

REPORT TITLE: FUTURE OF WASTE AND RECYCLING

19 JANUARY 2022 (RESCHEDULED FROM 7 DECEMBER 2021)

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Councillor Martin Tod – Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the direction of travel that the city council is now making on how the waste management system in Hampshire will respond to, and meet, the forthcoming Environment Bill in order to drive significant improvements in performance.

Following discussion at HEP, verbal feedback will be provided to support the cabinet decision scheduled for the 25th January 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the HEP review the information contained within this report and the presentation that will go with it, and identify the key issues to be addressed in Winchester during the development of the City Councils response.

1 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 1.1 There are likely to be significant financial implications for the city council, but as yet the details of these are not known. Indications from central government are that there is likely to be significant funding to support the improvement of recycling and waste management across England but that the exact distribution and make up of this funding is not yet known.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

All 14 of the waste authorities of Hampshire (Disposal and Collection) are partners, along with Veolia, in Project Integra, the partnership established in the mid-1990s to deliver an integrated waste management service.

Overall performance, particularly in terms of recycling, has stagnated in the last few years. This, combined with the release of the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy and the scale of change it is expected to have on all local authorities means that a review of the partnership strategy is now necessary.

The Resources and Waste Strategy will be implemented via the forthcoming Environment Bill which is expected to become law in late 2021 with the first implementation dates in late 2023/24.

A clear strategy that covers the development and delivery of changes over this period and into the future is key to ensuring that the benefits are maximised for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton, and all the local authorities within that area.

2.1 Project Integra Strategy

The new Project Integra strategy (the joint municipal waste management strategy (JMWMS)) will cover the period 2021 – 2035 and the overarching vision is set out below:

"The Project Integra partners will work together to deliver high performing, forward looking recycling and waste management services which provide value for money for Hampshire taxpayers meeting local needs and recognising the climate emergency and need for a reduction in carbon emissions."

This vision has been developed collaboratively by all Project Integra partners and reflects the need to work closely and collaboratively in order to deliver significant improvements in performance and ensure value for money.

The strategy sets out the current performance of the partnership clearly showing that recycling rates have plateaued over the last few years. Although

Winchester is performing well compared to other authorities in Hampshire, Hampshire has slipped down the national league tables as other authorities have developed new infrastructure and services to improve their performance.

2.2 National changes in the Environment Bill

There are three key new waste and recycling policies that will be introduced by the Environment Bill that will have a significant impact on how we operate and how the Hampshire strategy develops;

- Consistency of Household and Business Recycling Collections in England
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging
- Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

The combined impact of these policies represents the most significant change for the waste management sector, and particularly Local Authorities, for more than a decade, requiring new collection and disposal services and the associated infrastructure.

2.3 Key objectives in the JMWMS

Engagement with key stakeholders across PI's partnering authorities was undertaken to identify and agree the JMWMS aims and objectives in light of these developing national policies. A series of engagement workshops were undertaken to firstly identify, and secondly assess, options available to the partnership, resulting in a shortlist of subjects to be incorporated into the JMWMS.

Partnership Working

- Whole system thinking at PI level
- Development of and commitment towards the revised JMWMS Implementation Plan
- Setting agreed performance indicators and targets
- Revision to PI funding arrangements
- Identification of external funding opportunities

Recyclable Material Management

- Introduction of two stream collections
- Reduced contamination
- Retained and maximised income share for materials

Waste Reduction

- Development and delivery of waste prevention initiatives
- Increased reuse from bulky waste
- Continued promotion of home composting

Best Practice

- Zero waste to landfill
- Evaluation and introduction of alternative fuels for vehicles

- Identification and evaluation of alternative technologies

Service Delivery

- Consistent, best practice approach to service provision
- Improved and consistent communications campaigns
- Consistent approach to staff training
- Increased cross boundary working

2.6 Action Plan

This JMWMS sets out the strategic direction for the Partnership and will be supported by a new operational partnership agreement and detailed action plan to take PI forward including meeting the requirements of the Environment Bill. The partnership will collaboratively develop a detailed implementation plan based on the key objectives covered within the Strategy and PI partners will engage and agree on the approach to be taken going forward.

The implementation plan once agreed will be managed by the PI Executive to setup any task and finish groups required for delivery of the plan, and to keep track of progress.

The table below sets out the key strategic actions that all PI Partners are signed up to by approval of this JMWMS, however it is not reflective of the final Action Plan.

Strategic Objective	Strategic Actions
Partnership Working	Approval of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Adopting a whole systems approach to waste services in Hampshire
Recyclables Material Management	Commitment to move to a twin stream system for dry recyclables. Commitment to reducing contamination of all waste streams through joint working.
Waste Reduction	Support the aim of reducing waste in Hampshire. Commitment to work together to increase the reuse of bulky waste.
Best Practice	Commitment to reviewing and sharing best practice to improve both performance and service delivery.
Service Delivery	Commitment to consistent communications to support service delivery across the partnership.

2.7 Approval of JMWMS

In order to be adopted the JMWMS requires approval by each of the individual Project Integra partner authorities and due to the timetable for formal decisions there is the potential for minor changes to the JMWMS wording. The final draft is being reviewed by Cabinet on the 25th January 2022, with a recommendation that it is approved.

The JMWMS also identifies the ongoing financial pressures that Local Authorities are experiencing and the need to ensure not only value for money but also that performance enhancements, particularly in terms of waste prevention and reduction are delivered, that reduce the cost of waste services overall.

2.8 Specific implications for Winchester

Compared to other authorities in the Project Integra Partnership, Winchester is relatively high performing.

The performance of Winchester is based on the following waste collection system.

- An alternate weekly collection of waste and recycling,
- a 4 weekly collection of glass, introduced in October 2019,
- a paid for garden waste service, introduced in February 21,
- a weekly collection of batteries and Waste Electrical Equipment introduced February 21,
- and small recycling centres, which include glass, textiles, and some carton banks.

Due to the nature of Winchester there are around 10,000 properties which are in flats or apartment types, plus around 1,200 properties which are difficult to access. These all have access to the full range of recycling and waste services, except where bin store size of accessibility issues restrict this.

The proposed collection system to operate across Hampshire would mean that the following changes to collection in Winchester would occur.

- The introduction of a weekly food waste collection to all properties in Winchester via a small food waste bin to be collected from kerbside, or larger bins in communal properties.
- Stopping the 4 weekly collection of glass, and adding glass to the fortnightly collection of recycling.
- Introduction of a container specifically for paper and card to be collected on a fortnightly basis
- Retention of a fortnightly residual waste collection, the charged for garden waste service, and the WEEE and battery collections

- The introduction of a wider range of recycling (pots tubs cartons and trays) into the recycling bin, along with the glass, previously collected separately.

Latest guidance from government is that the food waste systems that need to be introduced will be fully funded by government through their 'new burdens' approach, and under the Extended Producer Responsibility regulations there would be additional funding to local authorities from producers of packaging to cover the costs of delivering the collection and processing of packaging materials.

2.9 Impact on businesses

An interesting and potentially overlooked part of these government policies is the impact on businesses. The consistency part of the new policies identifies that the consistent in recycling is intended to apply equally in commercial premises, and the proposed deposit return scheme would have significant impact on those businesses selling and thereby potentially needing to take back containers which have been sold, and then store them.

Additionally any producers of packaging in Winchester would need to be made aware of, and then apply the requirement of the extended producer responsibility requirements, to cover the cost of dealing with any packaging waste which is produced.

Between these policies there are some serious implications for business to be aware of over the next 5 years as these policies become enshrined in legislation, and there will be a role for the city council in making business operating within the city council area aware of the need to respond and helping them to respond appropriately, once final details of the policies are known.

2.10 Financial Implications

The Project Integra partnership is discussing a new partnership agreement, alongside the development of the JMWMS, which will clearly identify how money flows between the partners, and this is intended to be on the basis that there are incentives for good performing authorities.

This is also dependent upon the nature of the incentives and finances which are delivered as part of the Environment Bill, where some significant financial changes, such as EPR and DRS are introduced.

However until this partnership agreement is finalised, and the national financial picture is clearer, no partners are committed to anything in the JMWMS, beyond the principles which are set out within.

2.11 Timescale

The County Council has now started the process of seeking formal planning permission to develop a site in central Eastleigh to act as the single material recycling facility to respond to the collections of waste in these types from across Hampshire.

The government is also progressing the Environment Bill through parliament, and any changes to the collection system in Winchester will be dependent on the infrastructure being available from the County Council and the finances being made available from the government.

These two factors will lead the development of the timetable for all authorities across Hampshire, including Winchester, and there may be some local authorities which choose, or need to move sooner or later depend upon their local circumstances. Once these two main drivers have clearer timescales, Winchester will need to work to develop its own timetable for change, and identify the decisions required.

2.12 Conclusion

The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy provides the high level structure for the Project Integra partnership to deliver the requirements of the Environment Bill and achieve a significant step forward in performance on all levels.

The Strategy seeks to maximise the benefit of a partnership approach in delivering high quality services to residents and achieving value for money in terms of the whole waste system of Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton.

By approving this strategy, Winchester City Council is demonstrating both its ambition to improve performance and commitment towards improving the service for residents, with a consistent Hampshire framework.

However there needs to be further work on the partnership agreement its associated financial agreement before any final decision can be made on changes to waste management across Winchester.

Once there are further details known, a significant piece of project work will be required over a number of years to respond to these changes, and to introduce them across Winchester so that our performance improves significantly, and residents and local businesses are aware of the changes and able to respond accordingly.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 3.1 An alternative is to not sign up to the direction of travel set out in the new joint waste management strategy, however this is likely to have severe reputational and performance issues if we do not sign up. In addition the direction of travel signified by the new strategy reflects the direction of travel of the national

policies being developed which have significant funding indicated to be attached to them, so this option is not preferred.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

None

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES