

Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee



19th September 2019

Waste Task Group Findings

Purpose of report: To inform the Select Committee of the outcome of the work of the Waste Task Group.

Introduction

1. The February meeting of Cabinet agreed to establish a Waste Task Group (WTG) with a remit to explore issues relating to the following:
 - The cost, operation and management of the network of Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) in place across the County,
 - Improving overall recycling performance, and
 - Developing the Council's response to DEFRA's draft Resources and Waste Strategy, published in December 2018.

2. This report brings together the findings of the WTG based on an approach that included a number of visits to key Council waste facilities, meetings with key partners including district and borough councils, and evidence submitted by potential delivery partners including local charities offering reuse and recycling services to Surrey residents.

Key Findings

3. The full report of the Waste Task Group is included as appendix 1 of this report.

4. The report has four key sections focusing on the following:
 - **Understanding the current context of waste management across Surrey.** In this section the report looks at how waste management services are organised, how it performs and what it costs. It also includes a brief summary of some examples of how the council has tackled waste minimisation. Finally, it also explores the

challenges facing this sector in the form of the draft Resources and Waste Strategy 2018.

- The main findings of the WTG are set out in the section entitled **Recommendations** and includes a firm recommendation to retain all existing CRCs, that charges for wood and rubble should be removed, and stronger messaging about the role of waste minimisation.
 - There are a number of specific recommendations in respect of improving kerbside recycling performance and set out an argument for improving the work delivered jointly with the district and boroughs via the Surrey Environmental Partnership (SEP).
 - The final tranche of recommendations look at scope for delivering operational and cost improvements by developing services for third parties, such as local businesses and other public sector organisations, such as academy schools.
5. Section 7 of the WTG report sets out a limited number of specific proposals that would help reduce the overall cost of managing the network of CRCs.
6. The section of the report titled **Discussion** seeks to draw out wider opportunities and challenges the service to be more pro-active in a number of areas including:
- Working with the voluntary sector
 - Working more closely with schools
 - Being prepared for changes being signposted in the DEFRA Resources and Waste Strategy consultation outcomes.

Recommendations

7. The WTG report sets out 12 key recommendations under the following four headings:
- Changes at Community Recycling Centres
 - Scaling up waste reduction, reuse and community composting
 - Raising recycling and its quality
 - Services to Business and other public sector organisations

8. The report also backs up its findings by exploring best practice across four case studies covering: bicycle refurbishment, furniture reuse, community composting and 'baby bank' reuse.

Conclusions

9. The Waste Task Group has published a report setting out a series of recommendations, and advice across a range of key waste management issues that affect both the cost of managing waste and how the County Council and the district and boroughs performs in terms of recycling.
10. The report concludes that the measures, as set out in the WTG recommendations, would ensure that the council's approach to managing waste has a stronger, more environmentally friendly approach based on prioritising waste reduction and reuse. Furthermore, it encourages the council to adopt bolder targets in respect of recycling performance and waste minimisation

Recommendations:

11. To note the recommendations of the findings of the Waste Task Group.

Next steps:

No Further Actions Required.

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Sources/background papers: None

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