

**REPORT TO THE SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT  
PARTNERSHIP JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**11 DECEMBER 2020**

**REPORT OF:** Colin Huntington, Project Director, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership

**SUBJECT:** STWWMP Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Joint Executive Committee on the progress of the latest refresh of the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 16 March 2018, the Joint Executive Committee received a report highlighting the proposed structure for the refresh of the STWWMP Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS). Whilst the new structure retained and simplified the previous strategic objectives, specific actions were replaced with five broad, over-arching themes which support flexibility in delivering day-to-day services and activities. This approach will still provide opportunities to be considered to further joint partnership or new ways of working through the development of trial activities or dedicated 'projects' targeting priority issues.
- 2.2 However, unfortunately, STWWMP has been unable to progress further the publication of the JMWMS, which was put on hold until the impact of the partner authority climate emergency declarations on all aspects of local authority services became clearer.
- 2.3 Furthermore, there have also been significant delays in the development of national waste policy as Government delayed the publication of the resources and waste strategy (RaWS) until late December 2018. This was then followed by a series of consultation exercises that considered the strategy's key proposals, such as the introduction of a deposit return scheme, reforms to the UK packaging producer responsibility system, and ensuring consistency in household and business recycling collections. Further consultation exercises

are planned which are expected to clarify which of the proposals will be legislated as well as how they will be implemented and funded.

- 2.4 Unfortunately, the COVID-19 coronavirus public health emergency has also impacted on the forthcoming RaWS consultation process, which was originally scheduled for 2020 but has now been delayed until spring 2021 at the earliest.

### **3. STWWMP JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) was agreed by each partner authority Cabinet in 2007. It covers the management of municipal waste for the period 2007–2027 and includes:

- Waste collected from households
- Recycling collections
- Waste taken to recycling banks
- Collections of bulky waste
- Street sweepings
- Collection of household clinical waste
- Commercial/trade waste collected by the local authorities
- Fly-tipped waste
- Waste accepted at household waste recycling centres

- 3.2 It does not consider most industrial, commercial, construction, or demolition wastes, which are generally managed by the private sector.

- 3.3 Whilst there is no statutory requirement for STWWMP to produce a JMWMS, the Partnership considers the publication of a strategy as 'best practice' and has committed to undertaking regular reviews, the first of which was published in January 2013.

### **4. JMWMS REVIEW – PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 4.1 It is important that STWWMP can ensure that the partner authorities have a relevant, top-level, waste management strategy available to them. This will support flexibility in service delivery whilst continuing to meet key aims and aspirations.

- 4.2 However, the current JMWMS is now significantly out of date – largely because of the significant achievements successfully delivered by the partner authorities since its publication in 2013. This includes:

- The completion of the new residual waste processing and treatment infrastructure (including the construction of the STWWMP energy-from-waste facility) and service commencement of the 25-year residual waste treatment contract;
- The development of complementary household kerbside recycling services across all three partner authorities, including the introduction of additional recyclable materials;

- The introduction of a dedicated community education and engagement programme delivered by third sector environmental regeneration charity Groundwork North East & Cumbria from our new visitor and education centre at Campground;
- The establishment of a joint partnership team to provide the Waste Disposal Authority functions on behalf of the partner authorities through the day-to-day contract management functions for the range of waste treatment and recycling contracts with external service providers; and
- The development of close and effective working relationships at all levels with SUEZ, Groundwork North East & Cumbria, and other external recycling contractors.

4.3 The refreshed JMWMS structure previously agreed by the Joint Executive Committee was initially intended to provide strategic direction for the period 2018-2022 but, for the reasons highlighted above, it has not been possible to further progress the publication of the JMWMS.

4.4 However, as the uncertainty across the waste sector is likely to continue for the near future, to ensure that high-level guidance can be provided to support decisions on future service delivery issues and inform short-to-medium term budget planning cycles, it is important that further consideration is given to reconsider the work previously undertaken based on the latest information available and realign the five-year strategy refresh to cover the period 2021-2025.

## 5. **NEXT STEPS**

5.1 The refreshed JMWMS has been designed to:

- Be easy to understand, follow, and enable progress to be monitored.
- Consider the context of partner authority waste services within the current financial climate and other restrictions on service delivery.
- Be clear about the priorities and not commit partner authorities to deliver actions with unknown external outcomes and/or influences.
- Be proportionate and realistic about issues that STWWMP can directly influence at different levels, e.g. nationally; within their own operational activities; and across other services within their own councils.

5.2 It is proposed that a fully designed final STWWMP JMWMS 2021-2025 is presented for consideration by Joint Executive Committee on 12 March 2021 which, if agreed, will then be published online by each partner authority later in the same month.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Joint Executive Committee is requested to:

- (i) Note the contents of this report; and
- (ii) Agree to receive the final design of the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025 for approval prior to its publication in March 2021.

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