

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY & WASTE MANAGEMENT CABINET PANEL

WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 10:00AM

**LOCAL AUTHORITY COLLECTED WASTE SPATIAL STRATEGY 2016 –
HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE ANNEX**

Report of the Chief Executive & Director of Environment

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Executive Member: Terry Hone, Community Safety & Waste Management

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To present the Cabinet Panel with the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) annex to the Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) Spatial Strategy 2016. This document has been prepared by the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and sets out an assessment of the HWRC network and identifies the WDAs vision for a robust, efficient and fit for purpose service that is capable of fulfilling future demand.
- 1.2. The draft HWRC annex can be read at <https://hertsc365.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/Services/Environment/Transport/Pages/CLG-Waste-Papers.aspx>

2. Background

- 2.1. The LACW Spatial Strategy 2016 sets out an assessment of desirable new and improved waste management facilities required in the county over the period to 2031 to better enable the sustainable management of LACW. The strategy is not a policy document and does not represent a formal position. It was presented to the CSWM Cabinet Panel on 1 November 2016 and can be found as 05 – Item 5 – Appendix 1 on the following link: <http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/563/Committee/53/Default.aspx>
- 2.2. The strategy has been shared with the Waste Planning Authority, Waste Collection Authorities, the District and Borough Councils' Planning Teams and other relevant planning bodies. This will enable other relevant services and organisations to fully understand the aspirations, requirements and vision of the WDA and consider these as part of their operational and planning processes.

- 2.3. At the November 2016 Panel it was highlighted that further important work was needed to complete the strategy, particularly in relation to the understanding, analysis and assessment of the 17 HWRCs. At the June 2017 Panel an update highlighting the information used to inform the HWRC annex and this report was presented to the Cabinet Panel.

<http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/741/Committee/53/Default.aspx>

3. Recommendation

- 3.1. The Cabinet Panel are requested to note the HWRC annex to the LACW Spatial Strategy 2016.

4. The Household Waste Recycling Centre annex

- 4.1. This annex assesses the viability of the current network to provide a service to 2031. It identifies guiding criteria for the development of new HWRCs, sets out an informed vision of the infrastructure required to provide a robust HWRC network that is effective and efficient and, with the recognition of inherent uncertainty in delivering waste facilities, indicates what a future HWRC network could look like.
- 4.2. As part of the LACW Spatial Strategy it is the intention of the WDA to share this annex with relevant planning bodies.
- 4.3. The HWRC network is an important frontline service that currently receives approximately 2.4 million visits per annum and requires significant investment in order to be fit-for-purpose. The network consists of 17 centres located throughout the county. These centres play an important role in moving waste up the waste hierarchy by enabling the segregation of different waste types and providing opportunities for quality items originally destined for disposal to be reused. The service is valued by residents and is busy throughout the year.
- 4.4. The current network is comprehensive and has evolved overtime with facilities traditionally developed to serve sizable settlements and their location determined by the availability of suitable land.
- 4.5. An assessment of each centre has been completed, taking into consideration overall suitability, condition, impact on the surrounding area including the local road network and capacity.
- 4.6. The annex identifies that in the short term (within five years) seven centres will be classified as unsuitable. These centres are Bishops' Stortford, Buntingford, Cole Green, Hemel Hempstead, Hoddesdon, Turnford and Ware.
- 4.7. In the long term (10-15 years) to 2031 the suitability of the network reduces further with a total of 11 centres assessed as unsuitable and a further two identified as 'not ideal'. This leaves four centres identified as suitable to 2031. These centres are Harpenden, Rickmansworth, Royston and Waterdale.

- 4.8. A significant contributing factor in the unsuitability of each centre is the lack of available space to improve their configuration. In the majority of instances restrictions such as land ownership and planning means expansion of the centres is not feasible. All centres have been configured to make best use of available space, but additional room is needed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.
- 4.9. The compact nature of the centres means that parking bays are limited and closely spaced. Restricted parking adversely affects the capacity of each centre, especially at peak times. Centres located close to the busy local road network or that are too small to have an onsite queuing lane can cause disruption and congestion in the local area.
- 4.10. An increase in households of c.90,000 by 2031 will place additional pressure on the network generally and increased use of the centres may necessitate further temporary closures to facilitate container exchanges. This may lead to increased queuing, especially at peak times.
- 4.11. The HWRC annex sets out the vision for future HWRC provision which builds on positive aspects of the current service such as improved customer service and maintained recycling and diversion rates. Broadly the vision consists of a well distributed network of existing HWRCs identified as being suitable in the long term and newly developed HWRC 'super sites'.
- 4.12. The super sites would act as the service's flagship centres and would be strategically located on the road network, well designed and include provision for the significant promotion of reuse and repair to help drive waste up the waste hierarchy and promote the 'prevention' agenda. These centres will increase capacity, be able to accommodate planned growth and be able to serve a wider catchment area, enabling the concentration of resources such as staffing, supervision and container provision.
- 4.13. Once at a super site an improved service would be provided, the layout would enable service users to easily separate their waste and/or visit the reuse and repair areas. This should provide for increased recycling rates and reduced disposal costs. The design and increased capacity of the centre would significantly reduce the likelihood of queuing and also the need to close centres during opening hours to carry out container servicing, thereby, providing improvements to the on-site customer experience.
- 4.14. As identified in the annex three centres have an existing and realistic opportunity of being improved to super site status. They are Ware, Stevenage and Turnford. Planning permission for the expansion of the Ware HWRC has been submitted and, should permission be granted, a new centre will hopefully be operational in summer 2019. The council have recently purchased land adjacent to the Stevenage HWRC and expansion of this centre is being explored.

The Turnford HWRC is situated in the Brookfield area, this is identified as an area of major redevelopment in Broxbourne Borough Council's Local Plan and therefore provision of a new HWRC is being investigated as part of this process.

- 4.15. Delivery of the centres in 4.14 above would result in a HWRC network with seven centres suitable to 2031. The annex identifies an indicative network that would enable a more robust and easy to use service that is fit for purpose. It is based on the retention of suitable centres to 2031 and the provision of three new super sites in two areas of search. These new centres would serve Bishops' Stortford including the proposed Gilston development and the A414 growth corridor which is set to see sixty percent of all proposed development in the county to 2031.
- 4.16. Provision of super sites could enable the rationalisation of the HWRS network with possible closure of some of the least suitable centres in the network. While service provision would change, it would be a robust service that is capable of fulfilling the future demand of population growth, moving waste up the hierarchy and meeting the potential requirement to further segregate waste types as part of the circular economy agenda.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The existing network requires significant investment in order to be fit-for-purpose in the context of increasing use and planned housing commitments in the emerging local plan processes across the County. Capital investment in a smaller number of 'super-sites' which are larger, better placed and more accessible for existing and emerging housing stock could enable some rationalisation of the network, thereby reducing the number of centres in the network and the associated net revenue cost for operation and management of the network.
- 5.2. The potential revenue savings can be estimated based on the contractor's financial model for operation at the time of tender (in 2013/14) and would be subject to negotiation. The savings are comparatively modest as a super-site would require increased staffing numbers, waste containers and an assumption that the same volume of visits and waste would need to be managed.
- 5.3. At this stage, potential revenue savings identified under this option are linked to new centres that have a realistic prospect of delivery within the councils Integrated Plan period (see 4.14 above) although, should site searches provide further opportunity, additional rationalisation options may arise. It should be noted that one-off closure costs have been estimated (e.g. redundancy and permit surrender costs) such that delayed delivery of potential savings is assumed.

- 5.4. Should planning permission for the redevelopment of the Ware HWRC be granted, it would become operational in 2019 and could, subject to consultation and approval, enable the review of 2-3 proximate less fit-for-purpose centres. This could realise a saving of c. £60k to £70k per annum from 2020/2021, however, one-off closure costs (est. £65k) mean this would not be deliverable until 2021/22.
- 5.5. Expansion of the Stevenage HWRC into adjacent land could enable the review of 2-3 proximate less fit-for-purpose centres. This could, subject to consultation and approval, realise a saving of c. £180k per annum, however there would be one-off closure costs (est. £90k).
- 5.6. The risks to delivery include the identification/availability of suitable land, securing capital investment, obtaining planning permission and completion of the appropriate process for the closure of any existing centres.

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1. When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.
- 6.2. Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.
- 6.3. The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.4. No EqIA was undertaken in relation to this matter as this information report has no implications for any persons with protected characteristics.