



Report to Cabinet

Subject **The National Waste Strategy (NWS)**

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1. Purpose of the Report

To advise members on the recent release of the National Waste Strategy for England 2007 and request members views on the Government's consultation paper on recycling incentives for households.

2. Background

This report highlights key issues from the recent release of the National Waste Strategy for England 2007, outlining the main objectives and proposed targets for England. The National Waste Strategy (NWS) was published on 24th May 2007 replacing Waste Strategy 2000.

Since 2000, England has made important progress in improving household recycling and composting rates, achieving 27% nationally in 2005/06. However, England's performance on recycling and composting still lags behind many European countries. The NWS recognises that there are significant improvements to be made in managing waste more sustainably. The New National Strategy sets both a vision and key objectives and emphasises that each part of society should take responsibility for its waste and that producers, retailers, consumers, Government and Local Authorities will all need to play a big part in reducing waste and stimulating a growth in developing sustainable solutions. The NWS sets out aims that will involve all sectors of the waste management chain encouraging them to:-

- i) Design, manufacture and sell products and packaging that use fewer natural resources, and can be more easily re-used and recycled.
- ii) Break the link between economic growth and waste growth by minimising waste.
- iii) Provide and encourage the use of convenient recycling facilities for householders and commercial customers and provide advice and information about how to reduce waste.
- iv) Recover energy from residual waste not recycled or composted using a mix of technologies.
- v) Landfill increasingly smaller amounts of residual waste.

Local Authorities are likely to have particular influence over the last three of the above aims. Nottinghamshire's Waste PFI includes the construction of an energy recovery facility and has ambitious targets to divert from landfill.

Since March 2000 our recycling and composting performance has increased from **7.95% to 35.69% in 2006/07**. The amount of waste sent to landfill in this period has reduced from **43,125 tonnes** in 1999/2000 to **27,872 tonnes** in 2006/07.

The NWS proposes increasingly ambitious targets for England and these are summarised below:

- Reducing the amount of household waste not reused, recycled or composted from 22.1 million tonnes in 2000 to 15.8 million tonnes in 2010 and an aspirational 12.2 million tonnes in 2020, which is equivalent to halving nationally the kilograms of waste collected per person per annum.
- Meeting the following municipal and household waste targets:-

New National Targets	2010	2015	2020
Household Waste Recycling and Composing	40%	45%	50%
Municipal Waste Recovery	53%	67%	75%

- Nationally, Government wants to meet and exceed the landfill directive diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste in 2010, 2013, and 2020.
- Proposed targets to reduce commercial and industrial waste going to landfill.
- The NWS is focusing action on paper, glass, food, aluminium, wood, plastic and textiles.

A more detailed summary of the main aims of the NWS is detailed in Appendix A.

In response to the recommendations made in the Lyons Review and following calls from the Local Government Association, the Government have simultaneously released a public consultation on proposals to allow revenue neutral financial incentive schemes to reduce and recycle waste. Such schemes are currently prohibited in the UK under current legislation, but are widespread in other parts of Europe.

The Government's proposal is that Local Authorities should be given the power to decide whether to introduce a revenue neutral financial incentive scheme, where this is desired locally. The key aim of any such scheme must be the promotion of recycling and waste minimization.

Any proposed scheme must be revenue neutral and must not increase the amount residents as a whole pay to their Local Authority. Any set up costs would need to be offset by annual savings in future years. There must also be a clear communication strategy, it must also make provision for the needs of groups potentially disadvantaged by the scheme such as large families and there must be strong provisions to avoid fly tipping and littering.

If waste collection Authorities such as Gedling Borough Council are given the powers, the decision to implement financial incentives would be locally determined and we would have the flexibility to choose the exact nature of the scheme including the levels of payments and rebates, the process of administering the incentive, which households the scheme could apply to and the type of scheme to adopt.

The Government has put down two other options, namely, do nothing, or localised waste charging where waste collection is funded through a direct charge on residents similar to many European Countries. The Government is currently not supporting this option as it is seeking behavioural change without increasing tax burdens, which this scheme could cause. Their preference is the incentive scheme.

3. Proposals

Firstly, I suggest that we should comment on the household incentives consultations by welcoming the powers to decide locally as to whether to introduce revenue neutral financial incentives for reducing waste going to landfill and increasing recycling and composting but Members views are requested.

With regard to the NWS, the Council now needs to produce a New Waste Strategy for the next five years that includes the following: -

- Clear objectives that will ensure that at least 40% of the waste collected within the Borough is diverted from landfill by 2010 and that 45% is diverted by 2013, two years ahead of the Governments proposals. (N.B. It is still not clear as to whether each Local Authority will be given individual targets).
- It must consider a number of waste management options, looking at both frequency and type of kerbside collection schemes.
- It will need to focus attention on reducing the kilograms of household waste per head of population. This should also include any powers available on introducing household incentive schemes.
- It will also need to consider the weekly collection of food/kitchen waste at the kerbside. The Government are particularly emphasising that food waste is processed anaerobically. We will need to work closely with the waste Disposal Authority on this issue particularly as the waste PFI contract does not currently include anaerobic digestion or in-vessel composting.
- Extension of waste management publicity campaigns to raise further awareness and action on reducing waste going to landfill.
- It must consider and strengthen joint working with neighbouring Authorities. Many of the objectives of the NWS cannot be achieved by small WCA's without the support of the WDA and neighbouring Councils.

- It must consider the provision of advice and information to both local businesses and householders on waste recycling and minimisation. It must also consider developing more initiatives to recycle and compost commercial waste.
- Finally, our new strategy needs to consider the level of investment necessary to meet these ambitions. (The Local Government Association has already emphasised in its initial response to the NWS that the Government's comprehensive spending review should provide sufficient resource to enable Councils to meet these challenges and it suggests that the increase in landfill tax is returned to Local Government in a transparent way. The landfill tax escalator will increase landfill costs by £8 per tonne from 2008 until at least 2010/11).

None of the above issues can be resolved in isolation here at Gedling. We need to work closely with neighbouring Authorities and Nottinghamshire County Council (WDA) to formulate joint plans on achieving these targets. I, therefore propose we enter into discussions on all these issues and then produce a New Waste Strategy for Gedling by the summer of 2008 for Cabinet approval. Any investment required can then be included in the 2009/10 budget process.

4. Financial Implications

At this stage we do not need to invest in further recycling and waste reduction initiatives. We need to maximise the performance of existing schemes, reviewing frequency of collections, reducing expenditure and increasing income. As mentioned above, once the new strategy has been developed and approved by Cabinet next year, any required developments can be included in 2009/10 budgets.

5. Equality Impact Assessments

All new services and any changes to existing provisions proposed in our new waste strategy will have equality impact assessments.

6. Recommendations

That Members note the requirements of the National Waste Strategy outlined in this report and authorise the production of a new waste strategy for the Council.

7. Members' Views

Members' views are requested on the household incentives schemes proposal outlined in this report.

8. Background Papers

National Waste Strategy for England 2007, 24th May 2007.
LGA briefing on waste strategy review 24th May 2007.
APSE Briefing, Waste Strategy for England 2007, May 2007.

Below is a more detailed summary of the main points of the National Waste Strategy (NWS) 2007. Nevertheless, both the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) and the Local Government Association indicate that there are areas of the NWS that need further guidance and evaluation to help local authorities. They indicate that more detailed briefings on specific aspects raised by the new NWS will follow. Consequently, Gedling will need to consider the potential impacts of the NWS carefully as it develops and implements its own waste strategy, and when undertaking future reviews.

Some of the key objectives of the NWS include:

1. Waste Prevention

Decoupling the link between economic growth and waste growth in all sectors putting greater emphasis on waste prevention and reuse.

A new tonnage based target to reduce the kilograms of household waste per head of populations.

Advise businesses and householders on waste recycling, composting and waste minimisation.

2. Incentives

A consultation on household financial incentives formed part of the release of the NWS. Councils will be free to encourage households to participate using financial incentives. Government emphasise that such incentive schemes have to be revenue neutral to local authorities and not increase overall costs, suggesting that schemes base themselves on incentive payments to households that do recycle, and this is funded by households who don't.

The Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) recommends that any 'pay as you throw' schemes must be introduced sensitively ensuring that larger households are not penalised, elderly residents in particular are supported when implemented and any introduction is complimented with an education and enforcement campaign to tackle in particular potential increases in fly-tipping.

3. Infrastructure & Markets

Secure investment in the infrastructure needed to divert waste from landfill and for the management of hazardous waste. The NWS does not propose any new statutory duty regarding Hazardous Household Waste and local authorities. It notes however that more could be done to improve the segregation and management of hazardous household waste, encouraging local authorities to publicise separate collections. Further, the NWS proposes to consult the industry sector about the scope of voluntary agreements for the separate collection, recycling or recovery of paint and pesticides. This might suggest that new collection schemes for paints and pesticides managed by the producer could be on the horizon.

Government proposes working with particular product sectors to stimulate greater recycling and recovery, in particular looking at 7 key waste products (paper, food, glass, aluminium, wood, plastics and textiles). As example, Government are considering the following-:

- Setting challenging targets with the paper industry to increase paper recycling and reduce paper waste particularly for office papers, catalogues, directories and free newspapers.
- Stimulating the use of anaerobic digestion for the management of food and green waste.
- Developing the market for wood waste of which a third could be used to generate electricity and save many tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

4. Local Authorities

Local authorities have a vital role to play in delivering convenient recycling services and advice to householders and businesses about waste recycling, composting and waste prevention. In particular, Councils will be encouraged to:

- i) Strengthen and encourage partnerships between local authorities, including the consideration of developing Joint Waste Authorities.
- ii) Help smaller businesses in particular reduce and recycle waste.
- iii) Change the culture and behaviour around waste management issues by extending recycling campaigns to include waste reduction. Nevertheless, a reflection on European experience brings the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) to suggest that a change in waste culture is likely to take some years to achieve.
- iv) Provide more recycling receptacles in public places.
- v) Increase recycling in schools by using award schemes.

5. Alternate Weekly Collections

Government states clearly that decisions on the best way to collect waste are a matter for local authorities and recognise some public concern over alternate weekly collections of recycling and residual waste. Government indicates that alternate weekly collection may not be the only way to boost recycling but recognise experiences from authorities both in the UK and abroad demonstrate that such schemes can work well and can contribute significantly to higher recycling rates, provided the scheme is well designed and implemented.

6. Energy from Waste

So that unavoidable residual waste is treated in a way that provides the greatest benefits to the UK's energy policy government recognise that recovering energy from waste is an essential component of a well-balanced energy policy. Compared to today's 10%, energy from waste is expected to account for managing 25% of England's municipal waste by 2020, lower than some of our European partners including Sweden and Denmark and similar to the Netherlands, France and Germany.

7. Climate Change

Government anticipate the overall impact of the new NWS will provide a net reduction of at least 9.3 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum.

8. Commercial and Industrial Waste

Government identify that commercial and industrial waste is expected to fall by 20% by 2010; nevertheless, the Local Government Association (LGA) considers that a stronger commitment is needed from businesses. The LGA also suggest that a mandatory target is placed on the business sector to reduce waste.

9. Regulation

The NWS suggests a number of reforms to current waste management regulations that in particular drives the reduction in waste and diversion away from landfill. For example, there is intention by government to consult on legally restricting some types of waste to landfill including biodegradable waste or recyclable materials.

10. Local & Regional Governance

Government recognises that local government and regional bodies have a vital role in providing advice and services to local businesses and householders and are keen to realise the benefits of partnership working between authorities. Government are planning a new "local performance package for local authorities" to support the delivery of the Government's waste outcomes. The NWS also encourages Regional Development Agencies and other regional bodies to coordinate business waste and resource management in partnership with local authorities and third sector organisations.