

Scrutiny Report



Waste Disposal and Recycling

**Report of the Environment Scrutiny Panel
April 2005**

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Chairman's Foreword

We would all like a job where what we did made a real difference to the environment, making it a better place now and for future generations; where we were valued, rewarded and appreciated for our hard work and advice; and where we could contribute effectively to those in need.

This report describes how we came across people who actually had such a job, working in Gloucestershire (paras 7.8-7.24) and how Worcestershire and Herefordshire could benefit from the evident best practice.

We also explore waste management in Worcestershire generally, as well as other ways of improving domestic recycling from a County and District perspective, which have resulted in some clear conclusions and practical recommendations.

Worcestershire is a two-tier authority, which brings added complications to waste management. The County Council is the Waste Disposal Authority whilst the Districts are the Waste Collection Authority. Each depends on the other to achieve targets set by the government. We hope that the recommendations contained in this report, coupled with improvements already planned by the Directorate, will contribute to the development of more successful recycling programmes throughout the County, building on the much good work already undertaken.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the scrutiny, in particular, Pete Browne, Head of Waste and Passenger Transport Manager, for his enthusiasm, commitment and clear information. Also, staff from the Waste Management Team, representatives from the six Districts in Worcestershire, and our Waste Contractors for their provision of information and constructive comments during various visits and meetings over the last couple of months.

I would also like to thank the Officers from Gloucestershire County Council who provided us with an insight into how an excellent Household Waste Centre is managed.

Finally, I am grateful to the members of the Scrutiny Panel Task Group and the scrutiny team for their commitment and hard work on this exercise.

Peter Fallows

Chairman, Environment Scrutiny Panel

Environment Scrutiny Panel

Recycling and Waste Disposal Scrutiny

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We agreed at the outset that a positive outcome for the scrutiny would be to:

- Contribute to improved levels of domestic recycling.
- Aid the public understanding of the implications of not meeting recycling targets and exceeding government landfill quotas
- Clarify County Councillors' understanding of current and future recycling arrangements within the County.
- Ensure that all councillors (county or district) deliver a clear message to the public on recycling.

Waste management is a wide-ranging complex area where contractual arrangements need flexibility to allow for changing government targets and penalties as well as changing technology.

Key Findings

We must increase our recycling whilst reducing the amount of waste going to landfill sites to avoid potentially £10s of millions in penalties.

Education, publicity campaigns and consideration of value for money of various recycling schemes are all important. **We conclude however, that a cultural change in the management and operation of Household Recycling Centres could significantly increase recycling rates.**

Government targets

The Scrutiny Panel found during its discussions that Government recycling targets were regrettably sometimes the only aim, without regard to value for money. For instance the Cotswolds had already achieved 20% recycling, but, to increase recycling to meet targets, it would have to start collecting green waste, which was expensive and not necessarily best value for money. **Clearly, the aim is to produce less waste rather than simply hit a recycling target, and we urge the Cabinet Member to ensure this focus is maintained. This may require a change of heart by the Government but we are firmly of the opinion that mere target chasing is wrong.**

Sink Macerators

Further research into the benefits and effects of sink macerators (food waste disposal units) on the waste stream could also have very positive results.

Bi-weekly collections

Experience in areas where bi-weekly collections have been introduced show that after an initial furore, normality returns as the routine is established. The benefit is that the amount of waste collected is reduced and the level of recycling is increased.

Recommendations

1. **We recommend that the County Council makes it clear to districts, through the Joint Waste Members Forum, the basis on which grants to fund recycling schemes are made (paragraph 5.6).**
2. **We believe that the most important factors in achieving this change in ethos are the quality of people doing the job, an effective management structure, the quality of staff training and a staff incentive scheme (paragraph 7.19).**
3. **We recommend that Worcestershire County Council Waste Management Officers begin urgent negotiations with its current contractor, to discuss possible, mutually beneficial changes to the contract, to emulate best practice elsewhere, which should result in improved performance in Worcestershire's HRCs (paragraph 7.22).**
4. **We further recommend that in Autumn 2005, Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel monitor the outcomes of this report, initially by visiting the pilot HRCs in the County, to review progress on improved signage and the level of welcome and information provided by staff at HRC sites (paragraph 7.23).**
5. **We recommend that the Environmental Services Directorate work with the Directors of Focsa and Urbaser (UK) to prepare a report for the relevant Scrutiny Panel which should include progress on the following (paragraph 7.24):**
 - **whether visits to Wingmoor HRC have taken place to share good practice;**
 - **how supervision is managed both at a strategic level and on the HRC sites;**
 - **evidence of how it is intended to attract suitable staff (or re-train existing staff) for jobs at Household Recycling Sites, including for example, details of recruitment adverts and revised job descriptions for recycling site supervisors and staff;**
 - **details of training provided to HRC staff at the Hill and Moor training facility (ie the number of hours provided and examples of the type of training and subject material) and whether this results in accredited qualifications such as NVQs;**
 - **evidence of consideration (or pilot) for the introduction of a staff bonus scheme based on increased levels of recycling at sites; and**
 - **review how items suitable for reuse are sold and consider donating a percentage of the proceeds to a Charity.**
6. **The Scrutiny Panel recommend that the County Council enters into discussions with Severn Trent on CIWEM's research and explore the possibility with Redditch Borough Council to investigate further the implications of the installation of sink macerators (paragraph 8.7).**

7. **We recommend that this Council lobby the government seeking an urgent change in the classification of Charity Shop waste from commercial to household rates (paragraph 8.17).**
8. **We recommend the Waste Management Unit investigate the feasibility of offering residents increased capacity composting bins (paragraph 8.19).**
9. **We recommend that the feasibility and cost effectiveness of installing paper recycling banks in Schools, as a first step, be investigated further, initially by the Environment and Educational Services Directorates and the Joint Waste Members Forum (paragraph 9.3).**
10. **We recommend that the Joint Members Waste Forum consider how school waste in the County should be classified. (paragraph 9.4).**
11. **We recommend that the Council's Waste Management Unit adopt a holistic approach as the basis for future campaigns to ensure the public are informed about the full range of options and accessories to aid retention and recycling of municipal waste. Further information on the cost to individual residents should government targets not be met, should also be made clear. Agreement should be sought from our Strategic Waste Partners on a whole county approach to publicity campaigns to increase recycling (paragraph 9.5).**

Environment Scrutiny Panel

WASTE DISPOSAL & RECYCLING

Scrutiny Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Some 400 million tonnes of waste are produced in the UK each year, a quarter of which is from households, commerce and industry. In Herefordshire and Worcestershire more than 417,000 tonnes of municipal waste, was produced in 2003/4. Nationally, municipal waste has been increasing at some 3 - 4% per annum. If municipal waste continues to increase at this rate it will have doubled from the 1995 level by 2020.¹
- 1.2 The Government has set all authorities challenging targets for recycling and composting. They have also allocated landfill allowances to each waste disposal authority, and penalties for exceeding those allowances.
- 1.3 It is clearly imperative for the County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority, and the District Councils as the Waste Collection Authorities, to work together to reduce the amount of waste produced and increase the amount recycled and composted in order to meet these targets. A joint strategy has been agreed which will require investment from all partners and considerable capital investments have been made and are continuing by the County Council, for example in Materials Recycling Facilities and Household Waste Sites. The final capital requirement is expected to be around £100 million.
- 1.4 The Environment Scrutiny Panel was keen to examine the costs of waste disposal and recycling, in order to help assess whether the Council should be investing in waste minimisation, in order to spend less on waste disposal and processing. It is also important for the Council and public to understand when recycling is actually reducing the cost of waste disposal and when it is a cost in its own right.
- 1.5 Members were also concerned that the initial enthusiasm for the various recycling schemes across the County might be declining and wanted to explore how participation in recycling schemes could be maintained.
- 1.6 The scrutiny's terms of reference were to examine:
 - Costs and value for money of various recycling schemes operated by District Councils
 - Worcestershire County Council's waste disposal costs and operating practices compared with some best performing County Councils
 - What impact future developments will have on recycling and waste disposal in Worcestershire?

¹ DEFRA website

1.7 Members agreed that a positive outcome for the scrutiny would be to:

- Contribute to improved levels of domestic recycling.
- Aid the public understanding of the implications of not meeting recycling targets and exceeding government landfill quotas.
- Clarify County Councillors' understanding of current and future recycling arrangements within the County.
- Ensure that all councillors (county or district) deliver a clear message to the public on recycling.

2. Joint Municipal Waste Strategy - Integrated Waste Management

2.1 The newly adopted Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy has set out to develop an integrated holistic plan from doorstep to waste disposal and processing across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The proposed waste management system in the strategy can be summarised as follows:

- reduce waste and restrict growth
- re-use waste
- retain waste
- recycle waste
- recovery of value from residual waste
- final disposal.

2.2 The Joint Waste Members Forum is also looking at the possibility of one waste management authority controlling the whole waste operation in the county thus linking collection and disposal.

2.3 The strategy has led to an integrated delivery plan which sets out the recycling/composting contributions from each of the constituent Waste Collection Authorities that, combined with the Waste Management PFI Contract, aims to ensure that targets are met.

2.4 The Scrutiny Panel heard that great interest is being shown in this joint working model, not least by DEFRA, and it is being cited as a model for two-tier local government areas.

3. WCC's recycling and waste disposal targets

3.1 Worcestershire's target is to recycle or compost 30% of household waste by 2005/06. In 2003/4 the target was 20%. Within the overall total, there are individual targets for each waste collection authority, ranging from 10% to 16% in 2003/4 and from 18% to 24% in 2005/6. The Government has strongly encouraged disposal and collection authorities to pool these targets and work together to achieve them.

Contract Year	Year beginning 1 st April	Recycling & Composting (%)	HWS Recycling & Composting (%)	Recovery (incl recycling & composting) (%)	Maximum MSW* to Landfill (%)	Maximum BMW** to Landfill (tonnes)	Notes
1	1999/2000	-	-	-	-	-	* and ** slightly exceed DEFRA statutory allocation
2	2000/01	-	-	-	-	-	
3	2001/02	-	-	-	-	-	
4	2002/03	-	-	-	-	-	
5	2003/04	20%	-	-	-	-	
6	2004/05	23%	-	-	-	-	
7	2005/06	30%	50%	40%	60%	232,007	
8	2006/07	30%	51%	41%	59%	217,443	
9	2007/08	31%	52%	42%	58%	198,023	
10	2008/09	31%	54%	44%	56%	173,748	
11	2009/10	31%	55%	45%	55%	144,619	
12	2010/11	32%	55%	52%	48%	128,550	
13	2011/12	32%	55%	58%	42%	112,482	
14	2012/13	32%	55%	65%	35%	96,413	
15	2013/14	32%	55%	71%	29%	92,281	
16	2014/15	33%	55%	78%	22%	88,149	
17	2015/16	33%	55%	78%	22%	84,017	
18	2016/17	33%	55%	78%	22%	79,885	
19	2017/18	33%	55%	78%	22%	75,753	
20	2018/19	33%	55%	78%	22%	71,621	
21	2019/20	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
22	2020/21	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
23	2021/22	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
24	2022/23	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
25	2023/24	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
26	2024/25	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
27	2025/26	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
28	2026/27	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
29	2027/28	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	
30	2028/29	33%	55%	78%	22%	67,489	

*MSW-Municipal Solid Waste

**BMW-Biodegradable Municipal Waste

Table extracted from the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (November 2004) Table 11 on page 37.

Are we achieving them?

3.2 Overall in Herefordshire & Worcestershire in 2003/04 more than 19% of this waste was recycled or composted, around 3% was sent for energy recovery and the remaining waste was sent to landfill.

3.3 The Council's Waste Management Unit is planning to meet the 30% combined recycling and composting target through partnership working with the Districts and the increasing recycling and composting at Household Waste Sites. Current performance is generally ahead of target, although the kg/head/annum has been adversely affected by increased tonnages arising from the recently introduced Bromsgrove green waste collection service.

What will happen if we don't achieve them?

- 3.4 If we do not achieve the right levels of diversion from landfill we are at risk of exceeding our Landfill Allowance. The government (DEFRA) has stated that the fine for not meeting the Landfill Allowance will be £150 per tonne. It is anticipated that the prospect of this will force authorities to trade surplus capacity. The allowances become less over time, as it is intended that new waste processing facilities will come on stream.
- 3.5 At the present time there is no definitive guide to how much capacity is or will be available on either a national or regional basis, mainly because many authorities are either in similar circumstances to Herefordshire and Worcestershire (in that they have contracts in place but have not yet cleared the planning permission hurdles) or are not so far advanced in contractual terms.
- 3.6 It is believed that over the next 3 to 5 years there will be an overall shortfall in capacity that will drive the price of Landfill Allowances up towards the £150 per tonne level.
- 3.7 Should none of the Fibrecycle™ (see below) processing plants proposed for Herefordshire and Worcestershire have been constructed before 2010 then the potential fine could be in excess of £15 million (100,000 tonnes at £150 a tonne) per annum.

4. District Councils' Recycling Schemes

- 4.1 Members visited the six District Councils to ask about their collection and recycling schemes. The table below shows the type of collection and the amount of waste collected per district.

	No. Households Based on 2002 Figures	Tonnes Municipal Waste Collected 03/04	Methodology
Bromsgrove	36,859	31,085	Green – 240 Litre Wheeled Bin 2 x boxes, 1 for paper, textiles, 1 for cans, glass, plastic
Malvern Hills	31,169	23,017	Sacks 1 x purple paper and textiles 1 x cans and plastics
Redditch	33,159	33,133	2 x boxes 1 for paper and textiles 1 for cans and glass
*Worcester City	40,677	34,227	Sacks 1 x purple paper and textiles 1 x cans and plastic
Wychavon	48,437	42,906	Sacks 1 x purple paper and textiles 1 x cans and plastic
Wyre Forest	41,758	37,729	2 x boxes 1 for paper and textiles 1 for glass, cans and plastic

**Note: Worcester City are planning to change to wheeled bin collection method on a Bi-weekly basis for approx 13,000 properties from October 2005, then in October 2006 an additional 13,000 properties will be added, with the remainder being introduced by October 2007. (Size of bin to be confirmed)*

4.2 The percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been recycled (BVPI 82a) and composted (BVPI 82b) in 2003/04 are shown in the table at Appendix 1 (hard copy only available).² These range from 10.88% in Bromsgrove to 17.2% in Wychavon.

5. Costs and Value for money

5.1 Members asked Districts for their unit costs of collection. The cost of waste collection per household (BVPI no 86) shows that in 2003/04 costs ranged from £25.81 per household in Worcester City, to £38.47 in Wychavon (see Appendix 1).

5.2 We asked what the total costs were for waste collection in districts. Wyre Forest was the only District that provided a figure, which was £1.37m for the period 2003/04 and estimated at about £1.65m for 2004/05.

² From the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire 2004 - 2034

- 5.3 The cost of Waste Disposal in Worcestershire for 2003/04 is £49.14 per tonne (BVPI87).
- 5.4 The Scrutiny Panel found during its discussions that Government recycling targets were regrettably sometimes the only aim, without regard to value for money. For instance the Cotswolds had already achieved 20% recycling, but, to increase recycling to meet targets, it would have to start collecting green waste, which was expensive and not necessarily best value for money. **Clearly, the aim is to produce less waste rather than simply hit a recycling target, and we urge the Cabinet Member to ensure this focus is maintained. This may require a change of heart by the Government but we are firmly of the opinion that mere target chasing is wrong.**
- 5.5 Malvern Hills District Council had made the issue of recycling one of its top priorities. During a recent review, they had, for example, analysed a number of options and concluded that bring banks for glass, collected by an independent contractor was the most economic solution. Malvern's focus on economic viability was reflected in the overall cost of collection per person, £14.09, compared to Wychavon's £17.87. Wychavon's proposal for a kerbside glass collection scheme was comparatively expensive (£175 per tonne), compared to collection costs in other Districts. It was suggested that savings from introducing a bi weekly (rather than weekly) collection might pay for such schemes.
- 5.6 When considering funding such schemes, the County Council must consider value for money compared to schemes put forward by other districts, and choose the most cost effective schemes in the county, rather than award funds equally between districts. **We recommend that the County Council makes it clear to districts, through the Joint Waste Members Forum, the basis on which grants to fund recycling schemes are made.**

6. Estech plants

- 6.1 The proposed new Estech Fibrecycle™ plants can recycle between 40% and 90% of the residual (black bag) waste collected. Currently 10-15% of "source separated" recycled waste has to be rejected as not being suitable for recycling. The table below shows the output performance from the Contract once the three Fibrecycle™ plants and remaining capital works are operational.

	Original Output	Intended Output
Recycling	26.5%	≥ 56%
Diversion from Landfill	52.5%	≥ 78%

- 6.2 The Fibrecycle process operates by utilising steam treatment technology to convert all municipal solid waste into sanitised secondary recyclates (eg metals and plastics), recyclable organic fibre and sanitised residual waste for landfill. Members asked whether they would therefore supersede the need for recycling in the future. It was explained that three plants would be able to handle 300,000 tonnes of waste. In 2003/04 Herefordshire and

Worcestershire produced over 400,000 tonnes of municipal waste so there would still be a need to deal with the remainder.

- 6.3 The proposed Estech plants are therefore vital to helping Worcestershire County Council achieve its targets on diversion of biological waste from landfill and avoid being penalised under the new scheme. If their development slips by more than a year the Council would exceed its landfill allowance.
- 6.4 Negotiations are continuing to enable construction of the first plant to be completed and become operational in 2006, (subject to planning approval) with the subsequent plants programmed for operation in 2009 and 2013, (the latter dependent on waste growth).
- 6.5 Estech Europe were granted planning permission for their first 100,000 tonne per annum plant at Madley in Herefordshire (Herefordshire Planning Reference: SW/03/3281/N 6 April 2004), although this is currently subject to an application for Judicial Review. On 18 February 2005, the High Court judge ruled that the council had given proper consideration to alternative sites. However the judge ruled in favour of Herefordshire Waste Watchers in respect of the claim that further environmental information should have been made available prior to planning permission being granted.
- 6.6 Europe's second application for a Fibrecycle™ plant at Hartlebury Industrial Estate was granted planning permission on 3 February 2005 following the Worcestershire's Planning Committee on 14 December. There is a three-month period until 3 May during which applications for Judicial Review can be made. Estech Europe is also undertaking negotiations for a third plant elsewhere in Worcestershire with the further goal of a planning application in July 2005.

7. Mercia Waste Management Ltd Contract

- 7.1 The Worcestershire and Herefordshire Waste PFI contract was let on 1 January 1998 with a recycling target of 26.5% and a diversion from landfill target of 52.5%. It was predominantly based around a waste to energy facility for which planning permission was subsequently not obtained. A "standstill agreement" has been in place since March 2002 whilst alternative technologies and ways forward have been explored.
- 7.2 The final capital requirement is expected to be significantly in excess of the sum originally anticipated when the PFI contract was signed as shown in the table below (approximate costs):

Original planned Capital Expenditure	Revised Capital Expenditure (Estimated)	Capital Expenditure on Assets to date
£60m	£100m	£22m

- 7.3 Although the proposed Estech plants require more capital in the initial stages than the previously planned waste to energy plant, they have lower running costs and will probably cost around the same in the long term.

Extra capital is also required to purchase the land for the Estech plants and for upgrading and refurbishing Household Recycling Centres.

- 7.4 This investment will enable the Councils to meet the latest government targets that are being adopted as part of the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy.
- 7.5 Worcestershire County Council has set the Contractor, Mercia Waste Management Ltd, a target to recycle 50% at household waste sites in 2005/6. Negotiations have continued with Mercia and latterly with their proposed sub-contractor, Estech Europe Limited to develop a commercial solution that will enable the statutory targets for recycling and diversion (which are much higher than required in the original contract) to be fulfilled.
- 7.6 Members noted that the interim standstill contract has been well managed, but were concerned about the actual achievement of the recycling and composting targets.
- 7.7 The Scrutiny Panel spoke to the Directors of the County's waste contractors, Tony Adamson, Operations Director (Focsa) and Luis De La Parte (Director of Urbaser) to discuss the costs and business problems of recycling. They noted that the original contract reflected the thinking at the time, which required the introduction of split level access and refurbishment of HRC sites. Since then the drivers for waste management had changed and new government targets have increased recycling targets dramatically.

Household Waste Sites

- 7.8 The Scrutiny Panel visited Wingmoor Farm Household Recycling Centre (HRC) Gloucestershire, and found that 79% of incoming waste was recycled annually. In comparison, Malvern (Newlands) HRC had recycled about 38% in the last month and 50% on a rolling 12-month basis.
- 7.9 The contract in Gloucestershire for the operation and management was awarded to Cory Environmental in 2002. A 200% increase in recycling has taken place and it now has the second highest recycling rate of any HRC in the country. This has been achieved by having a management structure in place on the site and by:

Staff Improvements

- Staff are called recycling advisors and receive additional training on recycling.
- Staff are highly motivated and receive rewards and incentives, aligned to recycling objectives.
- Staff are valued for providing a first class recycling service and go out or their way to greet new recyclers and help initially in showing visitors what goes where and advise on general recycling.
- Items suitable for reuse are sold off site (117 tonnes last year) a percentage of the proceeds are donated to the Charity 'CLIC' (Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood). This provided another 'feel good' incentive for staff to retrieve saleable items.

Improved Environment

- Large clear signs on each depository, showing what type of material should be deposited and an explanation of what happens to it. For example the sign on the clothing bank stated that all clothing would be donated to the Salvation Army, the sign on the Non-recyclable container stated that 'Everything in this container will go to Landfill – please recycle'.
 - Clean smooth road surface, clearly marked plus corporate colours on containers where possible.
 - The signs at Malvern were less clear and had negative rather than positive messages. Although staff were helpful to people with large items, there was no staff incentive scheme or motivation to encourage greater use of recycling facility.
- 7.10 The Scrutiny Panel also heard that the best performing HRC site in the country, in Dorset, is managed by a recycling enthusiast, rather than a contractor. We were impressed that the enthusiasm, and commitment of staff at HRCs, as well as how they welcome visitors, appears to lead to increases in recycling levels.
- 7.11 Members asked Worcestershire's waste contractors whether there were any plans to emulate such best practice on Worcestershire's HRC sites. They highlighted the 2003 National Association of Civic Amenity Sites (NACAS) study, which set out best practice for the industry.
- 7.12 They explained that a number of factors affected levels of recycling when comparing HRC sites, for example:
- the NACAS best practice report shows that very busy sites in densely populated areas generally achieve a lower overall rate of recycling than those in more rural locations, especially where the catchment area is made up of those who may be well educated and environmentally aware;
 - levels of recycling are affected by changes in collection frequency. It is well known for instance that bi-weekly collections (instead of weekly) will decrease the overall amount of waste, and increase levels of recycling;
 - the location of the HRC site; and
 - the number of local or national publicity campaigns.
- 7.13 The contractors described how the role of HRC staff traditionally was to open and lock up, clean the site, answer the phone and do other administration, meet visiting officers, and help people with bulky items. They acknowledged that a complete change of emphasis was needed, so that greeting, encouraging and advising on recycling, became a main focus of the job.
- 7.14 Since October 2004, the contractor has initiated 2 pilots at HRCs in Redditch and Bilford Road, Worcester, which aim to:
- increase the number of staff to help recyclers;
 - increase training so that staff are aware of what happens to recycled material;

- extend the range of recycling depositories to include wood and aluminium; and
 - introduce clearer and additional signage.
- 7.15 If the pilot is successful and cost effective, it will be rolled out across other HRCs in the County.
- 7.16 We welcome this development, especially as there are positive early indications that recycling levels are increasing on these sites. However, Members were aware of some concerns about the Redditch HRC, which still was not particularly welcoming despite the increased number of staff at this pilot site.
- 7.17 The contractors advised that they have considered staff incentive schemes but are finding it difficult to set up a system fair to all employees across the county. They also suggested that if you pay a decent wage and provide good working conditions, then an operative should do that job effectively without bonuses and incentives. Finally they noted that the wide number of factors which influence recycling levels at HRC sites can make it difficult to link recycling targets to staff bonus schemes.
- 7.18 We accept that many factors can influence recycling levels at HRC sites. However, it is clear that at Gloucestershire's Wingmoor HRC, the 200% increase in recycling achieved was not as a result of any of these factors, because the site location, density of the population, the standard of education within its catchment area, and frequency of waste collection had not changed significantly.
- 7.19 We conclude that the success at Wingmoor was achieved because new and existing staff now believe in what they were doing and are highly motivated. **We believe that the most important factors in achieving this change in ethos are the quality of people doing the job, an effective management structure, the quality of staff training and a staff incentive scheme.**
- 7.20 Following our discussions with the contractors we are still not clear exactly how the cultural change in Worcestershire will take place. We are uncertain as to how staff supervision will be managed both at a strategic level and on the HRC sites (ie who will manage the culture change, and who will check that visitors are being greeted and informed). Similarly, details of how they intend to attract suitable staff, the content and programme of staff training courses and whether detailed consideration of staff bonus schemes has taken place, needs to be clarified.
- 7.21 We have some reservations that our current contractors, although moving positively in the right direction, have the necessary structure, or detailed programme of actions needed, in place, to implement the necessary culture change in HRC staff.

Findings

- 7.22 We recommend that Worcestershire County Council Waste Management Officers begin urgent negotiations with its current contractor, to discuss possible, mutually beneficial changes to the contract, to emulate best practice elsewhere, which should result in improved performance in Worcestershire's HRCs.**
- 7.23 We further recommend that in Autumn 2005, Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel monitor the outcomes of this report, initially by visiting the pilot HRCs in the County, to review progress on improved signage and the level of welcome and information provided by staff at HRC sites.**
- 7.24 As part of this monitoring process we recommend that the Environmental Services Directorate work with the Directors of Focsa and Urbaser (UK) to prepare a report for the relevant Scrutiny Panel which should include progress on the following:**
- **whether visits to Wingmoor HRC have taken place to share good practice;**
 - **how supervision is managed both at a strategic level and on the HRC sites;**
 - **evidence of how it is intended to attract suitable staff (or re-train existing staff) for jobs at Household Recycling Sites, including for example, details of recruitment adverts and revised job descriptions for recycling site supervisors and staff;**
 - **details of training provided to HRC staff at the Hill and Moor training facility (ie the number of hours provided and examples of the type of training and subject material) and whether this results in accredited qualifications such as NVQs;**
 - **evidence of consideration (or pilot) for the introduction of a staff bonus scheme based on increased levels of recycling at sites; and**
 - **review how items suitable for reuse are sold and consider donating a percentage of the proceeds to a Charity.**

8. Waste Minimisation

- 8.1** There is a need to encourage the public to maintain individual responsibility for the amount of waste created. This can be done in part by encouraging recycling at home; otherwise there is a danger that waste creation could spiral out of control. Authorities which have achieved high recycling rates have ensured that they maximise the number of people recycling whilst minimising the amount of residual waste collected – known as a ‘pressurising the waste stream’.
- 8.2** There are a number of measures which could help minimise waste. Redditch Borough Council’s, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 25 January 2005, put forward a number of options to put pressure on those not yet recycling. These included the following:
- **Fortnightly (instead of weekly) Collections**

- Reduced Bin Capacity
- Compulsory Recycling
- Charging for waste collection

Sink Macerators (Waste Disposal Units)

- 8.3 In Worcestershire, the average amount of waste produced by each person in 2003/04, was 528kg, of which 320kg was collected waste. Kitchen waste amounted to about 29% of the total collected waste and about 15% of total waste per person.
- 8.4 Recent results from an ongoing 23-week, single home trial, have demonstrated that the amount of residual waste produced per person could be reduced by up to 50kg per person per annum (over 70% of the residual waste collected), if people disposed of all kitchen waste via composting or sink macerators (aka sink waste disposal units). If the total amount of residual waste was reduced by this amount, it would be possible to only have two Estech sites for Herefordshire & Worcestershire, rather than three.
- 8.5 Sink macerators cost £100-£400. There has been scepticism of them by municipal waste and wastewater treatment professionals, which means no proper research has been done on their contribution to waste management. However some of their concerns are addressed in a recent Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) report (attached at Appendix 2).
- 8.6 All the Districts were interested in finding out more about sink macerators to reduce the volume of waste coming into the waste stream. Redditch Borough Council was interested in completing a pilot with sink macerators. The Districts agreed that Severn Trent should be involved in early discussions initially with Redditch Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council to investigate further the implications of the installation of sink macerators.
- 8.7 The Scrutiny Panel recommend that the County Council enters into discussions with Severn Trent on CIWEM's research and explore the possibility with Redditch Borough Council to investigate further the implications of the installation of sink macerators.**

Fortnightly (instead of weekly) Collections

- 8.8 Fortnightly collections of residual waste not only pressurise the waste stream but also help to reduce the huge additional costs of running separate recycling rounds.
- 8.9 Locally, both Wyre Forest and Bromsgrove have opted for fortnightly collections of residual waste. Wyre Forest, which has a very similar system of both waste collections and recycling collections to Redditch, has shown that with a move to fortnightly residual refuse collection, recycling tonnages can be increased dramatically.

- 8.10 However, before changes can be made, other local authorities have found that extensive consultation is needed and that residents need to be fully appraised of all the facts and costs around recycling and waste minimisation.

Reduced Bin Capacity

- 8.11 In Redditch, since April 2004, all new properties and replacement bins (in areas with a kerbside collection of recyclables) have been given 180 litre bins, as opposed to the present 240-litre bin (designed to hold about 4 plastic sacks).
- 8.12 Reduced capacity encourages those who previously disposed of garden waste in their bin to take it to the green waste skip at the Household Waste Site.

Compulsory Recycling

- 8.13 Redditch considered that an effective way to increase participation was to make recycling compulsory. Barnet Metropolitan Borough Council was the first authority in the Country to take advantage of the introduction of statutory recycling. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, part 2, section 46, the council can specify the way in which residents should dispose of their rubbish.
- 8.14 This is seen as an example of best practice and Districts should be encouraged to take full advantage of the Environmental Protection Act.

Charging for collections of certain types of waste

- 8.15 Charging for bulky collections of waste pressurises the waste stream by encouraging people to find alternative ways of dealing with unwanted items – such as donating them to charity.
- 8.16 We also asked why charities such as Network Worcestershire, which contribute to recycling by refurbishing and selling white goods and furniture that might otherwise be disposed of at HRCs, were charged large amounts for the collection of items it could not sell or refurbish.
- 8.17 Worcestershire's waste contractors explained that such items are classed as commercial waste and charged accordingly. For example if a carpet fitter left an old carpet for a householder to dispose of, it would be classed as household waste, whereas if a carpet fitter took the old carpet to a waste site, it is classified as commercial waste. As the Network Charity is contributing to reducing the overall tonnage of waste collected and genuinely recycling, like other charity shops, we feel that charging at commercial rates is wrong and **recommend that this Council lobby the government seeking an urgent change in the classification of Charity Shop waste from commercial to household rates.**

Composting

- 8.18 One of the Government's key objectives is to increase the amount of organic material from the municipal waste stream that is composted. Home composting is a good opportunity for the householder to take responsibility for the organic fraction of their waste and provides an effective way of diverting Biodegradable Municipal Waste from landfill.
- 8.19 The Scrutiny Panel considered that free or cheap compost bins are a good idea, although keen composters could find that the current ones available from the County are not large enough. **We recommend the Waste Management Unit investigate the feasibility of offering residents increased capacity composting bins.**
- 8.20 We recommend that the Joint Waste Members Forum consider and continue to promote all aspects of waste minimisation where feasible.

9. Encouraging recycling

Schools

- 9.1 Bromsgrove and Redditch felt strongly that educating the next generation was the key to future success. Education plays an important part in getting the message across and will affect future recycling levels. If children and young people are involved in recycling at school on a regular basis, it is likely this will lead to increased recycling at home. Also, Eco school status should be supported fully by the County to encourage sustainability.
- 9.2 Members agreed that consultation between the Education and Environmental Services Directorate should take place this year on the possible introduction of recycling in schools. Recycling facilities for items not included in kerbside collections, such as aluminium and card could be considered, especially in first schools.
- 9.3 **We recommend that the feasibility and cost effectiveness of installing paper recycling banks in Schools, as a first step, be investigated further, initially by the Environment and Educational Services Directorates and the Joint Waste Members Forum.**
- 9.4 We were advised that school waste has been classed as commercial waste and therefore is not recorded in the tonnage of household waste collected. However, current legislation shows that school waste should be classed as household waste (for which there would be a charge for collection). **We recommend that the Joint Members Waste Forum consider how school waste in the County should be classified.**

Future Campaigns

- 9.5 Clearly, a range of measures is needed to encourage greater public participation in recycling. **We recommend that the Council's Waste Management Unit adopt a holistic approach as the basis for future campaigns to ensure the public are informed about the full range of**

options and accessories to aid retention and recycling of municipal waste. Further information on the cost to individual residents should government targets not be met, should also be made clear. Agreement should be sought from our Strategic Waste Partners on a whole county approach to publicity campaigns to increase recycling.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 We have been through a steep learning curve and hope this report will help other Councillors and the public gain greater understanding of the issues surrounding waste management.
- 10.2 Waste management is a wide-ranging complex area where contractual arrangements need flexibility to allow for changing government targets and penalties as well as changing technology.
- 10.3 Education, publicity campaigns and consideration of value for money of various recycling schemes are all important. The main message is we must increase our recycling to meet these targets whilst reducing the amount of waste going to landfill sites, to avoid potentially £10s of millions in penalties. Providing that the new Estech Fibercycle plants come on line as planned, Worcestershire will be in a better position than many other authorities. **We conclude however that a cultural change in the management and operation of Household Recycling Centres could significantly increase recycling rates.**
- 10.4 There is a lot of good work going on, particularly the development of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, which has led to an integrated delivery plan.
- 10.5 Both Malvern and Wychavon felt that the Districts should be more highly valued as equal partners on the Joint Members Waste Forum. There have been some instances recently when agenda items would be received a couple of days before a meeting, making Districts feel they had little input and were being directed as to what to do. It is clearly vital for all partners to work together effectively.
- 10.6 We are grateful to the District and Borough Councils for supporting and contributing to this strategy which we hope will result in one waste management authority controlling the whole waste operation in the county thus linking collection and disposal.
- 10.7 At the beginning of the report we agreed what would be a positive outcome from this relatively short exercise and are aware that there is much still to do. We hope that the recommendations contained in this report, coupled with work already planned by the Directorate, Waste Contractors and partners in the District Councils, will contribute to the development of more successful recycling programmes throughout the County.

APPENDIX 1

Table 4 2003/2004

see below for BVPI definitions

	BVPI 82a	BVPI 82b	BVPI 82c	BVPI 82d	BVPI 84	BVPI 85	BVPI 86	BVPI 87	BVPI 89	BVPI 90a	BVPI 90c	BVP1 91	BVP1 199
Bromsgrove DC	10.88%	0.04%	N/A	N/A	347kg	nofig	N/A	N/A	81%	71%	N/A	14.12%	34%
Malvern Hills DC	15.27%	0%	N/A	N/A	332kg	£33.09	N/A	69%	84%	67%	N/A	100%	18%
Redditch BC	11.44%	0%	N/A	N/A	405kg	£29.60	N/A	57%	86%	77%	N/A	44%	14%
Worcester City	16.30%	0.04%	N/A	N/A	355kg	£25.81	N/A	56%	89%	77%	N/A	95.20%	34%
Wychavon DC	17.20%	0%	N/A	N/A	411kg	£38.47	N/A	69%	90%	80%	N/A	94%	14%
Wyre Forest DC	12.59%	0%	N/A	N/A	379kg	£37.40	N/A	56%	79%	62%	N/A	84%	28%
Herefordshire Council	13.56%	5.94%	0	80.50 %	497kg	£38.99	£59.09	62%	89%	67%	82%	58%	34%
Worcestershire County Council	13.77%	5.28%	4.28%	76.68 %	528kg	N/A	£49.14	N/A	N/A	N/A	91%	N/A	N/A

Environmental BVPIs

BV Code	Definition
BV 82a	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been recycled.
BV 82b	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings that have been composted.
BV 82c	Percentage of the heat, power and other energy recovered.
BV 82d	Percentage of the total waste arising which have been landfilled.
BV 84	Number of kilograms of household waste collected per head.
BV 85	<i>The cost per square kilometre of keeping land and relevant highways for which the authority is responsible, clear of litter and refuse.</i>
BV 86	Cost of waste collection per household.
BV 87	Cost of waste disposal per tonne for municipal waste.
BV 88	Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste.
BV 89	PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH:
BV 90	a) recycling facilities b) household waste collection c) civic amenity sites
BV 91	Percentage of the population resident in the authorities' area which are served by a kerbside collection of recyclables or within 1 kilometre radius of a recycling centre.
BV 199	"The proportion of relevant land and highways as defined under EPA 1990 pat IV 86 (expressed as a % that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and debris (e.g. salt & other debris) across four categories of cleanliness (clean, light, significant and heavy))."

Notes

The italic indicators are those which are no longer applicable and have been omitted from the foregoing BVPI Tables.

THE UPPER CASE INDICATORS ARE THREE YEARLY USER SATISFACTION SCORES AND TO AVOID REPETITION THESE HAVE BEEN OMITTED FROM THE FOREGOING BVPI TABLES.

APPENDIX 2

Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management

Food Waste Disposers

Introduction

The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) is an independent professional body representing over 12,000 managers, and other professionals, in all sectors, who are responsible for the stewardship of environmental assets. CIWEM's agreed purpose is to develop and promote better and integrated management of the environment; to foster a deeper understanding of water and environmental issues and to enhance the quality of people's lives. This is achieved through CIWEM's Royal Charter, education, training and professional development; dissemination of information; conferences and events; research and publications; contact with Government agencies and other bodies, partnerships with other organisations and the publication of Policy Position Statements (PPS).

Purpose

To outline the main issues relating to the use of food waste disposers (FWD). These are installed beneath sinks to macerate food waste in order that it can be disposed to the wastewater collection and treatment system as an alternative to disposing it with solid waste. The issues include the effect of food waste on the wastewater system, the diversion of food waste from landfill and consequent reduction in methane production, avoidance of extra vehicle movements for separate collection, avoidance of vermin attraction and avoidance of storing putrescible food waste in or close to kitchens with its associated health and odour implications.

Background

FWD were introduced to the market in North America in the 1930s. North America has the greatest density of domestic installation at about 50% of households. This is an order of magnitude more than any country in the EU, where food waste is generally disposed as part of the solid waste system. However the density of installation in commercial kitchens is very much greater.

In the EU the Landfill Directive¹ requires reduction in the amount of biodegradable waste disposed to landfill. The environmental objective of this requirement is to reduce methane emissions from landfills. It is estimated that methane has more than 20-times the climate change effect of carbon dioxide over 100 years. Several countries and municipalities have introduced separate collection schemes whereby the solid waste from domestic and commercial premises is required to be stored in separate containers, collected separately and taken to treatment facilities. The biodegradable fraction is generally composted or (less often) anaerobically digested, with the methane used as a renewable energy source. Separate collection often necessitates extra truck traffic, especially during summer when it is not acceptable to store biodegradable waste for long periods prior to collection because of odour.

The question of the place of FWD in EU waste policy was raised in 2001². This document said "In order to avoid an unjustified increase in the quantity of sewage

sludge, it should be prohibited to shred solid biodegradable waste with a view to evacuating it via the sewer." It raised the question of the relative environmental benefits and costs of FWD compared with separate storage and collection.

The Working Document² carries the introductory rider "This working document is intended as a basis for preliminary discussions. It represents the opinion of DG ENV.A.2¹ only and does not necessarily engage the Commission." The Director of Sustainable Development has subsequently confirmed (Priv. Comm. 2001) that an environmental directive is not able to ban equipment such as FWD but that Member States or municipalities could ban them if they had grounds to believe that they jeopardised sewerage or wastewater treatment.

Several States and municipalities have banned the installation of FWD but these bans appear to have had no objective basis because when the case has been examined objectively bans have been reversed. For example FWD have been banned in New York City since the 1970s but this was rescinded in 1997 following a 21 month study by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)³ of 3 paired groups of different types of apartments (514 with FWD and 535 controls). The DEP modelled capital and operating cost implications (sewerage, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal) and concluded that overall there was no significant difference.

In Sweden the town of Staffanstorp has been studied⁴ and concluded that in several cases FWD provide a very good solution to the waste problem. No accumulation in drains or sewers was found, neither was there a change in water consumption. The change in wastewater treatment, biogas and biosolids offset the solid waste collection. The nutrients from the ground food waste improved biological phosphate removal.

There have been similar conclusions in other studies, for example in the Netherlands,⁵ Germany⁶ and Israel⁷. Approximately 33% of ground organic kitchen waste solids were solubilised and the remainder were transported evenly as bed load and as suspended solids even at low flow velocities and in the low sewer gradients common in the Netherlands. There was no impact on fat accumulation. It enhanced biological nutrient removal and increased biogas production at wastewater treatment works and reduced the amount and moisture content of municipal solid waste.

The studies cited above (and others) indicate that domestic FWD do not prejudice the performance of wastewater treatment works but there have been instances where FWD in the kitchens of commercial residential establishments have overloaded the small rural works to which they are sewered. This was because of lavish over-provision of food and consequent waste. In the UK regulatory control of this situation is the prerogative of the Local Authority rather than the sewerage undertaker. Fortunately this situation is the exception rather than the rule and soluble by tripartite discussion.

Many sewers carry rainwater (especially in older systems) and even where surface water connection is not intended there can be infiltration that swells flows in wet weather. Sewer capacity cannot be infinite and therefore it is sensible to make provision for overflow in the most severe conditions where it causes the least inconvenience. The Environment Agency normally requires that solids greater than 6mm in any direction are removed from Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) and that sewage is not macerated upstream of a CSO. Sewage contains hair and other fibres that form a mesh across screens; finer solids can accumulate on this mesh. CSOs

are generally raked mechanically to prevent such accumulation, which would lead to blockage if it were not removed. Installation of FWD increased the per capita suspended solids by 33%⁴. Measurements of the output from FWD show that about 98% of the input is reduced in size to <2mm⁶ therefore the solids cannot themselves block a CSO. However FWD do add fine particles to the general load in sewage, which would be discharged to the aquatic environment in the event of overflow. If the CSO design is such that particles <2mm accumulate on other debris and result in blockage, the impact of FWD will be to reduce the time to blockage rather than determine whether it will block or not.

Another consideration is the risk of veterinary disease transmission as a result of contaminated meat being disposed. One could argue that meat in kitchens should by definition be fit for consumption, but this neglects illegal meat imports. The evidence of the limited surveys of incoming flights and other routes suggests that there is considerable illegal meat importation. It is suggested to have been the cause of the recent swine vesicular and foot and mouth disease outbreaks. However DEFRA considers that, even with more stringent controls at points of entry, it will be impossible to eliminate illegal meat imports entirely. Fortunately the disease agents have a similar susceptibility to wastewater and sludge treatment as the other organisms of concern. Voluntary changes in practice by the water companies⁸ mean that even if infected meat were disposed via FWD to sewer the disease agents would be subject to two control barriers to veterinary infection. The first barrier is sludge treatment (conventional or enhanced) and the second the land use restrictions set out in the matrix⁸. CIWEM welcomes and celebrates the voluntary agreement and that government is going to use this as a "bottom-up" approach to revising the relevant legislation for use of biosolids on land.

The final consideration is financial. It is clear from the studies cited above that removing food waste from the solid waste stream reduces the cost of collecting and disposing that stream, however it is transferred to the liquid waste stream. If the receiving wastewater treatment works has anaerobic digestion (AD) and derives income from the biogas, the additional biogas more than offsets the cost of treating the aqueous stream⁶. The additional biogas could even make the difference between viability and non-viability of gas utilisation. But if the works does not have AD, or if it is unable to use the biogas there is nothing to offset the additional treatment cost. In many countries the local authority is responsible for both liquid and solid waste and cost transfer is not really critical. However in the UK liquid and solid wastes are completely separate businesses and it would be equitable to reimburse the wastewater business for relieving the solid waste business of part of its costs.

Key Issues

1. It appears that regulatory restrictions on the use of FWD have been the result of prejudiced opinion rather than objective assessment and that where impacts have been assessed objectively there has been shown to be no case for such restrictions.
2. Especially in areas of high-density accommodation the case for FWD as an alternative to separate collection of biodegradable waste appears strong, on the grounds of avoiding additional traffic and odour and possibly disease. Disease vectors such as foxes, rats, birds and flies are attracted to large particles of food in solid waste but FWD solubilise and grind food so that it is no longer attractive to these creatures.
3. The change in water usage associated with operation of FWD has been measured to be trivial or not significant.

4. The risk of accumulation in sewers has been found to be non-existent because the specific gravity of the ground waste is so low that the particles remain in suspension. Fat has been found to sorb onto other particles and therefore to be conveyed with the wastewater rather than to deposit on the sewer walls.
5. FWD do not alter the risk of blockages at CSOs with 6mm screens because <1% of particles are >5mm, but they might reduce the time to blockage for those that are prone to accumulate particles <2mm diameter.
6. There is currently understandable concern about veterinary risk in general, but since FWD will in the main process materials deemed fit for consumption their use should have no impact on this risk. Even if unfit, illegal meat were processed, the dual barriers of wastewater and sludge treatment and matching of biosolids type to land use will provide adequate control. In the event of overflow, the disease risk from food waste is unlikely to be as great as from faecal material, given that people disposing illegal meat are also likely to have consumed it and if there were veterinary pathogens they would be in consumers' faeces.
7. The increased oxygen requirement for secondary wastewater treatment has been found to be more than offset by the additional biogas production at sites where there is anaerobic digestion.
8. The additional food value of ground organic kitchen waste can improve biological nutrient removal (BNR) at wastewater treatment works. [Food supply is performance-limiting factor for BNR at some works.]
9. The addition of ground kitchen waste (high in organic matter, fat and moisture) to wastewater increases biogas production at works that anaerobically digest sludge. This has been estimated at 300MJ/resident·year⁶ (equivalent to 8 litres diesel). It also reduces the moisture content of the residual solid waste, which increases its calorific value and/or makes it easier to separate into useable fractions.

Conclusions

1. CIWEM recommends that policy decisions be proportionate to risk and based on objective assessment and that this applies as much to FWD as to other issues. Where there is insufficient information to allow objective assessment, action should be put in place to fill the information gap.⁹
2. CIWEM considers that FWD may have a useful place in the management of food waste and that they might be a more convenient and environmentally superior alternative to separate storage and collection. However there is the question of cost transfer.
3. CIWEM would like to see additional independent research to further expand the growing body of evidence about FWD.

References

- ¹ Council of the European Communities (1999) Council Directive on the Landfill of Waste, 1999/31/EC
- ² European Commission Biological treatment of biodegradable waste, DG ENV.E.3/LM/biowaste/1st draft Brussels, 20 October 2000.
- ³ New York City DEP (1999) The impact of food waste disposers in combined sewer areas of New York City.
- ⁴ Nilsson et al. (1990) Waste management at the source utilizing food waste disposers in the home; a case study in the town of Staffanstorp. Dept. Environmental Engineering, University of Lund.
- ⁵ De Koning, J. And van der Graaf, J.H.J.M. (1996) Kitchen food waste disposers, effects on sewer system and wastewater treatment. Technical University Delft.

⁶ Kegebein, J.; Hoffmann, E. and Hahn, H.H. (2001) Co-Transport and Co-Reuse, An Alternative to Separate Bio-Waste Collection? Wasser. Abwasser 142, 429-434

⁷ Galil, N.I. and Yaacov, L. (2000) Integrated solid waste systems including domestic garbage disposers. Proceedings CIWEM, Aqua-Enviro 5th European Biosolids & Organic Residuals Conference.

⁸ Safe sludge matrix. www.adas.co.uk/matrix

⁹ Commission of the European Communities (2000) Communication from The Commission On The Precautionary Principle COM(2000) 1 final Brussels, 2.2.2000

February 2003

Note: CIWEM Policy Position Statements (PPS) represents the Institution's views on issues at a particular point in time. It is accepted that situations change as research provides new evidence. It should be understood, therefore, that CIWEM PPSs are under constant review and that previously held views may alter and lead to revised PPSs.

APPENDIX 3

List of documents available to the Environment Scrutiny Panel (copies available on request –see back cover)

Documents

- 1 3 December 2004 - Environment Scrutiny Panel Agenda and Minutes
- 2 3 December 2004 – Memo to Head of Waste and Passenger Transport Management requesting further information
- 3 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004 – 2034
- 4 10 December 2004 – Notes of Task Group Meeting (Scoping)
- 5 5 January 2005 – Notes of Task Group Meeting (presentation by Head of Waste and Passenger Transport Management including slides from the presentation, information about Food Waste Disposers (FWDs) and two draft/pilot leaflets entitled ‘Myth or BPEO?’ and ‘Get tooled up’)
- 6 14 January 2005 - Agenda and Minutes of Environment Scrutiny Panel
- 7 17 January 2005 – letter to the Lead Officer for Recycling/Waste Disposal in each of the six local authority areas of Worcestershire requesting visit and detailing possible questions.
- 8 20 January - Letter to Panel Members enclosing
 - Agenda flysheet and minutes of the meetings of the Joint Members Waste Forum on 6 September and 30 November 2004. The Implementation Plan, (for the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy) is attached.
- 9 18 January 2005 - Notes of Task Group Meeting
- 10 Document – Shropshire’s Municipal Waste Management Strategy
- 11 18 February 2005 – Notes of Task Group Meeting summarising deliberations on what was learned following the Panel’s visit to Household Waste sites in Gloucestershire and Malvern
- 12 Document comparing answers to questions asked about recycling at meetings with partners in the 6 District Councils, including Wychavon District Council’s, Redditch Borough Council’s (25 January 2005) and Malvern Hills District Council’s recent agenda reports considering recycling and waste collection options for the future.
- 13 8 March 2005 – Agenda and Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Panel
- 14 11 March 2005 – Letter to Panel Members enclosing possible questions to ask the Council’s Waste Contractors
- 15 16 March 2005 – Meeting with the Council’s Waste Contractors

Further copies of this report are available from:

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ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL**Scrutiny Report - Recycling and Waste Disposal****RESPONSE FROM CABINET MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY**

I acknowledge the significant amount of work that has been undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel in a short compressed period of time and the particular importance of the behavioural and communication issues addressed in the report and its recommendations.

This scrutiny exercise has highlighted the positive role that the Environmental Scrutiny Panel can make and the opportunity to investigate best practice and bring back real tangible benefits from other places is most welcome.

I am pleased to confirm by the specific comments made against each recommendation, as shown overleaf, that I recommend that the Cabinet accept and implement all of the recommendations in the manner shown.

ALWYN DAVIES**Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economic Development and
Regeneration, Environment and Sustainability**

Response by the Cabinet Member with Responsibility to the individual Recommendations

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Agreed?/Background/Proposal
1.	<p>We recommend that the County Council makes it clear to districts, through the Joint Waste Members Forum, the basis on which grants to fund recycling schemes are made (paragraph 5.6).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: Each individual district has been informed of the basis of their grant for enhanced recycling. However, the Scrutiny Panel's point is understood and well made at a time when the County Council requires further recycling from Districts in order to meet it's own (higher) recycling/composting targets (30% in 2005/2006).</p> <p>Proposed Action: Though the Members Joint Waste Forum it is proposed to publish a regular league table of enhanced recycling with the associated costs, as a means of encouraging efficiency and obtaining effective deployment of grants for enhancement.</p>
2.	<p>[In relation to the success of the Wingmoor Household Waste Site recycling] We believe that the most important factors in achieving this change in ethos are the quality of people doing the job, an effective management structure, the quality of staff training and a staff incentive scheme (paragraph 7.19).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: The Integrated Waste Management PFI Contract is essentially an output-based contract that was not intended to address the 'soft' factors such as employee motivation, which is seen as the contractor's responsibility. However, by working in close partnership it is possible to share and encourage innovation such as the Scrutiny Panel has identified.</p> <p>Proposed Action: This will be an ongoing topic in regular meetings with the Contractor whose specific proposals in the light of the Wingmoor visit are being sought.</p>

3.	<p>We recommend that Worcestershire County Council Waste Management Officers begin urgent negotiations with its current contractor, to discuss possible, mutually beneficial changes to the contract, to emulate best practice elsewhere, which should result in improved performance in Worcestershire's HRCs (paragraph 7.22).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: As part of the need to increase recycling and diversion from landfill performance, proposed agreement on variations to the contract are well advanced and will achieve a higher minimum level of recycling at Household Waste Sites.</p> <p>Proposed Action: (a) Work to complete the variation is being continued and (b) a plan of identifying and emulating best practice elsewhere, for both the client and contractor is to be implemented.</p>
4.	<p>We further recommend that in Autumn 2005, Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel monitor the outcomes of this report, initially by visiting the pilot HRCs in the County, to review progress on improved signage and the level of welcome and information provided by staff at HRC sites (paragraph 7.23).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>I would agree that this could only be beneficial in ensuring the Contractor knows that the Council is serious about this issue, and support the initiative.</p>

5.	<p>1. We recommend that the Environmental Services Directorate work with the Directors of Focsa and Urbaser (UK) to prepare a report for the relevant Scrutiny Panel which should include progress on the following (paragraph 7.24):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether visits to Wingmoor HRC have taken place to share good practice; • how supervision is managed both at a strategic level and on the HRC sites; • evidence of how it is intended to attract suitable staff (or re-train existing staff) for jobs at Household Recycling Sites, including for example, details of recruitment adverts and revised job descriptions for recycling site supervisors and staff; • details of training provided to HRC staff at the Hill and Moor training facility (ie the number of hours provided and examples of the type of training and subject material) and whether this results in accredited qualifications such as NVQs; • evidence of consideration (or pilot) for the introduction of a staff bonus scheme based on increased levels of recycling at sites; and • review how items suitable for reuse are sold and consider donating a percentage of the proceeds to a Charity. 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background and Proposed Action: See comments under Recommendation 2 above.</p> <p>In partnership with the Contractor an appropriate report on progress will be prepared.</p>
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6.	<p>The Scrutiny Panel recommend that the County Council enters into discussions with Severn Trent on CIWEM's research and explore the possibility with Redditch Borough Council to investigate further the implications of the installation of sink macerators (paragraph 8.7).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: The use of home sink waste macerators could play a significant role in reducing the amount of waste transported, processed and going to landfill, but as yet has been an issue not significantly pursued by Waste Management Authorities. Some pilot research is being undertaken in the County to pursue this.</p> <p>Proposed Action: Their use and formal promotion as a further 'weapon' in the Mission Impossible armoury could be an important part of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy's plans to divert waste from landfill over the coming three (and more) years.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with Severn Trent Water at Board level and a bid made to the County Surveyors Society for further research funding.</p> <p>In parallel discussions and research funding requests are being made to DEFRA and the Environment Agency.</p>
7.	<p>We recommend that this Council lobby the government seeking an urgent change in the classification of Charity Shop waste from commercial to household rates (paragraph 8.17).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: The law surrounding the commercial/household status of registered charities and not for profit enterprises is complex. However, the Waste Management Authorities can opt to use discretion over such matters.</p> <p>Proposed Action: One of the work-streams of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy is to work in partnership with the social enterprise sector to facilitate them playing a greater role in waste management.</p>

8.	<p>We recommend the Waste Management Unit investigate the feasibility of offering residents increased capacity composting bins (paragraph 8.19).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: The provision of compost bins has been through funding/products supplied by the Waste Action Resource Programme (WRAP).</p> <p>Proposed Action: In future campaigns we will discuss with WRAP whether the provision of even larger bins could be accommodated for those requiring them. Alternatively households could acquire multiple bins.</p>
9.	<p>We recommend that the feasibility and cost effectiveness of installing paper recycling banks in Schools, as a first step, be investigated further, initially by the Environment and Educational Services Directorates and the Joint Waste Members Forum (paragraph 9.3).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: The issue of schools waste is another topic addressed by the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (clause 8.9) and is under discussion with the Education Directorate.</p> <p>Proposed Action: Work to ensure an effective recycling service to schools has already begun in partnership with some Districts and will be extended across the County through the Members Joint Waste Forum.</p>

10.	<p>We recommend that the Joint Members Waste Forum consider how school waste in the County should be classified. (paragraph 9.4).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: School and College Waste is deemed Household Waste for which the collection authority may levy a reasonable charge.</p> <p>Proposed Action: The issue is more the custom and practice than the actual definition of waste. However, as a result of the Scrutiny panel's recommendations it is proposed to increase the priority of this work since it has significant potential benefits in influencing the behaviour of families through school children participating in recycling.</p>
11.	<p>We recommend that the Council's Waste Management Unit adopt a holistic approach as the basis for future campaigns to ensure the public are informed about the full range of options and accessories to aid retention and recycling of municipal waste. Further information on the cost to individual residents should government targets not be met, should also be made clear. Agreement should be sought from our Strategic Waste Partners on a whole county approach to publicity campaigns to increase recycling (9.5).</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Background: There have as a matter of historic background been a large number of organisations involved in promoting the 'responsible waste management' message, for example from Defra and WRAP to Welcome to Our Future and Districts.</p> <p>Proposed Action: Though the Joint Waste Forum it is proposed to further the work to date on maximising the effectiveness of 'waste' communications.</p>