

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Strategic Waste Board Meeting

5th June 2009

Council Chamber, Armagh City and District Council Offices

Present:

Sammy Wilson MLA	Minister of the Environment (Chair)
Stephen Peover	Permanent Secretary, Department of the Environment
Wesley Shannon	Department of the Environment
Helen Anderson	Department of the Environment
Liam McKibben	DARD
Jim Sutherland*	OFMDFMDRD
Doreen Brown	Planning Service
Anthony McKay	DCAL
Jim Magee*	DSD
Barney McGahan	DHSSPS
Brian Godfrey*	DFP
Hilda Hagan	Urban Forest Limited
Pat Durkan	NIEA
Dave Foster	
Ursula Walsh	University of Ulster
Graham Byrne	Operational Director, Southern Waste Management Partnership (SWaMP2008)
John Quinn	Chief Executive, arc21
Alderman Hubert Nicholl	Chairman, arc21 Joint Committee, Ballymena Borough Council
Councillor Winston Fulton	Deputy Chairman, arc21 Joint Committee, Larne Borough Council
Councillor Charles Rollston	SWaMP2008
Tim Walker	Chairman TAG

Eamon Molloy Development Officer, North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWMG)

Councillor Robert McPherson Coleraine Borough Council, NWRWMG

Councillor Patrick Groogan Magherafelt District Council, NWRWMG

Councillor Shaun Gallagher Chair of NILGA Waste Working Group, Derry City Council (Vice Chair)

Councillor Sean McGuigan Vice Chair of NILGA Waste Working Group Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council

Professor Sue Christie Director Northern Ireland Environment Link

In Attendance Alan McVicker, PDSU
Siobhan Tweedie, DOE Private Office

Secretariat: Karen Smyth, NILGA
Claire Bradley, NILGA
Ivan Gregg, DOE
John Waterworth, DOE

* Substitute members

1.	Welcome and Introductions	<u>Action</u>
1.1	The Minister welcomed all members of the Strategic Waste Board (SWB) to the meeting. Thanks were extended to Armagh City and District Council for hosting the meeting. A particular welcome was extended to Cllr Charlie Rollston, on his first SWB meeting.	
2.	Apologies	
2.1	Michael Willis (DCAL) John Cole (DHSSPS) Gerry Cosgrave (DFP) June Ingram (DEL) Wendy Reid (DE) David Sterling (DETI) John McMillen (OFMDFM) Cynthia Smyth (Planning Service) John Briggs (SWaMP2008)	
3.	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.	
4.	Matters Arising	
	The Minister outlined progress on the matters arising from the previous	

	meeting	
4.1	<p>Para. 8 of 13/03/2009 minutes <i>Departmental updates to be brought to next SWB meeting.</i></p> <p>The Minister noted that updates of Departmental waste management action plans had been received and these would be discussed on the main agenda.</p>	
4.2	<p>Para 9.1 of 13/03/2009 minutes <i>New reporting format to be progressed by DOE</i></p> <p>At the previous SWB meeting, the Board agreed the need for regular reporting on the implementation of district council Waste Management Plans. The Department confirmed that following a meeting on 24th April 2009, templates for the annual performance review report and the implementation action plan had been agreed with the Waste Management Groups.</p>	
4.3	<p>Para 10.1 Update to Elected Members and Independent Members Expenses Guidelines <i>Secretariat to ensure members are provided with appropriate forms</i></p> <p>The Minister reminded elected and independent members that they are entitled to claim expenses to attend SWB meetings and advised that new forms are available for anyone wishing to make a claim.</p>	
4.4	<p>Para. 10.2 DOE support to NILGA <i>Karen Smyth and Paul Simpson to work to resolve the issue of NILGA funding</i></p> <p>It was noted that NILGA met DOE on 23rd April 2009, and were engaged in preparing draft Terms of Reference for the post. Once these have been agreed, the Department hopes to be in a position to release funds. The update was welcomed by Cllr Shaun Gallagher.</p>	
5.	<p>Updates on Departmental Waste Management Action Plans</p>	
	<p>The Board received written reports on progress in implementing departmental waste management action plans, from all government departments. Verbal updates were also provided by DARD, DCAL, DFP, DHSSPS, DOE, DRD, DSD and OFMDFM. It was noted that updates from DEL, DE and DETI would be given at the next SWB meeting.</p> <p>Actions across the departments to address waste management issues included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information and awareness programmes for staff 2. Double-sided printing 3. Reducing paper use/ using recycled paper 4. Recycling of redundant computer equipment and furniture 5. Increased use of IT for 'publications' <p>Targets set for each department were also outlined and observations were offered on whether these targets have been or can be met in the future.</p>	<p>Further reports (from DEL, DE and DETI) to be received at the next SWB meeting.</p>

	<p>The Minister thanked all departments for their reports and encouraged each to set themselves rigorous standards.</p> <p>Prof Sue Christie welcomed the wide range of good practice and integrated approach adopted by departments. Prof Christie suggested to the Board that perhaps a best practice guide could be drawn up for other agencies to use as a benchmark. She further proposed that a uniform reporting mechanism is developed to ensure outcomes can be measured effectively.</p> <p>The Minister welcomed this suggestion and confirmed his department would take up a standard format of reporting with all other departments. The Minister also recommended that as budgets remain tight, this is an opportune way for departments to make real monetary savings.</p>	<p>DOENI to work with government departments to construct a suitable reporting format.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Waste Programme Steering Group Report- includes Strategy Delivery Programme Progress Report</p>	
	<p>Stephen Peover gave an update on the last meeting of the Waste Programme Steering Group which was held on 15th May 2009 .</p> <p>The report was noted by members of the Board.</p>	
<p>6.1</p>	<p>Update on learning and communications</p>	
	<p>A paper providing an update on the progress of the Learning and Communication strand of the Waste Management Strategy was presented to the Board.</p> <p>It was noted that there have been significant advances in this strand, with the appointment of Morrow Communications as a consultant and the imminent appointment of a Senior Information Officer for waste communications. The Senior Information Officer will be tasked to take forward the Waste Communications Action Plan drawn up by Morrow Communications.</p> <p>It is also hoped that a new, dedicated and independent waste website (which will replace the old “Wake Up To Waste” website) will be ready for launch in the Autumn. This website will be independent of the government and is designed to be dynamic by tracking users’ habits and changing accordingly.</p> <p>Cllr Winston Fulton expressed concern that no progress had been made in communicating waste messages to the general public since the presentation by Keith Patterson from WRAP over a year ago on developing a waste communications framework,. He noted that if important waste messages are not reaching the general public, momentum for recycling will be lost. Cllr Fulton also expressed concern regarding differences in what can be recycled in different council areas.</p> <p>Prof Sue Christie supported Cllr Fulton’s thoughts and further raised the point that an amber light in the reporting format represents a ‘10 per cent slippage’, yet there has been very little progress within the last 18 months in relation to communication, nor is there a Information Officer in post. It is important that EU targets and local targets are met; as missing these</p>	

	<p>will prove very expensive for councils, and in particular, rate-payers.</p> <p>The Minister acknowledged these comments, explaining that there had been difficulty ensuring funding, but an Officer will be in place shortly.</p> <p>Helen Anderson, DOE, advised that an internal competition has been run and commented that the filling of this post will really help improve communications. Ms Anderson further confirmed that the communication plan is due to be submitted by Morrow Communications to the department by the end of the month.</p>	
6.2	Update on data and research	
	<p>The Board were presented with a paper advising of progress on the Data and Research strand of the Waste Management Policy.</p> <p>It was noted that accurate and reliable information related to waste is required to enable the department and stakeholders to measure progress and to make investment decisions on the infrastructure Northern Ireland needs for the safe management of waste and to promote a healthy economy.</p> <p>The department have recognised that further work is needed to update and improve data that is available at present.</p> <p>It was further advised that the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is continuing to compile data for the European Waste Statistics Regulations so that waste policies and legislation can be better monitored and evaluated.</p> <p>It is hoped that a management information database, integrating all statutory returns, surveys and applications for waste producers, waste carriers and licensed authorities, will be complete by the end of September.</p> <p>Finally, it was confirmed that the Climate Change and Waste Strategy Division is currently undertaking a scoping exercise in relation to waste data and research. The aims of this exercise are to compile a comprehensive list of all existing NI waste data and research projects, identify gaps in existing data and research, examine data and research projects which have been or are being carried out elsewhere in the UK, identify and prioritise data needs and make recommendations as to who these needs can best be addressed. It is hoped that this exercise is due to be completed by the end of August.</p>	
6.3	Report from Waste Infrastructure Programme Board	
	<p>A report from the Waste Infrastructure Programme Board was presented to SWB and noted by members. Issues covered included progress on state aid issues, local government vires issues, Gateway Reviews, the risk register, site selection, planning, finance and communications</p>	
6.4	Progress on waste group projects	
	<p>Representatives from SWaMP2008, North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWVG) and arc21 were invited to provide the Board with an update of progress within each Waste Management Group.</p>	

	<p>SWaMP confirmed that their outline business case has been developed and is now approved by the department. SWaMP officers are currently awaiting confirmation from DFP to take their work forward.</p> <p>It was noted that planning is also a key issue at present as they have identified two sites for waste treatment and four sites for waste transfer.</p> <p>The Board was advised that DFP has assured the DOE that outstanding points requiring clarification can be finalised and confirmation should be received within the next few weeks.</p> <p>NWRWMG officers confirmed that their evaluation of the pre-qualification questionnaires is near complete and it is hoped that progress can soon be made towards the next phase of procurement. NWRWMG had invited the private sector to identify potential sites and has completed evaluation reports for sites. The next stage is to access funding necessary to 'secure' these sites.</p> <p>arc21 confirmed that they have entered into the next stage of dialogue and now must deselect 3 from a list of 6 tenders and these decisions will be presented to a joint committee by the end of June.</p> <p>They are also reviewing their planning strategy; subject to funds available. Again, funding is a critical issue as there is only enough revenue to sustain work for the next couple of months and arc21 sought clarification on the funding issue.</p> <p>arc21 also informed the meeting of the recent public consultation exercise that took place in Belfast involving businesses and households, regarding the proposed waste management development on Dargan Road. The responses to the consultation questionnaires are designed to inform Belfast City Council of the electorate's opinion on whether an EFW or an MBT plant should be built within the council boundaries. Belfast City Council will be making a decision on this matter on Tuesday 9th June 2009.</p> <p>The Minister thanked the WMGs for their contribution and highlighted there is common ground between the management groups and the department; and highlighted it is important to work closely and communicate with each other.</p> <p>In response to concern regarding the current distinction between capital and revenue spending allocation, the Board was assured that departmental officials have made a strong case to DFP to have a portion of SWIF capital funding re-classified to revenue funding to cover potential shortfalls</p>	
7.	Report on progress towards compliance with the EU Landfill Directive	
	A report outlining progress towards compliance with the EU Landfill Directive was presented to the Board. It was noted that good progress was being made and that Northern Ireland is expected to meet the first statutory target under the Directive in 2010.	
8.	Any other business	

	The Minister commented that this was Stephen Peover's last meeting with the Strategic Waste Board as he is moving to DFP. The Minister thanked Mr Peover for all his hard work to date. Cllr Shaun Gallagher echoed the Minister's words of thanks.	
9	Date and venue of next meeting	
	The next Strategic Waste Board meeting will be held in the North West region on 11 th September 2009. The exact venue will be confirmed in due course.	