

## BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**This matter is a Key Decision within the council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan**

**Report of the Place  
Executive Director**

### **Review of the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan**

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 This paper seeks to establish a clear way forward on how the future planning of waste will be addressed on a cross-boundary basis through joint working of the city region planning authorities.
- 1.2 Waste planning policies in South Yorkshire need to be reviewed and updated to reflect changes to government legislation and guidance, new targets and address shortfalls in provision. Otherwise, there is a high risk that emerging local plans will be found unsound following independent examination. This paper proposes that Leaders agree that a South Yorkshire Joint Waste Plan is prepared
- 1.3 This report seeks approval to prepare a South Yorkshire-wide joint waste plan. This essentially would involve reviewing and updating the existing policies and evidence base from Sheffield's Core Strategy and the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan with assistance from our city region partners including county councils in Derbyshire and Nottingham and other neighbouring authorities.

#### **2. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that approval is given to:**

- 2.1. **Prepare a South Yorkshire wide Joint Waste Plan working collaboratively with Rotherham, Doncaster and Sheffield.**
- 2.2 **Develop a Memorandum of Understanding to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Place.**
- 2.2. **Update the Local Development Scheme to reflect the commitment to prepare a South Yorkshire-wide Joint Waste Plan.**

#### **3. Introduction**

- 3.1 The Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (adopted in March 2012) currently provides planning waste policies and allocation of specific sites for waste recycling, treatment and disposal facilities. It is nearing its

review date and an approach is needed to agree how it should be reviewed. This will need to be agreed to show how we are keep waste plans up-to-date in forthcoming local plan examinations.

- 3.2 This report sets out the need for a review of existing waste policies and the options for how the existing Joint Waste Plan should be updated. The starting point for this will be to develop a Memorandum of Understanding, which would have to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Place. Once agreed, it will be necessary to update the Local Development Scheme to provide indicative timescales for preparation, submission and adoption of a new Joint Waste Plan.
- 3.3 Waste management is a cross-boundary matter and requires careful coordination and cooperation between local authorities across the Sheffield city region. Government guidance stipulates that local authorities can either prepare joint waste plans or incorporate policies on waste within a single local plan. Existing waste planning policies are now largely out-of-date and predate the latest national planning policy and legislation.
- 3.4 Government guidance also states that local authorities should work jointly and collaboratively to collect and share data and information, taking account of waste arisings across neighbouring planning authority areas and the government's latest capacity forecasts.
- 3.5 Dealing with waste is increasingly recognised as an important aspect of the economy providing jobs and resources and, as environmental controls improve, there are fewer negative aspects compared with the traditional ways of dealing with waste.
- 3.6 Sheffield City Council is also preparing a new local plan which will eventually replace the current adopted Core Strategy on which Sheffield's waste policies are currently based.
- 3.7 If adopted, a South Yorkshire Joint Waste Plan would have the status of a development plan document and sit alongside each authority's local plan. It would set out policies to guide decisions regarding the location, use and distribution of waste management facilities across South Yorkshire over the period to 2032/2033. These policies would then be the starting point for making decisions on planning applications.

#### **4 Proposal & Justification**

- 4.1 In South Yorkshire, waste planning policies (including the supporting evidence base) need reviewing and updating to take account of:
  - Recent changes to government policy and legislation (i.e. the introduction of the National Planning Policy for Waste; the revocation of site waste management plans as a legal requirement; the introduction of the new Waste Management Plan for England etc);

- New and more ambitious targets (recycling, disposal and landfill diversion) which are currently due to be enacted through European legislation, as part of the move towards a more competitive circular economy where the value of goods and services are maximised ;
  - Cross-boundary flows of waste, following the recent opening/expansion of regionally significant facilities (e.g. Ferrybridge multi-fuel plant in Knottingley and Bernard Road energy-from-waste plant in Sheffield);
  - The gradual rise in the production of waste arisings since the recession which exceed previous forecasts;
  - The actions/targets from the emerging Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Joint Waste Management Strategy (which sets out a target of reusing, recycling and recover energy from 95% of South Yorkshire's waste);
  - The recent closure of major waste facilities such as the Sterecycle recycling site in Rotherham and Parkwood landfill site in Sheffield;
  - The recent opening of major municipal waste facilities (e.g. recycling and treatment at Manvers, Bolton Road and waste transfer plant at Kirk Sandall, Doncaster) and planning permissions (e.g. waste wood energy plants in Barnsley and Rotherham);
  - The ambitious growth targets and priorities set out in the Sheffield City Region Growth Plan which provides challenges and opportunities to minimise the use of natural resources and waste and maximise the recycling and economic re-use of these resources;
  - The lack of progress with regard to the delivery of commercial and industrial waste recycling and treatment facilities such as the Doncaster Energy from Waste Project (leading to a potential shortfall in future capacity); and
  - Recent evidence which suggests that the Sheffield city region faces a significant decline in landfill capacity, following the closure of disposal sites (e.g. Croft Farm, Erin and Parkwood Springs) and the Environment Agency's ban on granting waste licences in the groundwater aquifers (e.g. Barnsdale Bar, Warmsworth Quarry and Sutton Quarry) and recent rise in landfill tax .
- 3.2 By law, local authorities must ensure that waste planning policies within local plans are regularly monitored and kept up-to-date. This will give greater certainty to both the waste industry and communities about where waste facilities will be located. Government guidance states that a review should usually be carried out at least every 5 years (i.e. 2017 for the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan).
- 3.3 South Yorkshire's authorities have pledged to work together to monitor and review the capacity of waste management facilities (including the availability of landfill sites). The Joint Waste Plan sets out a commitment to review municipal, commercial and industrial waste capacity targets on a 5 or 6 yearly

basis (2015, 2021 and 2026). Any review will need to coincide with the new plan period (up to 2032/2033).

#### **4. Progress to Date**

- 5.1 As part of the government's duty to cooperate requirement, waste planning authorities within Sheffield city region (including Derbyshire and Nottingham county councils) set up a working group to discuss matters relating to the cross-boundary movement of waste across the city region. In March a report from the working group outlining headline matters relating to the review of existing waste management policies was presented to SCR heads of planning who recommended preparing a Joint South Yorkshire Waste Plan. The County Councils will retain or produce their own waste plans but will be involved with the South Yorkshire plan through the duty to co-operate requirement.
- 5.2 In June SCR Chief Executives agreed with the recommendation made by SCR Heads of Planning subject to obtaining formal endorsement from each of the South Yorkshire authorities.

#### **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 Should the recommendations in this report be approved officers will work with officers in Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield in preparing a Memorandum of Understanding. As part of this it will be decided how the workload is to be divided amongst the local authorities in terms of whether one authority takes the lead on the whole process or whether each authority leads on a specific aspect.

#### **6. Consideration of alternative approaches**

- 6.1 There is a clear need to update the Joint Waste Plan but three alternative options exist to complete this work based on the new city region geography. These are as follows with the reasons for discounting them also explained:

| Option   | Reason for discounting  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1 Review the Barnsley, Doncaster Joint Waste Plan</b></p>              | <p>Excluding Sheffield would potentially result in a lack of integration between plans and in turn could result in inconsistent decision making. Waste planning is acknowledged to be a sub-regional/cross boundary issue and as Sheffield have expressed a willingness to be involved, we would find it difficult to demonstrate we are complying with the Duty to Cooperate if we excluded them.</p>                  |
| <p><b>2 No review – “do nothing scenario”</b></p>                            | <p>This option would be contrary to national policy and legislation. Capacity targets need reviewing and it is important to recognise cross boundary movements in the new plan. If the plan is deemed out-of-date, there would be a risk of poorly located planning permissions and again, it is likely we would be deemed to have failed to comply with the duty to cooperate.</p>                                     |
| <p><b>3 Produce a joint waste plan covering other authorities in SCR</b></p> | <p>County councils (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) are preparing separate waste plans so to include them would result in the potential for overlap and duplication. There is no previous precedent for a joint plan covering such a large area primarily because it would be more resource intensive and would involve longer lead-in times given the number of authorities involved and their separate protocols.</p> |

## **7. Implications for Barnsley**

- 7.1 Given the stage we are at in respect of the Local Plan, we have limited resources at present to undertake such a review. However, we have had experience preparing a waste plan jointly and there would be capacity to utilise this once the Local Plans is adopted.
- 7.2 Given that we already have a joint waste plan covering Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham we already are not starting the work afresh. Capacity forecasting is an on-going process and much of the existing evidence can be updated and amended to reflect the most recent information available.
- 7.3 By working together and sharing resources through a single process, the four councils of South Yorkshire have an opportunity to deliver significant cost savings and efficiencies over the lifetime of the project.
- 7.4 Municipal waste management teams (including BDR Waste Partnership) could also lend support and assistance. In terms of capacity forecasts there may be benefits in sharing costs on capacity forecasts that are beneficial to both the planning and waste forecasts in the future.

## **8. Implications for local people / service users**

- 8.1 Households in Barnsley Rotherham, Doncaster and Sheffield produce over a million tonnes of waste each year. The Joint Waste Plan will address waste needs at a sub-regional level providing for coordinated and planned waste facilities. The plan will help establish new ways to assemble, collect, re-cycle, treat and dispose of waste to address long term needs as landfill space decreases and disposal becomes increasingly more expensive. The plan will, in partnership with the private sector, drive toward cleaner and more efficient

methods such as waste reduction, composting, recycling and energy recovery, ultimately achieving the most sustainable option for Barnsley and the region. The plan will benefit not only the citizens of Barnsley, but also Rotherham, Doncaster and Sheffield too taking forward the recently agreed South Yorkshire Waste Strategy.

## **9. Financial implications**

- 9.1 Consultation on the financial implications has taken place with colleagues in Financial Services on behalf of the Director of Finance, Assets and I.T.
- 9.2 The anticipated costs associated with preparing a South Yorkshire-wide plan can be broken down as follows.
- Community engagement and consultation.
  - Preparation of the evidence base (including the costs associated with the commissioning of consultants and studies to determine future capacity forecasts).
  - Public examination. This includes costs associated with hiring an independent planning inspector and programme officer to support the examination.
- 9.3 The initial estimate for how much each authority should contribute is £75k over a period of 2-3 years. These costs will be contained within the existing resources allocated for the submission, examination and adoption of the Local Plan.
- 9.4 The financial implications to this report are summarised in the attached Appendix A.

## **10. Employee implications**

- 10.1 There are no employee implications arising from this report.

## **11. Communications implications**

- 11.1 There are communications implications arising from this report. Communications support will be required in preparing and disseminating press releases and dealing with social media.

## **12. Community Strategy and the Council's Performance Management Framework**

- 12.1 Public consultation will be carried out in accordance with the revised Statement of Community Involvement which sets out how local people and stakeholders can engage in, and influence, planning decisions. Therefore it supports the corporate priority of people achieving their potential.

## **13. Promoting Equality & Diversity and Social Inclusion**

- 13.1 The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement which acknowledges that some support or

reasonable adjustments will be necessary for some groups such as preparing information in accessible formats or meeting people face to face in small groups. There will be a need to liaise with the network of Equality Forums that facilitate engagement with some of the diverse groups who have historically been harder to involve.

**14. Tackling Health Inequalities**

- 14.1 There are no direct matters of relevance arising from this report but a Health Impact Assessment will be produced and made available when preparing the Joint Waste Plan.

**15. Climate Change & Sustainable Energy Act 2006**

- 15.1 There are no direct matters of relevance arising from this report but the emphasis of the NPPF is to promote sustainable development and the Joint Waste Plan must provide the evidence that proposals take account of the impact on the environment.

**16. Risk Management Issues**

- 16.1 There is a risk that the Joint Waste Plan could be found unsound, especially if the evidence base underpinning the plan is not robust. In order to reduce this risk sufficient provision will be made to commission robust evidence.

**17. Conservation of Biodiversity**

- 17.1 No direct biodiversity implications arising from this report.

**18. List of Appendices**

Existing Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan

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| Office Contact: Joe Jenkinson | Telephone No: 2588 | Date: 01/11/2016 |
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