



Haringey Council

Agenda item:

[No.]

Cabinet

On 15th July 2007

Report Title:

Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Review of Waste, Recycling, Collection and Disposal

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable):

Report of: **Niall Bolger, Director of Urban Environment**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Non-Key Decision**

1. Purpose

1.1 To set out the Cabinet's response to the report of the Scrutiny Review of Waste, Recycling, Collection and Disposal.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member

2.1 Waste can no longer be considered as the inevitable by-product of modern life that has to be sent for incineration or landfilling. Waste reduction is at the top of the waste hierarchy and we must seek to produce less of it in the future. The waste that is produced must be regarded as a resource upon which we should seek the maximum return through re-use or recycling.

2.2 This scrutiny review has helped us to focus on what our current policies and strategies are for reducing, re-using, recycling, collecting and disposing of waste, what they should look like in future and how we need to set ourselves up to meet the challenges that lay ahead.

2.3 Whilst there are a number of recommendations within the scrutiny review that are not agreed, it is certainly the case that the review has provided the opportunity to consider a wide range of issues and to think about how best practice elsewhere can be transferred to Haringey to improve our performance across various activities.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Cabinet approve the response.

3.2 That the Cabinet agrees that the agreed recommendations are incorporated within the Front Line Services business plan and that any recommendations requiring additional funding are dealt with as part of the Council's budget setting process in 2009/10 and beyond as appropriate.

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4. Chief Financial Officer Comments

4.1 The majority of the Scrutiny recommendations have financial implications for the Council, some of which could require significant additional resources. The proposals should only be agreed in principle at this stage, as they need to be specifically costed and any additional funding requirements must be clearly identified either from existing approved budgets or from external bidding opportunities where appropriate or through the Council's business and budget planning framework. Details of the fully costed proposals and how these are to be funded should be reported back to Members for approval prior to implementation.

4.2 The report indicates that some of the recommendations are to be considered as part of developing the new waste management and transport contract. As mentioned above, these proposals are likely to incur additional costs compared to the currently approved budgets for the contract. It is extremely important that the Council obtains best value for money from any new arrangement eventually agreed for delivering waste management services.

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

5.1 The Head of Legal Services notes the recommendations of this report and should be consulted in relation to the terms and conditions of the new contract that will replace the Integrated Waste Management and Transport contract upon its expiry in December 2009.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

7. Strategic Implications

7.1 The scrutiny review contains 23 main recommendations and 34 sub-recommendations giving a total of 57 recommendations in all. Of the recommendations and sub-recommendations that have been made:

- 32 have been agreed;
- 18 have been agreed in principle;
- 1 has been agreed in part;
- 1 has been partly agreed and partly agreed in principle; and
- 5 have not been agreed.

7.2 The responses to these recommendations can be broken down into the following categories:

- new contract requirements;
- policy;
- collection methodologies;
- Information and education;
- business waste recycling
- recycling and waste reduction from Council buildings; and
- promoting re-use.

7.3 New Contract Requirements

7.3.1 A number of recommendations have been made in relation to the new contract that will eventually replace the Integrated Waste Management and Transport Contract. These recommendations refer to a range of matters requiring consideration in the design of the new contract from performance measures - including targets, penalties and incentives - to packaging, collection methodologies and area based working. These recommendations have generally been agreed.

7.3.2 The new contract provides an opportunity to secure value for money services which take advantage of modern technology and working practices to deliver better standards of service that meet residents' needs. It also provides an opportunity for the Council to introduce effective remedial powers where reliability and standard of service delivery do not meet global targets or are not satisfactory at a local level.

7.3.3 Whilst the recommendations of the scrutiny review have generally been agreed and the opportunities provided by the new contract should be pursued with vigour, there remains a careful balance to be achieved between cost and quality. A contract which is populated by targets set at achieving top quartile performance across the board and very low trigger levels for invoking defaults and remedies will be more costly than where targets are moderate and trigger levels are higher. A consideration could be the identification of those key targets where the Council would actively pursue top quartile performance, counterbalanced by other targets set at moderate levels to keep contract costs within budgets. This will be explored in more detail as part of the procurement process.

7.4 Policy

- 7.4.1 The main policy considerations arising from the scrutiny are compulsory recycling and fortnightly collections. These recommendations have not been agreed. Haringey has set challenging recycling targets to meet through its Recycling Strategy and, with north London partner boroughs, through the North London Joint Waste Strategy. To meet its commitments in these strategies the Council has been actively rolling out more and new recycling collection services over a period of years. As these roll-outs have progressed there have been corresponding increases in the recycling rate. Further expansion of recycling collection services are due to be rolled out in 2008/09 which are expected to lead to higher recycling rates.
- 7.4.2 Recycling collection services in Haringey have not yet reached maturity. Against this background it is not yet appropriate to consider a policy of compulsory recycling as it has not been demonstrated that this will be required to achieve the set recycling targets.
- 7.4.3 Fortnightly collections have been introduced by a significant number of councils and, where they have been introduced, recycling rates have improved. Most of the top performing Councils for recycling already have fortnightly collections. However, most of these Councils are rural, semi-rural or low density housing in nature and lend themselves relatively easily to fortnightly collections. Fortnightly collections do not translate easily into heavily urbanised areas and remain largely untested in this environment. As such this policy is not being considered for Haringey.

7.5 Collection methodology

- 7.5.1 There are a number of recommendations regarding collection methodology. Notable amongst these is the question of whether the Council should collect recycling as mixed materials / commingled, where paper, glass, card and cans are collected together in a single compartment collection vehicle, or source separated, where different materials are hand-separated at the point of collection onto multi-compartment vehicles, keeping the materials separate. Whilst these recommendations are generally agreed in principle, the Council's own comparison of source-separated and mixed material collection methodologies demonstrated that the latter was more cost-effective for Haringey when this issue was examined in detail in 2006.
- 7.5.2 It should be noted that the Council is required to deliver waste and recycling to the North London Waste Authority and Service Level Agreements are in place to specify the types and quantities of waste and recycling delivered. Any decisions concerning changes to type and quantity of waste and recycling collected which impacts on the type and quantity of waste and recycling delivered to NLWA by Haringey, will need to have regard to the existing agreements that are in place between the two parties and may require changes to those agreements.

7.6 Information and Education

- 7.6.1 Information and education are vital components of the strategies to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. The range of recommendations regarding information and

education are generally agreed although some are only agreed in principle due to the additional resources that they would require.

7.7 Business Waste and Recycling

- 7.7.1 The Council is required to treat business waste and recycling differently from household waste. Any waste or recycling collections made by the Council from business premises require a charge to be rendered which covers the costs associated with making the collection and disposing of the arisings. In addition, any recyclate collected from businesses is not allowed to be included in the Council's calculation of recycling performance. As such the emphasis of the Council's recycling investment has been upon developing household recycling collections.
- 7.7.2 Nevertheless, the Government's Waste Strategy 2007 sets out an aspirational target to reduce commercial and industrial waste sent to landfill by 20% by 2010 compared to 2004. There is currently no comprehensive business waste recycling collection service offered by the Council. The recommendations of the scrutiny review to help promote business waste recycling through information and advice are generally agreed, although there are some recommendations which have only been agreed in principle as they will require additional resources.

7.8 Recycling and Waste Reduction from Council Buildings

- 7.8.1 The Council must ensure that it leads by example in waste reduction and recycling. The recommendations of the scrutiny review for increasing recycling and reducing waste from Council buildings are agreed where they relate to the approved investment for providing new services due to begin later in 2008/09. Some of the recommendations in the scrutiny review are only agreed in principle as they would require additional investment over and above that which has been agreed.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Many of the recommendations of the scrutiny review can be implemented within existing budgets. However, some recommendations will require additional funding in order to be implemented. The Environmental Resource Service will investigate the value and feasibility of implementing the recommendations that require investment and where appropriate these will be incorporated into the 2009/10 business planning process. The outcomes of these investigations and the business planning process will be reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 Legislation seek to ensure that new contracts are future-proofed to avoid additional cost. Where new regulations require unavoidable, additional costs the business planning process will be used to identify and bid for the required resources.

10. Equalities Implications

- 10.1 The Environmental Resource Service will ensure that waste and recycling services are designed to be accessible to all residents. Particular efforts will be made to provide the opportunity for residents to recycle the full range of materials in a convenient and easy to understand fashion, no matter what type of property they live in.

- 10.2 In terms of street cleanliness, the Council will create the appropriate performance clauses in the contract that will provide standards of service throughout the borough that are equally good.
- 10.3 It is important that residents are aware of the range of waste management services that are provided by the Council, particularly those services that will help them to dispose of larger items legitimately and for free, are well publicised. This review has recognised the importance of communications in this respect and the forthcoming Communication Plan will be an important tool for ensuring that all residents of Haringey know how to reduce, reuse, recycle or dispose of their waste properly.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 The Panel consulted with a wide range of bodies and individuals including residents, Members, external consultant, Accord, LBs Hackney & Waltham Forest, the greater London Authority and London Community Recycling Network.
- 11.2 Where the agreed recommendations involve changes to service delivery or policy, consultation will be conducted as appropriate.

12. Background

- 12.1 The Scrutiny Review was commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of its 2007/8 work programme. The Committee agreed the following terms of reference:
- To make recommendations for improving the design of the new contract to determine the specification, the range, the provision and the collection methodologies, including benchmarking with other authorities to consider best practice, and to ensure that the new contract is fit for purpose and provides value for money.
 - To explore new and transferable initiatives including the approach, cost and consultation/communication used by other authorities which are not currently used by Haringey and which may help to inform the delivery of services to meet local needs.
 - To meet the objective of increasing the amount of household waste recycled and composted in Haringey to 35% by 2010, and to increase the amount of household waste recycled and composted in Haringey to 45% by 2015 of which 10% should be composted, taking account of any key issues arising relating to health and safety for the waste management and recycling service.
 - To investigate the possibilities for increasing business participation in recycling, including through working in partnership and contractual arrangements with local businesses
 - To consider communication methods aimed at raising awareness and providing advice to residents on waste minimisation and recycling, and to ensure education about the environment is taking place for our young people.
 - To consider ways in which to improve resident satisfaction of Haringey's waste, recycling and composting services, including by talking to residents and other authorities.

13. Conclusion

13.1 This scrutiny review has provided a valuable examination of the current arrangements for waste collection and recycling. Through this scrutiny review there has been an opportunity to;

- consider how services are currently set up to deliver the outcomes and targets required by the Council;
- think about what the future challenges are for these services, both in a national and local context;
- inform the design and specification of the contract that will replace the Integrated Waste Management and Transport Contract; and
- consider the future for the policies and strategies around waste as a resource and the emerging focus on CO2 and climate change, especially through the new Waste Strategy 2007 for England and the new National Indicator set.

14. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

Appendix A, Table of responses to recommendations of Scrutiny Review of Flytipping including SMART action plan.