

To: Council

Date: 14th April 2014

Report of: Councillor John Tanner, Board Member for Cleaner, Greener Oxford

Title of Report: **Oxfordshire Environment and Waste Partnership**

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To inform members of the work of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership and Oxfordshire Environment Partnership.

Report approved by:

Executive lead member: Councillor John Tanner

Policy Framework: The Corporate Plan

Recommendation:

1. Council is asked to comment on and note the contents of the report.

The role of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership

1. The Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP) is a partnership of county and district councils in Oxfordshire who are working together to continuously improve waste management services within the county. The partnership has operated as a statutory joint committee since April 2007, meaning that the partner councils have made a legally binding commitment to work together on waste management issues.
2. OWP provides a framework to enable joint working between the partner authorities on waste matters. The purpose of the Joint Committee is to carry out the strategic, financial and operational functions set out below and in doing so to discharge, on behalf of the partner authorities, their statutory responsibilities for waste management.
3. The OWP Joint Committee meets four times per year and is chaired by Cllr David Dodds (South Oxfordshire District Council), with chairmanship rotating between partners on an annual basis.

4. The OWP Joint Committee is supported by two employed officers and an officer group structure as outlined below:



5. In Oxfordshire, responsibility for waste management is shared between the county council, which is responsible for waste disposal and the district councils, which have responsibility for collecting household waste. The Joint Committee is responsible for approving and overseeing delivery of actions associated with the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) which was agreed in 2007 and updated 2013.
6. Further information on the partnership can be found in the link below: <http://www.oxfordshirewaste.gov.uk/cms/content/home-page>

The role of the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership

7. The Environment Partnership and Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP) were brought together in 2009 following the review of partnership governance in Oxfordshire. The two partnerships remain distinct but work closely together.
8. The Environment Partnership was formed in 2008 to lead on environmental priorities for the Oxfordshire Partnership.
9. Membership is a loose group comprising the elected members of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, officers and representatives from governmental and nongovernmental agencies. The partnership has no formal decision making powers but individual decisions can be made by each authority's representative.

Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Delivery and Priorities

10. A key responsibility of the OWP Joint Committee has been to oversee the delivery of an Oxfordshire JMWMS. This sets out Oxfordshire's vision for the future of municipal waste management in the county:

A society where everyone tries to prevent waste and see waste materials as a potential resource. Oxfordshire is pursuing a clear vision for sustainable waste management and resource efficiency:

"We will work in partnership to reduce waste and to maximise reuse, recycling and composting. We will treat residual waste before disposal to further recover value and to minimise the environmental impact of managing our waste streams"

11. The JMWMS articulates a number of policies that contribute to the delivery of the vision.

- i. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will encourage the efficient use of resources, reduce consumption and take responsibility for the waste that they produce.
- ii. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will lobby central government to focus on waste as an integral part of sustainable resource management.
- iii. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will help households and individuals to reduce and manage their waste in order to ensure zero growth or better of municipal waste per person per annum.
- iv. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will provide an integrated system of collection and processing of household waste which will achieve, as a minimum:
By 31st March 2020: recycle or compost at least 65% of household waste;
By 31st March 2025: recycle or compost at least 70% of household waste.
- v. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will ensure that recycling facilities and services are available to all residents.
- vi. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will encourage businesses to reduce, reuse and recycle by providing good quality recycling services, information and advice.
- vii. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will minimise waste to landfill and recover energy from non-recyclable waste through the operation of the Ardley Energy from Waste facility. We will seek to landfill no more than 5% of non-recyclable household waste.
- viii. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will provide waste management services for specialised, potentially polluting material streams such as hazardous waste and waste electrical and electronic equipment, which as a minimum meet legislative requirements.
- ix. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, working with the Waste Planning Authority, will ensure that waste facilities are suitably sized and distributed with the aim of minimising the transport of waste. Facilities will be well related to areas of the population, given the environmental and amenity constraints, and the availability of suitable sites.
- x. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will assist the development of local markets for recovered materials.

- xi. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership councils will work together, with local communities, and with our service providers to reduce the environmental and financial costs of waste management.
- xii. Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will seek to improve local environmental quality through effective communications and enforcement activity.

12. To date, OWP's achievements include:

- Reducing the amount of household waste generated by 8%;
- Increasing the amount of household waste recycled and composted from 38.5% in 2006/07 to over 60% in 2011/12;
- Reducing the amount of household waste sent to landfill from 61.4% in 2006/7 to 38% in 2011/12; and
- Obtaining more than £1 million in Performance Reward Grant from Government and working collaboratively to reinvest funds in new waste management services (through the establishment of the OWP New Initiatives Fund).

Funding

13. The OWP has historically been allocated funding through partner contributions from county and district councils, with the majority share of funding coming from the county council. Funding has supported delivery of the JMWMS through employment of two full time officers, along with a programme of environmental education, communications and support for home composting. Table below provides a breakdown of the funding allocation from each authority in 2013/14:

Cherwell District Council	Oxford City Council	Oxfordshire County Council	South Oxfordshire District Council	Vale of White Horse District Council	West Oxfordshire District Council	Total partner contributions
£27,492	£27,492	£137,460	£27,492	£27,492	£27,492	£274,920

14. Oxfordshire County Council informed the OWP chairman in December 2013 that it proposed to cease funding to the partnership from March 2015. County Council contributions makes up 50% of the OWP annual revenue budget and removal of this funding would hence make the agreed OWP budget unaffordable.

15. The withdrawal of funding for OWP was formally agreed at a meeting of Oxfordshire County Council on 18th February 2014.

16. At a meeting of the Oxfordshire Leaders Group on the 30th January 2014, leaders recognised the good work of the OWP over the years and the sustained culture change that had been delivered across the county. However there was a strong view that the formal partnership arrangements through a Joint Statutory Committee are no longer required. It was agreed to:

xiii. Disband the Waste Partnership as a Joint Statutory Committee as soon as possible - this requires all members of the committee to agree this via a report to Cabinet or Executive Board. The annual grant to the partnership will cease from April 2014.

17. In light of the budget cut agreed by County Council on the 18 February 2014 it was formally decided to terminate the agreement under which the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership is constituted and close down the partnership at the OWP Joint Committee on the 4th April 2014.

18. It was agreed that informal arrangements to ensure partnership working should continue as follows:

- the officers' strategy group shall continue to meet regularly;
- the Cabinet/Executive members with responsibility for waste and environmental matters shall continue to meet at least twice per year.

Recycling Credits

19. Oxfordshire County Council remains as the disposal authority. In order to incentivise sustainable behaviour and avoid landfill of valuable waste streams Recycling Credits are provided to collections authorities such as the City Council. The County Council will continue to distribute recycling credits to districts and the City Council. In 2013/14 the approximate value of these £550k.

Oxfordshire Environment Partnership Future

20. Following on from the decisions of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership on the 4th April 2014, the environment Partnership resolved:

- that the six local authorities continue to work together in partnership to reduce waste and carbon dioxide emissions;
- that the Environment Partnership be maintained in its existing format;
- that the waste commitments drawn from the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy be included within its remit;
- that the Environment Partnership meet at least every six months.

21. There remains the potential for a co-ordinating and campaigning role between the district councils to ensure efficient use of resources to ensure non duplication of campaign material, for example, such as 'love food, hate waste' and 'Refashion'. However, this work has no resources provided to it at present.

22. It has been agreed to draw up a new agreement as to how the revised Environment Partnership will function. It is expected this will be presented at its next meeting on the 24th October 2014.

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Further information can be found on the web site link below.

<http://www.oxfordshirewaste.gov.uk/cms/content/home-page>

Version number: 1**Annex 1****Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Joint Committee members:**

Chair – Councillor David Dodds	South Oxfordshire District Council
Councillor David Harvey	West Oxfordshire District Council
Councillor Nigel Morris	Cherwell District Council
Councillor David Nimmo-Smith	Oxfordshire County Council
Councillor John Tanner	Oxford City Council
Councillor Reg Waite	Vale of White Horse District Council