

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>4 December, 2012</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Waste Strategy</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>Progress Report as requested by the Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Coun. W Gareth Roberts</b>

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Council's Waste Strategy for the 2010 to 2025 period, was adopted by the Council in its meeting of 21 January, 2010. See the Appendix.
- 1.2 This Report is for the purpose of providing the Scrutiny Committee with a brief update on the Waste Strategy and, in- particular, to provide a response to the following questions:

## **2. RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **A What have been the major successes for the Waste Strategy to date?**

The Waste Strategy adopted by the Council includes an Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan contains 12 steps/developments which need to be carried out in order to achieve the Waste Strategy during the 15 years under consideration. Re: steps 6.1.1 to 6.1.12 in the Appendix.

The following is a concise update relevant to these steps.

**6.1.1 Rationalisation of Collection Routes in the Arfon Area** – has been implemented.

**6.1.2 Review Commercial Waste** – has been implemented with provision for the collection of recycling materials, food, glass and residual waste for 2200 clients. Differential fee charging to be adopted by the Council for the 2013/14 year.

**6.1.3 Provide Additional Recycling Centres** – has been implemented with new centres at Dolgellau and Blaenau Ffestiniog. Recycling levels at the centres has increased from 63% to 69.42% (September 2012).

**6.1.4 Provide Material Recovery Facility to the south of the County** – the Coed Ffridd Arw, Dolgellau site currently being used, planning consent obtained to adopt the site for the purpose, construction to start soon.

**6.1.5 Adaptations to the Caergylchu Material Recovery Facility** – some adaptations already implemented, the fleet workshop has been re-located in order to provide room for the expansion of Caergylchu. Currently out to tender for the necessary work. Adaptations to start early 2013.

**6.1.6 Expand Recyclates Collection (blue box) to include other materials** – markets have by now been established for the purpose and awaiting adaptations to Caergylchu (see 6.1.5 above). It is intended to expand collections to include poor quality (grade) plastic containers and tetrapaks in the new year.

**6.1.7 Reduce to size of the residual waste receptacle** – awaiting the consultant's findings on the possible options (December 2012). The consultant has been commissioned by the Welsh Government as part of the Collaborative Change Programme. The matter will need the Council's approval during the next few months and in order for it to be implemented in 2013/14.

**6.1.8 Other Measures Required to Increase Recycling and Composting (2012-2017)** – educational campaigns and raising awareness continues, programme being implemented for the purpose of changing community collection points, alterations to waste collection routes on-going and continuing. Street recycling bins being provided when opportunities arise/grant funding available.

**6.1.9 Treatment of Food Waste (GwryiAD Project)** – have commissioned Biogen to provide an Anaerobic Digester at Llwyn Isaf, Clynnog. Gwynedd Council is the first in Wales (and Britain) to complete the agreement (contract) for the purpose. Construction work has already started and programmed to be operational August/September 2013.

**6.1.10 Collecting Food Waste Weekly** – is operational throughout the County with arrangements continuing to provide the service at specific sites e.g. clusters of flats etc.

**6.1.11 Treatment of Residual Waste (North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Project (2016-2017 onwards))** – Gwynedd is in partnership with Conwy, Anglesey, Denbigh and Flint. A site at Shotton, Flint being considered for the purpose.

**6.1.12 Reducing our Dependency on Landfill (2010 - 2025)** – Llwyn Isaf Landfill Site closed earlier than programmed (2012), the future of the Ffridd Rasmus Landfill Site being considered earlier than programmed. Capping and safeguarding of the Cilgwyn Landfill Site currently being carried out and to be completed this financial year.

**From the above, it can be seen that there has been, to date, significant progress with regards the Implementation Plan. The Council during this period has avoided paying any Landfill Allowance infraction fines. Gwynedd Council was amidst 12 Local Authorities that achieved the Welsh Government recycling/composting target of 40% in 2009/10. (10 Welsh Local Authorities did not achieve this target). Gwynedd Council's success in developing Project GwryiAD has received acclaim and national recognition.**

**The Scrutiny Committee should note that the Waste Strategy is long term and this Council has much more to achieve in order for it to be successfully delivered.**

Gwynedd's Re-use/Recycling/Composting figures (to September 2012) are as follows:

	(Total Q1 and Q2)	Q2 Only
Re-use:	4.13%	4.17%
Recycling:	24.13%	24.68%
Composting:	21.85%	23.01%
Total:	50.16%	51.86%

(52% has to be achieved by 31 March, 2013)

Percentages of Municipal Waste sent to landfill: 46.2% (September 2012).

Since introducing changes to the Commercial Waste Collection Service, recycling/composting levels have increased from 11% to 25.11% (September 2012).

**B The WMT/004 Indicator shows a comparative decline in Gwynedd's performance between 2007/08 and 2011/12. What in your opinion are the reasons for this, and what steps have been taken to resolve this and what is the forecast for the remaining period of the Strategy?**

The following are actual figures for WTM/004 'Percentage of Municipal Waste sent to landfill' for the years being considered:

Year	Landfilled (t)*	% Landfilled (WTM/004)*
2007/08	54477	66.20%
2008/09	50448	63.10%
2009/10	45734	56.90%
2010/11	41978	54.00%
2011/12	39582	51.80%

\*The above figures are from the Waste Data Flow which is a statutory measure required by the Welsh Government/Environment Agency.

The above figures do not show a decline. The question probably relates to Gwynedd's ranking compared to others with regards this indicator i.e. Gwynedd has slipped from 14<sup>th</sup> position (out of 22 authorities) to 20<sup>th</sup> position during the period. This confirms our continued over-dependency on landfill. The September 2012 figure of 46.2% suggests that Gwynedd will probably improve on its comparative position in the 2012/13 year.

**C It appears that the total waste collected between 2017 and 2012 has reduced by 5195 tonnes, however, the total going to landfill has increased by 3879 tonnes. What in your opinion are the reasons for this?**

The question is not on a sound basis. There was an actual reduction of 6103 tonnes of total waste arising with a reduction of 14895 tonnes disposed by landfill during this period.

**CH What is the difference between our arrangements and other similar authorities? What lessons can be learnt from other authority good practice?**

Gwynedd Council's waste collection arrangements accord with the Welsh Government's 'blueprint' for good practice. A number of Welsh Authorities have opted for a co-mingled recycling collection service instead of the 'kerbside' sort system developed and established here in Gwynedd. These authorities now face the possibility of having to change their arrangements in order to meet Welsh Government and European Union requirements.

Officers involved in implementing the Welsh Strategy regularly meet (by means of several specific task teams) and examples of other authority's best practice (as well as failures) are discussed and considered as part of each Task Team meeting agenda. We closely follow developments in other counties and there are regular examples of the sharing of good practice and ideas in the numerous professional and technical meetings held e.g. W.L.G.A, CSS Wales, Cylch, WAW, WG, regional partnership projects etc. Gwynedd Council has been highly commended and deemed to be the best in Wales for having a very detailed and planned long term waste strategy and for its long term financial evaluation and planning of the strategy.

**D Explain what work had been undertaken to consult with residents regarding implementing the strategy in order to have an effect on their behaviour and to ensure an improvement in terms of our targets?**

The number and range of campaign carried out, and being currently undertaken, is extensive. Therefore to summarize, there are specific campaigns and raising awareness exercises being carried out at schools, for students (with the University of Bangor), residents from 'door to door' – this is currently being targeted in order to improve participation in weekly food collection, communities, businesses (commercial waste service), voluntary sector-including collaborative working and partnerships, events, collaborative campaigns with others etc. Regular publicity is programmed and arranged with the Council's Communications Unit.

**DD Indicate any restrictions or other problems encountered and how you dealt with them.**

Numerous problems have arisen and have been addressed e.g. there was a delay in the purchasing of essential vehicles (due to procurement requirements) which caused a 7 month slippage to the weekly food waste collection and commercial waste collection programmes. This has had an effect in terms of reaching this year 40% recycling/composting (local) target for commercial waste. With the 7 month delay in introducing the new service, it is likely that commercial waste recycling levels will be in the order of 30% this year.

It is apparent that Gwynedd's residents continue to be over-dependant (or over-use) the residual (green) bin (or 3 black sacks) and are slow in changing their practices in recycling more. The Council has to take action in this respect (see step 6.1.7 of the Appendix).

There are significant campaigns being undertaken currently to improve food waste collection performance. Despite there being a monthly increase in what is being collected, residents are slow in fully using the new service. We have experience of having a 'lag' (usually 6 months) between the introduction of a new service or provision to facilitate recycling and when residents (and businesses) regularly use the service.

**E What would be the consequence of not achieving the targets?**

This has been explained in Part 10 of the Appendix.

**3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 The information in this Report is for the purpose of providing a concise update on the Waste Strategy and in order to answer the questions raised. As the relevant Cabinet Member, I shall (as well as the Head of Highways and Municipal) be available to elaborate on the issues reported at the Scrutiny Committee if required.