

COUNCIL

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WASTE STRATEGY

Portfolio holder: Councillor Phil Filmer, Front Line Services

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration and Development

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1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks approval to the Waste Strategy.

2 Decision Issues

2.1 This is a matter for Council because of the potential for decisions which may seek to amend the existing policy framework and budget.

3 Background and consultation

3.1 Following the previous report to Cabinet on 6 September the draft waste strategy was subject to a consultation process in line with the proposals set out in that report.

3.2 To ensure independence many of the arrangements were made by the corporate research and review team. The facilitation and presentations were primarily made by external organizations or consultants not previously used by waste services nor contributing previously to any part of the draft waste strategy.

3.3 During the consultation period officers met on two occasions with the Overview and Scrutiny task group set up to monitor progress and to discuss the results being obtained.

3.4 The details and final results of the consultation exercises were submitted in a report to the Environment and Front Line Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 November and the summary of consultation is set out in appendix A. The Committee was happy with the consultation process so far and supported the amended draft waste strategy for referral to the Cabinet. They also requested the continuation of the cross-party

advisory group and asked to be informed of the results of further consultation.

3.5 The tables set out below state the proposed changes to the Waste Strategy in light of the consultation process, including Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet, with regard to waste minimisation and recycling/composting.

3.6 *Waste Minimisation*

3.6.1 The waste minimisation initiatives have been strongly supported across all sectors that responded to the consultation; for instance 97% of the respondents from the citizens panel think it is important to minimise the amount of waste they produce.

3.6.2 Comments on specific recommendations are detailed below:

WM1 The average waste to date for 2005/06 is 567kgs per head of population per annum. Consultees considered that it was important to stabilize or reduce this figure in the future.

WM6 Requests have been received to support further advertising of re use schemes.

WM8 Concerns have been raised from residents across the board about a possible increase in flytipping of waste if there are limits imposed on the range of bulky waste items collected.

WM11 Within Medway Council premises, it has been suggested that we could highlight greener working practices through training to reduce over-ordering of paper, leaflets etc. The Council needs to lead by example.

WM12 Neighbouring councils would like to see an amicable way forward and Medway working more closely with KCC.

WM13 Concerns raised over increased water usage, eutrophication (the contamination of water supplies with biological matter) and passing on a waste disposal problem to another body. Further discussion with water authorities will be necessary.

3.6.3 Revised waste minimisation recommendations following these comments are detailed below. All of the options can be undertaken irrespective of the current waste contract arrangements so a continuous programme of promotion can begin to ensure that WM1 can be achieved as early as practically possible.

	Initiative	Description	Timescale
WM 1	Waste growth	Slow down, stabilise rate of growth of municipal waste with the aim to maintain waste collected per head of population at 2005/6 levels of 567kg per annum.	2010
WM 2	Waste minimisation at source	Work with external agencies to encourage waste minimisation at source and improve markets for recycled materials.	On going
WM 3	Home composting campaign	Continue to provide home composting units and support the national campaign.	On going
WM 4	Reusable nappies	Continue to support the real nappy programme, working with external bodies such as Waste Resource Action Programme, Real Nappy network, local agents and health visitors.	On going
WM 5	Wood chipping	Investigate the feasibility of a home, mobile wood chipping service.	2007
WM 6	Charity reuse schemes	Increase advertising for reuse schemes, for example the Vines Centre Trust, to encourage residents to reuse furniture and white goods rather than rely on the council's bulky waste collection service.	On going
WM 7	Waste exchange	Investigate and undertake a trial waste exchange day to promote reuse of items.	2006
WM 8	Bulky waste reduction	Limit the range of bulky items collected to exclude those that could be deemed to be industrial waste, ensuring close monitoring to assess impact on fly tipping.	2007
WM 9	Think before you buy	Increase education of the public on waste minimisation to use the power and influence consumers have over manufacturers.	On going
WM 10	Enforcement	Increase fly-tipping enforcement. This would discourage fly-tipping and ultimately limit the number of incidents.	On going

WM 11	The green procurement code	Work with other sections within Medway Council to promote a green procurement code and with external agencies to pass the message on to other businesses in Medway.	On going
WM12	Household waste recycling centres	Work with KCC to ensure Medway is compensated for the waste left at household waste recycling centres by residents from outside the area or the sites' usage is restricted to Medway residents only.	2006
WM 13	Food digesters	Conduct further investigations, especially with local water authorities, to assess the impact and feasibility for the use of sink digesters for waste food, especially in flats and new builds.	2007

3.7 *Recycling/Composting*

3.7.1 Increased recycling/composting has been supported across all areas of the consultation. Residents are in favour of increased recycling to limit the residual waste to be disposed of.

3.7.2 Comments on specific recommendations are detailed below:

R1 It is suggested that there is a change in the statement about recycling targets that will reinforce the council's commitment to consider zero waste in future years, and to acknowledge the aims of the Medway Waste Forum Zero waste policy.

R2 The consensus of opinion shows there is a need for increased capacity for recycling, with a split between preferences for a weekly recycling collection and fortnightly collections with increased capacity. There is a recognised need for choice in collection containers for recycling as not all households are suitable for wheeled bins, and some will only be able to handle a limited number of bins. To achieve maximum recycling rates, there is a need to restrict residual waste collections to encourage non-voluntary recyclers, but there is a public concern over storing food waste, especially for more than one week. If the food waste can be removed from the black sack collections, placed in the brown bin/sack waste and sent to an in-vessel composter (as per recommendation R9), it would make fortnightly collections of black sacks more acceptable. Following a recommendation from Cabinet on 13 December 2005, a slight amendment was made to this item as highlighted in italics on the table below.

R6 In both the surveys undertaken in 2004 and 2005, residents have not been in favour of the introduction of charges for bulky waste collections, even if this would mean faster collections or an ability to recycle more items. At the road shows concerns were raised over the possibility of increased fly tipping if a charge was introduced. Nevertheless in order to develop more collection capacity it is recommended charges be introduced from 2009.

R7 Glass recycling at the kerbside has been widely supported at both the road shows and via the resident's surveys.

R9 Regardless of the introduction of mixed kitchen waste with garden waste, residents have expressed a need for additional brown bins for the garden waste collection service. There are over 800 households on a waiting list for brown bins and it is the second highest reason for non participation in the current scheme.

R11 & R12 R11 and R12 have been combined to make one recommendation to improve signage in line with the new national colour coding system.

	Initiative	Description	Timescale
R 1	Recycling rate	Aim to increase the recycling rate to 40 per cent by 2010; 45 per cent by 2015; 55 per cent 2020, with a recognition that Medway will revisit the Zero Waste proposal in the next review.	On going
R 2	Containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Undertake a borough wide survey of all properties suitable for two (garden and residual waste) or three (all services) wheeled bins. b) Issue approximately 20,000 brown bins to those properties deemed suitable c) To investigate all suitable households being issued with a wheeled bin for the collection of residual waste via an alternate weekly collection to ensure high levels of recycling and a reduction in residual waste. d) Provide residents with the option of a third wheeled bin for dry recycling or additional reusable bags to supplement the blue boxes. 	2006/7 2006/7 2009 2009
R 3	Schools recycling	Continue to work with schools and ensure waste and recycling become an everyday part of all school childrens' lives encouraging waste reduction, reuse	Ongoing

		and recycling.	
R 4	Awareness campaign	Link localised activity to national and regional waste awareness campaigns, ensuring all publicity is easily accessible by all Medway residents, using a wide variety of media.	Ongoing
R 5	Targeted communication and awareness raising activities	Undertake participation surveys and capture rate analysis for the kerbside recycling services to enable a targeted message on recycling to be given and to apply resources where needed to achieve a higher recycling rate.	2006
R 6	Bulky waste	Introduce a reasonable charge for the bulky waste collection service to enable a higher level of recycling to be achieved.	2009
R 7	Glass recycling	Introduce the kerbside collections of glass for the next collection contract .	2009
R 8	Other new materials	Work with partners to enable new materials to be collected when new markets are available and it is feasible, for example with certain plastics.	2009
R 9	In-vessel composting	a) Once an in-vessel composting unit is operational expand the brown bin service to include the collection of all putrescible kitchen waste. b) Issue biodegradable bags to households unsuitable for a wheeled bin in replacement of the brown plastic sacks.	2010
R 10	Multiple occupancy dwelling recycling	Provide all multiple occupancy dwellings in the area with a recycling kerbside collection via bins suitable for each property.	On going (completion by 2010)
R 11	Bring sites and household waste recycling centres	Continue to promote the sites and utilise the national bin colour coding scheme when refurbishments are due.	On going
R12	Waste electronic and electrical equipment	Investigate the feasibility of using the household waste recycling centres for waste electronic and electrical equipment collections other than from residents.	2006

3.8 *Waste disposal*

- 3.8.1 It has been acknowledged at both the LSP workshops and the Citizens' Panel that waste disposal is a complex issue and that more information would be needed to ensure an informed preference could be expressed. Residents felt that a range of options should be considered to establish the full financial implications and that future disposal contracts should have all party support.
- 3.8.2 The strategy has been written to include all options for disposal and it is not intended for one option to be singled out other than to provide guidance on the best practical environmental option based on information about different technologies at the time.
- 3.8.3 In line with views from the LSP and Citizens' workshop further work will be undertaken as part of the procurement process for disposal services to develop a list of criteria and their priority in order to assess and evaluate tenders submitted for disposal options. Such criteria will include environmental, social, financial and feasibility factors.

4 Advice and analysis

- 4.1 In the draft waste strategy summaries of the background research and consultations were incorporated as appendices to enable subsequent consultees to refer quickly to these key support documents during their analysis of the strategy.
- 4.2 For the purpose of this report, and for subsequent submission to full council, the waste strategy has been reduced to the main document attached at appendix B. All supporting documents (including all previous committee reports produced in support of the waste strategy) listed in the background documents below form a significant and substantial volume of information. All of this information is held in the waste services section and can be viewed on request.
- 4.3 There are a significant number of recommendations contained within the waste minimisation and waste recycling sections of the strategy. Some are not subject to formal contract action and pursuit of their implementation could commence within the period of the existing contract.
- 4.4 Other recommendations will need to be subject to competitive tendering procedures for a revised service to commence at the end of the existing contracted services. Furthermore, where there are potential options to

consider, each will require market testing to establish the best practical and financial option for Medway.

- 4.5 Each recommendation will involve a different level of staff and time input. Where contract action is required for services to commence at the end of the existing contract, it is imperative to ensure sufficient time and resources are allocated to enable the contract timetable to be met and for a sufficient lead in time to be provided for new services.
- 4.6 It is imperative, therefore, that an action plan be devised to take account of the recommendations that need to be dealt with as a priority and those that can be dealt with subsequently and, potentially, on a phased basis in line with their priority and the resources which are available or need to be acquired. Inevitably, services that require a high level of capital input at the start may be dependent on the availability of land and on planning and licensing conditions. Completion of a construction programme would need a further period of time to take account of the development and commissioning.

5 Cabinet – 13 December 2005

- 5.1 Cabinet considered the views of the Environment and Front Line Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and noted their support for the recommendations.
- 5.2 Cabinet agreed the recommended changes to the Waste Strategy except R2 (Containers) where Cabinet recommended the following to Council:
- ~~Issue all suitable households with~~ Investigate all suitable households being issued with a wheeled bin for the collection of residual waste via an alternate weekly collection to ensure high levels of recycling and a reduction in residual waste.
- 5.3 In addition to recommending approval of the Waste Strategy to Council, the Cabinet instructed officers to prepare an action plan to commence after Council in order to implement the recommendations of the strategy, and to report back to Cabinet on progress or to obtain authorisation to move to the next action phase at key strategic milestones. Officers are currently working on an action plan.
- 5.4 The Cabinet also noted that the Member task group set up by the Environment and Front Line Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee would continue to be involved in the future on such aspects as the assessment of potential waste processes, procedures and or facilities. Further details and criteria would be drawn up as part of the action plan.

5.5 Following submission of the waste strategy to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 November, and after the draft report deadline for Cabinet on 30 November, DEFRA issued new guidelines on the production of waste strategies. The new guidelines were reviewed and subsequently only minor additional information was needed to be included in the strategy already produced. In order to fulfill the new guidelines a number of additional paragraphs have been included in the strategy which provide clarification on certain topics and the information is highlighted in bold italics for ease of reference. None of the additional information affects any of the recommendations of the strategy.

6 Financial and legal implications

6.1 The strategy attached to this report covers a range of municipal waste issues that form a core service for residents and the public. The contents are supported by extensive research and analysis highlighted in the background documents and take account of revised waste legislation and, where possible, the implications of anticipated future legislation and targets. The cost of production and consultation upon the strategy can be met from within existing budget provision.

6.2 Once the strategy has been accepted at full council it will set the basis for the subsequent procurement of the services that the council decides to implement.

6.3 Although a waste strategy is not a statutory requirement of the council it does include advice and potential policies on recycling which the council must provide in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act (1990). DEFRA guidance indicates that it expects all local authorities to have in place a strategy for managing their municipal waste relevant to their responsibilities as a waste collection and/or a waste disposal authority.

7 Recommendation

7.1 That the Waste Strategy be approved.

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Background papers

Environment and Front Line Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report –
24 November 2005

Medway Waste Survey, MVA, August 2004.
Citizens Panel Questionnaire October 2005.

LSP Citizens Workshop on disposal October 2005
LSP Workshop on Disposal October 2005
LSP Questionnaire on Collection Services October 2005

Ethnic Minority Focus Group consultation October 2005

Waste Management Strategy for Medway 1999-2004
Medway's Draft Waste Management Strategy 2005-2020

Best Practicable Environmental Option for the Municipal Waste Management
Strategy, AEA, 20 April 2005

Waste Composition Analysis, MEL Research, 2000.
Updated Review of the Makeup of Household Waste AEA , July 2005.

Review of existing kerbside waste and recycling collection schemes. Rotate,
June 2005.
Best Value Review of Medway Council's Waste Services 2000/2001

Waste Strategy 2000 for England and Wales, May 2000
Waste Not Want Not, Strategy Unit Waste Study, November 2002
Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) – A Practical Guide, February 2005

Guidance on Municipal Waste Management Strategies, March 2001, DEFRA
Consultation Paper 2, Document D, Consultation of Draft Guidance on Municipal
Waste and Documents E, Draft outline of practical guidance on Municipal Waste
Management Strategies, December 2004, DEFRA.

[A Practice Guide for Development of Municipal Waste Management Strategies,](#)
DEFRA November 2005

Review of Waste Strategy, Environment and Front Line Services Overview and
Scrutiny Committee Report, 17 February 2004

Financial Implications of the Production of the Waste Strategy, Environment and Front Line Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, April 2004.
Waste Strategy, Cabinet Report 6 September 2005

European directives and relevant UK waste legislation as summarised in the waste strategy.