



**CLLR BERNIE MOONEY**

**CABINET**

**17 DECEMBER 2015**

**WIRRAL COUNCIL WASTE MANAGEMENT  
STRATEGY 2015 - 2020**

**Councillor Bernie Mooney, Cabinet Member for Environmental Protection said:**

‘One of the remarkable things about living in Wirral is the fantastic environment we all share. Our coastline and world class parks are second to none. As the Cabinet Member responsible for protecting the environment, I know how hard our teams work to collect your waste and maintain the environment.

However there is a need to do more in order to achieve waste targets at a time when resources are reducing. We need to look for ways to improve the level of recycled waste and we need the help of residents to do this.

We are currently recycling 36% of our waste, but legislation requires Wirral and all other councils to recycle at least 50% of waste by 2020. We have identified a range of options for consideration and incentives to help us improve and transform the way we manage waste and with this strategy we are setting out how we intend to achieve it. We will be working closely with residents and listening to their views before making decisions about future waste collection’.

**REPORT SUMMARY**

The Waste Management Strategy 2015 - 2020 provides direction for the transformation of the Council’s management of municipal waste over the next five years in order to meet statutory targets for recycling and reductions to landfill disposal.

Effective waste management is a crucial component of the Council’s drive to create an attractive local environment across Wirral. As such the Waste Management

Strategy underpins the delivery of key strategic themes set out within the Wirral Plan and directly supports Pledge 20 'Attractive Local Environment for Wirral Residents'.

The transformation of the Council's waste management and achievement of legislative targets will realise reductions to the significant waste disposal costs the Council incurs, currently over £15M per year.

An options appraisal exercise will be required to determine optimal arrangements for the Council's future waste management. Such an exercise will recognise the contrasting demographic profiles across the townships and communities of the borough and that a 'one size fits all' approach will not work.

The Council's Waste Management Strategy complements the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority's (MRWA) 'Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy 2011 – 2041' (JRWMS) and forms part of a suite of district authority strategies that provide the local delivery mechanism for achieving the aims and objectives of the JRWMS.

This matter affects all Wards in the Borough and is a Key Decision.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

Cabinet are requested to:

- (1) Approve the Wirral Council Waste Management Strategy 2015 – 2020 appended to this report;
- (2) Approve the commencement of an options appraisal exercise to consider future waste management arrangements; including the use of external support for project validation as outlined in Section 6.0;
- (3) Instruct officers to make recommendations for future waste management arrangements to a future Cabinet upon the conclusion of the options appraisal exercise.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

In order to meet statutory and corporate targets for waste management, the Council must establish new systems for the collection of municipal waste as quickly as possible.

The Council's current recycling performance is behind the level required to meet the 2020 targets and although the existing waste management system can be improved, such improvements will not meet the required targets alone.

The Waste Management Strategy 2015 – 2020 sets out the medium term requirements for waste management legislation and the scale of the task required to achieve 50% recycling by 2020. The Strategy also provides a framework for the future direction of the Council's waste management, which includes an action plan and a series of options for future waste stream collections.

The options appraisal exercise will consider the various waste stream collection options to determine the optimal system that can achieve targets as well as contribute to the Council's medium term financial plan.

Transforming the Council's waste management performance to reach the 50% recycling target will realise savings against the Council's waste disposal costs (the Council's waste levy apportionment for 2015/16 was £15,530,841).

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The identification of the optimal waste management arrangement will be sought through the proposed options appraisal project, however new arrangements are required in order for the Council to achieve the 2020 targets for recycling and landfill diversion. Officers will consider a number of collection models and options before making recommendations for the new and required collection arrangements.

The existing arrangements and performance can be improved, particularly through promotion campaigns to remind residents of recycling opportunities and addressing barriers to participation, however this alone will not achieve the 2020 targets.

To do nothing to improve current waste management arrangements will result in the Council not achieving the 2020 targets and potentially liable to fines and penalties. Projected savings to waste disposal costs through improved recycling performance would also not be realised.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **3.1 Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy 2011 - 2041**

The Councils of the Liverpool City Region and the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) work together through the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership. Some years ago the Partnership established a Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy (JRWMS), to ensure a cohesive, cost effective and environmentally beneficial approach is taken for the delivery of waste management services across the Liverpool City Region.

Each of the City Region councils participated in the development and establishment of the JRWMS several years ago.

The JRWMS has a number of key targets which the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership has signed up to, these include:

- Recycle 50% of household waste by 2020.
- Reduce the amount of municipal waste landfilled to 10% by 2020 and 2% by 2030.
- Reduce the total amount of waste produced per household by 8% to 1227kg per household by 2020.

The JRWMS was established in 2011 and is currently the subject of a refresh after 5 years of delivery. The Merseyside and Halton Partnership meets regularly to review progress against the JRWMS's objectives and targets, work has also started on the potential for sharing services and combining resources to drive efficiencies and reduce costs.

#### **3.2 Wirral Council's Waste Management Performance**

The Council established the Waste Management Strategy 2011 – 2014 to form part of the JRWMS and support key aims and objectives through local operational delivery. Since its introduction the strategy has enabled the Council to drive service changes and improvements to performance. However it now requires updating in order to meet future requirements and to become aligned to the Council's new corporate vision as set out in the Wirral Plan.

Over the past 10 years the Council has been one of the highest performing authorities on Merseyside for recycling, having invested some time ago in infrastructure and making changes to collection arrangements that significantly increased participation in recycling. Wirral introduced alternating weekly collections (AWC) between recycling (grey bin) and residual (green bin) collections over a number of phases between 2006 and 2007. As a result of this major service change, Wirral's recycling rate increased from 12.4% in 2005/06 to 36.3% in 2008/09. A further recycling increase 4% was achieved in 2010/11, due to the introduction of street sweeping recycling, which brought Wirral's total recycling to just over 40% in 2011/12.

However since reaching this position the Council's recycling performance has levelled out and in recent years dropped away. The introduction of a chargeable garden waste collection service in 2013 resulted in the quantity of garden waste tonnage collected reducing from 15% to 11%, with the garden waste previously collected being composted or being put in the residual bin. This has been the main cause of the drop in recycling performance, which has seen a 4% reduction from the peak in 2011/12 of just over 40% to 36% in 2014/15.

### **3.3 Improving Existing Performance**

Detailed analysis of recycling performance across the borough has highlighted that the current waste management arrangement has capacity that can be utilised to improve levels of recycling participation and reduce the amount of residual waste collected.

The analysis has demonstrated that there is recycling capacity across the borough from the highest performing areas to areas with low participation. Therefore the early focus of the Council's updated Waste Management Strategy will be to improve performance from the existing waste stream collection system.

Actions to increase participation and address recycling performance have already been put in place with Cabinet approving a range of measures including free replacement grey recycling bins and free bin repairs, the recruitment of recycling officers to deliver recycling initiatives and deployment of an alleyway dumping investigation team to deter dumping.

Further actions and initiatives are also due to be carried out, these include:

- Targeted high profile marketing campaign to promote recycling and support residents to do more. The performance analysis exercise will be used to effectively target residents with different messages and support.
- Targeting homes that are not presenting grey bins for collection, recycling officers have worked with the Biffa collection crews to build up a data base of locations to target.
- Collections from additional residual green bins that are not authorised will be stopped following notification.
- The refuse crews have each received updated instruction on recycled bin contamination arrangements.

Through the renewed focus on recycling participation and improvements to existing arrangements, it is anticipated that the Council's recycling performance will improve rising to 42% by 2017/18.

### **3.4 The Cost of Waste Disposal**

The Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) charge each Merseyside collection authority, including Wirral Council, a levy for the costs of disposal for waste generated. The formula used to apportion disposal costs is based on tonnages accumulated and contains an incentive for waste that can be diverted away from landfill.

Wirral Council's waste levy apportionment for 2015/16 is £15,530,800 which was a £445,000 increase from the 2014/15 apportionment. The increase in apportionment was due to a number of factors but was mainly down to Wirral's levelling off of recycling performance against the relative improvement in performance by other Merseyside authorities.

Therefore the Council, will instigate a number of exercises to improve performance through the existing system as stated above.

The Council projects that the above exercises will improve performance to 42% by 2017. Such an upward shift in performance will positively affect disposal costs and reduce the Council's levy apportionment.

The waste levy is apportioned on an annual basis, however there is a time lag caused by calculating the formula using previous year's tonnage and performance figures.

Therefore reductions to the Council's apportionment through improvements to current waste management system may not be realised until 2017/18.

However the levy apportionment formula is due for review as part of the strategic review of the MRWA's governance. Any changes to the formula will require unanimous agreement of all parties, however the view forming amongst the member authorities is that the formula must be changed to enable necessary savings to be made across the board and to fully incentivise recycling performance.

The transformation of the Council's waste management arrangements and achievement of the 50% recycling target will reduce disposal costs.

### **3.5 Options Appraisal for Future Waste Management**

In order to achieve the target of 50% recycling by 2020 an additional 16,289 tonnes of current residual waste will need to be recycled (coming out of the residual bin). The Waste Management Strategy sets out the projections in waste collected required to achieve the 2020 target. The actions and initiatives commenced to improve the current waste management system will increase recycling performance as stated above, however it will not achieve the 50% target alone. New waste stream collection arrangements will be needed to create the necessary shift from residual waste collections to other forms of recycling.

The Waste Management Strategy 2015 – 2020 therefore sets out options for transforming waste management arrangements over the next 5 years to achieve the 2020 target.

There are a range of options for increasing recycling performance to the required level, for most of these there are examples in operation up and down the country.

It is recommended that officers are instructed to assemble a project team to commence an options appraisal project to consider and test these options in order to make recommendations for the Council's future waste management delivery.

### **3.6 Enforcement of Waste Policies**

One of the key issues for consideration as part of the options appraisal project will be the provision of effective instruction to residents on the new waste management arrangement as they are introduced. It is vital that residents understand how the new systems will work and their role within it. The project team will prepare options for the instruction to residents along with the most effective ways of implementing it.

It is recommended that the Council involves residents at the earliest stages of the options appraisal project, consulting them on proposals and listening to their ideas and concerns. The options appraisal project will involve the organisation of pilot studies to test proposed collection models and obtain resident feedback, before making recommendations for the optimal system.

The Council's waste policies will also require updating as part of the Waste Management Strategy, enforcing policies such as no side waste and contamination will be crucial to achieving the step change in recycling performance and effecting required behavioural change for increasing the numbers of households participating.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

In line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan the delivery of the Waste Management Strategy will provide savings to the Council, both in terms of reduced disposal costs through the waste levy and operating costs. It is difficult to predict the saving in levy apportionment as it depends on the relative performance of other member authorities which can't be predicted.

The Council's waste levy apportionment for 2015/16 was £15,530,841 this is on top of waste collection costs for this year of over £7,600,000. The longstanding waste levy appointment formula does not provide incentive for recycling being tonnage based. However savings to waste disposal costs of over £200,000 would be realised through the Council achieving the 50% recycling target.

In line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) the options appraisal exercise will identify the financial implications of each potential waste solution and set out the savings to be achieved from waste disposal and operational costs.

It is proposed that external consultants are commissioned to validate the recommendations coming from the options appraisal exercise and to provide project assurance. It is recommended that Waste Development Fund is used to meet the cost of such consultants up to the value of £50,000.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The E.U. Waste Framework Directive 2008 provides the legislative framework for the collection, transport, recovery and disposal of waste. The directive requires all member states of the EU to take the necessary measures to ensure waste is recovered or disposed of without endangering human health or causing harm to the environment and includes permitting, registration and inspection requirements. The Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 were laid before Parliament and the Welsh Assembly on 19 July 2012 and came into force on 1 October 2012.

For local authorities, the Directive includes targets for member states to reuse and recycle 50% of household waste by 2020. The recycling rate for waste from households in England was 44.5% in 2013/14. If the targets are missed, there are provisions in the Localism Act for any fines imposed by the EU to be passed down to local authorities.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

The options appraisal exercise will be delivered in house within existing resources, with officers due to report back with recommendations for the optimal waste management solution and MTFP contributions. However due to the importance of the decision to be taken about the Council's long term waste management, it is recommended that external consultants are commissioned to validate the recommendations coming from the options appraisal exercise and to provide project assurance. It is recommended that Waste Development Fund is used to meet the cost of such consultants up to the value of £50,000.

The delivery of the Waste Management Strategy's objectives will require significant initial expenditure to invest in the necessary infrastructure, promotion campaigns and community engagement. However the Council, along with the other Merseyside authorities, was allocated a portion of the Waste Development Fund (WDF) by the MRWA to be used to transform waste management performance. The Council's allocation, received in 2014, was £6.7M and £1.7M has been spent to date. The Council is obligated to provide the MRWA with an annual update on WDF spend and its impact on recycling performance. Therefore, subject to Cabinet approval, the Council

has the financial resources to deliver the strategy's objectives and meet the 2020 target.

There are implications for the Council's Refuse and Environmental Streetscene Contract with Biffa and the variations that will be required to facilitate the introduction of new collection arrangements. The waste management contract will also be affected by any movement towards the combining of collection arrangements for a City Region solution, such implications (including financial) will be considered as part of the options appraisal and the contract does provide for a break clause.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

The options appraisal project will consider the risk associated with each of the future waste management option as part of the exercise. These will be included as part of the presentation of recommendations at the conclusion of the project.

However headline risks associated with the delivery of the Waste Management Strategy include the following:

- New waste collections streams do not create the required capacity to facilitate the level of shift required from residual waste to recycling provision.  
Control – thorough testing and piloting of the recommended collection model prior to implementation.
- Participation levels in recycling fail to rise to the levels required to achieve the 2020 target.  
Control – resident engagement through forums and door stepping exercises, detailed analysis of participation levels, ongoing follow up support to residents.
- Levels of fly tipped domestic refuse increase and increased levels of contamination within recycling provision.  
Control – enforcement of waste policies and promotion of action taken.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

It is proposed to utilise the outcomes of the Council's initial Insight survey to shape the approach to resident consultation and engagement exercises regarding future waste management. Transforming the Council's waste management performance will require a significant increase in resident understanding and participation. Therefore obtaining the views of residents, councillors and stakeholders about recycling will be an integral part of the options appraisal exercise.

The Council employs 5 fixed term Neighbourhood Recycling Officers to support recycling initiatives and liaise with residents to encourage participation in recycling. These officers link in with partners out in the community and

could be further utilised through neighbourhood working to support wider behaviour change in the community.

## 9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No because a full Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted as part of the options appraisal exercise on future waste management arrangements. Equality of access and barriers to participation will be crucial aspects of future waste management service delivery.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Wirral Council’s Waste Management Strategy 2015 - 2020

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Report of the Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment – <i>Refuse and Environmental Streetscene Services Contract – Enhanced Contract Extension Offer Following Strategic Director Negotiations.</i>	December 2014