

From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee, 12 January 2017

Subject: **Adoption of the Kent Waste Disposal Strategy – 16/00146**

Key Decision: Yes

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: For Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Kent Wide

Summary:

As the Waste Disposal Authority for Kent, KCC requires a Waste Strategy to underpin future service design, ensuring intelligent and coordinated delivery which meets financial, environmental and customer needs. A twelve week consultation was held seeking views on the strategy Ambition, Priorities and Objectives, with amendments made to the strategy as appropriate.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport on the proposed decision to adopt and publish the Kent Waste Disposal Strategy as shown at Annex 1.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In Kent, local authority Waste Management operates in a two-tier system. KCC is the statutory Waste Disposal Authority¹ (WDA), responsible for the receipt and onward processing/disposal of household waste which is collected by the district and borough councils as the Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs). KCC also has statutory responsibility to provide a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) service to residents. KCC's annual revenue expenditure to meet these responsibilities is c. £65m.
- 1.2 With a predicted increase in waste volumes of 20% by 2031 and fluctuations in market value for recyclable materials, local authorities must consider innovative ways to deliver services. A new waste strategy for KCC as the WDA will provide clear direction with regard to priority outcomes set against financial, corporate, environmental and legislative drivers. It should be noted that the statutory and discretionary services provided by the Waste Collection Authority are not within scope of this strategy, however this disposal strategy will dovetail

¹ As defined in legislation: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>

with the statutory Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS)² which sets out how waste should be managed across the County.

- 1.3 The strategy presents the overall 'Ambition' for KCC up to 2035; it details a series of priorities and supporting objectives that will help to achieve this ambition. This strategy does not attempt to set out the detail of how the ambition, priorities and objectives will be achieved. An Implementation Plan will be produced by June 2017 which will detail the projects to be undertaken to deliver the strategy and the Plan will be updated on a regular basis. Where required, further stages of public consultation will be undertaken and subsequent 'decisions' will be sought where project recommendations result in significant service changes.
- 1.4 A high level Evidence Base document has also been developed to provide background information to support the development of the strategy. This sets out the current waste management position, drivers for change in detail and some early forecasting models (Annex 4).

2. Strategy development

- 2.1 A small cross party Member Task and Finish Group was established to support an officer strategy steering group, which in turn was accountable to the Growth Environment and Transport Officer Portfolio Board and ultimately through to this Cabinet Committee. The Member Task and Finish Group helped guide the strategy development and considered the ambition, priorities and objectives.
- 2.2 A District Development Workshop was held with officers across the 12 district/ borough councils and Members which attend the Kent Resource Partnership Member Board, to ensure the vital views of the WCAs were included with the strategy development prior to consultation.

3. Consultation on the Kent Waste Disposal Strategy

- 3.1 The draft strategy was open for consultation between 11 July 2016 and 2 October 2016 and sought views on the Ambition, Priorities and Objectives with the aim to engage primarily with key partners and stakeholders. The consultation was publically available should residents wish to have commented, with some public engagement undertaken. The consultation was communicated via a number of methods including; targeted emails to key stakeholders and networks, a press release, social media, posters and postcards available at strategic locations and face to face engagement at each of the 18 Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- 3.2 The consultation consisted of a questionnaire, available in both electronic and paper format and alternative formats available upon request. Stakeholders and residents were made aware of the consultation and invited to respond using various communication methods and in a proportionate manner.

² The KJMWMS is the strategy for the Kent Resource Partnership, a partnership The Kent Resource Partnership (KRP) is a partnership of the 13 local authorities in Kent: www.kent.gov.uk/krp

- 3.3 Key consultees included; Kent WCAs, Parish Councils, HWRC Providers (current), the market (potential providers), internal KCC groups and service teams as appropriate, local businesses (regarding trade waste), neighbouring Local Authorities (including Medway Council), other WDAs, Environment Agency, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Kent Police.
- 3.4 A total of 244 responses were received - 208 responses from residents, 12 responses from Kent District and Borough Councils (including from 2 different departments in Tunbridge Wells Borough Council), 14 responses from Kent Town or Parish Councils, 1 response from a Voluntary or Community Sector Organisation, 3 responses from organisations in the waste management sector, 1 councillor, 1 KCC employee, 2 'others' (Kent Association of Local Councils and Valpak Limited) and 2 respondents did not provide this information.
- 3.5 From those that completed the questionnaire, 89% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the Ambition and the majority of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the priorities (between 79% and 89%) and with the sub-objectives (between 74% and 87%). This high level of strong agreement indicates that the priorities and objectives consulted upon were reflective of the direction the service should be taking.
- 3.6 The priorities with the highest percentage of respondents who 'strongly agreed' were Priority 4 'Customer Service' (60%) and Priority 6 'The Environment' (56%). In contrast, the Priority with the fewest respondents who 'strongly agreed' was Priority 5 'Commissioning' (45%).
- 3.7 Feedback has been incorporated into this final draft of the strategy and the full report on the consultation will be made available to all respondents on the website in January 2017. A wealth of further information was also received from consultation responses which will be used when commencing implementation of the strategy.
- 3.8 Some areas that were raised by all responding groups are clarified within the strategy document and include:
 - 3.8.1 Waste collections e.g. about district council bulky waste collections or district council recycling containers. Whilst there is an appreciation that there are significant synergies with the household waste collection service provided by the district/ borough councils throughout the strategy, it is important to reiterate that this is a Waste **Disposal** Strategy. Nevertheless, any comments relating specifically to household waste collection will be passed to the Kent district/ borough councils. In a similar vein, it is re-iterated that the WCA costs will be taken into account when delivering the Ambition and Priorities.
 - 3.8.2 There were a number of comments regarding measures, evidence and outcomes relating to each objective and why these were not included in the strategy. It is important to re-iterate that implementation of the strategy and specific delivery projects will commence after adoption of

the strategy. These specific projects will include the measures to deliver effectiveness. It should also be noted that any changes to service will be consulted upon again, as required and necessary. Where evidence is mentioned as part of the objective, a table has now been included in the strategy as an appendix to present the 'types' of evidence which will be considered in delivery phase.

- 3.8.3 The priority regarding the environment was moved to become Priority 1 to reflect the importance of the environment by respondents and the significant number of comments relating to environmental impacts through the consultation responses.
- 3.8.4 Many comments seem to suggest that any waste which is not recycled is sent to landfill. It is important therefore to communicate to residents and stakeholders the significant percentage of waste that is sent for energy ('recovery' as detailed in the waste hierarchy) and the very small percentage of waste which is sent to landfill.
- 3.8.5 There were a few comments questioning whether we do many of the objectives already. It is important to re-iterate the Ambition and Objectives bring together work the service already does as well as plans for the future into one place. By stating an objective does not mean we are not working towards achieving it already.
- 3.8.6 There were a number of comments regarding specific concerns with current HWRC Operating Policy and the approach to trade waste enforcement, which will be addressed in implementation phase.
- 3.8.7 The challenges and opportunities facing KCC as a WDA as a result of 'Brexit' were also mentioned by a number of respondents. As a result the text relating to 'future legislation' has been amended to reflect the current uncertainties as well as the requirement to keep abreast of any impacts on the service. As a result a project relating to the 'impacts of Brexit' is likely to form part of the implementation plan.

4 The Implementation Plan

- 4.1 A draft Implementation Plan will be prepared after adoption of the strategy to set out the projects which will be undertaken to deliver the strategy. It is envisaged that this plan will be amended and updated over time to remain up-to-date and relevant.
- 4.2 Where major changes to services are proposed as part of a project, public consultation and subsequent Member decision(s) will be undertaken.
- 4.3 The timetable for the preparation of the Plan is as follows:
 - Proposed adoption of the Strategy – January 2017
 - Preparation of the Implementation Plan – February to June 2017

- Public Consultation on initial projects – September to November 2017

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Costs associated with strategy development and the consultation were met within existing budgets.
- 5.2 The development of the strategy itself will not deliver direct any savings. However, the delivery of this strategy will find efficiencies, savings and income allowing the service to develop and evolve; it also recognises that in order to reach our ambition, the cost to deliver the strategy could be high and in some instances require significant capital investment and/ or the accessing of key funding. Any investment must have sound cost benefits and be affordable and will be subject to Council governance and approval.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 There are statutory obligations required of a WDA which must be met and therefore the strategy itself and any subsequent interventions to deliver the strategy must be compliant.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (Annex 5) was completed prior to and post consultation to ensure consideration was given to the impact of the strategy, the approach to consultation and any relevant feedback. The initial assessment indicated that any impact on users could be reasonably mitigated. Further and subsequent EqIAs will be conducted to understand positive and negative impacts upon customers when undertaking projects as part of the implementation plan to deliver the strategy.

8. Other corporate implications

- 8.1 The Waste Strategy and implementation plan embeds the principles and objectives of the following corporate and partnership strategies:
- Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy
 - KCC's Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Corporate Strategic Statement 2015-20;
 - KCC Commissioning Framework;
 - Kent Environment Strategy;
 - KCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013 - 2030;
 - KCC's Growth & Infrastructure Framework
 - KCC's Customer Service Policy 2015-17;
 - Relevant waste legislation;

9. Recommendations:

- 9.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport on the proposed decision to adopt and publish the Kent Waste Disposal Strategy as shown at Annex 1.

10. Appendices and Background Documents

- Annex 1: Proposed Record of Decision
- Annex 2: Proposed Waste Disposal Authority Strategy
- Annex 3: Consultation Report
- Annex 4: Evidence Base
- Annex 5: Equality Impact Assessment

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