

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20 JANUARY 2011

### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

#### RECYCLING AND WASTE MINIMISATION ACTION PLAN UPDATE

## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

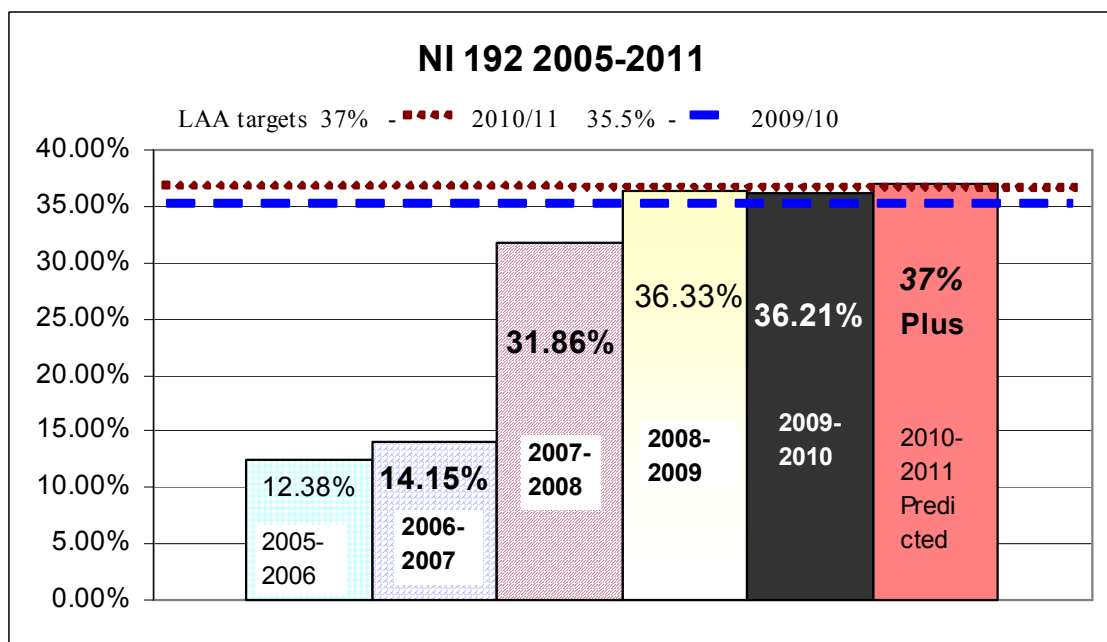
This report updates Members on the current position of the Local Area Agreement Recycling and Waste Minimisation Action Plan for 2009/10, a copy of which is attached in the Appendix.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

Increasing the amount of waste recycled is a corporate priority for the Council and contributes to the Council's Strategic Objectives.

Technical Services have stretched targets within the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and have met the previous two years targets and are on track for meeting the target for the current financial year.

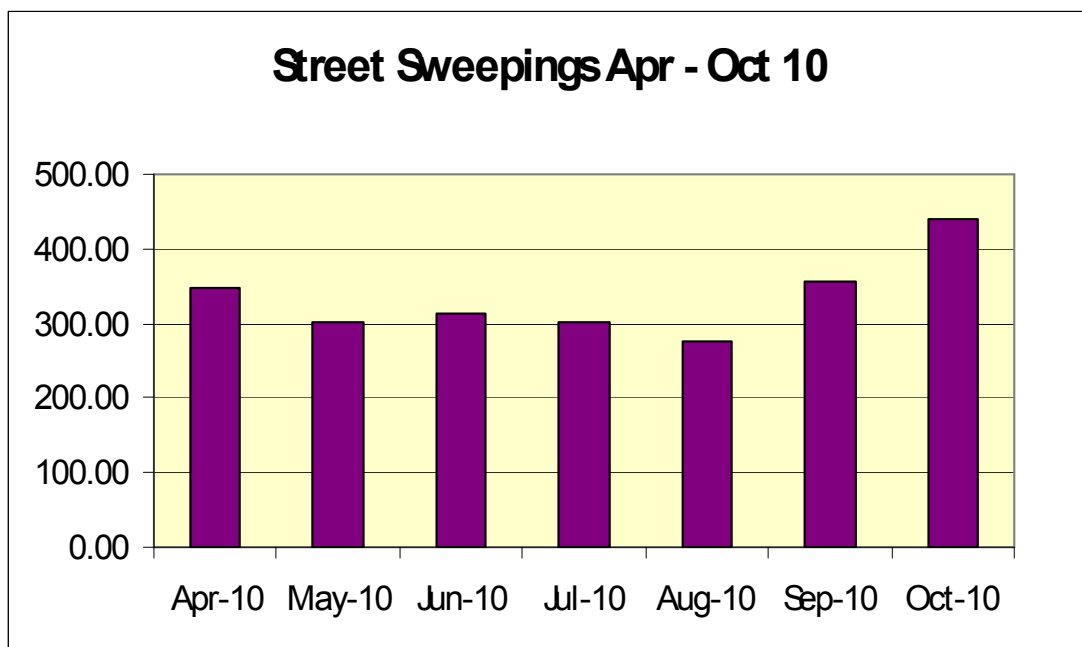
## 3.0 PERFORMANCE TO DATE



Household waste diverted from landfill is either recycled or composted. Technical Services reports Wirral's recycling performance under National Indicator NI 192. As members are aware, recycling has risen dramatically in Wirral resulting in a three-fold increase in the Council's recycling rate since 2005/06.

Whilst performance has remained relatively static for the past two years, indications are that this current year's performance is predicted to show a marked increase. The current target of 37% should be achieved and exceeded.

The increase since last year has been predominantly due to the recycling of mechanical street sweepings combined with an improved return from dry recyclable materials as a result of the initiatives outlined later within this report. The graph below shows the monthly tonnage of recycled street sweepings to date.



#### **4.0 IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF MATERIALS COLLECTED**

A number of methods have been deployed, (described in detail below), to help with reducing the contamination levels of grey recycling bins. It is important for the Council to deliver good quality recycling to the MRF, and this both ensures that the reprocessors accept the material and that the MRF can separate and sort the material. Improving the quality of recycling delivered to the MRF is one of the Biffa / Wirral Partnering Board work stream projects for 2010/11.

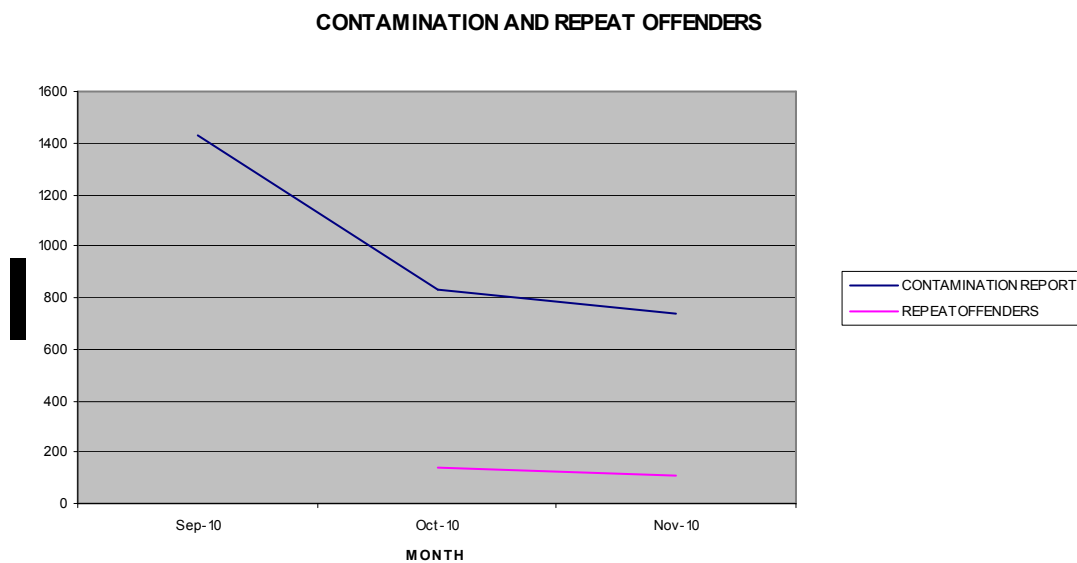
##### **4.1 Improvements to procedures**

Since April 2010 Biffa and the Council have been increasing the awareness amongst collection crews on how to identify and log contaminated bins. This

resulted in approximately 1,800-2,000 properties being communicated with between April – August due to the recycling bins being heavily contaminated. Since September 2010, letters have been sent out by post to properties logged as having contaminated bins and properties with repeat occurrences of contamination have received visits by the Council’s Participation Officers.

Thanks to the improvement of procedures and also the other initiatives mentioned below, the numbers of both contaminated bins and repeat offenders are beginning to fall.

The graph below illustrates the dramatic fall in September as a result of procedural change and the other contributory factors.



## 4.2 Future Jobs Fund- Assistant Recycling Project Officers

After a successful bid to the Future Jobs Fund, between May – November 2010, the first batch of Future Jobs Fund Assistant Recycling Officers were employed by Technical Services.

The team was tasked with reducing the number of contaminated recycling bins on six collection rounds identified by Biffa as having the highest amount of contaminated recycling bins. At the start of the project an average of 91 bins per round were found to be heavily contaminated. At the end of the project, the team had reduced this to an average of 11. They did so through a process of working with crews to identify and sticker contaminated bins and followed this up with 'educational' visits to the residents. In addition to this project, the team also took part in numerous road shows and public events.

Technical Services currently has the second batch of Future Jobs Fund employees that have duties to undertake a similar role on different collection rounds as well as reviewing properties within the Borough that have more

than one green bin. It is proposed that this successful initiative will be extended to include a third and final batch of intakes from March 2011 onwards.

### **4.3 Refuse Vehicle Signage**

All recycling and refuse vehicles have received new livery aimed at educating residents with clear simple messages to help reduce the levels of contamination within grey recycling bins. The messages have been informed by Waste Compositional Analysis previously undertaken by the Council as well as results of questionnaires completed by residents at the various events that have been attended by Officers.

## **5.0 IMPROVEMENTS TO COLLECTION INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **5.1 Bag Round**

Currently there are 367 properties within the Borough that currently have a general rubbish bag collection. Technical Services aims to commence the roll out process of a recycling collection service in the early New Year to these properties, commencing with a pre leaflet two weeks before the containers are delivered.

The new system being introduced will allow residents to place recycling into a box and will collect all materials recycled through the current grey bin scheme. Unfortunately it is not possible, for health and safety reasons to collect glass from these properties as part of this collection service. However residents can of course continue to take glass to a glass bring bank site. Officers expect that an extra 70-100 tonnes per annum of recycling will be diverted from landfill and that the roll out will satisfy much needed demand.

### **5.2 Multi Occupancy Properties**

Multi occupancies received a recycling service in May 2009. Since May, there have been a number of properties that could not go onto the recycling service due to reasons such as space restrictions, or legal lease arrangement issues. Technical Services is now at a stage where there are only two locations that remain to be provided with a recycling service.

Thorough consultation with the landlords / management companies at these locations has continued to a stage where they are finally in a position to meet the requirements of the Council and will be provided with a recycling service in the early New Year.

### **5.3 On Street Recycling**

In August this year, 23 extra on street recycle bins for the collection of drinks containers and newspapers were rolled out across the Borough. The Borough now has 55 on street recycling bins. Any future on street recycling bins that are rolled out will require extra payment to Biffa for the emptying and servicing of the recycling element of the bins. Officers would like to stress that although the bins do send out a positive message in terms of recycling, they are prone to contamination and are therefore operationally better being limited in numbers and not spread throughout the Borough en mass.

### **5.4 Primary Care Trust Clinics**

An extra three primary care trust clinics have been added to the Council's household waste recycling collection. Initial talks with the Primary Care Trust are indicating that there may be potential to add General Practitioners surgeries onto the recycling service during the next financial year. The type of waste being collected for the purposes of recycling is classed as household waste. The containers for this initiative have been funded by Capital Grants and the Primary Care Trust pay the Council for the collection.

### **5.5 Office Recycling**

Technical Services is due to present a progress report to the Council's Executive Management Team, recommending further roll outs to Council offices, to ensure that the co-mingled office recycling service is offered to 100% of Council buildings. Subject to endorsement to the recommendations contained within the report, it is expected that the roll out of office recycling will be undertaken at the same time as the roll out to the bag round previously mentioned in section 5.1 above.

## **6.0 HOME COMPOSTING**

In 2009-2010, 287 home composters were distributed to Wirral homes under the National Home Composting Scheme under partnership between Wirral and the Waste Resources and Action Program (WRAP), WRAP have since ceased this National scheme. This was superceded by the National Get Composting Campaign run in conjunction with a private sector organisation, Straight Plc.

Between April and November 2010, 194 compost bins have been distributed. Wirral have also distributed 4 wormeries to schools between August and October under separate work undertaken.

It is predicted that the new scheme, which is now being promoted as a partnership approach across the Merseyside Waste Partnership will distribute 200 home compost bins this financial year.

It is expected that from Spring 2011 onwards through the summer, refuse vehicle signage, combined with leaflets promoting the offer being made available to public outlets, that there will be a considerable increase in the take up of the offer.

## **7.0 MERSEYSIDE JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

On behalf of the Merseyside Waste Partnership, Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority is currently taking the lead on the review of the Merseyside Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Many factors influence the rapidly changing nature of waste, (including its volumes and composition), from varying economic conditions at home and globally, how we make use of natural resources, product design and environmental drivers such as the low carbon agenda. That is the environment in which the revision of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) is taking place.

The Merseyside Waste Partnership needs to have an up to date and fit for purpose Strategy for the long-term management of our municipal waste and material resources which is flexible enough to address these changing conditions.

The review is making significant progress in identifying key issues and drivers, establishing robust data and evidence to develop appropriate options for Members to consider, and aims to ensure that any revised Strategy reflects the views, knowledge and aspirations of the residents of Merseyside and key stakeholders.

The overall timetable remains on track to have an agreed and published Strategy by the end of the 2011/12 financial year. There will be a delay in the production of the draft Strategy to take account of the review of the Waste Strategy for England in Spring 2011. However, the Partnership has been able to inform the Government's call for evidence through the project work it has done on the JMWMS to date.

The main works streams within the review are:

- Waste Composition Analysis of recycling, organics and residual waste from Kerbside collections in all five six districts of Merseyside and Halton and at all Household Waste Recycling Centres;
- Issues and Options Analysis including a review of the District Council Action Plans
- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Engagement with stakeholders and Public Consultation

As part of the review Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority and Envirolink Northwest have commissioned consultants to look at four key main topics: Future Strategic Direction for resource management; Future Waste Composition; Future Manufacturing; Future Waste infrastructure. An initial draft report detailing the initial findings from the consultants will be published by December 2010 and this will inform the further developments of the Waste Strategy.

Members will have the opportunity to scrutinise reports for all the project work undertaken for the Strategy review from February 2011 and a draft Strategy will follow.

## **8.0 KITCHEN WASTE RECYCLING**

The Merseyside Waste Partnership has recently received a commissioned report from the Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAP) investigating a number of potential options for kitchen waste collection for member authorities.

In Wirral's case, the report undertook a study of a number of options relating to potential kitchen waste collection within Wirral, assuming a stance of the present services operated within Wirral and what would be needed in order to implement a kitchen waste recycling service.

The estimates produced by the consultants indicate that the most cost effective option result identified by the consultants was to collect kitchen waste using separate dedicated food collection vehicles, resulting in a one off capital set up cost of just over £1.6 million and an annual operational cost of just over £1.7 million.

It is estimated that the option would divert approximately 11,000 tonnes of waste from landfill and result in overall improvements in recycling of between 7-8%. There is also an estimated net treatment cost saving of minus £383,950 annually as a result of diverting the waste from landfill.

While this is the most cost effective option at the present time, there may be other opportunities coinciding with Biffa's fleet renewal in 2013.

The work undertaken by WRAP and any decisions that need to be made by Wirral Council have to be viewed within the context of wider issues, not least the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy review outcomes.

## **9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**9.1** There are no specific implications under this heading.

**10.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**11.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**12.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**13.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**14.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 All activity proposed in this report supports the principles of the LA21 Agenda, contributing positively to Wirral's Nottingham Declaration and Sustainability plans.

**15.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**16.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS**

16.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**17.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT**

17.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**18.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

18.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

**19.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

19.1 Committee is requested to note and endorse the progress being made in delivering the Recycling and Waste Minimisation Action Plan for 2010/11.

DAVID GREEN  
DIRECTOR, TECHNICAL SERVICES



