

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 June 2023

Report Title	Briefing Paper - West Northamptonshire - Resource and Waste Strategy
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1. Purpose of Resource and Waste Strategy

West Northamptonshire Council has the statutory duties of both a Waste Collection Authority and a Waste Disposal Authority and since vesting day has fulfilled these duties by continuing the waste services arrangements from the four predecessor authorities. The contractual arrangements that are in place will continue until their natural expiry, which will happen as each contract ends over the next 5 years (until 2028).

To inform the decisions taken about the services which will replace the current arrangements, we need a vision for the waste services provided by West Northamptonshire. The Resources and Waste Strategy will be the long-term vision, with an accompanying action plan.

2. Work to Date

After discussions with Cabinet and Scrutiny, a Members Working Group was established in Autumn 2022. The Group includes members representing all 3 geographic areas and all political parties and has an agreed terms of reference. The purpose of the working group is to steer the development of the waste strategy. The group does not have delegated authority, but instead group provides updates to EPB and Scrutiny and any decisions regarding the strategy will be taken in a formal Cabinet meeting.

There have been four themed workshops with the member working group:

- Purpose and scope of the waste strategy. Priorities for Waste Services.
- Waste Collection services, both at the kerbside and Household Waste Recycling Centres. Best Performing Authorities.
- Current Waste Infrastructure & opportunities to develop new infrastructure.
- Residual waste collection options, and review of draft vision.

There have also been officer workshops involving other service areas across the Council, to ensure that the Waste Strategy coordinates and supports other council strategies, which may be in development, or already adopted.

3. Draft Vision

A vision has been drafted which reflects the discussions with the Members Working Group, and the draft vision has been shared with the working group to check their agreement.

The vision will be presented in an interactive and visual way, with icons for the 10 key themes, which can be clicked for more information. The 10 key themes are:

- i. Harmonised Waste Services, with all householders receiving an equivalent service, recognising that it will need to be tailored to take account of housing type, family size, etc.
- ii. Prioritise waste services in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy.
- iii. Support waste prevention by supporting local initiatives and increasing the amount of waste education activity we carry out – for all of our residents.
- iv. High Performing Services – setting realistic but ambitious targets.
- v. Value for money, efficient services, maximising income opportunities.
- vi. One service delivery method to achieve economies of scale.
- vii. Investment in infrastructure, developing business cases to inform final decisions.
- viii. Consider carbon emissions related to any changes to waste services.
- ix. Improve street cleansing standards by working better with partners.
- x. Coordinate with other WN Council Strategies.

4. Draft Consultation

It is proposed to consult with stakeholders (residents, members, neighbouring authorities, etc) to find out their views on the draft vision. The consultation will involve approx. 20 questions focused on the parts of the vision that residents are most likely to be interested in:

- Kerbside collection
- Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Street Cleansing
- Value for Money

Specific questions about possible changes to waste services will be included, which we recognise residents may potentially have strong opinions about. For example:

- There are benefits if we restrict residual waste capacity, either by reducing frequency of collection to 3 weekly, or by reducing the residual waste bin size. We plan to ask residents which their preference would be.
- There are benefits if we introduce some controls at the Household Waste Recycling Centres, which may result in reduced costs, or reduced queues. We plan to ask residents their opinions on booking in advance, or a using a resident's only permit system.

The consultation is planned to commence at the end of June and run for approximately 8 weeks during the summer, to allow everyone an opportunity to respond, even if they are away for summer holidays. The results from the consultation will be used to help refine and share the resource and waste strategy.

5. Next Steps

- Consult with residents on the draft vision during July & August.
- Refine the vision and draft the strategy
- Develop an action plan
- Ask Cabinet to consider and agree the strategy at its October meeting.
- Commence procurement of key contracts.

As noted earlier, the resources and waste strategy will provide the vision and direction for replacement services, as current contracts end. There are 2 key contracts due to expire in March 2025. One is for the treatment of residual waste, one is for the Household Waste Recycling Centre Service. Each of these contracts is complex and high value and will require an 18 month procurement and mobilisation period. Therefore, at the October meeting, Cabinet will also be asked to agree that procurement of these contracts can commence.