



LINCOLNSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP

21 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT REFERENCE: **3.1**

SUBJECT: NATIONAL WASTE POLICY REVIEW

REPORT BY: OFFICER WORKING GROUP

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 14 June 2011 DEFRA published the Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011.

This report followed a consultation exercise which had commenced almost exactly one year previously. Both the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership and some of its constituent authorities responded to the consultation in light of the potentially major impacts the Review could have had on the frequency (and cost) of waste collection and the provision of waste infrastructure.

The Executive Summary of the Review is attached as Appendix 1, but there are certain aspects outlined below that the Waste Officer Group considered to be worthy of more detailed consideration.

DISCUSSIONS – THE REVIEW

Frequency of waste collection

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Review is what it did not do, in that the threatened imposition of a return to weekly residual waste collection has not materialised.

The document does repeatedly refer to 'households reasonable expectations of

weekly collections' and it is anticipated that there may be an announcement in due course of a financial incentive for those Councils that wish to choose to return to a weekly collection of residual waste.

There is to be a new Recycling and Waste Services Commitment for councils to sign up to and it will be interesting to see if this contains any requirements for frequency of waste collection.

Food Waste and Anaerobic Digestion (AD)

The Review has a strong emphasis on reducing food waste. The Government's preferred disposal route for food waste that does arise is by using AD, but this requires a separate food waste collection services as mixing food waste with garden waste would result in a huge rise in the cost of treating the garden waste.

It is difficult to see how this can be progressed in a Lincolnshire context as the EfW route for disposal has already been selected and the energy from burning food waste forms around 20% of the calorific value of the waste which will be the fuel for the EfW.

Business Waste

There is an intention within Defra to make recycling easier for businesses and in particular small medium enterprises (SME's). It is intended that a Business Waste and Recycling Collection Commitment for local authorities will be published in the summer of 2011.

It will be necessary to consider the implications of developments in this area, particularly if it imposes any additional duties on Local Authorities for the collection and/or disposal of business waste.

There is also an encouragement that local authorities explore whether Household Waste Recycling Centre facilities and other bring bank facilities can be modified to allow businesses to use them at a reasonable cost.

Taxation and Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme. (LATS)

LATS is to be abolished at the end of 2012/13 as the Government is confident targets on reducing landfill can be met without this tool. This will have the effect of removing a barrier to the collection of business waste by local authorities (see previous comment).

The continued use of Landfill Tax is seen as a more effective driver for landfill reduction and this will continue to rise until it reaches £80/tonne in 2014/15, and further increases may occur beyond that date.

Regulation and Enforcement

A number of initiatives are outlined in the review under this heading including:

- Amended sentencing guidelines to be produced to guide Magistrates dealing with waste offences;

- A proposal to raise wider awareness of the Duty of Care requirements such as the need for anyone utilising a third party to dispose of waste to use a Registered Waste Carrier;
- A proposal to prohibit wood waste going to landfill, although this would only be an issue if residual waste continued to be landfilled which is unlikely in Lincolnshire once the EfW is in operation;
- A proposal to look at changing regulatory responsibilities between the Environment Agency and local authorities, but as no details were given it is not clear in which direction the responsibilities would move;
- A proposal to amend/repeal certain powers available to local authorities in respect of household waste, as the Government is of the view that the powers are in some cases being used disproportionately. This includes powers to inspect waste to determine if the correct bins are being used and to analyse waste.

Recycling on the Go

The Review strongly promotes the concept of recycling the waste from litter bins, and this could involve litter authorities in the provision of different bins for different types of litter.

Rewards for recycling

The Review refers to the promotion of schemes to increase recycling by offering rewards to residents, although schemes of this nature do only tend to be efficient where performance is currently low. It is also only likely to be deliverable by the monitoring of residents' bins using retrofitted 'chips' and the provision of 'chip' readers on refuse freighters.

Reception of the Review by the Waste Profession

The Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) represents waste managers from across the UK, and in the July issue of the CIWM journal their Editor describes the Review as "a lost opportunity", particularly when compared to documents which have been produced by the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This view is largely backed up by other contributors to the journal and across the wider waste press where the word "underwhelming" seemed a popular way of describing something that has been much hyped and awaited for over a year.

The general disappointment was that after over a year of consultation, working parties and publicity the review seems to be focusing on yet another round of extensive consultation on the proposals in the review.

Implications of the Review

Further details regarding how these ideas will be taken forward are expecting to

emerge over the coming months. Once details are known it will be easier to comment on their implications for Local authorities/LWP in particular.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership is recommended to note the review and instruct the Officer Group to report back with further developments as and when they arise.