WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE**

**REPORT OF:**

**HEAD OF WASTE STRATEGY AND CONTRACTS**

**FOR SUBMISSION TO:**

**AUTHORITY MEETING**

**DATE:**

**20th September 2006**

**SUMMARY OF REPORT:**

This report updates members on progress made since the last meeting, regarding the implementation of the North London Joint Waste Strategy.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Authority is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the postponement of the formal review of the North London Joint Waste Strategy for the reasons set out in paragraph 1.5 of the report...
- (ii) endorse the continued involvement of the Authority in the pan-London Working Group on a real nappy incentive scheme and agree in principle to participating in the development of a pan-London voucher scheme subject to the further detail being provided for approval at a subsequent meeting; and
- (iii) delegate authority to the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts, in consultation with the Chairman, to make the final awards of funding to community composting groups from the North London Small Grants Fund.

**Signed by Head of Waste Strategy  
and Contracts**

.....

**Date:** .....

## **1. BACKGROUND AND STRATEGY REVIEW**

- 1.1 The 'Mayor's Draft' North London Joint Waste Strategy (NLJWS), September 2004, provides the framework for progress towards reducing, re-using and recovering a greater proportion of the municipal waste which is generated in the North London Waste Authority area and reducing the amount which is sent for disposal to landfill.
- 1.2 The Authority and its Partners have undertaken a Best Practicable Environmental Option analysis for North London. The preferred option involves working in partnership as local authorities and with local communities to provide the services and facilities required to make the improvements needed at the most efficient scale of operation and finance. The preferred option involves action and investment in waste minimisation, recycling and composting and recovering energy from waste.

### **Mayoral Review of the NLJWS**

- 1.3 The Mayor of London is reviewing the NLJWS and his formal comments are expected very shortly.
- 1.4 As approved at the Authority meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2004, the Head of Waste Strategy and Contracts has delegated authority, "to make minor alterations in response to any comments received from the London Mayor." In the light of this, the comments will be discussed at the November meeting of the Strategy Implementation Board and then incorporated into the Strategy and final version of North London Joint Waste Strategy for publication as soon as possible.

### **Future Reviews of the NLJWS**

- 1.5 The 'Mayor's Draft' of the NLJWS, 2004 outlines a first formal review date for 2006. However, as the Mayor's comments on the 2004 draft have not yet been received, and also because both the National Waste Strategy (for England) and the London Mayor's municipal waste strategy are currently under review, it is recommended that a further review of the NLJWS is carried out after all the above is completed rather than as indicated in the original 'Mayor's Draft' NLJWS.
- 1.6 This report outlines progress on the delivery of the Strategy. The report is organised according to the relevant chapters (3 to 8) in the NLJWS.

## **2.0 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Review of England's Waste Strategy**

- 2.1 As reported at the last Authority meeting (28<sup>th</sup> June 2006) a formal response to the above was submitted by the Authority to the DEFRA Waste Strategy Review Team. A summary of the responses to the consultation has now been published (Review of England's Waste Strategy A Consultation Document, Summary of responses to the consultation, August 2006, produced by Dialogue by Design, Independent Facilitators.)
- 2.2 A copy of the Executive Summary to this report is enclosed in Appendix 1, full copies are available from the Policy and Development Manager. The main aspects to note are that there was strong support for variable charging and/or making waste management costs more transparent on council tax bills for household waste, although there were some (according to the summary report) that felt that costs were not high enough yet to change peoples' behaviour.
- 2.3 There was also strong support for more ambitious national targets and continued local authority targets, although many felt that it was time to move away from using economic instruments targets at the end of pipe and instead target resource efficiency through taxation on materials and products.

### **Implications for the Authority**

- 2.4 Until the final English Waste Strategy is produced it is too early to consider the potential implications of any potential changes in detail, but both the introduction of variable charging and additional local authority targets would impact upon the operating environment for the Authority. However, both these changes would simply place greater emphasis on the need for increased provision of recycling, composting and recovery facilities and services.
- 2.5 The other potentially more significant change would be any alteration to the role of local authorities in respect of other waste streams and the integration of municipal and other waste streams. This is particularly pertinent given the strong support in the consultation for more effort on commercial and industrial waste. Authority officers will keep abreast of developments and advise Members accordingly. It is anticipated that a revised English Waste Strategy will be produced at the end of the calendar year.

## **Joint Waste Development Plan Document**

- 2.6 The constituent borough councils continue to work together to prepare a Joint Waste Development Plan Document (JWDPD) for North London. This will create the shared land-use planning framework for all wastes (household, commercial, industrial, construction and demolition) in North London into the future.
- 2.7 All seven boroughs have now ratified the joint Memorandum of Understanding which sets out arrangements for project management, decision making, dispute resolution and budgets.
- 2.8 A shortlist of consultants to produce the JWDPD has been drawn up following an advertisement and pre-qualification process. The shortlisted consultancies have been invited to tender for the work. The successful consultancy is expected to be appointed in December 2006.
- 2.9 The consultancy appointment process is being carried out by the Planning Officer's Group and the contract let by the London Borough of Camden as the lead borough on this issue. Whilst the Authority is represented as an observer on the Planning Officer's Group, the Authority has not been involved in the shortlisting or consultancy appointment process.
- 2.10 The North London Planning Officer's Group as represented by the Programme Manager and supported by an Authority representative also gave oral evidence to the Examination in Public (EiP) of the Draft Alterations to the London Plan, the spatial strategy for London. Details of the results of the EiP and the proposals for Further Alterations to the London Plan are included elsewhere on this Authority meeting agenda.

## **3.0 WASTE HIERARCHY OPTIONS**

### **Waste Prevention and Reduction – Waste Prevention Plan**

- 3.1 The NLJWS sets out a series of implementation actions which the partners have agreed in order to achieve their waste prevention objectives. These actions are at a strategic level and an implementation plan is being prepared which will put practical actions in place to enable the partners to deliver on their strategic objectives. A draft implementation plan has been prepared by Authority officers and is being circulated to borough officers for review ahead of Member discussion at the November meeting of the Strategy Implementation Board.

### **Waste Prevention and Reduction – Real Nappy Research**

- 3.2 At the last Authority meeting Members approved the principle of providing funding for Real Nappies for London (RNfL), which is managed by the Womens' Environmental Network (WEN), to carry out the final stages of a research project investigating the most effective and cost effective method of promoting and encouraging real nappy uptake.

3.3 The results of the research have now been published and the conclusions are as follows:

- The environmental aspect of real nappies is appealing, (66% of respondents to the second random survey of parents and expectant parents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'cloth nappies create less waste than other forms of nappies' and 67% either slightly or strongly disagreed with the statement that 'cloth nappies are harmful to the environment'.
- But behaviour is influenced by a perception of convenience (with broadly disposables seen as convenient, real nappies perceived as inconvenient).
- This perception of 'convenience' and 'inconvenience' includes how easy they are to 'get hold of when you need them', availability in the shops, how easy they are to store and ease of use.
- There is an outdated view of cloth nappies and a lack of knowledge about them. Over half (52%) of parents with babies and young children who were surveyed agreed with the statement that they are 'not confident using cloth nappies'. This compares with only 13% who agree they are not confident using disposables.
- The key influences on parental choice of nappies are friends and family and also professionals in the health service with the following percentages of respondents saying these were the main influencers:
  - 'Friends' (28%)
  - 'Health professionals/midwives/health visitors' (25%)
  - 'Parents' (17%)
- The top three factors influencing choice of nappy type were:
  - 'The one I believe is easiest to use' (37%)
  - 'The type used for previous child' (32%)
  - 'Recommendation from friends/family' (29%)
- Uncommitted people want to try before they buy (there is a vast range of styles and types of real nappy on the market).
- There is a lack of awareness of laundry services, but some appeal due to the convenience factor
- The initial cost of real nappies is a big barrier.
- The view of pilot participants (who tried real nappies as a result of a 'cash back' subsidy, a voucher or trial pack incentive scheme) is largely positive.

3.4 In relation to the three types of 'incentive' offered with the pilot projects: 'cash back' (Islington and Hackney), redeemable vouchers (Hounslow and Richmond) or trial packs (Bexley and Lambeth) the results showed that:

- 3.5 Out of the three types of incentive which were pilot tested, trial packs are the most effective at encouraging those who would not have considered real nappies to try them. Over 80% of 'cash back' pilot participants who were surveyed and nearly 80% (although this dropped to just under 70% in the second survey) of voucher participants said they would have started to use real nappies anyway if the scheme hadn't existed. In other words, these two incentives tend to capture those people who are already interested in real nappies. However, less than 50% of trial pack pilot participants said they would have used them anyway, i.e. this incentive is better at capturing more uncommitted people and encouraging them to try.
- 3.6 However, almost inevitably, more of the trial pack pilot participants stopped using the real nappies after they'd tried them than participants in either of the other two schemes.
- 3.7 The research showed that an upfront cash outlay of at least £50 (or less) is a barrier to those on low income, so in this regard a 'cash back' scheme where residents claim the 'cash back' after they have purchased the real nappies is a less effective incentive than either of the other two schemes which require no up-front outlay. A 'cash back' incentive paid by cheque can also be a barrier to those on low incomes who don't necessarily have bank accounts to receive it.
- 3.8 Although washing real nappies at home will result in a saving for one baby (and even bigger for two), weekly management of a budget for those on low incomes overrides everything, precluding 'spending up front to save.'
- 3.9 With the Richmond and Hounslow voucher scheme the research showed that while parents do not have to spend cash up front, they do have to make a decision about what nappies they want to 'purchase' by redeeming their voucher so they have to make a decision about what nappies they want from a limited number of suppliers, i.e. make some investigations themselves, which may encourage them to be more involved and develop commitment to real nappies.
- 3.10 Information provided by local authorities scores very low with people as an influencer on their choice of nappy. Only 4% of the final random sample survey (parents of children aged 0 – 5 that currently wear nappies and expectant parents) said that information provided by the local authority was a source of information for them as an influencer on their choice of nappy (compared to friends at 28% and health professionals at 25%).
- 3.11 As a result of the findings of the research and in order to provide economies of scale, it is proposed to develop a single pan-London real nappy incentive scheme. This would allow the sharing of resources such as dedicated outreach workers and enable more effective engagement with the health service (which the research shows is a key influencer on parental decision-making in relation to nappies). In other words a limited number of local authority officers could talk to the health service and health professionals centrally, rather than each borough making its own approaches at a local level).

- 3.12 It is proposed that the pan-London scheme is a voucher scheme with central administration provided either by a lead authority or a secondee from an authority. It is also proposed that the North London nappy website, which is used by boroughs, the Authority and the nappy laundering and supply services in North London to administer the 'cash back' scheme in North London is adapted for use across the whole of London to administer a new scheme. The full detail of the proposals still need more work, such as agreement on the value of any vouchers that are offered on a pan-London basis, how much each participating authority would need to pay in order to support the central administration service and some pan-London publicity and what type of transition process would be put in place to move boroughs which are currently offering 'cash back' to a voucher scheme. It is envisaged that those authorities which are currently providing free trial packs of real nappies for residents would still be able to provide them in return for the redemption of the vouchers.
- 3.13 The Authority is represented on the Working Group which is developing the proposals. The Working Group includes a representative from each of London's Statutory Joint Waste Disposal Authorities and a NHS hospital facilities manager, a midwife, a nappy laundry service manager, a real nappy network representative and representatives from some of the unitary south London boroughs, Southwark and Bexley. At present the only commitment is officer time but within the next few months it may be necessary to make a contribution to the working costs of WEN to enable them to provide continued support to the group. In the longer term the benefits of being part of a pan-London scheme would potentially bring:
- reduced administration costs for the NLWA (by sharing across London)
  - economies of scale in terms of printing, design and other promotional costs for real nappy programmes
  - better uptake of real nappies because of greater support and promotion by the NHS, use of a more effective incentive (vouchers) and a more high profile, centrally organised promotional campaign
- 3.14 Members are recommended to endorse the continued involvement of the Authority in the pan-London Working Group, agree in principle to participating in the development of a pan-London voucher scheme subject to the further detail being provided for approval at a subsequent meeting.

### **Waste Prevention and Reduction - Recycling and Re-use Credits**

- 3.15 A separate report is provided as part of this Authority agenda.

### **Waste Recycling and Composting - North London Integrated Compost Project**

#### **In-vessel composting facility**

- 3.16 A full first year operational review report for the facility will be provided at the next Authority meeting.

- 3.17 However, Members should note in advance of this that there have been a number of complaints about odour from the plant. The problem stemmed from a batch of green waste received in May. Because of the wet weather the material started to break down anaerobically at the facility. The odours peaked in late May and early June because of the summer heatwave. Following discussions with the company and the Environment Agency a notice was issued by Enfield council's environmental health department to ensure works were carried out to remove all the compost that had been identified as the source of the odour. If the material had been left in the plant it would have taken another three weeks to go through the maturing process.
- 3.18 Composting experts at Agrivert who operate the plant for LondonWaste, have been working to tackle the odour problem and the German composting company Biodegma (who supplied the technology to Agrivert and LondonWaste) has provided additional technical and operational advice, which Agrivert and LondonWaste have now incorporated into their procedures.

### **Home and Community composting**

- 3.19 The next round of Small Grants funding for community composting projects has recently been announced following approval given by Members at the last Authority regarding the management costs for the same. The meeting also approved London Community Recycling Network providing some additional support for community composting for a second year across North London. A press release has been issued to announce the second year of the North London Small Grants Fund. Community composting groups have been alerted and a postcard promotional pack along with a letter of explanation has been sent to all North London councillors to promote the programme.
- 3.20 The deadline for applications to the Small Grants Fund was 15<sup>th</sup> September. Members are recommended to allow the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts in consultation with the Chairman to make the final awards of funding to groups, following the required application evaluation process, which includes both an independent evaluator's review and site visits to shortlisted projects. The results of the application, evaluation and decision-making process will be reported to Members at the next Authority meeting.

## **4 MANAGEMENT OF OTHER WASTE STREAMS**

- 4.1 As reported in paragraph 2.5 above, the consultation on the English Waste Strategy included proposals for local authorities to have a greater role in relation to commercial and industrial waste, which was broadly supported by consultees. We await the final Strategy to be produced towards the end of the year.

## **5 IDENTIFYING THE BEST PRACTICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL OPTION FOR NORTH LONDON**

### **Waste Data**

- 5.1 The results of the independent modeling carried out by Entec who were appointed to advise on the procurement process are now completed.
- 5.2 Any proposed changes to the waste data being used by the Authority will be incorporated into the Draft Procurement Plan when it is submitted to Members for approval.

## **6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE BEST PRACTICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL OPTION FOR NORTH LONDON**

### **Waste Disposal Implications – Materials Recycling Facilities**

- 6.1 LondonWaste Ltd has now completed the community consultation exercise prior to submitting a planning application for a proposed MRF at the Edmonton Ecopark. The letter from the Authority which was approved at the last meeting has been submitted as part of this process.
- 6.2 LondonWaste is now proceeding with developing a proposal that the Authority will be able to consider in the near future.

### **Transport Implications – Rail Transfer**

- 6.3 The Authority's Hendon Rail Transfer Station is within the Cricklewood and Brent Cross Regeneration Area. The London Borough of Barnet and the development agencies involved in the regeneration are proposing to relocate the Authority's rail transfer station to a new, purpose-built waste facility elsewhere in the regeneration area. Any replacement facility is required to assist the Authority in meeting its landfill allowance trading scheme (LATS) obligations to divert biodegradable waste away from landfill.
- 6.4 A detailed technology options appraisal for the replacement site has been commissioned by the developers based upon tonnage data supplied by the Authority. A soft market testing exercise has been initiated and Authority officers attended 2 'industry days' where technology providers demonstrated their own technology, the benefits of the same and the site requirements for each. An options appraisal report will be produced shortly, the results of which will be reported at the next Authority meeting.

## **7.0 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER THE STRATEGY**

### **A Public Awareness and Participation Campaign**

- 7.1 The Partner Authorities recognised in the NLJWS that engaging the public effectively to take action will be crucial for the achievement of the Strategy and accordingly committed to an on-going public awareness campaign throughout the period of the Strategy and to undertake to coordinate their respective contributions to this campaign where this will be beneficial.
- 7.2 As agreed at the Authority meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2006, Members approved the submission of a joint bid to the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) communication fund (Behavioural Change Local Fund) for further promotional activity with the detail to be agreed by the Head of Waste Strategy and Contracts in consultation with the Chairman.
- 7.3 A partnership bid for funding was submitted by the Authority on behalf of five partners: Camden, Hackney, Enfield, Waltham Forest and the Authority by the due date – 28<sup>th</sup> April. Barnet, Hackney, Haringey and Islington also submitted individual bids for financial support. (Hackney was able to be part of both a joint bid and submit an individual bid, other boroughs could only submit one bid).
- 7.4 The partnership bid was specifically aimed at increasing participation in kerbside recycling in poorly performing areas and came to £444,932 over a two year period. The bid incorporated a community workshop toolkit containing guidance and resources for borough officers in different community languages, some website resources, posters and display banners for community events. The bid also included local advertising and specifically targeted activities such as doorstepping and community workshops (using the resources above) in Enfield and Waltham Forest. Evaluation and participation surveys before and after the campaign were also included as a requirement of the funding.
- 7.5 Formal written notification has been received from WRAP that the partnership bid was successful. Verbally officers have been told that the amount awarded is £300,000. Other than officer time, no additional expenditure is planned, but if it arises, it will be contained within current budgets. An inception meeting is scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> September at which the final work programme is expected to be agreed.
- 7.6 The individual Barnet and Hackney bids were also successful.

## **Commercial and Industrial Partners - Bulking of Dry Recyclable Wastes**

- 7.7 Several constituent Borough Councils had asked the Authority to make arrangements with LondonWaste Ltd (LWL) for the receipt, bulking and transportation of commingled dry recyclables to third party materials reclamation facilities (MRFs). This arrangement was allowed for in the 2006/07 budget.
- 7.8 The benefit to the Authority is that it will start to have under its control the feedstock for the first local MRF (rather than this being controlled by separate contracts within its boroughs) for which approval in principle to procure was given by the Authority in April 2005. It also means however that the Authority takes on (indirectly through LWL) the task and risk of securing appropriate MRF capacity elsewhere.
- 7.9 Following the relevant procedures, contracts have now been signed between the Authority and LWL and LWL and the third party MRF to implement this arrangement. Following a phased introduction the new arrangement started in full on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006.
- 7.10 Letters still need to be signed by the Authority and the three boroughs to ensure that the quality specification and total minimum tonnage requirement of 18,200 tonnes per year continue to be met.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Authority is recommended to:
- (i) note the postponement of the formal review of the North London Joint Waste Strategy for the reasons set out in paragraph 1.5 of the report;
  - (ii) endorse the continued involvement of the Authority in the pan-London Working Group on a real nappy incentive scheme and agree in principle to participating in the development of a pan-London voucher scheme subject to the further detail being provided for approval at a subsequent meeting; and
  - (iii) delegate authority to the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts, in consultation with the Chairman, to make the final awards of funding to community composting groups from the North London Small Grants Fund.

## **9.0 COMMENTS OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISER**

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

## 10.0 COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

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

### Local Government Act 1972 – Access to information

**Documents used:** North London Joint Waste Strategy, Mayor's Draft, September 2004

Review of England's Waste Strategy A Consultation Document, February 2006 (Defra)

Review of England's Waste Strategy A Consultation Document, Summary of responses to the consultation, August 2006, Produced by Dialogue by Design, Independent Facilitators - Executive Summary

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# Appendix 1. – Review of England’s Waste Strategy A Consultation Document, Summary of responses to the consultation, August 2006, Produced by Dialogue by Design, Independent Facilitators - Executive Summary

## Executive Summary

The public consultation on the review of England’s Waste Strategy ran from 14 February until 9 May 2006. In all 4017 responses were received through the online web pages, by post or by email from a diverse range of individuals and organisations. The range of views expressed was wide and varied and this report provides a brief summary of the responses to each question and provides a flavour of the main issues raised.

There was broad support from stakeholders for the main vision and general direction of the strategy, with main concerns centred around how we deliver the strategy, particularly given the current lack of infrastructure, and whether we have the right balance of options in line with the waste hierarchy. Overall England is felt to be making some progress and to have some of right drivers in place (e.g. LATS) but could be aiming to do more – at least as well as the best in UK and abroad.

### Key points included:

- Wide agreement for more emphasis on **waste prevention** and minimisation activities, although the challenge this represents is recognised. Main suggestions are around the better use of regulation, incentives and penalties, and in particular better use of producer responsibility. There was strong support for taking a life-cycle approach during decision-making.
- More effort is needed on **education, information and awareness raising**, for the general public (as consumers) and businesses (e.g. design profession, SMEs) to encourage waste minimisation, reuse and recycling
- There was strong support for **variable charging and/or making waste management costs more transparent** on council tax bills for household waste, although there were some that felt costs were not high enough yet to change people’s behaviour. There were also strong concerns over the potential for increased flytipping, and hence calls for greater enforcement and better data capture if any such scheme was introduced.
- Recognition that **LATS** will be strong driver for local authorities to move waste management up the waste stream but strong support for higher **landfill tax** to drive sustainable waste management in other sectors. Many felt it was time to move away from using economic instruments targeted at the end of pipe and instead target resource efficiency through **taxation on materials/products**.
- Support for **more ambitious national targets**, provided there are clear delivery mechanisms in place and continued **local authority targets**, provided adequate resources are provided, but little consensus on how high they should be, how they should be designed and who they should fall on.
- **Energy from waste** and incineration remains controversial with many opponents (mainly through campaign letters), however many of those responding directly to the question see it as a viable option, provided options higher up the hierarchy are exhausted first. Many acknowledge that more evidence and information was needed.
- Most agree that **landfill** should be the last resort for non treatable waste in the long run (once alternative treatment and infrastructure are fully developed)
- The need to **simplify regulation** and change it where it could be more enabling and less obstructive of strategic objectives – especially around the **definition of waste**

- Ongoing support for WRAP. While most respondents favour development and encouragement of **domestic markets** for recyclates rather than relying on international ones, it was recognised that we live in a global economy and that there is a legitimate global market for some waste materials provided standards are met.
- Strong support for **more effort on commercial and industrial waste**, including support for C&I diversion target, but few suggestions on how this would be delivered. The landfill tax escalator and producer responsibility (e.g. packaging targets) seen as the main drivers.
- Strong support for the **sectoral approach**, including prevention targets, especially for packaging and food waste, targeted at the manufacture and retail sectors. Caveats are around availability of reliable data necessary for prioritisation and how targets would be implemented. Most respondents favour a **statutory approach** over purely voluntary agreements, or a combination of both, with voluntary agreements being backed by the threat of regulation.
- Strong support for **more integration** of municipal and other waste streams, but concerns over impacts on LATS. Widespread support for a **greater strategic role for LAs** in facilitating this, provided adequate funding and resources are made available.
- Support for **stronger regional co-ordination in procurement** of waste management services; and strong support for **partnership working** at regional and sub-regional level but disparate views on the effectiveness of Local Area Agreements (LAAs)
- Strong support for **Sustainable Waste Programme Board** provided it has the powers to get things done. Main caveats are around its membership, remit, funding and operation.