



<b>Subject:</b>	The Waste Framework: To – 2025 & Beyond – Initial Report
<b>Date:</b>	13 June 2017
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	Members are requested to approve the attached draft strategy scenarios for managing waste – “ <i>The Waste Framework</i> ”.
1.2	Members may recall that there were a series of Party Group Briefings held on this topic during May which highlighted the focus of the Waste Framework upon four areas: Waste Collection Arrangements, Infrastructure, Behaviour Change and Technology. Useful feedback was received from these briefings and a number of amendments/enhancements were made to the Waste Framework to reflect these comments which is now being presented for consideration.

1.3	Following approval, a consultation exercise and programme of engagement will be developed to consult with stakeholders. This is to ensure that householders' and others' views are gathered to inform a final drafting of the Waste Framework which will then be reported to the Committee for final ratification, expected to be in late autumn.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve the draft "<i>Waste Framework</i>" for consultation later this year.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
3.1	<p>Members may be aware that Waste Management has been developing a 10 year Waste Strategy and have sought to incorporate issues relating to emerging legislative requirements, changes in the local marketplace, the current status of arc21's residual waste treatment facilities and Brexit. The Service has also been carefully considering how expenditure could be minimised, efficiency savings could be delivered and revenues maximised for the Council. This has resulted in a series of realistic scenarios being developed to achieve a 50% household waste recycling target and save money, while also aligning with the Belfast Agenda objectives of supporting job creation. Waste Management has drawn carefully from experiences and recommendations from both Scotland and Wales to inform the development of this draft strategy, as both these regions have implemented progressive and forward-looking policies and strategies which their councils are now implementing.</p>
3.2	<p>Waste Management has also been in discussions with the Waste &amp; Resources Action Programme (WRAP) officers in Wales (the third best performing recycling country in the world) and WRAP HQ (currently providing advice to several Governments across the world), as well as Zero Waste Scotland to test the assumptions used in the draft and critically review its content. As Members will recall, at several recent Committee meetings questions have been raised about how waste can play a more central role in creating and supporting jobs in Belfast, and this draft strategy has been designed specifically to focus upon improving the quality of recyclables collected so that it can make a more positive contribution to the circular economy and the jobs target contained within the Belfast Agenda. WRAP is in the process of formally responding to the draft Framework and their comments will be incorporated into the final version for Members' consideration later this financial year.</p>
3.3	<p>Of particular note, after modelling and interpretation, the recommended option in the Waste Framework aligns closely with the Collections Blueprint published in 2011 by the Welsh</p>

Government and to which several councils are presently transitioning. This blueprint was drafted to contribute to the delivery of “*one planet living*” and emphasises the need for councils to generate as high quality recyclables as possible in order to produce suitable materials for remanufacture – as close to the point of origin as possible. Further details on these recommendations are available at

<http://www.wrapcymru.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Municipal%20Sector%20Plan%20Wales%20-%20Collections%20Buleprint.pdf>.

3.4 In Northern Ireland, last year WRAP were contracted by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to conduct a Recycling Gap Analysis study of councils’ waste collection operations with a view to determining if there were common elements which could be introduced to deliver the 50% recycling target (e.g. providing a separate collection service for food waste). Working with a small working group of senior technical directors and managers, WRAP modelled a number of scenarios at a regional level which, similar to what’s been promoted in Wales, highlighted that a range of opportunities existed for councils to improve their performance based upon amending their approaches to waste collection and practices at their Household Recycling Centres. On a council-by-council basis, this study also drilled into what councils should consider and provided tailored recommendations. Several neighbouring councils are now implementing some of the recommendations relevant to them; which are similar to some of the approaches presented within the draft Waste Framework. Depending upon the results of the consultation exercise, this raises the prospect of collaborative working on waste collection and associated services in years to come.

3.5 Returning to Belfast, the challenge is to achieve a 50% recycling target for household waste while making best use of the resources available. Notwithstanding that the Council outperformed its benchmark class and has been recognised as best practice for implementing the “*Towards Zero Waste*” Action Plan, a paradigm shift is needed if this target is to be delivered. This objective has been further emphasised with the SoLACE, NILGA, DAERA and SIB action plan, approved by the Council in October 2016, to

1. (produce) minimal municipal waste
2. Achieve the 2020 target of recycling 50% of household waste and preparing to contribute to meeting the 65% municipal waste recycling target by 2030
3. Maximum recovery and use of energy from residual waste in NI
4. Sufficient licensed landfill capacity in NI (being) provided

3.6	<p>As mentioned above, the Waste Framework has been drafted after careful consideration of the realistic options facing the Council to create jobs/increase recycling and taking several of the council-specific WRAP recommendations. What has been highlighted is that business as usual will result in a spiral of reducing or stagnant performance, and increasing costs. Change will only be achieved with a fundamental shift in the Council's approach to recycling and service delivery. Where possible, opportunities to realise efficiency gains have been identified as well as to increase income generation, but an investment of financial and other resources will be necessary to achieve the objectives within the Waste Framework, albeit some scenarios have potential for invest-to-save or increased income opportunities. Depending upon the scenario chosen, there may also be DAERA capital funding available to offset some of the costs over the next five years, or so.</p>
3.7	<p>To provide independent scrutiny, the Assurance, Governance &amp; Risk Service (AGRS) reviewed the draft and relevant comments have been incorporated into the version appended to this report (see Appendix 1).</p>
3.8	<p>It is worth reiterating that the draft Waste Framework envisages that significant change will be needed to collection operations, infrastructure and behaviour change, supported by technology and there may be particular sectors which have potential to assist the Council deliver the 50% target, such as the social sector. In addition to conducting the modelling and analysis, the Service has also used the results from the WRAP Recycling Gap Analysis study for Belfast to check the scenarios developed for the draft Framework – there is a close correlation. The WRAP results for Belfast reinforce that a paradigm shift is needed to improve performance and these conclusions are now informing specific research into a “<i>Belfast Collections Options</i>” to meet the legislative requirements for the Council to conduct a Technical, Economic &amp; Environmentally Practicable (TEEP) assessment which is drawing to a close.</p>
3.9	<p>Members may recall that last year Waste Management formed a collaborative partnership with WRAP to develop a Circular Economy strategy – “<i>Resourceful Belfast</i>”. The objective of this strategy is to move beyond waste and to identify what is needed to increase training opportunities, jobs and sectors in NI which could use the materials collected by better segregated waste; this strategy will shortly be finalised. Recognising that waste collections played a crucial role in this, delivery of the TEEP assessment is being completed as part of this collaborative partnership. Initial findings support the Waste Collection Arrangements in the Waste Framework and the need to focus upon ensuring quality recyclables are</p>

	<p>collected from householders; the final report will play a fundamental role in any recommendations to be presented to Members alongside the results from the consultation exercise.</p>
3.10	<p>Last month, party group briefings were held for Members to outline the steps needed to deliver the changes required, following which relevant amendments were made to the draft document. The draft Framework highlights that considerable effort and a fundamental shift of approach is needed if Belfast is to deliver a household waste recycling rate of 50% and beyond (see Appendix 2). The briefings also highlighted that the arc21 residual waste treatment contract, whether operational by 2020 or not, would treat and dispose of the same waste as is currently being managed by the Council – with the same proportion being recovered. So, in terms of contributing to the recycling, this would not make a material difference to the Council’s performance. Should arc21 not be realised, the mid/longer-term scenarios for dealing with residual waste are contained within the draft Framework, but these would need further consideration in this eventuality.</p>
3.11	<p>If Members are satisfied with this report, the next step will be to prepare the questions for stakeholder consultation on the respective separate elements, and a programme of engagement will be developed to present the scenarios relevant to different audiences. If Members approve this Waste Framework, an “<i>implementation plan</i>” will be developed to frame appropriate parts of the document for consultation and/or development (e.g. some proposals, such as the Waste Collection Arrangements should be tested with householders, while other aspects will not affect them). Once key decision points are reached, reports will be presented to Members for consideration, alongside any supplementary evidence provided from other sources, for example, views from WRAP (Cymru) and Zero Waste Scotland on the Waste Framework, the results from the TEEP assessment, consultants reports on Infrastructure and Technology.</p>
3.12	<p>In terms of the implementation plan, the obvious starting point is the Waste Collection Arrangements and Behaviour Change actions which householders are likely to experience as the Council strives to improve our opportunity to support job creation. Waste Management will work closely with WRAP, Corporate Communications and any additional communications support to develop a comprehensive consultation approach using appropriate mechanisms, such as a Citizen Space survey on the Council’s website, to design information for drop in events, and to engage with appropriate focus groups.</p>

<p>3.13</p>	<p>The priority will be on expediting the consultation exercise so that reports on the views and recommendations can be presented to Members for consideration in as timely a manner as possible. This is also likely to be of critical importance to ensure that the Council is in a position to make use of any DAERA funding which may be available. By way of example of the type of questions which are being drafted, these will focus on improvements which the different scenarios offer to service delivery. For example, they may consist of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Would you be happy to recycle a wider range of materials for the kerbside?</li> <li>2. If recycling services were provide on a weekly basis would you be likely to recycle more? (outer city)</li> <li>3. Would you be more likely to recycle food waste if we collected the waste on a weekly basis? (outer city)</li> <li>4. Would a weekly glass collection service encourage you to recycle glass? (outer city)</li> <li>5. How important to you is using recyclable materials to help create jobs in NI?</li> <li>6. Do you think that providing a trolley for you boxes would make it easier for you to recycle?</li> </ol>
<p>3.14</p>	<p>Waste Management is also currently working with a student anthropologist from Queens University, Belfast to examine attitudes to recycling in a particular part of the city (inner west) which will also contribute findings to the consultation process.</p>
<p>3.15</p>	<p>Finally, WRAP have invited stakeholders to a seminar entitled “<i>Bridging the Recycling Gap</i>” on 22 June in Templepatrick. This half day seminar will specifically be considering addressing how to transform recycling locally to meet recycling targets while also supplying more materials to support and grow the NI economy – drive development of the Circular Economy. If Members are interested in attending they could either contact the Head of Waste Management on extension 3311, or contact Mr Patterson, Wrap. Further details of this event are appended to this report (see Appendix 3).</p>
<p><b>HR/Financial/Asset/Equality Implications</b></p>	
<p>3.16</p>	<p>There are no HR/financial/equality implications associated with this report however there will be human resource and financial implications associated with implementing the draft Waste Framework both during the consultation stage, and depending upon the decisions taken thereafter.</p>

3.17	Further HR/financial/equality implications will need to be identified and included within any future reports as the Waste Framework is considered and implemented.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 – The draft Waste Framework Appendix 2 – Members’ Briefing on the Waste Framework Appendix 3 – 'Bridging the Recycling Gap': An invitation to attend a WRAP Seminar