

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

Briefing Note for Scrutiny – June 2013

Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Staffordshire – Draft Document for Consultation

Background

The refreshed Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) has been developed and produced by the Staffordshire Waste Partnership, which consists of all of the authorities within Staffordshire with a waste function, whether it be collection (WCA), disposal (WDA), or in the case of Stoke-on-Trent, both (UA). For clarification therefore the partnership consists of:-

- Cannock Chase District Council - WCA;
- East Staffordshire Borough Council - WCA;
- Lichfield District Council - WCA;
- Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council - WCA;
- South Staffordshire District Council - WCA;
- Stafford Borough Council - WCA;
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council - WCA;
- Staffordshire County Council - WDA;
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council - UA and
- Tamworth Borough Council - WCA

The partnership has a Joint Waste Management Board (JWMB) which consists of senior officers and Members with responsibility for waste as part of their portfolio. The JWMB meets on a quarterly basis to share best practice, develop new ideas and monitor performance of all the partners. The current JMWMS was last refreshed in 2007 and set out how all ten of the waste authorities in Staffordshire would move towards Zero Waste to Landfill by 2020. With construction of the new Energy from waste plant (EfW) in the south of the county, known as 'project W2R' well underway, and completion on target for the end of 2013, the partnership will only landfill a very small amount of the material (less than 5%) collected. As a partnership we are now recycling and composting over 50% of the waste we collect, and therefore the partnership has achieved its core objective as far as practicably possible.

In agreeing to refresh the JMWMS in 2012, the JWMB recognised this milestone had been met, and that the issues surrounding effective and sustainable waste management has changed substantially since 2007.

The Waste Hierarchy needs to be more effectively embedded in the new document, with Waste Prevention at the forefront of our thinking. Commercial and Trade Waste also needs to be incorporated, rather than concentrating on purely household waste as before.

The current JMWMS does not effectively incorporate strategies and policies adopted by individual authorities within the JWMB, and a refreshed document needs to redress the balance more effectively. The proposal therefore is for individual authorities waste and minimisation strategies to be refreshed at the same time therefore allowing the JMWMS to be a simple overarching document which sits above the individual authority documents.

Allowing individual partner authorities to develop their own waste strategies recognises individual authority aspirations and needs of their communities. The process for refreshing Newcastle's Recycling and Waste management strategy is currently in the process of development being led by

a cross party group of members via a Cabinet Panel. As Newcastle's strategy develops further updates can be provided to the scrutiny committee as requested.

This will provide a clear framework of infrastructure requirements over the next five to ten years, especially in the north and east of the county, and in particular what we do to replace the current Northern EfW (Hanford) contract which expires in 2020.

Additionally there is a need to understand our neighbouring authorities intentions, again particularly in the North and East of the County, where proposals involving PFI have run into difficulties, as there may be opportunities to provide more effectively positioned infrastructure.

In conclusion therefore the refreshed JMWMS will incorporate the following:

- That we treat waste as a resource, not a problem;
- Include clear recognition of partner authority's waste minimisation and recycling strategies;
- Incorporate a waste minimisation and re-use strategy;
- Explore fully the potential to increase work with 3rd Sector organisations;
- Incorporate a strategy for dealing with commercial waste;
- Set a clear framework for infrastructure requirements which consider a wide range of technologies to ensure we recover the maximum value from the materials we collect;
- Considers options for the north of the County and Stoke-on-Trent when the current contract arrangements for the Hanford EfW plant come to an end in 2020;
- Working in partnership to maximise external funding opportunities.

Development of the refreshed JMWMS 2013 has taken place over the last twelve months, utilising the partnerships own resources. Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council have been the project lead for the refreshed strategy, and the process managed by an officer steering group, consisting of the Chair of the Staffordshire Waste Officers Group (SWOG) the Chair of the Staffordshire Recycling Officers Group (ROG) a lead officer from one of the WCA's, a lead officer from the WDA, and a lead officer from Stoke-on-Trent UA, with the support of an officer on a part time basis from the Staffordshire Waste Partnership.

Events have been undertaken for officers and members of the JWMB to set their vision and aspirations, which has culminated in the adoption of six key principles to which the refreshed strategy will focus:

- Waste Prevention;
- Efficiency Savings;
- Resource Recovery;
- Carbon Reduction;
- Infrastructure & Contracts;
- Municipal Waste Household & Commercial (providing more efficient customer focused services).

These key principles have been further developed into a draft delivery plan which was formally approved by the JWMB at its meeting in October 2012.

Issues

In developing a refreshed strategy for the partnership it was recognised that account needed to be taken of individual authority's needs and circumstances, particularly in the current economic climate with severe pressure on financial resources.

Proposal

The timetable for formal adoption of the refreshed JMWMS 2013 is detailed below:

- Members to take away and review the draft JMWMS 2013 in their respective authorities as part of the formal consultation process by the end of September 2013;
- Any amendments following the consultation exercise to be agreed by partner authorities and incorporated into a final document to be presented for final approval by the JWMB at its scheduled meeting in January 2014.

Reasons for Preferred Solution

Developing the JMWMS as a simple overarching strategy allows individual partner authorities to develop their detailed strategies and delivery plans which take account of the six overarching principles of the JMWMS and allow them to develop their services in a way which reflects the needs and aspirations of individual authority communities. The methodology also allows flexibility in providing a structure which allows authorities to work more closely together and potentially share services, where there is mutual benefit to those authorities.

Legal and Statutory Implications

Under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003, local authorities had a statutory duty to produce Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategies (JMWMS), unless authorities achieved "excellent" in their Comprehensive Performance Assessment. These exemptions are no longer valid and government is currently consulting local authorities on the statutory duty to produce JMWMS's

If the statutory duty to prepare a JMWMS is removed, the JWMB agreed it still wished to produce a strategy as best practice.

Financial and Resource Implications

There will be some resource implications for members and officers time. Further financial and resource implications will be identified once the Councils own Waste strategy is agreed and finalised.

Background Papers

A copy of the draft strategy document will be tabled at the meeting.

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