

HEALTH PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

21 January 2004

REPORT OF THE WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY REVIEW INFORMAL GROUP

Contact Officer: David Boardman Tel No: 01962 848477

RECENT REFERENCES:

HH52 - Recycling and Household Waste Management Review - 21 November 2001

HH77 - Increasing the Effectiveness of Kerbside Recycling - 13 March 2002

CAB670 - Project Integra Annual Business Plan 2003/04 - 30 June 2003

CAB759 - National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund Bid - 3 December 2003

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides a summary of the review undertaken by the Health Performance Improvement Committee Waste Management Policy Review Informal Group between August and November 2003.

The review scrutinised the measures taken by the Council to promote waste reduction and recycling and to meet statutory recycling targets. The review also considered and evaluated the Council's existing waste management arrangements and makes recommendations concerning changes necessary to collection arrangements and policies to ensure that future recycling targets are met.

This report should be considered in association with CAB 755 - "Meeting Statutory Recycling Targets - A Way Forward" also on the agenda for this meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Committee notes the findings of the Group and the conclusions detailed in Section 6 of this report and that these be taken into account by the Committee when considering report CAB 755 - "Meeting Statutory Recycling Targets - A Way Forward".

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Membership of the Group was approved at the meeting of the Health Performance Improvement Committee held on 3 July 2003 (Report HE14 refers) and consisted of Councillors Carter, Pearce, Quar, Rees, and Hutton (Chairman).
- 1.2 The aim of the Group was to produce recommendations for creditable and innovative waste management policies and collection arrangements commensurate with what is affordable by the Council and the Business Plans and policies of Project Integra (CAB 670 refers).

2 Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The terms of reference of the Group were to consider the following:
 - a) The Council's current policies
 - b) The results of recent relevant Best Value Reviews
 - c) The results of Members' seminars held earlier in the year
 - d) The Project Integra Annual Business Plan
 - e) Any other relevant information such as Citizens' Panel responses

3 The Process

- 3.1 The Group endeavoured by a process of analysis and evaluation to bring together the information and facts obtained by studying relevant reports and other information. This also involved interviewing officers of the City Council and neighbouring authorities.
- 3.2 The review considered the following matters:
 - a) **Waste Analysis:** the research data available that identifies the materials within householders' refuse bins that, if collected separately, could be recycled.
 - b) **Infrastructure:** the availability of current and future infrastructure capacity to process any additional collected materials.
 - c) **Collection Methodology:** the collection arrangements and policies of the best performing authorities in the country including the systems operated by other members of Project Integra (PI).
 - d) **Evaluation of Collection Options:** aimed at reducing residual waste and increasing the quantity of recyclable materials collected.
 - e) **Policy Options:** possible alternative policies to support the preferred options for improving recycling and waste minimisation within the district.

4 Key Principles:

4.1 During the review the following principles were developed and agreed by the Group as being the most appropriate way forward in developing the possible future of the service:

- a) **Political Consensus:** that the subject was too important for political disagreement. All members of the Council needed to work together to produce the best possible solution to the problems of waste growth, meeting statutory recycling targets and reducing the need for landfill.
- b) **Validation of Actions:** that a credible argument supporting the reasons for change has to be part of a major educational programme because the public will need to be convinced of the reasons for change.
- c) **Communicating the Message:** that a suitable campaign of publicity, promotion and education should be used to persuade the public that any new system is the correct one and the most sensible way forward to meet statutory targets and secure long term sustainability.
- d) **Explaining the Challenge:** also, to communicate to the public that Winchester has a greater challenge to meet because of its residents' keenness to recycle and their high past achievements.

4.2 In addition to the above, the Group considered the key views that came out of the Member workshops held earlier in the year and endorsed these as being an appropriate means of determining a suitable way forward. (Section 4 of CAB 755 – "Meeting Statutory Recycling Targets - A Way Forward" refers).

5 Evaluation of the Options

5.1 The Group reviewed the practical options to improve recycling and composting rates, estimated costs and other relevant factors and constraints (as shown in Appendix 7 of CAB 755 - "Meeting Statutory Recycling Targets – A Way Forward").

5.2 In summary, Options 1 to 11 do not achieve the 36% target and would incur the consequences and penalties of not so doing. Most risk other unfortunate 'side effects' including increased excess or side waste, contamination of collected material, the difficulty of enforcing bans, the unpopularity and costly administration of charges, higher capital costs, the logistics and cost of dealing with large numbers of replaced bins, etc.

5.3 The Group also considered and evaluated the current and a range of alternative waste management policies that would support the preferred options to improve waste reduction and recycling. Appendix 1 attached gives details of the policies that the Group considers will best support the recommended options. Initially these policies would only apply to the areas covered by any trial. The Committee may, however, wish to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to apply policies 1(i), 3(i), 3(iii), 3(iv), 6 and 8 district wide prior to the introduction of any trial alternate weekly collection scheme.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Although the Council has been successful in the past at collecting recyclables, there are still considerable amounts of material being disposed of in householders' refuse bins including green garden waste, dry mixed recyclables and glass that could be composted and recycled. If these materials were collected it would significantly reduce the amount of residual waste to be landfilled or incinerated.

- 6.2 In order to meet the government's statutory recycling target of 36% by 2005/6, reduce the growth in waste, the amount of material going to landfill or incineration and provide householders with the means to recycle more, the Group recommends the following:
- a) Alternate weekly collection (AWC) of refuse and recyclables. In view of the need to encourage participation, the incentive of both free green garden waste collection and kerbside collection of glass (i.e. Option 13) should be offered.
 - b) Alternatively, AWC plus free green garden waste collection only (i.e. Option 12).
- 6.3 The Group considered that the costs of associated district wide changes (as shown in Appendix 8 of CAB 755) should be regarded as indicative estimates only at this stage. Further work should therefore be undertaken prior to any decision being taken to extend any changes to the service district wide. Officers were of the opinion that only a trial could produce an accurate picture of public acceptance and participation rates, tonnages of the various waste fractions to be collected, most appropriate collection vehicles, suitability of collected materials for recycling and centralised composting, seasonal variations and hence cost. With so many variables and unknowns at the present time, the Group concurred with this view.
- 6.4 The Group strongly supported the provision of an educational programme being rolled out prior to, and during, any trial undertaken. Also that education, promotion and publicity were the key to securing the support of householders and achieving successful change.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

7 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 7.1 The Green Agenda, including the minimising of waste, is a key priority within the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2004-2007.
- 7.2 Under that priority, identified improvements include the introduction of improved waste collection and recycling services including the kerbside collection of garden waste.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 There are considerable costs associated with undertaking any trial or subsequent changes to the Council's waste management services. These will need to be taken into consideration and the need to meet future recycling targets balanced against other Council priorities.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Various, including information available on the Internet from Project Integra, Defra, the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC), the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP), Wastewatch, etc.

APPENDICES:

1. Proposed Waste Management Policies Supported by the Policy Review Informal Group.

Appendix 1**Waste Management Policies**

A review of the Council's current and possible future waste management policies was undertaken by the Health Performance Improvement Committee Waste Management Policy Review Informal Group on 6 November 2003.

The following policies are recommended in the areas to be covered by the proposed trial to support the aims of maximising recycling and minimising residual waste by encouraging householders to reduce waste and participate in recycling and composting.

Collection Arrangements

1. **The Standard Service:** to provide a standard 'free' collection per household of:
 - (i) a single wheeled bin for residual waste and (as now) a single wheeled bin plus unlimited number of carrier bags, white or clear sacks or bin liners for dry mixed recyclables, and:
 - (ii) a single free bag for garden waste and (possibly) a plastic box or basket for glass if collected.
2. **Collection:** each waste fraction to be collected fortnightly on an alternate weekly (AWC) basis.
3. **Customer Choice:** each household allowed:
 - (i) a maximum of 1 x 240 litre bin for refuse and 1 x 240 litre bin for dry mixed recyclables. Thus, could alternatively have 1 x 240 + 1 x 140 or 2 x 140. Self-adhesive labels could be used to identify which bin was used for which fraction.
 - (ii) existing householders with a 120 litre refuse bin to be provided with a 240 litre refuse bin on request free of charge.
 - (iii) existing householders with a 140 litre recycling bin be permitted to swap their bins over or exchange the 140 for a 240 litre recycling bin at a subsidised charge of £10. No charge to be made to householders in receipt of a means tested benefit namely; Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit, Tax Credits and Pension Credits.
 - (iv) standard issue for all new households to be 2 x 240 litre bins unless smaller bins are requested.
4. **Enhanced Service:** to provide householders with additional bags for garden waste at an incrementally rising charge of £25 for the second bag, £50 for the third bag, £75 for the fourth bag etc.
5. **Voluntary Participation:** householders to decide which elements of kerbside collection of dry mixed recyclables, green waste and, possibly, glass they wished to participate in. But residual waste collections to be limited to the emptying of one wheeled bin every two weeks.
6. **Larger Households:** some flexibility on the number of bins for larger households, student households, etc. For example, households of 6 or more persons to be allowed a maximum of 3 x 240 litre bins for the collection of their residual waste and dry mixed recyclables. Where additional bins are requested these shall be provided at the standard charge

7. **Small Properties:** households unable to use wheeled bins could be entitled to the collection of a maximum of (say) three black plastic sacks of residual waste with an unlimited number of carrier bags, white or clear plastic sacks or bin liners for dry mixed recyclables. Also, one bag for garden waste and (possibly) one box or basket for glass.
8. **Bin Provision Generally:** phase out the use of 120 litre refuse bins and standardise on 140 and 240 litre bins.

Restrictive Policies

1. **Collection of Garden Waste:** a prohibition on the collection of garden waste except in the prescribed bags.
2. **Refuse Containing Garden Waste:** refuse obviously containing garden waste not to be collected.
3. **Contamination of Garden Waste:** collectable garden waste would include grass cuttings, leaves, light prunings, plants and weeds with small amounts of attached soil. Kitchen waste, rubble, building or other such material, larger amounts of soil or stones, general waste, etc. would not be accepted.
4. **Contamination of Recyclables:** dry mixed recyclables contaminated with general refuse, green waste, food or other materials likely to prevent the recyclables being processed not to be collected.
5. **Contamination of Glass:** glass contaminated with other materials including crockery not to be accepted.
6. **Excess or Side Waste:** no collection of 'excess' or 'side' residual waste except after delays caused by Bank Holidays (as now).
7. **Overfilling / Overloading of Bins:** no emptying of bins if lids are too open for mechanical emptying without the risk of spillage. Also, no emptying of bins too heavy to be moved by one collection operative.