

Place Scrutiny Committee

3 March 2016

Waste Strategy

Purpose of Report: Summary Report

The Group continue to meet quarterly to review the implementation of the Strategy including the roll out of the three weekly residual waste collections.

The Authority is on target to achieve the Welsh Government's statutory recycling target of 58% with a predicted outturn of 58.5% recycling rate at year end. The next target is 64% recycling by 2019/20.

Although a full assessment will take place at year end, it seems as though the change to a three weekly residual collection has resulted in less residual waste. Other UK authorities have reported a 20% reduction in kerbside residual waste following implementation of a three weekly collection. An Awareness and Enforcement Team has been developed following a restructuring which is able to offer advice and support to any resident who may have issues with the new regime. It seems as though the majority of residents have adapted well. Raising awareness is the priority but this will be followed by enforcement in due course if necessary. A further issue to be tackled is the contamination of recyclate as it is the intention that the Authority will be able to sort its own material in the future and so reduce costs and maximise income from the material.

A proposal to move to a 4 weekly residual collection was included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2017/18. This has been ruled out for the current MTFS.

The performance at Household Waste Recycling Sites operating under the new contracts has improved considerably as well as material throughput reducing. There are now targets for recycling in the contracts which are enforcement via financial deductions if they are not met. Furthermore, payments are now fixed as opposed to being paid on a tonnage basis. The Group were concerned that there should still be facilities to enable items to be reused. This was still encouraged but may not take the same form as has in the past, such as shops at HWRCs, for reasons of space and public safety. There were ongoing discussions with the contractor regarding the provision of re-use facilities.

Community Recycling (Bring) sites are to be reviewed with the potential for rationalisation – this would likely result in fewer incidences of fly tipping as this is a problem at many sites

The food waste contract continues to go well. Agrivert are currently constructing a plant at Stormy Down in South Wales, which should be available towards the end of 2016. It is expected that the authorities will be able to take advantage of reduced haulage costs once this facility becomes operational.

Work continues in separating trade waste from domestic waste and it is now known that trade waste is breaking even. More awareness and enforcement work is now underway to ensure that traders comply with their obligations. Council premises, including schools, are now being charged for trade waste. Providing free recycling to Council premises had cost the service and it was no longer able to subsidize other services. The charging structure ensures that it remains more cost effective to recycle. Kitchen waste at schools is collected separately. An Enforcement Policy now been approved and introduced.

The contract for disposal of residual waste expires at the end of the current financial year. Currently one third goes to 'energy from waste' and two thirds to landfill however, under future targets from 2019/20 only 10% of residual waste can be landfilled. All options for alternatives are under consideration with the Welsh Government and other parties. Any future option will have to be sustainable in the long term. It is anticipated to have identified a clear way forward within six months.

The Group believe there are some positive messages which should be highlighted to the public – recycling target, new website regarding collection days etc. Further work is to be undertaken regarding reuse facilities, other authorities' practices and a standardised information sheet for use in holiday lets

The Group also request that the Place Scrutiny Committee consider their future role and whether scrutiny of any other related issues should be considered.

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Sources/background papers: Notes of a meeting,

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