

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10TH MARCH 2011

SUBJECT:	<i>WASTE RECYCLING POLICY REVIEW UPDATE</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>DAVID GREEN – DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR GILL GARDINER</i>
KEY DECISION? (<i>Defined in paragraph 13.3 of Article 13 'Decision Making' in the Council's Constitution.</i>)	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in response to a notice of motion raised at a Council meeting in July of last year. The Director of Technical Services was requested to examine new ways of reducing waste to landfill and providing new recycling collections. This included a specific update on the separate collection of kitchen food waste from households within the Wirral.
- 1.2 Initiatives introduced to date, along with the corresponding investment in the services, by Wirral, has resulted in a dramatic improvement in recycling performance over the past 5 years. Wirral's recycling rate has increased from 14.4% in 2006/2007 to 36.2% in 2009/2010 and is projected to top 40% for the current year.
- 1.3 Before any decision is taken to invest in costly new additional kerbside collections services, it is recommended that Wirral continues to maximise all opportunities for the recovery of materials that can be collected using current collection systems and by maintaining and extending waste awareness campaigns. This will be based around;
- the continuation of existing initiatives aimed at educating and encouraging residents to participate in current collection schemes. This will include the targeted monitoring of areas to increase participation rates using assistant recycling officers, currently being funded via the Government's Future Jobs Funding initiative which is due to come to an end this year,
 - the completion of roll outs of kerbside recycling collections to all households within the Wirral,

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- working with the MWDA to provide suitable processing facilities at the Bidston MRF to recover mixed plastics and dry recyclable materials (glass, paper, cans, plastic), from arisings from street cleansing operations,
- a targeted intensive food waste reduction campaign, this will be a further extension and development of the 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign which has been running over the past 2 years or so.

The above should provide an opportunity for Wirral to move to and possibly exceed a 45% recycling performance.

- 1.4 The MWDA are currently in the process of procuring a new long-term contract for the treatment and processing of residual waste that is currently being disposed of via landfill. It is not known at the present time what contribution, if any, this contract and the associated treatment process will make towards Merseyside's recycling performance. These issues should become clearer towards the end of this year and it would be prudent to wait and understand what the actual likely performance is, how this relates to the overall proposed strategy target of 50% recycling and in turn to specific targets for individual authorities. For example if a relatively modest 5% recycling performance could be obtained from treating Wirral's residual waste, this would make a significant contribution towards achieving and bettering a combined recycling performance of 50% within the Wirral and may in turn obviate the need for further initiatives such as separate kitchen food waste collections and processing.
- 1.5 The Government is in the process of reviewing the Council's municipal waste statutory requirements, based on European and National policies and strategies. Whilst currently there are no statutory U.K. targets, relating to future waste recycling targets, this should be clarified later this year following the translation of the European target of 50% recycling by 2020, into U.K. legislation.
- 1.6 The current review of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside commenced around 12 months ago and is due to be concluded by the end of this year. An update on the work completed to date, along with some of the key findings and recommendations, will be presented to this committee meeting by an officer from the MWDA. The draft strategy will subsequently be submitted to members for comment with the aim of publishing the final strategy in December 2011.
- 1.7 A subsequent report on the detail of the draft strategy, along with a proposed recycling action plan for Wirral, will be submitted to a future meeting of this committee for comments and endorsement.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 Members are requested to:

- (1) Note the past and projected current improvement in Wirral's waste reduction and recycling performance as detailed within section 6.1 of this report.

(2) Consider the opportunities for further improvement in performance, along with the suggested approach and priority towards this as contained within section 7 of this report.

(3) Note, comment where appropriate and endorse the work completed to date on the review of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside (JMWMS) with a further report to be provided to Members on the full detail of the JMWMS as part of the strategy consultation/ratification process.

(4) Request officers to provide a further report, containing a detailed updated waste recycling action plan for Wirral, in conjunction with the draft Merseyside municipal waste strategy report referred to in recommendation 3 above.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 Member comments/endorsement is required to the work undertaken to date, to enable the further development of detailed strategies and policies in this area.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 At the Council meeting of the 12th July 2010, a motion was raised asking the director of Technical Services to:

- Examine new ways to reduce waste to landfill (such as through the introduction of food waste collections (taking account of existing work undertaken to date), the collection of recyclable material from businesses, increasing the range of recyclable material that can be taken to the Council's recycling collection points and working with the MWDA to increase the range of materials that can be placed into the grey bins.
- Investigate the feasibility and cost effectiveness of introducing a recycling rewards scheme to incentivise households to recycle more.

Within the examination and investigation above, the Council stresses that any new ways of reducing waste to landfill, such as the collection of food waste, must not take place at the expense of any other front line services, nor must it be allowed, through reduction in resources or any other way, to reduce the present high standard and reliability of waste collection across the borough.

A response to the above issues is contained within the main body of this report.

4.2 This report also provides members with an update on the draft recommendations arising from the review of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside (JMWMS). A detailed presentation and update will be given to the committee members by an officer from the MWDA, some headline facts have been highlighted in section 5 below.

5.0 REVIEW OF THE JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR MERSEYSIDE (JMWMS)

- 5.1 The current review commenced around 12 months ago and is due to be concluded by the end of this year, with the aim of publishing the final strategy in December 2011.
- 5.2 During the past six months a detailed options and environmental assessment has been undertaken along with a Merseyside consultation exercise. This work was based around the list of strategy objectives agreed at member workshops held early last year. These objectives have now been condensed into the following 'short list' of proposed objectives;
1. Reduce the climate change/carbon impacts of waste management.
 2. Maximise prevention of waste.
 3. Maximise landfill diversion/recovery of residual waste.
 4. Maximise sustainable economic activity associated with waste management.
 5. Reduce the ecological footprint of waste management activities.
 6. Promote behavioural/cultural change that delivers the strategy objectives.
 7. Promote the use of renewable energy.
 8. Achieve high recycling i.e. 50 to 55%.
 9. Promote resource efficiency.
 10. Provide sufficient capacity for waste management activity.
- 5.3 The strategy will provide a strategic framework for delivering the above objectives, which in turn will reflect in the detailed proposals contained within Wirral's own detailed waste recycling action plan. Subject to member comments and endorsement to the strategy review work undertaken to date, along with the comments contained within the main body of this report, a further report will be provided to members containing Wirral's proposed action plan for achieving the strategy objectives.
- 5.4 As stated above a full presentation and update on the JMWMS will be provided to the committee. This will be followed by a further opportunity for members to consider and comment on the specific detail of the draft strategy at a subsequent committee meeting.

6.0 WIRRAL'S CURRENT RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

- 6.1 Initiatives introduced to date, along with the corresponding investment in the services, by Wirral, has resulted in a dramatic improvement in recycling performance over the past 5 years. Wirral's recycling rate has increased from 14.4% in 2006/2007 to 36.2% in 2009/2010 and is projected to top 40% for the current year.

A comparison between the actual figures for 2009/2010 and the projected figures for 2010/2011 has been shown in table 1 below.

Table 1 – Comparison Between Last Years Actual and This Years Projected Recycling Performance.

Figures are projected and actual tonnes	Projected 10/11	09/10	% change from 09-10
Household Waste Arisings	125,868	131,605	2.3% Decrease
Commercial Waste (Council Offices)	1,174	0	N/A
Municipal Waste	128,274	133,206	1.8% Decrease
Garden Waste (Brown Bin) Recycling	18,553	18,909	1.5% Decrease
Bring Site Recycling	404	452	10% Decrease
White Goods Recycling	265	176	79% Increase
Dry (Grey Bin) Recycling	28,231	26,378	14% Increase
Street Sweepings Recycled	4,228	0	N/A only partial collection 09-10
Third Party Recycling	708	763	7% Decrease
Total Recycling	52,389	47,578	13.5% Increase
	41.6%	36.1%	

The headline figures have been highlighted in the table above, the significant figures include:

- A projected 4,811 tonnes increase in the overall amount of material diverted for recycling.
- A significant contribution (4,228t) from the new initiative to recycle street sweepings.
- Further increases in the amount of dry recyclable materials collected via grey bin kerbside collections.
- A significant (5,737t) overall reduction in the amount of household and total municipal waste collected by Wirral. (It should be noted that a proportion of this is likely to be as a result of the continuing impact of the recession on spending/consumption habits).

Whilst the above figures are obviously welcomed, they should not preclude Wirral from seeking further improvements and exploring all opportunities to improve performance towards the proposed 50%+ recycling target currently under consideration a part of the JMWMS.

7.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVING WIRRAL'S RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

7.1 The latest waste composition analysis of Wirral's residual (green bin) waste, undertaken in March and June of last year, provides the most up to date information on which to estimate the opportunities for further improvements in waste reduction/recycling performance.

This, combined with detailed tonnage information for residual street cleansing waste arisings, has been used to produce the 'opportunity' figures contained within table 2 below. Also included in the table are some comments on the key implications associated with realising these opportunities and the suggested priorities for addressing these. Further details on the reasoning behind the suggested priority have been included within sections 7.2 to 7.8 below.

Table 2 – Key Opportunities/Implications For Improving Wirral’s Recycling Performance.

Material	Performance Opportunity (% Reduction and/or Recycling)	Service Options	Cost Implications	Suggested Priority & timing of Initiative
Kitchen Food Waste (KFW)	Up to 18%*	New Separate KFW weekly collection	VERY HIGH capital and revenue cost (see section 7.2). New budget growth would need to be identified.	LOW - Keep under review – Major resource commitment required which needs to be considered after implementing all alternative achievable options for improving performance.
		Continuation of KFW waste reduction campaigns.	LOW - MEDIUM could be achieved using existing budgets.	HIGH – Continue and enhance current food waste reduction campaigns. Reducing KFW should be given priority over separate collection service.
Further recovery of dry recyclable materials collected via existing kerbside (grey bin) collection.	Up to: 3% Paper 1% Card 2-3% Plastic Up to 6-7% in total.	Maximising participation in current schemes. Reducing contamination levels.	LOW - MEDIUM could be achieved using existing budgets.	HIGH – Continue efforts to increase participation and reduce contamination using existing staffing. HIGH - Impending roll out of kerbside recycling to remaining properties that do not currently have a service. HIGH - Continue work with Biffa and MWDA to reduce amount of rejected materials at Bidston MRF.
		Introduce collections for mixed plastics	LOW if incorporated within existing GREY bin collections.	MEDIUM – would require MWDA to provide suitable processing facilities at Bidston (or future) MRF.
Further recovery of dry recyclable materials from street cleansing (Bins and Litter Picking)	Up to 3% in total.	Separate cans, plastics and paper from litter picking and bin emptying activities.	LOW if recovered from current unsorted mixed waste taken to MRF	MEDIUM – would require MWDA to provide suitable processing facilities at Bidston (or future) MRF.

* Whilst KFW comprises of around 18% of the total collected household waste, experience elsewhere has shown that this does not directly correlate with the actual % collected via KFW kerbside collection schemes. Separate collections have a natural waste reduction effect, when householders become aware of the amount of food that is being wasted. Additionally some food waste will cross contaminate other materials in the waste stream, particularly food waste packaging and therefore cannot be readily separated for recovery. Finally the survey was undertaken around 12 months ago and continuing food waste reduction campaigns, along with the general economic situation, are likely to have resulted in a reduction in the amount of food waste in green bins in the intervening period.

7.2 Kitchen Food Waste Collections

The Merseyside Waste Partnership has recently commissioned a report from the Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAP) investigating a number of potential options for kitchen waste collection for member authorities. Whilst, at the time of writing this report, the final report had yet to be published, the headline results for Wirral as likely to be as follows:

- A separate weekly KFW collection using purpose made boxes, would provide the best return in terms of increased recycling performance.
- The likely return, from KFW collections, is currently estimated at around 11,000 tonnes per annum in total. This would equate to an estimated 8% to 9% improvement in Wirral's overall waste diversion/recycling performance (see note in table 2 above regarding relationship between this figure and the estimated 18% total KFW in household waste stream).
- One off (capital costs) for kitchen food waste boxes and separate kitchen collection caddies would be in the region of £6/property (including delivery). This would equate to a capital funding requirement of £876,000 in total for 146,000 households. Unless the situation changes, it is unlikely that there will be any further capital grant support from central Government to support such initiatives.
- Additional operational collection costs are estimated to be in the region of £4.0 million to £6.0 million per annum, or £27 to £41/household/annum. It should be noted that these are generic estimates that include for any economies of scale that may be gained from operating a separate Mersey wide collection contract. In addition to these, Wirral would need to produce it's own estimate based on using Biffa to provide the service. Although, it is considered that the order of collection cost is unlikely to reduce significantly, if at all.
- The diversion of 11,000 tonnes of KFW from landfill does provide an estimated saving in current landfill disposal/tax costs (and residual waste treatment costs in the future). However when this is offset against the cost of treating kitchen food waste via anaerobic digestion, the total net savings amount to around £384,000 per annum. Unfortunately this is nowhere near enough to offset the substantial increase in collection costs highlighted above. Additionally, it should be noted that, these estimates are based on national average figures, as the consultants were unable to understand how the actual figures could be produced in the context of existing and future annual waste disposal/treatment Levy calculations.

As can be seen from the above, whilst kitchen food waste collections do undoubtedly present an opportunity for moving to and beyond a 50% recycling performance, they do have significant cost and service implications.

Accordingly, given the Council's current financial position it would be difficult to make a sound business case, at this time, for any investment into the introduction of separate kitchen food waste collections. In the event that the planned future review and renegotiation of the Levy payment to the MWDA,

does result in significant savings to the Council, this may provide an opportunity for further consideration of this issue.

It is therefore recommended that the Council concentrates its efforts in the short to medium term on kitchen food waste reduction initiatives and campaigns, as these are likely to provide better value for money in this respect.

It is further recommended that the Council continue to maximise all opportunities to improve returns from existing collection services, before consideration of further additional collection infrastructure, which does not currently represent good value for money. In any event and notwithstanding the outcome from the recent JMWMS consultation exercise, such an initiative would need to be subject to a specific future 'Living in Wirral', or similar, budget consultation exercise before any firm proposal to move forward could be made.

7.3 Improving Returns From Existing Grey Bin Collections

As detailed in table 2 above, there is some scope for further improvements in the amount of dry recyclable material (paper, card glass and plastic) being collected via the Council's current kerbside grey bin collection service.

PROVIDE A FULL COVERAGE OF KERBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTIONS - This will be a continued progression of the intensive work undertaken over the past 2 or 3 years to roll out recycling services to as many households as possible. This has resulted in a borough wide coverage of recycling collections to multi occupancy properties and will be completed, in March of this year, following the provision of a kerbside recycling collection to those remaining 'hard to reach' properties that currently receive a black bag collection for residual waste. By the time this report is considered 99.99% of all properties in the borough will have been provided with a kerbside recycling service for all the main dry recyclable materials.

IMPROVING PARTICIPATION IN EXISTING COLLECTIONS - there has been a concerted education/enforcement campaign over the same period aimed at raising awareness amongst Wirral's residents and 'encouraging' those who fail to comply with the collection policies in this respect. This campaign has required a significant investment in staffing resources and has resulted in up to 6 assistant recycling officers being provided and funded via the Governments Future Jobs Fund investment in staff initiative.

The FJF initiative is coming to an end this year and the third and final intake of staff will finish work in September. Accordingly, unless corresponding funding for the continuation of this staff input can be found, this key work stream cannot be continued beyond this date and the impetus gained in this area will not be maintained and possibly lost.

7.4 Extending Range of Materials Collected in Grey Bins - Collection of Mixed Plastics

An outline feasibility study into the options for the collection of mixed recyclable plastics has been produced by the Council's Waste Strategy & Recycling Manager and has been included at Appendix A to this report.

For the reasons stated in the report, officers recommend progressing the option to collect mixed plastics using the existing kerbside Grey Bin collections, in preference to using bring banks as:

- It will be convenient, easy to understand and encourage residents to separate these materials for recycling.
- It will provide the best return in terms of improved recycling performance.
- It is likely to be the most cost effective option.
- It will provide the most benefit to the environment, when compared to additional journeys to bring banks.

However it will be dependant on the MWDA to provide additional arrangements and processing facilities at the Bidston MRF. Currently there are no plans to do this and it will require officers and where appropriate members to work within the remit of the Joint Merseyside Municipal Waste Partnership to bring about this change.

7.5 Further Recycling of Litter Collected By Street Cleansing Crews

The recently introduced initiative to recycle arisings from street cleansing operations has shown that there is a potential opportunity to achieve, relatively easily, a significant gain in recycling performance.

Potentially this could be extended further to process and recover glass, paper, cans etc collected as part of the Council's cleansing and litter clearance operations.

However, as with mixed plastics, this would require the cooperation of the MWDA to provide suitably enhanced MRF recovery facilities (either at Bidston or an alternative location and officers will continue negotiations with them to see if this can be progressed.

7.6 Recycling Incentive Schemes

The Government has recently announced that local authorities should not penalise residents on the amount of residual rubbish that they throw away and encourages Local Authorities to offer incentives to householders to encourage recycling.

There are examples of such schemes in action, many are small scale and part of localised campaigns, offering vouchers to householders to encourage them to participate in recycling schemes.

There is an incentive scheme operated under the name of Recycle Bank, run by Halton Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Officers have investigated the key implications associated with implementing and running these schemes, which are as follows:

- Reward points are awarded under the scheme for the amount of recyclable material (kg) collected by each participating household. These are exchanged for reward vouchers for goods and services provided by participating companies.
- An annual payment is made to Recycle bank for each participating property in the scheme. These payments would represent a significant cost to Wirral in the event that the scheme was to be rolled out to all households (for commercial confidentiality reasons, the participating authorities have asked that specific details of the payments are not disclosed within this or any report)
- Modifications would be required to wheeled bins (bin chips) and vehicles, to record and monitor weights of materials being collected from individual households. This would have significant cost implications i.e. £3 per bin to fit chips (£438,000 total), £16,000 per vehicle for bin weighing equipment (£480,000 total).
- The Council establishes and maintains a database of properties, recycling weights and reward points etc. Obviously this requires a significant investment in implementing and maintaining appropriate systems. In Wirral's case this could amount to at least one additional FTE staff member dedicated to running such a scheme, along with a £20,000 computer hardware/software costs.
- It is difficult to quantify any tangible benefits (in terms of net improvements in recycling performance), until published data becomes available from schemes that have been running for a significant period of time.

As can be seen from the above, there are significant resource implications associated with introducing and maintaining a Recycle bank, or any other similar scheme aimed at incentivising individual households. There will also be other data protection and civil liberty issues associated with maintaining individual records, which may not be viewed favourably received by Wirral's residents, in the event that such a scheme is proposed.

National industry groups have also expressed concerns over such schemes. This has resulted in statements detailing comments that incentivising could drive consumption rather than promoting the message of waste reduction.

For the above reasons it is recommended that schemes such as this would not be appropriate for introduction in the Wirral at this time.

However, in recognition of the continuing need to encourage and promote the recycling message, officers recommend that further work be undertaken to provide regular feedback to Wirral's residents on overall recycling performance this will include:

- An annual update of Wirral's overall recycling performance to be included on new Bin wagon signage boards.
- Including regularly updated targeted messages on the Home page of Wirral Council website.
- Regular recycling performance updates on One Stop Shop electronic plasma screens.
- Information to local groups, businesses and schools via a series of focused community joint working events.
- Working with schools.
- Press releases acknowledging improved performance and thanking residents for their continued support and participation.
- Regular feedback to area forums, including any specific service issues relating to the area in question.

Officers will maintain a watching brief on specific incentive schemes and report back if and when any appropriate schemes are identified which could potentially contribute a significant benefit to further improvements in Wirral's recycling performance.

7.7 Potential Contribution from The Future Residual Waste Treatment Contract

The MWDA are currently in the process of procuring a large scale processing contract, which will provide facilities and treatment processes for all of Merseyside's residual waste (i.e. the waste that is currently sent to landfill).

The new treatment facilities are due to come on line some time in 2015 and the new contract will cover the period up to 2041. It is not known at the present time what contribution, if any, this contract and the associated treatment process will make towards Merseyside's recycling performance. This will be dependant upon the actual final technology offered by the preferred bidders, along with clarity (from Government via DEFRA) over the allowable contribution that such technologies make towards recycling performance.

These issues should become clearer towards the end of this year and it would be prudent to wait and understand what the actual likely performance is, how this relates to the overall proposed strategy target of 50% recycling and in turn to specific targets for individual authorities. For example if a relatively modest 5% recycling performance could be obtained from treating Wirral's residual waste, this would make a significant contribution towards achieving and bettering a combined recycling performance of 50% within the Wirral and may in turn obviate the need for further initiatives such as separate kitchen food waste collections and processing.

7.8 Provision of a Commercial Recycling Service

Members also requested that a feasibility study be undertaken into the provision of a recycling collection service for commercial (trade) waste, from businesses within the area.

The results of this outline feasibility study have been included at appendix B to this report, with the key implications being as follows:

- The Council does not currently directly provide any trade waste collections from businesses and would need to provide a service via our waste collection contractor Biffa. This reduces the commercial opportunities for Wirral to run the service 'at a profit'.
- There are a number of established major suppliers of trade waste collection and recycling services within the Wirral. Hence it is an extremely competitive market for a new provider to break into. Current market rates are extremely competitive and the opportunities for making a profit are significantly reduced as result.
- As a result of these factors, there is a high risk that Wirral will not be able to make a surplus (or indeed 'break even') on the costs of providing any trade waste recycling collection services.
- Wirral's total reported municipal waste would increase, as a result of collecting this waste, which we currently do not manage.
- There is no benefit in terms of increased recycling NI192 performance, as this is measured against our performance for recycling household waste only.

In view of the above, and in accordance with current commercial waste collection policies, officers recommend that the Council continue to act as an enabler to commercial enterprises and do not directly collect commercial waste by offering it as a Council collection service.

The Council does however collect commercial waste from its own offices and buildings and recycling collection bins are currently provided to ensure that as much of this waste as possible is diverted from landfill for recycling.

This initiative has helped to separately identify and quantify commercial waste, that was previously being incorrectly recorded as Household Waste and in turn has had a significant impact on reducing reported Household waste and improving reported Household waste recycling performance.

Officers are working with Council facilities managers to continue to roll out recycling collections to all (the vast majority of) Council offices and buildings.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 None beyond those discussed in general terms within the main body of this report.

9.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 Options for improving recycling performance have been detailed within section 7 of this report.

10.0 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The options contained within the JMWMS have been subject to a Merseywide and Wirral specific consultation exercise. The final results of this exercise will

be reported to this committee, in conjunction with the reporting of the proposed draft strategy for consideration.

11.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

11.1 None

12.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

12.1 None at this time.

13.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The requirement to provide municipal waste collection and recycling services are contained within the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Wirral's services and associated policies (both current and future) are designed to meet the requirements of the Act.

13.2 Whilst the Council has a statutory duty to collect and recycle household waste, Government statutory recycling targets have yet to be updated beyond the targets for Wirral set five or so years ago, which have now been achieved and exceeded.

13.3 European Law (the European Landfill Directive) specifies targets for reduction in biodegradable waste to landfill, this requirement falls on Waste Disposal Authorities (i.e. MWDA). The new European Waste Directive Framework (WDF) introduces a statutory recycling target of 50% recycling by 2020 for member states (this requirement is likely to apply to both MWDA and Wirral). Both pieces of European Law include for penalties, by way of fines, for member states that fail to meet the targets for landfill diversion and recycling. The WDF is about to be transposed into U.K. law via regulations currently being laid before parliament. This should hopefully provide clarity on the application of the 50% recycling target, along with specific details on how the Government proposes to pass on the penalties (fines) to those local authorities that fail to achieve the target.

13.4 Additionally, the U.K.'s national waste strategy is currently subject to a review and update, the results of which are due to be published in May of this year. It is anticipated that further guidance and clarity will also be provided at that time, on the links between European waste strategies and recycling targets and how these will relate to U.K. strategies and targets.

14.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 None at this time.

15.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Waste reduction and recycling policies and projects directly reduce the amount of waste being collected and sent to landfill arising from Wirral residents.

15.2 A detailed environmental impact assessment is being undertaken as part of the JMWMS strategy review process.

16.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

16.1 None.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Outline feasibility Study – Collection of Mixed Recyclable Plastics
Appendix B – Outline feasibility Study – Provision of a Commercial Waste Recycling Scheme

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

OUTLINE FEASIBILITY STUDY – COLLECTION OF MIXED PLASTICS

1.0 ISSUE

The Council requested that Technical Services to look at the feasibility of increasing the range of plastics collected for recycling.

2.0 CURRENT APPROACH

The Council collects plastic bottles from residents and does not collect any other type of plastic. The range of recyclables are currently collected by two methods:

- 1) Bring Sites – There are 19 bring site locations within the Wirral collecting glass, paper, cans, textiles, tetrapak, shoes and books.
- 2) Kerbside or communal area collection points – glass, cans, tins, paper and cardboard, plastic bottles.

3.0 OPTIONS FOR THE COLLECTION OF MIXED PLASTICS

As indicated by the current approach above, there are two methods of collecting recyclable materials that the Council uses. Officers from Technical Services have spoken to a National company that offers Councils a mixed plastics bring site collection service and Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority has also been approached as to the current position on processing mixed plastics at Bidston MRF.

4.0 OPTION 1 - COLLECTION OF MIXED PLASTICS USING EXISTING BRING SITES

A leading National recycling company based in Nottingham can offer bring site containers for plastic bottles as well as the materials listed below:

Polypropylene (PP) – Re-usable microwave-able ware, kitchenware, yogurt containers, margarine tubs, microwave-able disposable takeaway containers, disposable cups/plates.

Polystyrene (PS) – Egg cartons, disposable cups, plates, trays and cutlery, disposable take away containers.

They request a minimum contract period of three years with Councils who sign up for the service and their charges differ depending on the number of containers.

4.1.1 Financial Implications of collecting mixed plastics from bring sites

Due to the bulk of the material, a minimum of two containers should initially be provided at each site (initially 7 sites in total, to mirror the coverage provided by banks for Tetra Paks), emptied on a minimum of a twice-weekly emptying schedule this would result in a cost of approximately £50,000 annually.

However the cost could easily be double this as it is predicted that customer demand may be high and therefore further sites and/or containers would need to be provided to meet this demand.

4.1.2 Risks

Service may need to be expanded.

The risk of locating containers on bring sites for mixed plastics is primarily a large demand for the service. As indicated above, this could easily result in twice weekly or more regular emptying of the containers. The sites could easily become over run with demand and could have an impact on the cleanliness of the area. The Council would be locked into a minimum three-year contract with the service provider.

Challenge From MWDA

The Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) specifies a range of materials (including mixed plastics) over which the disposal authority (MWDA) has exclusive rights in terms of materials disposal and/or processing. The MWDA may invoke a challenge under the agreement, in the event that this material is consigned to a third party contractor for processing.

4.1.3 Benefits

Residents would be able to recycle an increased range of recyclables and the Council would be meeting the expectations of the customer. Recycling rates in the Borough could potentially be increased by no more than 0.5%.

4.2 Option 2 - Collecting mixed plastics from the kerbside

An increasing number of Councils are now collecting mixed plastics for recycling via current kerbside collection schemes. A local example of this is Cheshire West and Chester Council that are now recycling plastic containers, such as yogurt pots, butter and margarine pots and plastic egg trays in addition to their pre-existing plastic bottle collection. This service excludes plant pots, black plastic and plastic film.

The plastic is taken to a reprocessor in Leicester, that has a processing plant with the ability to identify and sort mixed plastics.

In terms of the opportunity for Wirral to collect other types of plastics from the kerbside, officers have spoken with senior colleagues at the MWDA and currently there are no plans at the present time to increase the range of materials accepted at the Bidston MRF. This is despite the building of the Gilmoor MRF scheduled for 1st August commencement.

Obviously discussions need to be commenced between the MWDA and Wirral as to the future recycling capabilities of the Merseyside Waste Partnership and the implications of this to Wirral. The essence of the conversation will need to be based on fairness and equality and access to recycling the same materials.

If the Bidston MRF was to accept mixed plastics, then colleagues at the MWDA have indicated that modifications both to the plant and also to the Veolia contract would be needed.

Wirral Officers will open dialogue with the MWDA regarding the current position, both establishing the financial implications and infrastructure implications relating to including mixed plastics within the materials accepted at the MRF.

4.2.1 Financial Implications

If mixed plastics recycling is introduced at the Bidston MRF, then there will be financial implications to the Merseyside Waste Partnership due to the infrastructure modification that will be needed. Officers from Wirral intend to raise the subject of mixed plastics from Wirral being recycled by Veolia and the MWDA in the coming year.

There may also be contractual cost implications with the Biffa contract due to increasing the operational requirements to collect this relatively high volume/low weight material.

4.2.2 Risks

MWDA Will not Provide MRF facilities To Recover Mixed Plastics.

From initial talks with the MWDA, there are currently no plans to introduce mixed plastics recycling at the Bidston MRF. Officers intend to work with the MWDA to understand the issue in more detail.

Collection Costs May Increase

Introducing additional material into the grey bin may increase the amount of tips Biffa will need to do in a day posing risks around service capacity and there may be contractual cost implications.

4.2.3 Benefits

If Wirral was to recycle mixed plastics, then officers estimate that just fewer than 3,000 tones of mixed plastic could be diverted from residents green bins and recycled through the grey bin scheme. This would improve Wirral's recycling rate by approximately 3%.

Mixed plastics collection could easily be integrated into the existing grey bin service, thus making it efficient and easy for residents. It would also bring environmental benefits, when compared to additional vehicle movements associated with using bring bank collections.

5.0 RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Officers recommend, based on the risks and costs associated with mixed plastic bring site collection, that the issue of mixed plastics recycling is better being pursued via Option 2 i.e. using existing kerbside collection infrastructure.

The preferred approach would be to recycle mixed plastics through the Bidston MRF as this will achieve maximum diversion from landfill, will be more efficient operationally and sustainable in the long term. This aim will be pursued through dialogue with the MWDA through the Senior Officers Group and lobbying from the Council.

Robert Jones – Waste Strategy & Recycling Manager
10th February 2011

OUTLINE FEASIBILITY STUDY – PROVISION OF A COMMERCIAL WASTE RECYCLING SERVICE

1.0 ISSUE

At the Council meeting of the 12th July 2010, a motion was raised asking the director of Technical Services to:

- Examine new ways to reduce waste to landfill such as the collection of recyclable material from businesses.

2.0 CURRENT APPROACH

Currently, the Council do not collect from any commercial enterprises. The Council act as an enabler and point commercial enterprises in the direction of the various waste management companies within Merseyside (some of which are large National Companies).

The Council does however collected commercial waste from its own offices and buildings and services are currently provided to ensure that as much of this waste as possible is diverted from landfill for recycling.

3.0 OPTIONS FOR COLLECTING COMMERCIAL WASTE FOR RECYCLING

As Wirral no longer directly provides or manages operational services, collections would need to be provided via the Council's contractor, Biffa.

Following discussions with Biffa, it has been determined that there are two main operational options available to collect commercial waste for recycling. Below is a description of the options.

4.0 OPTION 1 – UTILISE GARDEN WASTE VEHICLES ON A MONDAY

Opiton1	Utilise Garden waste vehicles on a Monday
Description	The nine garden waste vehicles do not currently operate on a Monday. The Council do not pay for the vehicles on a Monday and as such the vehicles are Biffa's cost.
Pros	There are more than enough vehicles, even taking into account some being held back and used as spares to replace any broken down vehicles from Biffa's general RCV fleet.
Cons	There will be a cost to the Council for this service which we would have to recoup by charging the customer. The service will only run on a Monday.
Cost	Vehicle cost of £350 per day per vehicle.

4.1.1 Financial Implications of Option 1

As indicated in option 1 above, one option may be to collect commercial waste on a Monday. Indicative costs provided by Biffa indicate that a charge of £350 per day, equating to an annual cost of £18,200 per year would be applied to the Council.

The Council would also have to pay Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority a gate fee of £34.06 per tonne for commercial waste recycling.

Recycling credits are not payable in respect to commercial waste and there are no savings to the levy payments as no trade waste is currently being collected by Wirral.

Customers would be need to be charged for the collection of waste by the Council at a competitive rate, currently estimated at around £7 per lift. Analysis has shown (included below) that even with up to 200 customers it is likely that the Council would operate at a loss or near to a loss.

Number of customers with one bin emptied weekly	Weight per Bin (t)	Estimated Tonnage	Gate Fee per Tonne	Accumulated gate fee	Charge per Lift	Weekly Net Cost
50	0.095	4.75	£34.06	£161.79	£7.00	-£161.79
60	0.095	5.7	£34.06	£194.14	£7.00	-£124.14
70	0.095	6.65	£34.06	£226.50	£7.00	-£86.50
80	0.095	7.6	£34.06	£258.86	£7.00	-£48.86
90	0.095	8.55	£34.06	£291.21	£7.00	-£11.21
100	0.095	9.5	£34.06	£323.57	£7.00	£26.43
110	0.095	10.45	£34.06	£355.93	£7.00	£64.07
120	0.095	11.4	£34.06	£388.28	£7.00	£101.72
130	0.095	12.35	£34.06	£420.64	£7.00	-£210.64
140	0.095	13.3	£34.06	£453.00	£7.00	-£173.00
150	0.095	14.25	£34.06	£485.36	£7.00	-£135.36
160	0.095	15.2	£34.06	£517.71	£7.00	-£97.71
170	0.095	16.15	£34.06	£550.07	£7.00	-£60.07
180	0.095	17.1	£34.06	£582.43	£7.00	-£22.43
190	0.095	18.05	£34.06	£614.78	£7.00	£15.22
200	0.095	19	£34.06	£647.14	£7.00	£52.86

*highlighted means two garden waste vehicles will be utilised.

5.0 OPTION 2 – EMPLOYING A DEDICATED VEHICLE GIVING THE OPTION OF WORKING MONDAY- FRIDAY

Option 2	Use a dedicated vehicle giving the option of working Monday – Friday.
Description	Biffa purchase an additional vehicle to their fleet and run the vehicle to collect trade waste.
Pros	The service will be able to run everyday of the week.
Cons	The Council would have to pay for the additional vehicle any subsequent vehicles if the service demand was to increase.
Cost	£170k per year per vehicle.

5.1.1 Financial Implications of Option 2

One extra Refuse Collection Vehicle will be needed at an operational cost of £170,000 per annum.

The Council would also have to pay Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority a gate fee of £34.06 per tonne for commercial waste recycling.

This option would be less economical compared to Option 1.

6.0 RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH BOTH OPTIONS

Risks associated with this include operating the collection vehicle inefficiently both in terms of environmentally and financially due to not securing enough customers in what is deemed as a very competitive established market in Wirral.

7.0 BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH BOTH OPTIONS

The main benefit would be to allow Wirral to take a more pro- active approach to the current approach and actually collect commercial waste for recycling. Commercial enterprises would benefit from having Wirral Council as potential collector as the Council would be an additional collector operating in the market place.

There are no benefits in terms of Wirral's overall recycling NI192 performance as this calculation applies in respect to Household waste only.

8.0 RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Officers recommend that the Council continue to act as an enabler to commercial enterprises and do not directly collect commercial waste by offering it as a Council collection service due to the issues raised above.

Officers are working with facilities managers to continue to roll out recycling collections to all, (the vast majority) of Council offices and buildings.

Prepared by Robert Jones Waste Strategy & Recycling Manager – February 2011