

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**4 SEPTEMBER 2012**

**REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE - RESOURCES**

**REVIEW OF THE COST OF WASTE TO THE AUTHORITY**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To present Cabinet with the final report of the Review of the Cost of Waste to the Authority, carried out by the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Resources.

**2. Information and Analysis**

- 2.1 In 2011 a working group drawn from members of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Resources, conducted a Budget Review. One of the recommendations of this review was that a working group be established to consider the risk to the Authority presented by the significant and continued increases in the cost of waste disposal; in particular the cost of sending waste to landfill and the corresponding impact that this has on the budget for the Environmental Services Directorate and the Authority as a whole.
- 2.2 The Working Group conducting this Review was made up of Cllrs Murray, MacDonald, Twigg and Russell. The Review Report is attached at Appendix A for consideration.

**3. Considerations (to be specified individually where appropriate)**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: financial, legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, human rights, personnel, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

**4. Key Decision**

Yes/No

**5. Call-in**

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? Yes/**No**

**6. Background Papers**

None

**7. RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Cabinet receives the Cost of Waste to the Authority Review Report and notes its recommendations.

**CLLR PAT MURRAY  
CHAIRMAN  
IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – RESOURCES**



## **Review of the Cost of Waste to the Authority**



**Derbyshire County Council**

**Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Resources**

**July 2012**



## **Contents**

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Background Information</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. The Waste Hierarchy</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. The Derbyshire Position</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5. Site Visit</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6. Partnerships</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>7. Winning Hearts and Minds</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>8. Equalities Considerations</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>9. Conclusion</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>10. Recommendations</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>11. Background Papers</b>	<b>27</b>



## **1. Introduction**

In 2011 a working group drawn from members of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Resources conducted a Budget Review. As part of this process the Group met with each of the Authority's Strategic Directors and the Chief Executive to discuss their current budgetary position and to gain an understanding of the financial pressures they are facing. The meeting with the Strategic Director for Environmental Services highlighted the severity of the financial risk posed to Derbyshire County Council by increasing costs associated with its role as a Waste Disposal Authority. It became very clear to the Group that waste disposal and the use of landfill is not only an environmental but also financial risk that warrants its position on the Corporate Risk Register with the need to minimise the Authority's exposure to this financial risk.

One of the recommendations of the Budget Review Report 2011 was that a working group be drawn from the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Resources to consider the risk to the Authority presented by the significant and continued increases in the cost of waste disposal, in particular the cost of sending waste to landfill and the corresponding impact that this has on the budget for the Environmental Services Directorate and the Authority as a whole.

The objectives of this Review include to:

- Understand the relationship with the District and Borough Councils in Derbyshire as Waste Collection Authorities (WCA) and how their activity impacts upon Derbyshire County Council's role as the Waste Disposal Authority and its associated costs;
- Understand the cost implications for the Authority of differing waste disposal options.

A working group, made up of Cllrs Murray (in the Chair), MacDonald, Twigg and Russell, held two evidence gathering sessions and visited the integrated waste management facility at Waterswallows in Buxton, which comprises an in-vessel composting facility, waste transfer station and a household waste recycling centre.

The Working Group would like to thank the Derbyshire County Council Officers and representative of SITA UK for their time and in-put into this Review.

## **2. Background Information**

In 2011 the Government conducted a review of its waste policies and waste management in England and Wales; the Review was led by DEFRA and also spanned the work of other Government Departments such as the Department for Energy and Climate Change and the Department for Communities and Local Government, with the aim of progressing the Coalition Agreement's commitments to:

- Work towards a zero waste economy;
- Consult on the landfilling of wood waste, further consultation on textiles and biodegradable waste are planned for the future;
- Consult with local authorities on the future of Joint Municipal Waste Management, including the possible removal of the statutory duty to produce a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy;
- Promote the reporting of the environmental impact of waste management in carbon terms;
- Encourage councils to reward people for recycling and working to reduce littering; and introduce; and
- Measures to promote a huge increase in energy from waste through anaerobic digestion.

The Government's Review acknowledges that waste prevention is a priority, with local authorities remaining responsible for the design and delivery of local waste services in line with local circumstances; the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) will cease at the end of the current financial year with European Union Directives on waste and landfill continuing to provide the baseline targets for 2013 and 2020.

Local authority collected waste includes that produced by households, including street sweepings, litter and waste collected at Household Waste Recycling Centres, as well as waste from some municipal building and fly tipping.

Disposal of waste by way of landfill is defined as where material is deposited:

- On the surface of the land;
- On a structure set into the surface of the land; or



- Under the surface of the land (land includes land covered by water which is above the low water mark of ordinary spring tides)<sup>1</sup>.

Following the ending of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, landfill tax remains the primary disincentive to landfill; this was first introduced in October 1996. It also remains necessary to ensure that as a nation we meet key EU targets in 2013 and 2020. The Government acknowledge that up to a quarter of household, commercial and industrial waste will continue to be sent to landfill and this may warrant additional legislative tools, such as landfill bans or restrictions in the future.

The directive on the landfilling of waste establishes legislative targets for reducing the amount of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill, as this leads to methane emissions which have a significant environmental impact. The diversion of biodegradable municipal waste remains a Government priority and one for the County Council which has led to the development of an in-vessel composting facility serving the High Peak and plans to establish a second facility in the north east of the county.

**Figure 1**

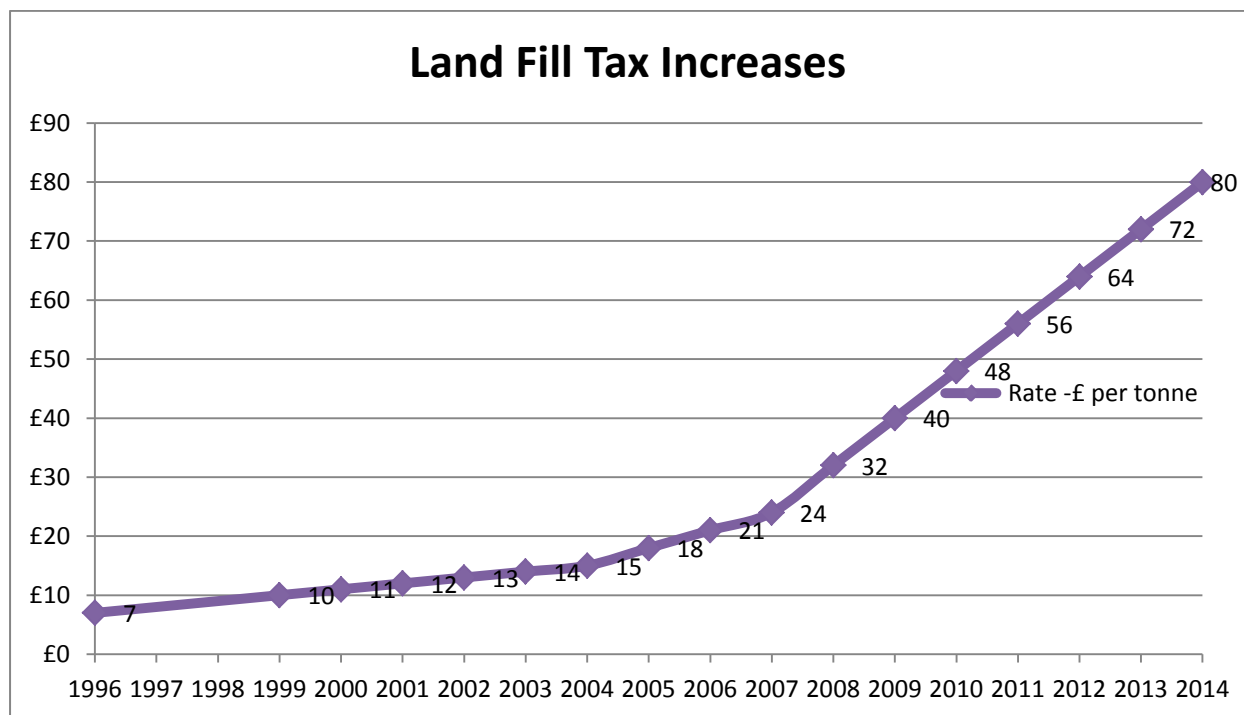


Figure 1 clearly illustrates the dramatic increases in landfill tax rates that have taken place in recent years. It was announced in the Budget 2010 that the rate of landfill tax would increase by £8 per tonne each year from 1 April 2011 until at least 2014. There will be a 'floor' preventing the rate from falling below £80

<sup>1</sup> HMRC

per tonne from 2014-15 to 2019-2020. Following this date it is envisaged that the rate will not drop below this figure and will be subject to inflation rate increases to ensure that nationally we meet our European Union targets. The Government in 2012 will consult on introducing restrictions on the landfilling of wood waste and building on this will consider the case for restrictions on sending other materials to landfill at a later date.

The overall volume of waste disposed in landfill has reduced at a significant rate in recent years – a 45% fall nationally since 2000/01<sup>2</sup>. In 2009 as a nation we sent 44 million tonnes of waste to landfill and it is projected that around a quarter of household<sup>3</sup> waste will continue to be sent to landfill. The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) is to be withdrawn after 2012/2013 but obligations to divert waste from landfill still remain, with landfill tax being the primary disincentive.

---

<sup>2</sup> Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011 – defra.

<sup>3</sup> DCC is only responsible for municipal waste disposal and not commercial and industrial waste.

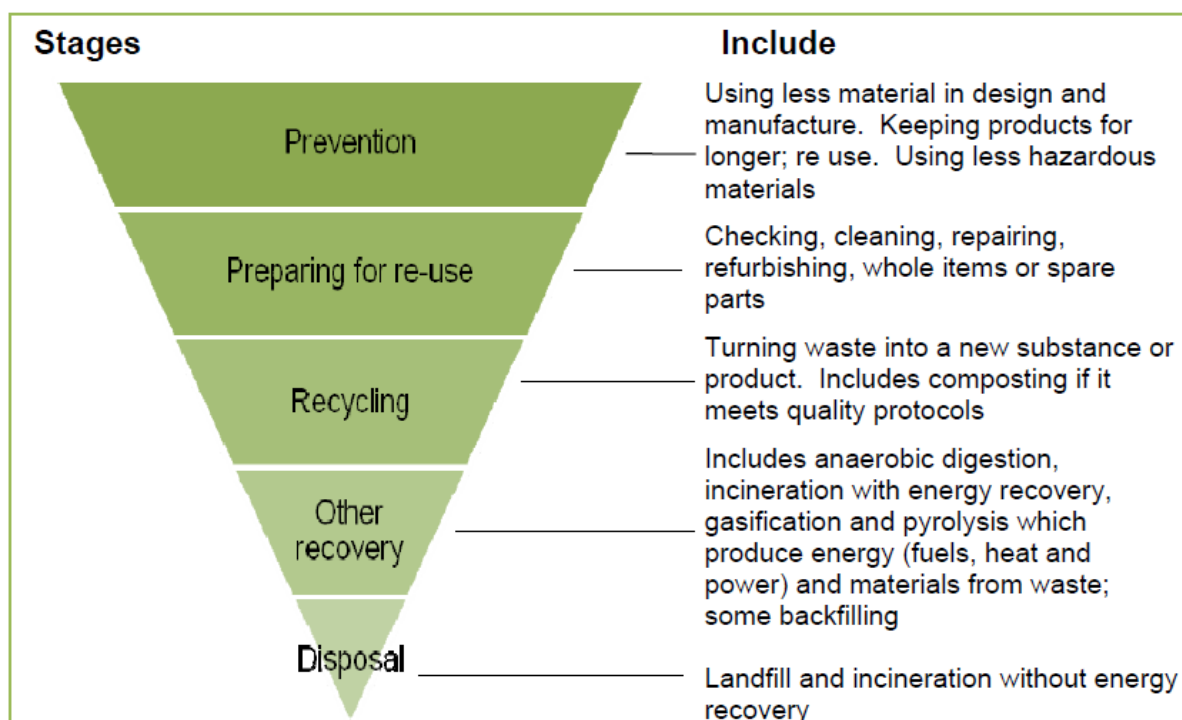
### 3. The Waste Hierarchy

The waste hierarchy ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment. This is not only a guide to sustainable waste management but also a legal requirement transposed into UK law through the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011. Prevention, which offers the best outcomes for the environment, is at the top of the priority order, followed by preparing for re-use, recycling, other types of recovery (including energy recovery) and last of all disposal (landfill).

An understanding of the waste hierarchy is fundamental to understanding of Derbyshire County Council's role as the Waste Disposal Authority; it provides a clear and concise guide for the strategic management of most waste. The hierarchy clearly demonstrates that the Authority's waste disposal role is heavily dependent on the actions of those that 'engage' with waste higher up the hierarchy, and is closely linked to the performance of others which is outside of the Authority's control.

The hierarchy illustrates the complexities and interdependencies that exist in waste prevention, collection, recycling and disposal and there is a desire from Derbyshire County Council's Waste Management Team to manage waste up the hierarchy. Landfill should be the last resort for this disposal of municipal and all other types of waste.

**Figure 2**



Source: defra – Government Review of Waste Policy in England and Wales

As the Waste Disposal Authority the County does not have statutory tools or enforcement powers to reduce the amount or type of waste it receives for disposal from Waste Collection Authorities.

Governments have tended to focus on reducing the levels of municipal waste; however nationally, and in Derbyshire, the largest volumes of waste is produced by commercial businesses. Derbyshire County Council, along with the districts and boroughs, handles limited amounts of business waste. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken to assess the viability of opening the Authority's household waste recycling centres to commercial businesses. It is anticipated that consultation will commence in the summer of 2012, the results of which will inform the next stages of the feasibility study.

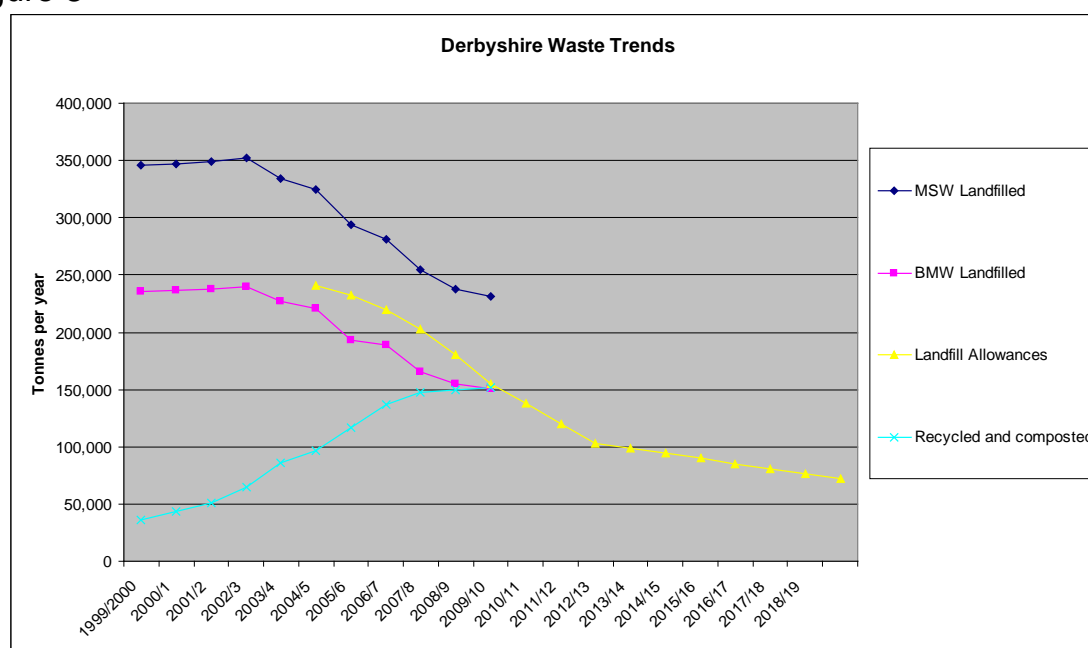
There is a clear environmental and financial benefit to be gained from reducing the amount of business waste that is produced. The Working Group feel that it would be beneficial to explore the role that can be played by Derbyshire County Council and Elected Members in supporting/influencing businesses to reduce the amount of waste they send to landfill and feel that this would result in a positive economic impact.

**Recommendation 1      That a Working Group be established to explore the potential role for Derbyshire County Council in supporting/influencing local businesses to reduce the amount of waste they produce.**

#### 4. The Derbyshire Position

Derbyshire County Council's role in relation to waste is that of the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA). Waste Disposal Authorities were established in the UK following the Environmental Protection Act 1990, to facilitate the disposal of municipal waste collected by Waste Collection Authorities (WCA) in the case of two tiered areas, district and borough councils. Each of Derbyshire's eight district and borough councils decides the methods and materials to collect for recycling and composting. Whilst the County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority, works in partnership in the development of these schemes, ultimately the decision on the method of collection and types of recyclables collected remains as a decision for the district and borough councils to make in line with their strategic and financial priorities. Consequently, each authority is at a different stage of development, with varying levels of performance, which directly impact on Derbyshire County Council's performance as the disposal authority. The following graph illustrates current waste trends in Derbyshire. It should be acknowledged that, taking account of recycling and composting schemes already implemented, this downwards trend is starting to flatten off as the 'quick wins' have been achieved.

Figure 3



4

The Waste Management Service sits within the Environmental Services Directorate and is divided into three areas:

<sup>4</sup> MSW – Municipal Solid Waste  
BMW – Biodegradable Municipal Waste

- Waste Contracts – the team's principal role is to prepare, let, administer and manage contracts for the treatment and disposal of municipal waste collected by Derbyshire's district and borough councils.
- Waste Development – this team is responsible for raising awareness of waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and composting with the objective of creating behaviour change in individuals and communities and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill.
- Waste Aftercare – the team is responsible for ensuring the former landfill sites operated and/or owned by the Authority do not cause nuisance or harm to persons, land or the environment in compliance with statutory obligations, Environment Agency guidance, environmental permits and legal arrangements.

As well as being responsible for municipal waste disposal, the Authority also provides nine household recycling centres located at:

Ashbourne	Loscoe
Bolsover	Newhall (Swadlincote)
Chesterfield	Northwood (Darley Dale)
Glossop	Waterswallows (near Buxton)
Ilkeston	

The Waterswallows site in Buxton is also home to an in-vessel composting<sup>5</sup> facility serving the High Peak areas which opened in 2009.

There are 15 full time equivalent staff working in these functional teams (structure chart Appendix 1), with expenditure on staffing representing just 1.9% of the overall waste management budget. The Service is also supported by a dedicated Public Relations Officer on a temporary basis (funded up to the end of the current financial year).

In the current financial year the Environmental Services Directorate has a budget reduction target of £4.750m. However, it successfully applied for an on-going service pressure contribution of £1.8m to meet the £8 per tonne increase in Landfill Tax from April 2012. The budget for Waste Management Service is detailed in the following table.

---

<sup>5</sup> The process of composting biodegradable municipal waste into a soil conditioner rich in nutrients.

Figure 4

Key Areas of Expenditure (2011/12)	Cost (£)	% of Budget
Employee & transport costs	£577,760	1.9%
Supplies & Service Overheads	£22,062	0.1%
Premises related - rent	£91,290	0.3%
Advisors fees inc Derby contribution	£216,861	0.7%
Payments to Districts Recycling Credits excludes income	£3,674,075	11.9%
Payments to Districts Excess mileage and abandoned vehicles	£185,644	0.6%
Green contract (WRG) Erewash and Amber Valley	£380,585	1.2%
Green contract (H W Martin) 3 North East Districts	£1,355,836	4.4%
SITA contract Green IVC/Waterswallows HWRC/HPBC,DDDC handling and transport <sup>6</sup>	£1,940,466.	6.3%
Hazardous waste	£5,176	0.0%
RRS Contract Disposal/HWRC/Waste Minimisation and Education Programme[ DCC element]	£23,509,657	76.5%
Income Commercial waste from Districts	-£1,461,005	-4.8%
Other Income, Rents, Gas Monitoring	-£196,676	-0.6%
Closed Landfill Sites exc employee costs	£368,187	1.2%
Waste Development exc employee costs	£76,346	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£30,746,267</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Derbyshire County Council Waste Management Budget Breakdown

The table illustrates the majority of expenditure relates to contract payments including landfill tax which accounts for approximately £12m of this figure. Historically, the County has relied heavily on landfill as the principal disposal route for municipal waste. The Authority does not directly operate any of the

<sup>6</sup> This includes the management and operation of household waste recycling centres, waste transfer stations, haulage and the costs associated with landfill (gate fees and landfill tax).

landfill sites in the county and the contractors that operate these sites charge a gate fee per tonne of waste disposed of. As part of contract negotiations the Authority market tests gate fee rates as well as undertaking on-going benchmarking and market testing, at points throughout the life of these contract. What is apparent from analysis of this budget is how small the figure spent on staffing is at 1.9% of the total and this impacts on the scope for generating on-going efficiencies.

The generation of efficiencies is particularly difficult for the waste management team due to the increasing demands and targets on the service, and by the size and length of time of waste management contracts, which inhibits flexibility. However, the length of these contracts reflects the investment by these companies in costly infrastructure. As part of the procurement process all long-term contracts are competitively tested to ensure the achievement of value for money. It is here that effective planning, procurement and partnership working will generate efficiencies.

The Working Group were pleased to be informed of the benchmarking, market testing and competitive procurement that occurs to ensure that waste management services achieve value for money and believe that this will positively contribute to a more efficient service.

### **Alternatives to landfill**

#### **Landfill diversion targets**

The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) was intended to be a major driver for diverting waste; however, landfill tax is now viewed as the principal incentive for Waste Disposal Authorities to reduce the waste they send to landfill. Derbyshire County Council met its 2010 target and is on schedule to meet the 2013 landfill diversion target, however, it remains exposed to significant costs associated with landfill tax.

#### **Recycling Credits**

The recycling credits scheme was an early initiative to incentivise recycling of household waste by local authorities and by third parties (e.g. community groups, businesses and other organisations carrying out recycling activity). The scheme's purpose is to make available to recyclers the savings in disposal and collection costs which result from recycling household waste and diverting it away from the waste stream.

The Waste Management Service is expecting to spend £3.7m in recycling credits in the current financial year, with the majority of this going to district and borough councils in acknowledgement of their recycling activity such as kerbside collections and recycling banks. While this scheme does offer some



incentive to collection authorities, there are no penalties that can be imposed for poor performance, or additional incentives that can be offered to encourage performance improvements.

### Residual Waste Treatment and Disposal

The Authority has spent a number of years, in partnership with Derby City Council, attempting to deliver a waste treatment facility to divert residual municipal waste from landfill. In 2009 a long-term contract was awarded to Resource Recovery Solutions (Derbyshire) Ltd (RRS), commencing in 2010 for a period of 27 years. The contract provides for the transfer and disposal of local authority collected waste that cannot be recycled or composted, as well as the management of the Council's nine Household Waste Recycling Centres. The identified treatment solution, as a long-term alternative to landfill, was the development of a Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) and gasification facility, located in the Sinfin suburb of Derby. RRS failed to secure planning permission for the Sinfin facility in 2009, with the appeal against this decision being dismissed in 2010.

Judicial Review of this appeal was sought; in July 2011 RRS were successful in getting the Planning Inspector's decision overturned. A second Public Inquiry took place in June 2012 and the Councils await the outcome. The original programme was for this facility to be operational in July 2012. The Authority has been working with Derby City Council and RRS on the development of a revised project plan, although this work is currently on hold pending the outcome of the Sinfin Public Inquiry. The Authority is also working with RRS to secure early diversion options at a number of treatment facilities as a short-term alternative.

Development of this site would be of both financial and environmental benefit to the Authority as well as dramatically reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. For example, Birmingham City Council has seen a dramatic reduction in the amount of municipal waste it sends to landfill following the development of an energy from waste facility, from above 20% in 2006/2007 to around 5% in 2010/12<sup>7</sup>.

Due to the sensitive nature of this issue, (the appeal/judicial review) as well as the commercially sensitive nature of some information here, the Working Group felt that it was inappropriate to consider this proposal in depth. The Group do acknowledge however, that there is a need to provide a viable environmental, financial and publically acceptable alternative to the continued landfilling of waste in the county.

---

<sup>7</sup> Refresh of the Municipal Waste Management Strategy – Birmingham City Council 2012.

**Recommendation 2** That a report is submitted to the Improvement and Scrutiny - Resources Committee, detailing the financial implications of the outcome of the Sinfin planning appeal at an appropriate date.

#### Early Diversion Options

Early diversion of waste, by utilising short-term capacity at energy from waste facilities in areas such as Stoke, Sheffield, Coventry, Nottingham and Wolverhampton, is undertaken by the Authority. A Mechanical Biological Treatment facility in east London has also been used. There is a cost attributable to this activity and currently the contractor, at the site where the waste is disposed of, is paid the same rate as if the waste was landfilled; there is a clear environmental and sustainability benefit to undertaking diversion of waste from landfill when possible. However, this is a short-term solution to a long-term issue, is not sustainable and should not replace efforts to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill as there is not sufficient and secure long-term capacity available to meet the County Council's landfill needs.

## **5. Site Visit**

As part of this Review process the Working Group undertook a site visit to Waterswallows site in Buxton. This one site contains the three waste management elements of:

- Household Waste Recycling Centre
- Waste Transfer Station
- In-vessel Composting facility

and cost the Authority £5.8m to establish.

### **Household Waste Recycling Centre**

The Household Waste Recycling Centre at this site was designed to ensure efficient traffic flow, to maximise recycling and composting and making visits to this site as quick and as convenient for customers as possible. The staff, on site, provide assistance, advice and guidance. The site has an in-built element of flexibility that allows it to respond to customer flow and demand.

### **Waste Transfer Station**

The Waterswallows site also houses a Waste Transfer Station. This facility is designed to act as a delivery point for waste collection vehicles, (in the case of this site those operated by High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council); waste that cannot be recycled or composted (residual) is then 'bulked up' and loaded on to much larger vehicles capable of carrying a far greater amount of waste than standard refuse vehicles, before being transferred to its end disposal/treatment facility either at landfill or currently in the case of Waterswallows an energy from waste facility. This process delivers a significant reduction in the amount of vehicle miles needed to move the waste, thereby reducing cost and local traffic, minimising the impact on the environment.

The Working Group were surprised at the quantities of recyclable products contained in the residual waste deposited at this facility, despite a number of recycling options being offered to local residents by Derbyshire County Council and High Peak Borough Council. This reinforced how challenging educating and changing the behaviour of the County's residents remains in relation to waste and recycling.

### **In-vessel Composting Facility**

This facility was opened in 2009 serving the High Peak area with the capacity to process 10,000 tonnes of green and kitchen waste, with 60% of this being converted into soil improver. It was visible to the Working Group how little food

waste was contained in the waste about to go through the composting process. Food waste can make-up 30% of household waste and without this product the composting process becomes a very expensive way of processing garden waste. It is essential that the amount of food waste composted is increased. There is also a significant problem with the amount of waste here that is 'contaminated' (i.e. black bag waste being put into green bins) and subsequently having to be sorted by hand or in a waste case scenario disposed of at landfill. The Waste Management Team is able to feedback to High Peak Borough Council on the approximate area where the contamination has occurred, to allow them to target their efforts in encouraging recycling and pointing out the issues that waste contamination can cause. There remains a significant challenge in encouraging residents not to place food waste in their black bin which would increase the amount of food waste sent for composting; this will only be achieved by altering the behaviour of residents in the county and addressing their concerns about the storage of food waste and issues of hygiene, odours and vermin.

One of the key learning points from establishing this facility was the need to enter into a formal agreement with waste collection authorities to commit them to meet a minimum tonnage obligations of compostable waste, avoiding some of the initial problems experienced by the Buxton facility not receiving the minimum tonnage obligations for compostable waste, incurring additional processing costs for DCC. Work is currently underway to deliver a second in-vessel composting facility in the north east of the county at Arkwright. Following a lengthy Judicial Review process, planning permission for the site has recently been secured and the plant should become operational by the spring/summer of 2013. Once the delayed facility is operational, six out of the eight district and borough councils in Derbyshire will provide a kerbside food and green waste collection service. In-vessel composting is an efficient, well proven and environmentally sustainable method of dealing with food and green waste.

The prevailing message from this site visit was the need to engage in continued education of residents in relation to waste recycling, the costs of waste 'contamination' and the environmental and financial costs of continuing to landfill waste not being sustainable.

The Working Group believe that there is a clear role for Members to play here as leaders in the local communities, engaging in education and awareness raising, as well as encouraging greater understanding of the financial and environmental implications of the failure to recycle and the unsustainability of continued landfilling. The roles of Councillors whether representing County divisions or District and Borough Wards are not mutually exclusive and the roles of waste collection and disposal authorities cannot be considered in isolation. Over 50% of County Councillors are also District or Borough

Councillors and have a significant role to play in these Waste Collection Authorities.

**Recommendation 3** That a Members' development seminar is held to raise awareness of Derbyshire County Council's role as a Waste Disposal Authority, identifying how this links to District and Borough Council's roles as Waste Collection Authorities, highlighting the financial risks the Authority is experiencing in this respect. It will also be advantageous for Members to be given an opportunity to visit the Waterswallows site in Buxton.

## **6. Partnerships**

Partnership working for the Waste Management Service is principally carried out through the Derbyshire Waste Partnership, which is made up of waste managers from each of the ten councils (including Derby City Council) and the delivery of the Derbyshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (DJMWMS). The Waste Partnership members have been working to deliver this strategy since its inception in 1997. The primary aim of this strategy is to guide waste collection and disposal authorities in the development of sustainable waste management solutions for the waste that is generated by Derbyshire residents each year. Testament to the initial success of this strategy is the increase in the County's recycling rates from 7% of municipal waste in 2000 to 42% in the year 2010/2011. However, the current target of achieving recycling rates of 55% by 2020 is exceptionally challenging. Which the Working Group acknowledge and they were informed that the 'quick wins' have already been taken; it also needs to be acknowledged that these challenging targets are set against a backdrop of a significant reduction in public spending that all local authorities are experiencing combined with the long term nature of many waste management contracts which inhibit the ability of the Council to make immediate savings.

The Derbyshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy is currently under review; the focus of this revised strategy will be on waste prevention, recycling and composting. This review has already commenced and will run until the middle of 2013, to ensure key stakeholders are given the opportunity to influence its development, with the adoption of the new strategy taking place in individual authorities by the autumn of 2013.

The challenges of reconciling the objectives and ideals of the Derbyshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy with other local strategies, budgets and financial pressures within individual authorities is considerable, with the Working Group identifying an important role for 'dual-hatted' Members to play.

**Recommendation 4     That progress reports on the development of a revised Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy are delivered to the Improvement and Scrutiny - Places Committee at key stages in its development.**

The Group was pleased with the relationship building that has been undertaken with district and borough partners and stressed the need to engender a sense of common purpose and direction.

The Head of Waste Management has recently undertaken a benchmarking visit to Leicestershire County Council, an Authority that is recognised for its excellent performance in recycling and minimising the amount of the residual waste sent to landfill. The Working Group is supportive of this proactive

approach to delivering service improvements undertaken by the Head of Waste Management and the desire to learn from the success of partners.

## **7. Winning Hearts and Minds**

This Review process has highlighted the significant role the Authority has in changing hearts and minds in relation to waste and recycling, as well as promoting the significant economic and environmental benefits that can be derived from persuading individuals and communities to alter their behaviour in relation to the volume and types of waste produced. The Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP), has reported that half of households hold back waste material because they are not sure whether it can be recycled or not. A significant number of households also put out material for recycling even if they are not sure it can be recycled. Both of these activities have significant consequences including affecting recycling performance, increasing costs in relation to landfill and creating confusion and/or lack of support amongst residents.

The Working Group were particularly impressed by the work being undertaken by the Waste Management Team in this area, especially that being undertaken in Derbyshire's schools by the Eco Schools Officer and the Eco schools programme. Facilitating culture change and generating public acceptance of this is crucial. The Waste Management Service is supported by a dedicated Communications Officer working in the Public Relations team at County Hall. The Working Group agree that this post is making a valuable contribution in getting the "reduce, re-use and recycle" message across, as well as emphasising that landfilling waste is no longer a viable economic and environmental option. Regular communication activities are important to keep householders aware and active in separating waste and increasing participation which will have a positive impact on the Authority's expenditure.

Effective engagement with stakeholders is essential. The importance of communication campaigns, jointly devised and delivered with districts and borough partners will ensure the delivery of a strong and coherent message to the public. Education has an important role to play in ensuring that the County's residents are aware of the facilities that are available to them, encouraging them to increase their recycling activity and making them aware of the short, medium and long-term implications of waste generation and disposal (both in financial and environmental terms).

**Recommendation 5 That the dedicated waste management Communications Officer post is maintained.**

Although positioned at the bottom of the waste hierarchy DCC will benefit from the clear economic and environmental rewards generated by investment in waste minimisation and recycling strategies. Its role as a Waste Disposal Authority is not mutually exclusive from that of a Waste Collection Authority.



County Members have a key role to play in relation to hearts and minds, stressing the importance of reducing the amount of waste that is sent to landfill in the County, highlighting the positive environmental and financial benefit that this will have.

## **8. Equalities Consideration**

The Working Group Member were pleased to be informed that equality of access to household recycling facilities and the equitable treatment of people using these facilities has been included as a key performance measure within the contract for managing the sites operated by the Authority. The Senior Policy Officer (Equalities) met with representatives of the main contractor towards the end of 2011 to discuss equalities considerations in detail. This positive approach is endorsed by the Working Group.

## **9. Conclusion**

In conducting this Review the complexity of Derbyshire County Council's role as the Waste Disposal Authority is plain to see. This cannot be underestimated, nor can the challenges presented by working to change the county's resident's views and activity in disposing of their household waste.

It has always been the intention that this Review takes an overview of the financial pressures relating to Derbyshire County Council's the costs associated with waste management. It has become apparent that even with a long-term treatment solution – such as the one proposed in Derby – coming online the costs of waste management will continue to increase, albeit not by as much as they would if no solution was provided. However, it remains important for the Authority to minimise its financial exposure and to mitigate the effects on Derbyshire's environment.

The role of Waste Collection Authorities and Waste Disposal Authorities are not mutually exclusive and Elected Members have an important role to play in the development and implementation of strategies that complement each other. This relationship should be one of mutual understanding and support with the benefit being felt by residents both in the collection, recycling, treatment and disposal of their household waste and also in the costs that their local authorities are incurring in collection and treatment/disposal roles.

Household and municipal waste should not be considered as a district and borough or a county issue, but as a universal issue that should be dealt with on a collective basis.

## **10.        Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1**        That a Working Group be established to explore the potential role for Derbyshire County Council in supporting/influencing local businesses to reduce the amount of waste they produce.

**Recommendation 2**        That a report is submitted to the Improvement and Scrutiny - Resources Committee, detailing the financial implications of the outcome of the Sinfin planning appeal at an appropriate date.

**Recommendation 3**        That a Members' development seminar is held to raise awareness of Derbyshire County Council's role as a Waste Disposal Authority, identifying how this links to District and Borough Council's roles as Waste Collection Authorities, highlighting the financial risks the Authority is experiencing in this respect. It will also be advantageous for Members to be given an opportunity to visit the Waterswallows site in Buxton.

**Recommendation 4**        That progress reports on the development of a revised Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy are delivered to the Improvement and Scrutiny - Places Committee at key stages in its development.

**Recommendation 5**        That the dedicated waste management Communications Officer post is maintained.

## **Background Papers**

- Scrutiny Review Scoping Report
- Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011 - defra
- Cost of Waste Disposal in Derbyshire Report – 07.02.12

Copies of documents held on file in the Improvement and Scrutiny Office.

WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

