



Buckinghamshire County Council

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Community and Environmental Services

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Title	Waste Reduction and Waste Education
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Introduction and summary

1. This report summarises current and planned waste reduction activities within Buckinghamshire and sets them in the context of the Waste Strategy for Buckinghamshire and the national waste Reduction Programme being carried out by WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme)

Recommendation

2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to **SUPPORT** the work and direction of the Waste Reduction Team.

Background information

3. In May 2000 the Government published the Waste Strategy 2000, which established the national framework for moving away from landfill towards more sustainable waste management alternatives in the UK. It is an overarching policy document that is the governments response to its obligations on waste issues contained within European Law.
4. The waste hierarchy is a useful framework that has become the cornerstone of sustainable waste management, setting out the order in which options for waste management should be considered based on environmental impact. The Waste Hierarchy is as follows:
 - Reduce
 - Re-use
 - Recover – including recycling
 - Dispose
5. In line with the National Waste Strategy, waste minimisation lies at the heart of the Waste Strategy for Buckinghamshire(WSB). The strategy sets out a series of recommended waste minimisation initiatives that should be pursued in the short and medium term.

6. The Government's Strategy Unit Report 'Waste Not, Want Not' published in November 2002 as the key waste reduction measures to pursue.
7. Furthermore the national waste minimisation programme being run by Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) focuses on three key areas:
 - Home Composting
 - Real Nappies
 - Waste Awareness and education
8. Therefore the waste minimisation measures identified in the WSB namely, home composting, real nappies, waste awareness and quality waste education are being pursued in order to closely integrate our work with the national waste reduction programme. Detailed work programmes are contained within the Service Plan and Business Plan of the Waste Management group.

Waste Reduction Team – Outputs from each work area

9. The team carries out work out in 5 distinct project areas:
 - Home Composting
 - Real Nappies
 - Schools Waste Education Programme
 - Countywide waste awareness campaign
 - Action against Illegal Dumping
10. Partnership working is inherent in the whole work of the team. Indeed in order to avoid duplication between District and County Councils all waste reduction projects are primarily carried out at the County Council but steered by a joint officers working group under the remit of the Waste Partnership for Buckinghamshire. Regular update reports are presented to the Joint Waste Committee and regular officer meetings are held with the Districts to update/liase on each of these project areas. It should be pointed out that the District Councils provided the Third party funding in order to release some of the external funding that has been secured to fund these programmes. The achievements of each programme area are set out in further detail below.

Home Composting Programme

11. Home composting is widely recognised as being one of the key measures in reducing the amounts of household waste requiring collection. Indeed the Government's recent Waste Not Want Not Report published in November 2002 indicated that home composting was one of four main waste minimisation measures where sustained action was needed in terms of rolling out compost bins and also ensuring continued support for householders who compost. This is on the basis that between 30-50% of household rubbish is made up of compostable material i.e. organic kitchen and garden waste

Home Composting - Main Outcomes

12. The compost project has achieved a number a key objectives. Success during the project include:
 - Over 50,000 compost bins have now been distributed in Buckinghamshire exceeding the target set out in the Waste Strategy for Bucks.

- Acceptance onto the WRAP home composting programme phase 2&3
- £114,000 of external funding has been approved for the development of the Bucks Home Composting Initiative
- Over 50 volunteers recruited and trained to Bucks Master Composter Programme
- Support systems in place for those who are home composting
- Recruitment of Home Compost Development Officer
- Major resident research regarding home compost usage due to be carried out in September 05
- Home composting waste diversion model in discussion with WRAP

Bucks Real Nappy Initiative

13. Last year over 30 million disposable nappies were thrown away in Buckinghamshire and reports suggest that they take over 200 years to rot away. In a household with one baby, up to half of their rubbish will comprise disposable nappies. The disposal of all these nappies cost the County Council some £1/4m last year.
14. The Waste Strategy for Bucks therefore identifies the development of the Bucks Real Nappy Campaign as a priority waste minimisation programme.

Real Nappy Initiative - Main Outcomes

15. The development of the Real Nappy campaign has had a number of successes notably:
 - Comprehensive parental research that has been requested by the WRAP National Real Nappy Campaign in order to establish baseline real nappy usage.
 - Launch of cash back scheme with over 70 cash back claims to date
 - Nappy Shops during Real Nappy Week 2005
 - Ongoing Nappuccino mornings generated significant interest
 - Development of community support network
 - Development of comprehensive partnership between all those with an interest in real nappies in the County.
 - £53,000 of external funding secured
 - Appointment of Real Nappy Development Officer
 - Real Nappy waste diversion model in discussion with WRAP
 - Campaign has been short listed for the national Real Nappy campaign awards 2005

Schools Waste Education Programme: Rethink Rubbish at School

16. The Waste Strategy for Bucks recognising that whilst public education will be important to achieving waste minimisation, the long-term success of reducing waste would be, in part, by the delivery of a comprehensive schools waste education programme. When the WSB was first drafted it was evident that some of the District Councils had been working closely with the schools. There was however, a clear need to develop a coordinated and quality curriculum based waste education programme that could be rolled out across the county, which had the support of the Local Education Authority. This has been done by the launch of the Rethink Rubbish at School on September 03 that is now providing a quality curriculum based schools waste education programme.

Rethink Rubbish at School - Main Outcomes

17. The Schools Waste Education Programme has achieved a number of successes to date:
- Acceptance by the national charity Waste Watch onto the Waste Education Support Programme (WESP).
 - £20,000 of external funding awarded from Bretts Environmental Trust to cover Theatre in Education and the Waste Education Support Programme.
 - Recruitment of a Waste Education Officer to oversee the implementation of a countywide WESP programme.
 - Launch of the Rethink Rubbish at School waste education programme.
 - 84 schools visited by BCC's Waste Education Officer delivering over 380 waste related activities to over 20,000 pupils.
 - Buckinghamshire's first Youth Waste Summit held in November 2004.
 - Delivery of the Theatre in Education Programme to over 40 primary schools.
 - Over 130 schools have received a free compost bin.
 - Achieving Top Performance (BCC Awards 2004) - Highly commended in the 'Works in partnership both internally and externally' category.

Anti Flytipping Campaign – Illegal Dumping Costs

18. On the basis that prior to November 2003 levels of flytipping were increasing by 20% per year a number of initiatives have been progressed upon flytipping i.e. covert camera surveillance, the Illegal Dumping Costs communication campaign to prevent flytipping and proactive enforcement and prosecutions.

Illegal Dumping Costs - Main Outcomes

19. The work against Illegal Dumping has achieved some noteworthy results namely:
- A reduction in flytipping incidents of 20% since start of campaign
 - The reduction in incidents has resulted in savings of over £56,000 in collection costs [campaign period data compared with preceding period] over the campaign period, which is a notional saving of £142,500 against the previous rising trend level.
 - Over 30 covert surveillance operations have been carried out filming over 50 flytipping incidents
 - Some 21 successful convictions against illegal dumping
 - National best practice recognition
 - Achieving Top Performance (BCC Awards) – Commended campaign – innovation category

Waste Awareness Communication Campaign – Recycle for Buckinghamshire

20. Despite extensive kerbside recycling provision across the County, there are still large quantities of recycling material entering the general waste stream. Therefore a long term communication strategy was developed in partnership with the District Councils to deliver an integrated communication campaign with the aim being to maximise participation rates in existing recycling schemes.

21. A bid totalling some £200,000 was approved by WRAP in order to fund the campaign. The key aims of the project are:
- To maximise participation rates within existing recycling infrastructure and to normalise recycling.
 - To encourage those who are recycling to do more.
 - To deliver an integrated communication campaign designed to support existing District and County schemes across the County in relation to waste/recycling services with clear simple messages.
 - To effectively monitor recycling/participation rates and communication activities to measure success and make improvements for the future.
22. There are two main elements to the campaign and these are:
- Direct marketing including doorstepping of over 18,000 properties and leafleting
 - Media advertising closely linked to national Recycle Now Campaign including advertorials, in store retail advertising, campaign leaflet to every household in the County, campaign launch.

Recycle for Buckinghamshire - Main Outcomes

23. The main outcomes of the programme to date are:
- Extensive participation monitoring
 - Single unifying brand established - Recycle for Buckinghamshire
 - Incentive Scheme introduced
 - Series of advertorials
 - Messaging based upon resident research
 - Literature from campaign now used as an example of best practice by National recycle now campaign
 - Over 18,000 households directly spoken to over
 - Over 2500 recycling box requests (14% of households spoken to)

Overall Conclusions

24. The work of the team has led to significant progress be made on a number of waste reduction initiatives and the significant external funding generated offers considerable prospects for the future and outputs from the team.
25. Over the next year of these projects one of the key aims will be to monitor more effectively actual amounts of waste that are being diverted/reduced via these projects. Indeed discussions are underway with the national WRAP waste minimisation programme regarding the implementation of effective monitoring for each waste minimisation programme area.

Background Papers

Waste Strategy for Buckinghamshire
Planning and Environment Service Plan
Waste Management Business Plan
WRAP(Waste and Resources Business Plan) 04/05