

**Executive response to the Final Report of the Environment  
Select Committee Waste Task Group**

**Purpose**

1. To present the response of the Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property and Waste to the [Final Report of the Waste Task Group](#) (link to pdf). The task group's report was endorsed by the Committee on 14 April 2015 and referred to the Cabinet member for response.

**Background**

2. On 28 October 2014 the Environment Select Committee agreed that communications to householders regarding waste and recycling was a work priority and resolved to reconvene the Waste Task Group to review this area.

This priority relates to the following aspiration in the council's Business Plan 2013-17:

"We will increase recycling and reduce our carbon footprint – we will encourage waste prevention and re-use and reduce the carbon footprint of our buildings, fleet and street lighting and support our staff and schools to become more carbon efficient."

3. The task group adopted the following terms of reference:
  - (a) To investigate how improved communications with householders on the council's waste services may facilitate an improved rate of recycling (including garden waste);
  - (b) To investigate how to increase the awareness of the range of services and resources available to assist in achieving improved recycling rates; with clear information on how to access the available resources and services.
4. The task group met on four occasions between January and March 2015 with the following membership:
  - Cllr Pat Aves
  - Cllr Rosemary Brown
  - Cllr Peter Evans
  - Cllr Mollie Groom
  - Cllr Jose Green (Chairman)
  - Cllr Jacqui Lay
5. On 14 April 2015, the task group's final report was considered by the Committee and it was resolved:

- (1) To endorse the following recommendations and refer the report to the Cabinet member for response at the next meeting.

Executive response to recommendations:

**1. Alongside the environmental benefits, considers promoting the financial benefits of reducing, reusing and recycling in council communications about waste and recycling.**

Work will be done on this following the implementation of the new garden waste service, the change in operating hours at the household recycling centres and the completion of the current procurement process.

**2. Considers illustrating Wiltshire's recycling performance in an engaging graphic form on the council website and at HRCs.**

The waste management service works closely with the web team and again will consider this following implementation of the service changes referred to previously.

**3. In terms of kerbside collections, indicates how the following areas will be addressed:**

- Ensuring clarity around which plastics are recyclable and can be placed in the blue-lidded bins to avoid contamination;
- Ensuring clarity around what recyclables can be placed in the black box;
- Promotion of the council's offer of a second blue-lidded bin and black box at no additional charge to residents;
- Early information that plastics other than bottles will be kerbside recycled from 2017 as part of new waste contract.

Current communications strategies are focussing on the new garden waste service and the change to opening hours at the household recycling centres. Future strategies could focus on improvement of the collection of dry recyclables, subject to availability of budget. There will be a comprehensive communications strategy relating to any changes to the collection service arising from the commencement of new contract arrangements in 2017.

**4. Investigates whether decals (stickers) applied to bins are a cost-effective method of communicating waste collection arrangements and good recycling practices.**

This will be researched in connection with the work referred to above on promoting the collection of dry recyclables.

**5. Indicates how changes to garden waste collection arrangements will be:**

- Effectively communicated to residents; and
- Used as an opportunity to provide information about alternative options for garden waste, for example, good garden practice, composting, household recycling centres and the safe and legal use of bonfires.

There is a comprehensive communications strategy in place for communicating the changes to garden waste collections. Its success has been evidenced by the number of households signing up for the new service which now exceeds 61,000.

**6. Considers increasing communications around successful prosecutions for fly-tipping.**

The Enforcement team works closely with the council's media team to highlight such opportunities. It is an important element of our preventative work.

**7. Indicates how changes to HRC opening hours, their locations and opening hours will be widely communicated to avoid:**

- inconveniencing customers;
- reducing overall recycling rates; and
- increasing incidences of fly-tipping.

There is a comprehensive communications strategy in place.

**8. Provides further details of the recycling promotion work currently undertaken by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust under the joint venture agreement with the council and the implications for recycling of the Trust's business plan review.**

The council has a business plan in place which sets out the objectives that the WWT and the council will work to achieve. The board is chaired by Councillor Wickham, Portfolio Holder for Waste, who is taking a keen interest in the performance of WWT and ensuring that the objectives would be met.

**9. Provides any further details of the initiative being run by Westbury Area Board to develop a toolkit for recycling and composting and how other area boards might be supported to take forward similar initiatives and increase local recycling rates.**

Councillor Wickham is leading this work for Westbury Area Board. Once the toolkit has been produced we will ensure that it is communicated to all councillors and Community Area Managers.

**10. Notes the task group's comments on the waste and recycling pages of the council website and the improvements being made in the redesign.**

The comments are noted. The waste management service will continue to work closely with the web team to develop the information available to residents.

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**Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning (Strategic and Development Management), Property, Waste and Strategic Housing**