

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

MINUTES THE STRATEGIC WASTE BOARD

3.00pm Wednesday, 10 February 2010

Belfast Castle

<i>Present:</i>	
Councillor Edwin Poots MP MLA	Minister of the Environment (Chair)
Councillor Shaun Gallagher	Vice-Chair Chair of NILGA Waste Working Group Derry City Council
Leo O'Reilly	Permanent Secretary, Department of Environment
Alderman Hubert Nicholl	Chairman, arc21 Joint Committee Ballymena Borough Council
Tim Walker	Chairman, Local Government Technical Advisers Group Head of Waste Management, Belfast City Council
Councillor Charles Rollston	Chairman, SWaMP2008 Armagh City and District Council
Councillor Robert McPherson	Coleraine Borough Council
Peter Scott	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – Central Policy
David Thomson	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
Councillor Sean McGuigan	Deputy Chair of NILGA Waste Working Group Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
Councillor Winston Fulton	Deputy Chairman, arc21 Joint Committee Larne Borough Council
John Quinn	Chief Executive, arc21
Eamon Molloy	Development Officer North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWMG)
Professor Sue Christie	Director, NIEL
Councillor Patrick Groogan	Magherafelt District Council
Councillor Jack Patterson	Newry & Mourne District Council
Dave Foster	Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Alan Maitland	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
Graham Byrne	Operational Director Southern Waste Management Partnership (SWaMP2008)
John Cummins	Planning Service
Brett Hannam	Strategic Investment Board
Ursula Walsh	University of Ulster
Secretariat:	Ivan Gregg, Waste Programme Support Office, Department of the Environment John Waterworth, Waste Programme Support Office, Department of the Environment Karen Smyth, NILGA Claire Bradley, NILGA
In attendance:	Denis McMahon, Waste Planning and Infrastructure Division, Department of the Environment Mary Toner, Department of the Environment

1.	Welcome and Introductions	<u>Action</u>
1.1	Minister welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	Apologies	
2.1	Apologies were received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan McVicker (PDSU) • Gerry Cosgrove (DFP) • Ian Maye (Deputy Secretary, DOE) • Patrick Durkin (Urban Forest Limited) • Doreen Brown (DRD) • Brian Godfey (DHSSPS) • Alison Adams (DEL) 	
3.	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.	
4.	Matters Arising	
4.1	Minister Poots advised members of the Board that a standard format had been developed for departmental action plans on waste management and was circulated to all Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) departments for comment. Feedback on update reports is attached to the SWB papers for members' information.	

4.2	<p>The Minister noted that minutes of the previous meeting had recorded an action to seek further information from NIEA. Dave Foster (NIEA) confirmed that the Agency had faced significant challenges in terms of collecting statistics, but they hope to publish an annual update on regulatory and enforcement activity later in the year, which will be copied to SWB members for information..</p>	NIEA to provide update on regulatory activity.
4.3	<p>The Minister requested an update on fly-tipping issues discussed at the previous meeting. Karen Smyth (NILGA) advised members that Rodney Connor (Chief Executive, Fermanagh District Council) had contacted Minister Poots directly to resolve the particular incidence of fly-tipping that had been referred to at the previous meeting.</p>	
5.	Waste Flow Modelling	
	<p>Members were requested to note the contents of the Waste Flow Modelling paper. The paper identifies the ‘flow’ of waste in Northern Ireland from collection to treatment and disposal. Members noted that this information reflects a snapshot in time, and is already out-of-date as it does not recognise facilities for anaerobic digestion or other developments in recycling technology. It was noted that this information can be used as a policy development tool and further, more detailed information is currently being sought to bring the information up-to-date.</p> <p>John Quinn, Chief Executive of arc21 commented that the paper is a useful starting point for dialogue, but that he would need some time to consider the quantum and conclusions in the paper before responding to the Department.</p> <p>Alan Maitland suggested that there should be more detail on which methods of waste management are most effective for local councils to achieve targets. A query was posed in relation to how food waste figures are calculated. Members were advised that the volume of food waste was estimated from WasteDataFlow returns and waste compositional studies.</p>	<p>John Quinn to consider quantum on waste flow modelling and advise Department.</p> <p>DOE to provide more detailed district council level information on analysis of waste flow</p>
6.	Waste Strategy Implementation Group Report - includes Strategy Delivery Programme Progress Report	
	<p>Members were asked to note the waste strategy implementation group report which sets out the progress to date on strand milestones/ targets. Concerns were voiced with reference to the traffic light system; where progress had been marked from red to amber or amber to green where responsibility had been moved to other departments. Members were advised that overall there had been good progress but attention was drawn to the potential for significant changes in the waste programme as a result of the revision of the EU Waste Framework Directive..</p> <p>Professor Sue Christie highlighted the fact that there were instances where project ‘traffic lights’ are slipping from amber to red due to the lack of financial rather than staff resources and queried if a</p>	

<p>reallocation of £1.7 million capital funding had been made available for revenue spend within the waste management strategy. The Board was advised that the £1.7 million had been allocated to assist the site selection process, but that there had been some slippage and delay. The Department will be making bids for resources for recycling and waste prevention in particular to help progress the waste management strategy further.</p> <p>The Minister advised members that the DOE is facing a difficult financial situation with the equal pay issue and the fall in planning applications and revenue from fees. The department has efficiency savings of £15 million to find in the next financial year, and will seek to deal with this in a way that does not impact on core responsibilities, although this may mean transferring staff.</p> <p>The Minister commented that he is becoming more and more convinced of the benefits of recycling and extending recycling targets and feels that we can do more in this respect. However, this will have an impact on the scale of residual infrastructure. He added that there is still time to ensure that NI plc is not left with a substantial bill for over sized facilities, and that EfW should only be used for materials that cannot be recycled.</p> <p>John Quinn commented that urgent direction and guidance is required, as the procurement process is already very advanced. The Minister confirmed that he was happy to engage with the three regional waste management groups to discuss this issue in more detail, and to ensure that the public does not pick up the bill for unnecessary infrastructure.</p> <p>Cllr Shaun Gallagher (NWRWGM), Eamonn Molloy (NWRWGM) and Graham Byrne (SWAMP2008) all agreed a discussion of this nature would be useful. They noted that clarification would help the development of appropriately scaled facilities at both regional and sub regional level, and that there was a need to focus on maximising recycling and diversion from landfill. The Minister agreed to make this meeting a priority.</p> <p>Graham Byrne advised the Minister that bidders needed clarity on two issues; namely the sites available and guaranteed tonnage, and that SWaMP2008 were aiming towards the challenging target of 50% recycling. The Minister firstly informed members that the words 'guaranteed tonnage' gave him some cause for concern, and added that he considered 50% may not be a challenging enough target. He reiterated his concern that the public may end up subsidising waste management in the future if sites are not processing to full capacity and therefore resulting in the process being much more expensive to run.</p> <p>The Minister confirmed that whilst energy recovery will remain a key component of this strategy, he is keen to see greater recycling and less waste going to landfill.</p>	<p>Meeting to be arranged on procurement issues between Minister and three WMGs</p>
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7.	Proposed change to definition of municipal waste	
	<p>Members of the Board were invited to note the attached report relating to the proposed change to the definition of municipal waste. It was noted that the new definition will encompass more commercial waste within municipal waste, which will have an impact on Landfill Directive targets. However, it is expected that this will not have a hugely detrimental effect on the 2012 waste targets. Members were advised that the Department will be consulting on the implications for NILAS and the options available. One option would be to continue the scheme up until 2020. Members were also informed that the consultation would consider other policy instruments, for example, landfill bans, as a means of increasing diversion rates.</p> <p>Karen Smyth affirmed that there will be an impact on local councils with this proposed change and that she is currently working to co-ordinate a local government response to this consultation. Further to a letter received by NILGA from Larne Borough Council, Karen Smyth queried how much of the money raised by landfill tax is used in Northern Ireland. It was confirmed that this money does come back as part of the NI block grant, but is not separately defined as being sourced from landfill tax.</p> <p>Cllr Shaun Gallagher advised members that Philip Faithfull, Chief Executive of Strabane District Council has been quoted recently in the media as saying that if recycling within the district had been maximised and landfill tax payments reduced, the council would not have had to increase local rates. The Minister noted that Strabane's recycling rate was currently very low in comparison to the majority of district councils.</p>	
8.	Morrow Communications Brand Presentation	
	<p>Morrow Communications gave a presentation on the proposed brand to encourage the general public to 'reduce, reuse and recycle' more, as part of the communications strategy.</p> <p>The strategic context for the campaign brand was explained. This included a detailed audit and review of existing communications which collated a wide range of opinions and priorities of waste communication strategy and recommendations were made on what the overarching theme of the brand should be.</p> <p>During the creative process to developing the brand, Morrow Communications and the department considered the challenges that they may face and agreed the criteria which should be met when developing the brand. Existing printed and on-line existing material for other jurisdictions was researched and they began to test brand concepts.</p> <p>Many challenges were identified by Morrow Communications and were listed for members' information. These included the need to encourage the general public to change behaviour without being</p>	

<p>patronising or dictatorial, the need to develop a brand which encompasses many different messages and is usable by a number of different stakeholders.</p> <p>Morrow Communications then presented their brand and the tagline 'ReThink Waste' to the Board. It is hoped that the ReThink Waste brand can encompass notions of recovering waste, reducing waste, reusing, recycling and thinking of waste as a resource, as the 'Re' can be used as a creative device to reinforce key action points.</p> <p>The key strengths for this brand were identified by Morrow Communications as follows: the tagline is simple and memorable, it is an effective platform which can work alongside other campaign elements and messages, it is easily communicated both verbally, in written form and graphically, it is flexible over time and is engaging, without being patronising and most importantly, is campaignable.</p> <p>Morrow Communications confirmed that the website is near completion and is designed to allow various media forms to be used, for example, photos, video, case studies and connection to social network sites such as facebook and twitter. The site can act as a signpost to other organisations and specific campaigns can be highlighted due to the modular nature of the site.</p> <p>Morrow Communications invited members of the Board to ask any questions in relation to the campaign brand.</p> <p>Cllr Shaun Gallagher welcomed the work carried out to progress the communications strand of the waste management strategy, as effective communications will be key to achieving EU waste targets. Cllr Shaun Gallagher requested if the presentation could be emailed to all members of the Board. Morrow Communications agreed to this request.</p> <p>Cllr Winston Fulton queried how this campaign can reach members of the general public who do not have access to computer or internet. It was advised that the website will be the first step of the campaign, it is hoped that the campaign will also branch out to television and press advertisements.</p> <p>Karen Smyth reiterated Cllr Fulton's sentiments, affirming that there is an urgent need to get the message of how important the effective management of waste is across to the general public and more than a website is required to do this. It was agreed that there should be a strong emphasis on actions as this will be critical to the success of the campaign.</p> <p>Cllr Shaun Gallagher alluded to the hugely successful 'Wake Up to Waste' campaign which resulted in recycling increasing by 11% to re-emphasise the point that the campaign message is needed 'on the ground'.</p>	<p>Presentation from Morrow Communications to be emailed to all SWB members for information.</p>
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9.	Report from Waste Infrastructure Programme Board	
	<p>Members were invited to note the contents of the paper which outlined the progress of arc21, NWRWVG and SWAMP2008. It was noted that the three waste management groups were making excellent progress.</p> <p>Members further noted that the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill is currently under consideration through the NI Assembly.</p> <p>Tim Walker emphasised the need to know the composition of waste, as this will arm the Department and other stakeholders with information to know which areas of waste management to target in terms of communication. It is also important to know the impact of the economic downturn, and taking more recyclables out on the composition of residual waste. Tim Walker suggested that the Department look at undertaking a waste characterisation exercise, now and another in 5 years time, especially as waste will continue to change and packaging will continue to change. This information is central to waste management in order to prepare local authorities and other stakeholders for the future (in terms of procurement and technology).</p> <p>It was agreed that the Department would consider this and report back to members at the next SWB meeting.</p>	<p>Department to consider and advise members on waste characterisation/ composition..</p>
10.	Any Other Business	
	<p>Karen Smyth queried if the NIO had to submit their Departmental waste management plans through DOE or through DEFRA. It was agreed that the Department would investigate and inform members at the next SWB meeting.</p> <p>Karen Smyth further advised members that the NILGA conference will take place on 18-19 February 2010 in the Slieve Donard hotel, Newcastle and drew members' attention specifically to the waste meeting which will be held on the evening of 18 February, as it may be of interest for members of the Board to attend.</p>	<p>DOE to investigate situation regarding the NIO waste management plan.</p>
11.	Date and Venue of next meeting	
	<p>It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 26 May 2010 in the SWAMP2008 region. The Minister thanked arc21 for the arrangement of this meeting and the pleasant venue.</p>	