

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE:
JOINT WASTE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE - ADDENDUM

REPORT OF:
HEAD OF WASTE STRATEGY AND CONTRACTS

FOR SUBMISSION TO: AUTHORITY MEETING.	DATE: 7th July 2004
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SUMMARY OF REPORT:

The **JOINT WASTE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE** report with the main agenda papers states that the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts will give a verbal update on the results of the Cabinet Member Seminar at the meeting so that Members can consider any recommended revisions to the draft North London Joint Waste Strategy and consider approving the revised document as a final draft suitable for submission to the Greater London Authority.

This supplementary addendum sets out the main points raised by MORI who acted as independent consultants for the Partners to the draft North London Joint Waste Strategy and indicates the changes that are recommended by the Cabinet Member Seminar.

RECOMMENDATION

This report provides additional information for Members to consider when receiving the principal report **JOINT WASTE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE** at Item 16 on the agenda.

Signed by: Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts

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Date:.....

1. OUTLINE

- 1.1 This supplementary addendum sets out the main points raised by MORI who acted as independent consultants for the Partners to the draft North London Joint Waste Strategy (NLJWS) and indicates the changes that are recommended by the Cabinet Member Seminar.

2. STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE OUTCOMES

- 2.1 MORI, the independent public opinion research company, were engaged by the Authority on behalf of the Partners for the Stakeholder Dialogue on the draft NLJWS, and they presented their findings at the Cabinet Member Seminar on Monday 5th July. A copy of their presentation is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 From the outset MORI had recommended that qualitative research, face-to-face with stakeholders was more likely to be useful to the Partners than quantitative research that could only discover perceptions, but not the reasons for or context of those perceptions. A combination of both approaches was ultimately used.

Qualitative Research

- 2.3 This consisted of a presentation to the North London Recycling Forum in February 2004, two public workshops in May 2004 and the technical stakeholder feedback event in June 2004.
- 2.4 At the North London Recycling Forum, presentations were given by Authority officers on the background to and principal conclusions of the draft NLJWS and by MORI on the proposed stakeholder dialogue process. During a workshop session, Forum members were particularly asked whether they thought the proposed stakeholder dialogue process would give sufficient opportunity for them to express their views; Forum members agreed that it would.
- 2.5 Two public workshops were arranged by MORI (Saturdays 8th and 15th May 2004), both with groups representative of the Authority area, but one group was made up of people living in properties that had gardens and the other group from people without gardens. This was to test in general terms if those with greater space and opportunity to compost at home had noticeably different views from other people.
- 2.6 MORI recruited the residents in advance. At the workshops, MORI set the scene and Authority officers presented to the residents an outline of the draft NLJWS and physically showed them the Ashburton Grove and Hornsey Street waste facilities. MORI conducted discussion and questioning sessions in groups of different sizes, and asked a series of questions on a questionnaire both at the beginning and the end of the workshop to assess residents views

- 2.7 Key findings from the Public Reviews included:
- 1.7.1 a co-ordinated and consistent approach should be seen to be established between the Partner Authorities and the NLWA
 - 1.7.2 recycling should be prioritised and made easier for residents to participate in, with clear instructions on how and what to dispose of
 - 1.7.3 residents will accept council tax increases as a result, but they would like these to be 'ring fenced', with improved services
 - 1.7.4 promotional activities on recycling and waste minimisation issues should also be increased
 - 1.7.5 ideally, waste should be reduced at source. Companies should be encouraged to reduce waste and increase recyclability.
- 2.8 In order to obtain maximum benefit from the stakeholder feedback event (at which it had been planned to clarify and expand on respondents' comments on all principal aspects of the draft NLJWS) it was decided to use this day to focus on the various issues raised by the community recycling sector on the Best Practicable Environmental Options analysis conducted for the Partners by the Authority. Consequently all those who were either neutral or opposed in their views on the BPEO were invited; those in favour were not.
- 2.9 By far the most important change for the community sector was to secure explicit flexibility for Boroughs to continue and expand their kerbside sorting collection services. Other concerns were the way in which they perceived the Authority's power [subject to the issuance of regulations and guidance under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003] to direct boroughs to deliver recyclable wastes in a specified format for the Authority's MRFs would be used (possibly to their sector's disadvantage) and the limited overall future role of the community sector that they saw within the draft NLJWS.

Quantitative Research

- 2.10 This consisted of press releases and the small leaflets telling residents that the consultation was underway (of which 10,000 were given to each constituent borough to distribute through their own channels), and specific feedback forms that were sent directly to all members of the North London Recycling Forum with a summary of the draft NLJWS and more detailed, technical feedback forms that were sent to relevant companies, other disposal authorities and governmental bodies with the full draft NLJWS. The Authority's website also had the documents on it, with an online feedback form. All feedback forms went directly to MORI, so they could be independently assessed and reported upon.
- 2.11 The level of response to the above was lower than had been hoped, and MORI have advised that this part of the work cannot therefore be taken as statistically reliable.
- 2.12 Just 58 responses were received from the general public. MORI indicate further that those requesting and completing a Public Feedback Form tend to be those most interested in environmental and/or local issues.

- 2.13 Nevertheless, MORI reported that the main issue for these respondents was crime, followed by environment and rubbish. 71% said they recycle or compost more than a quarter of their household waste, which demonstrates keenness among elements of the population for recycling, and 95% say they would be willing to recycle or compost half their household rubbish every week.
- 2.14 Interestingly, given the choice between three statements reflecting different priorities, 60% thought “We should concentrate on reducing the environmental impacts of rubbish”; 29% thinking that “*We should strike a balance between minimising the environmental impact of North London’s rubbish and keeping waste management costs to a minimum*”; and just 3% thinking “*We should concentrate on managing the maximum amount of rubbish as cheaply as possible, and not giving priority to the environmental impacts*”. The Technical Feedback Forms were sent out to 86 stakeholders, and thirteen of them replied, of which eight were community sector. The results were broadly positive, with a minority expressing serious concerns about elements of the Draft Strategy, particularly over the BPEO process and the move to co-mingled recycling collection systems. The particular elements of the Draft Strategy that were seen as strengths were the proposal to develop a Joint North London Waste Local Plan [now to be set within the context of Local Development Frameworks] and the proposals for the management of other waste streams. The elements attracting the most negative views were the vision for waste management it sets out, the reasonableness of the assumptions on waste growth and composition, and specific proposals for waste minimisation and recycling and composting
- 2.16 It was the strength of the response received about the BPEO process and the conclusion that a mixture of co-mingled collection services, shared MRFs, composting facilities and residual waste facilities that led to the stakeholder feedback event being dedicated to these points as described above.
- 2.17 MORI concluded their presentation by saying that
- 2.16.1 NLWA and the Partner Authorities need to give feedback to residents and stakeholders to explain carefully the basis for the final Strategy
 - 2.16.2 This would emphasise to local people and stakeholders that the NLWA and the Partner Authorities are listening to them
 - 2.16.3 Participants in the community workshops noted that this intention was already clearly indicated by the fact that they had been invited to participate in the Dialogue
 - 2.16.4 Stakeholders also welcomed the opportunity to participate in the Technical Review and Stakeholder Event - although some felt they should have been consulted more and sooner in the process

3. CABINET MEMBER SEMINAR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 At the 5th July 2004 Cabinet Member Seminar, as noted above, MORI’s views on the stakeholder dialogue were received and considered. As a result of discussion between the eight partners there were several principal areas in which changes to the draft NLJWS were agreed to be recommended as necessary.

- 3.2 It was noted that the implication within the draft NLJWS that the BPEO of partnership-based co-mingled recycling collections and materials recycling facilities should in some way be imposed throughout North London (supplemented by two residual waste treatment plants and limited use of landfill) could be clarified and changed to make it explicit that recycling collection services involving collectors manually sorting all the various recyclable wastes into multi-compartment vehicles outside peoples homes (as occurs in all or part of six constituent boroughs).
- 3.3 It was agreed to be recommended that that the Partner Authorities' interpretation of the BPEO be made more flexible to permit Partner Authorities to employ either co-mingled or kerbside sorting of dry and organic recyclables provided that the facilities necessary for implementation are planned collectively in partnership to ensure certainty of compliance with the Landfill Directive and achievement of the targets set out within the strategy.
- 3.4 It was also noted by the Cabinet Member Seminar that the proposed use of the power of the Authority to direct Boroughs to deliver specified recyclable wastes in particular forms to identified facilities had been mis-interpreted by several well-informed respondents, so some re-wording would be necessary. It should be noted however that this power is not yet available, as the Secretary of State must first write the detailed regulations and guidance, which the WET Act 2003 empowers him to do.
- 3.5 It was agreed to be recommended that that whilst Partners should note firstly that the Authority will have powers under the WET Act 2003 to direct a collection authority to deliver their waste in a separated form for recycling or recovery, the amendments to the law also provide for disposal authorities to pay collection authorities such amounts as are needed to ensure that a collection authority is not financially worse off as a result of delivering waste in the separated form required by the disposal authority; secondly that the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has said it will consult on draft regulations and guidance for these measures in 2004; and finally that the wording of the proposal be adjusted to clarify that the powers of direction will only be called upon when the Authority needs to direct to a given facility in order to achieve its own statutory targets or as a contractual mechanism when working in partnership and with the agreement of relevant Partner Authorities.
- 3.6 It was further noted by the Cabinet Member Seminar that the role of community sector within the draft NLJWS was perceived as too limited by some within that sector.
- 3.7 It was agreed to be recommended that Partners should note there was no intention to be patronising - in fact the opposite was intended - and that stakeholder concerns relating to the potential role of community sector organisations in delivering front-line services should be explicitly reflected in Chapter 8 as detailed elsewhere in the strategy documents.
- 3.8 The final area noted by the Cabinet Member Seminar related to the proposed Strategy Implementation Board, and its likely role.

- 3.9 Following consideration of the stakeholder dialogue, the Cabinet Member Seminar agreed to recommend that a wide range of matters raised did not effect the overall vision and strategic direction that Partners had developed, but rather that they should be monitored or acted upon within the actual implementation of the NLJWS. Consequently various stakeholders would need to be assured that their concerns would indeed be taken up in this way where it is not appropriate to make changes to the main strategy document itself.
- 3.10 The Cabinet Member Seminar agreed to recommend that the Strategy Implementation Board should clearly be established (with appropriate officer support) as a non-executive body that would enable NLJWS matters to be considered collectively, but with all ultimate decisions remaining with the relevant Partner Authority. Areas to be dealt with by the Strategy Implementation Board include:
- 3.10.1 engagement with charity shops and the community sector
 - 3.10.2 co-ordination of planning matters with regards to municipal waste facilities in the context of new Local Development Frameworks
 - 3.10.3 consideration of detailed relative advantages and disadvantages of kerbside sorting and bulking versus co-mingled collections and central sorting, and of alternatives to the default levy mechanism
 - 3.10.4 co-ordination of the specification and letting of relevant contracts where these are intended to supply wastes to shared facilities or other forms of joint contracts are agreed, sufficient to meet the Landfill Directive obligations and NLJWS targets
 - 3.10.5 co-ordination of public awareness campaigns including re-use and composting, and work to minimise non-household wastes
 - 3.10.6 co-ordination of lobbying of regional, national and European governments where appropriate to further Partners' interests, including market development
 - 3.10.7 setting and monitoring performance against short and medium term targets, including prevailing facility capacity and likely lead times for any additional capacity that is needed
 - 3.10.8 developing, setting and monitoring performance against other aspects of the strategy, e.g. the amount or proportion of external funding obtained for new services
 - 3.10.9 alignment to best value principles, equalities issues, on-going regeneration and sustainability and Partners' community priorities
 - 3.10.10 sharing best practice and new experiences within North London (e.g. compulsory recycling), and monitor that elsewhere
- 3.11 Finally, the Cabinet Member Seminar received updated cost projections for the draft NLJWS so that all Partners will be better able to consider the broad financial implications. The relatively high London costs for labour and land were added into the model, and more recent information on likely contract rates were added. The costs (which are still based on 2002/03 data to allow comparability with previous modeling) are estimated to rise from £77.4m (£44.7m for NLWA) in 2003/04 to £91.4m (£67.3m for NLWA) in 2007/08, without inflation and assuming that facilities are commissioned on the ideal timetable previously modelled. The distribution of costs is significantly effected by recycling credits, which are rising in quantity and value throughout, to the extent they are

projected at £16.8m by 2007/08; a corresponding income is however shown for the Boroughs, so this does not effect the net cost to all Partners.

- 3.12 A more general up-dating of the draft NLJWS is also needed to reflect more recent waste generation, recycling and composting levels and more recent changes in policy and legislation from the London Mayor and the Government. This will effect all Chapters to greater or lesser extent, and will be undertaken and circulated to Partners for approval as soon as possible.
- 3.13 The work of the Strategy Implementation Board in co-ordinating contract specifications and tenders will clearly be of great importance and urgency, as forward financial planning for all Partners and certainty of achieving Landfill Directive targets for the Authority will require determination of these matters as early as possible.

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 This report provides additional information for Members to consider when receiving the principal report **JOINT WASTE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE** at Item 16 on the agenda.

5. COMMENTS OF THE FINANCE OFFICER

- 5.1 The Finance Officer will comment verbally at the meeting.

6. COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

- 6.1 The Legal Adviser will comment verbally at the meeting.

Local Government Act 1972 – Access to information

Presentations to Cabinet Member Seminar on 5th July 2004.

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Report Ends