

WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND : Towards Resource Management

Consultation - October 2005

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this document is to provide a comprehensive list of the questions contained within the Consultation Document entitled “Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland - Towards Resource Efficiency”. It is recommended that this list is not read in isolation as the background information and detail required for answering the questions is presented within the main Consultation Document.

Questions are presented in two parts as follows:

- Policies and Proposals within the Waste Management Strategy (divided into the six policy strands as outlined in the Consultation Document).
- Delivering the Strategy.

Stakeholders are invited to answer any questions which they consider to be relevant to their particular requirements in terms of future waste management in Northern Ireland.

PART 2: POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

STRAND 1 WASTE PREVENTION

Section 1.1 Government Leadership in Waste Prevention

A number of public sector mechanisms initiatives have been suggested to demonstrate enhanced Government Leadership in the prevention of waste.

Q1 Are there any other specific public sector initiatives that would help Government lead and guide all sectors in waste prevention?

Section 1.2 New Developments to include a Site Waste Management Plan

The Consultation Document sets out two options for the initial implementation of a Site Management Plan within new developments, which, subject to the necessary controls, can be extended more formally.

Q2a Which of the above options would be most effective in engaging the public and private sector to incorporate waste prevention and management into project planning and implementation?

Q2b Are there other options that may prove more effective in engaging the public and private sector to incorporate waste prevention and management into project planning and implementation?

Q2c Is a monetary threshold level of £200,000 appropriate, and if not, what threshold should apply?

Q2d Who should be responsible for monitoring and enforcement?

Section 1.3 Providing a Financial Incentive to Reduce Waste

A number of European Countries have developed financial incentives such as “pay as you throw schemes” for municipal waste. In Northern Ireland at present however, local Councils do not have the legal powers to make a direct charge for collection of residual wastes from householders.

Q3 Should a Northern Ireland-wide incentive charging scheme be developed, or should local Councils be given the powers to develop their own incentive charging schemes?

Section 1.4 Preventing Waste in the Business Sector

The Framework for Waste Prevention identifies a number of specific initiatives, supported by Government, which promote the benefits of waste prevention within business sectors. A number of examples of these initiatives have been provided within the Consultation Document.

Q4a Do the above initiatives collectively provide sufficient drivers for waste prevention in the business sector over the next five years?

Q4b Can other organisations such as local councils and trade associations do more to provide advice and encourage waste prevention in business? If yes, please indicate what other specific initiatives Government should consider.

Section 1.5 Preventing Waste in the Home

The Framework for Waste Prevention proposes several actions, detailed in the Consultation Document, which could be carried out by all sectors to encourage the general public to participate in waste prevention.

Q5 What other specific initiatives should we prioritise to assist individuals, households and communities in preventing waste?

Waste Prevention Targets

Government are at present giving consideration to the setting of waste prevention targets for specific industries and waste streams in order to control future waste growth.

Q6a Do you think that specific targets should be introduced to encourage waste prevention?

Q6b If so, what areas should be covered and what quantitative measures should be applied to best support delivery of our objectives for reducing waste and improving resource efficiency?

STRAND 2 RECYCLING AND RECOVERY

Enabling Participation

A number of measures have been highlighted, aimed at encouraging and enabling separate collection of materials for recycling and composting.

- Q7a Which proposals (sections 2.1- 2.5) would be most effective in encouraging businesses and the public to participate in recycling?**
- Q7b What other specific initiatives might we adopt to encourage individuals, households, communities and business to recycle and recover waste?**
- Q7c Should statutory requirements (as detailed in 2.2 and 2.3) be imposed on Local Councils to ensure adequate provision of services to enable all sectors to participate in recycling?**
- Q7d Do you agree that new powers (as detailed in 2.4) should be available to Local Councils to assist the use of financial incentives?**

Sustainable Procurement

It is intended that Government commitment to recycling and recovery will be strengthened by developing specific procurement policies and practices that encourage sustainable purchasing. A number of specific proposals or initiatives for achieving sustainable procurement within Government Bodies have been identified within the Consultation Document.

- Q8 How might equivalent initiatives (detailed in Section 2.6 - 2.8) be rolled out across other sectors?**

Developing a Recycling Economy for all Waste Streams

From 2005, it is proposed that membership of WRAP will be extended to participate fully in UK market development initiatives and new materials programmes in order to assist Northern Ireland to build processing capacity and develop viable end markets for recycled and recovered materials.

- Q9 What further programmes should the Department consider with WRAP as a focus for co-ordinated support to the business sector and Local Councils on market development?**

Recycling and Recovery Targets

A number of recycling and recovery targets have been proposed for municipal waste, commercial and industrial waste and construction, demolition & excavation waste, based on the framework set out in the Northern Ireland BPEO.

Q10a Do you consider these additional targets are necessary to support statutory targets for landfill diversion and producer responsibility, and if so, should these be made statutory?

Q10b If not, what other targets or voluntary practices should be adopted?

Individual targets for specific waste streams will be set through public and private sector Waste Management Action Plans. An option is to set minimum targets across the public and/or private sector to guide the development of these Plans.

Q11a Should minimum targets for waste recovery be set for public sector organisations?

Q11b Should minimum targets for waste recovery be set for private sector organisations?

Q11c If so, would a target of 5% recovery per annum, based on detailed analysis of an organisation's waste arisings be a reasonable aim?

Q11d If not, what other targets or guidelines might support delivery of our recycling and recovery objectives?

STRAND 3 WASTE PLANNING

Section 3.2 Obtaining Planning Permission for Waste Infrastructure Facilities

Planning Service is currently undergoing a comprehensive review, through its Modernising Planning Processes Programme. Within this, Planning Service has identified a number of areas in which processing of planning applications can be improved without compromising the integrity of the Planning Process.

Q12a Do you agree with Planning Service initiatives to improve the planning process?

Q12b Are there any additional steps we should address in relation to waste planning? If so, what are these?

Section 3.3 Waste Infrastructure Task Force

In April 2005, a Waste Infrastructure Task Force was established to examine the complex and inter-related issues surrounding the procurement of waste facilities.

Q13 Are there any additional issues which the Task Force should consider in relation to waste infrastructure?

Section 3.4 Structural Arrangements and Options

The Task Force will examine the fitness for purpose of the current structural arrangements for procuring waste infrastructure, options for short term change to existing structural arrangements and what changes, if any, to existing arrangements may be necessary in the long term. A number of structural options are being considered.

Q14a We would welcome your views on which of the above structural options would provide the most effective means of dealing with waste in Northern Ireland?

Q14b Are there any additional options we should consider?

Section 3.5 Assessing the Infrastructure Requirements

The Northern Ireland BPEO provides a baseline for combining a number of waste technologies with recycling and composting in order to meet the EU Landfill Directive targets.

Q15a Do you consider that the above mix of treatment facilities will enable Northern Ireland to meet its Landfill Directive targets?

Q15b Do you agree that energy from waste will be an essential component of the infrastructure mix required to meet Northern Ireland's Landfill Directive's targets? If not, what mix of infrastructure would you recommend?

Section 3.7 Programme Delivery Support Unit

A Programme Delivery Support Unit will be set up to deliver recommendations on potential funding and contract options and aid the procurement of major infrastructure.

Q16a Would you support the establishment of a Programme Delivery Support Unit as a mechanism for taking forward major waste infrastructure procurement?

Q16b Have we identified all the key issues which the Programme Delivery Support Unit should be addressing?

Section 3.8 Energy from Waste

The Northern Ireland BPEO recommends an integrated network of facilities for Northern Ireland which includes at least 10% energy from waste by 2020. Proposals for the development of these facilities will set out measures to maximise energy recovery whilst also ensuring that complementary targets for recycling and composting are met.

Q17 Do you consider that these actions will enable us to address Northern Ireland's infrastructure deficit?

STRAND 4 DATA AND RESEARCH

Section 4.1 Improving our Waste Data Systems

We are committed to improving data on waste arisings, composition and management methods to improve decision making in waste and resource management.

Q18a Do you agree that mandatory reporting is required to underpin accurate data collection and interpretation for non-municipal wastes?

Q18b If not, what other voluntary and mandatory measures, singly or in combination, would improve data collection for all waste streams?

Section 4.2 Promoting Research, Development and Demonstration Projects

Participation in research, development and demonstration initiatives and projects provides a co-ordinated and cost effective approach to delivering practical and innovative solutions to Northern Ireland's waste management issues.

Q19 We would welcome views on the overall approach to provide a co-ordinated research and development programme that meets Northern Ireland's needs and delivers best value.

STRAND 5 LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Q20a The Strategy aims to provide an effective legislative framework for waste management in Northern Ireland. In general do you consider that the proposed framework is sufficient?

Q20b If not, where would you like to see greater emphasis placed?

Section 5.4 Prevention of Illegal Dumping

The legislative powers available to Government and local Councils are not currently sufficient to deal with the growing problem of illegal dumping in Northern Ireland. In response to this a consultation paper detailing proposed amendments to the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 has been published. Stakeholders should respond to this Consultation Paper separately.

Section 5.5 Additional Powers/Changes to Legislation

A number of the proposals set out in the Consultation Paper will require further changes to the existing body of waste management legislation. Depending on the outcome of consultation, these may include measures to encourage the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste as well as facilitate the provision of waste management infrastructure.

Q21a Do you believe that the measures identified through future changes in legislation will have a positive effect on the way in which all waste streams are managed in Northern Ireland?

Q21b In your opinion, will the potential measures identified be acceptable to stakeholders and be feasible for implementation "on the ground"?

STRAND 6 LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION

Section 6.1 A New Programme for Public and Business Engagement

This new programme will continue to reinforce the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle messages and will also highlight new issues and priorities as implementation progresses. A number of proposals have been set out within the Consultation Document to achieve this.

Q22a Do you agree that there is a continuing need for national campaigns to encourage everyone to deal with their waste more responsibly?

Q22b What aspects should the next phase of the Government awareness programme address to provide the most effective support to District Councils, business and the voluntary sector in communicating the Strategy?

Q22c What specific initiatives might be incorporated into the Government programme to encourage everyone to deal with their waste more responsibly?

Section 6.3 Developing Best Practice Guidance for the Public Sector, Business and Communities

In partnership with local Government and the voluntary sector, we will develop guidance, fact sheets and educational resources to ensure the provision of consistent and appropriate information on waste management issues.

Q23a Should Government or other relevant organisations do more to raise awareness of waste issues amongst businesses?

Q23b What initiatives are most relevant for industry?

Section 6.4 Supporting the Delivery of Waste Education and Training

The promotion of best practice in waste management will be encouraged through establishment of an overarching framework for waste education as well as the development of partnerships with professional bodies, trade associations and business support organisations.

Q24 What should Government's priorities be in developing education and skills initiatives for waste and resource management?

PART 3: DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

Q25 Do you consider that the proposed Strategic Waste Board will provide significant and effective monitoring of progress on all areas of the Strategy? Do you believe that there are any alternative structures that would prove to be more effective in fulfilling a monitoring role?

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Confidentiality Of Consultations

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The Department can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. **Before** you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations as they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Department in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or be treated as confidential. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that: -

be made public or be treated as confidential.

- the Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- the Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties "in confidence" which is not confidential in nature;
- acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (or see the website at: <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>).

Consultation Responses – Please return written comments on the consultation paper by e-mail or letter to the officer below by :

Friday 20th January 2006

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