

Item No. 13.	Classification: Open	Date: 7 March 2023	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Waste Management Strategy - Extension to 2025	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Catherine Rose, Leisure, Parks, Streets and Clean Air	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR CATHERINE ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, PARKS, STREETS AND CLEAN AIR.

The Council's Waste Management Strategy 2003 to 2021 has come to an end. The most significant outcome of this strategy has been the establishment of the Waste PFI Contract 2008 to 2033 that led to the construction of the Integrated Waste Management Facility at Devon Street, which came into operation in 2011. The Waste PFI contract has delivered significant improvements in the management of household waste in Southwark, with high waste recovery rates now being achieved alongside very low levels of waste being disposed of to landfill which is the most environmentally harmful form of disposal.

Looking forward, one of the main influence on waste management strategy will be the government's Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018) which focusses on moving towards a circular economy and eliminating avoidable waste by 2050. In connection with the government's strategy three significant consultations have been undertaken which are expected to lead to new regulations and obligations being imposed on waste collection and disposal authorities that have the potential to fundamentally change the way that waste is collected and disposed of. The details of the new regulations and obligations are currently being awaited.

The Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 will provide time for the details of the new regulations and obligations to emerge and for the council to consider how these will affect existing waste collection and disposal arrangements in Southwark, including how they will affect the Waste PFI contract. Where changes to waste collection and disposal arrangements are required these will be incorporated into a new waste management strategy from 2026 along with changes driven by the council's own local plans and priorities, in particular the Climate Change Strategy and the ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Based on the most recently published data, Southwark has the highest household waste recycling rate of any inner London borough. Nevertheless, it is possible to increase the recycling rate in Southwark provided that existing

recycling collection services are used correctly by more households for the full range of recyclable materials. Therefore, the priority for the Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 will be to increase the household waste recycling rate achieved in Southwark, primarily by ensuring that existing collection services are used to the maximum level possible. This will be achieved through the implementation of twelve specific projects each with the capability of increasing the tonnage of recyclable waste that is placed into recycling collection streams and minimising that which is lost by being placed into the residual collection stream. The detail of these projects are set out in the Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation for the Cabinet

1. That Cabinet approve the Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025.

Recommendation for the Leader of the Council

2. That the Leader of the Council delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Environment, Neighbourhoods and Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks, Streets and Clean Air to approve the actions that will be required to implement the projects set out in the Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The London Borough of Southwark is a waste management Unitary Authority which places statutory responsibilities on the council to arrange for both the collection and disposal of all municipal waste within its area. The council's Waste Management Strategy 2003 to 2021, which set out how these responsibilities would be met, has come to an end. The most notable outcome from the 2003-2021 strategy has been the construction of the Integrated Waste Management Facility at Devon Street under the Waste PFI contract which commenced in 2008 and runs until 2033.
4. It is necessary to set out and adopt a waste strategy to take the council forward, not only to provide a defined strategic plan to achieve statutory targets for waste, but also to ensure the council meets its objective to become a carbon neutral borough by 2030 by contributing towards the delivery of the Climate Strategy and Action Plan. In considering this it must be noted that there have been substantial changes in the waste management sector since 2003 and, more recently, a number of new legislative and policy drivers have been introduced. Future options need to be considered in the context of emerging changes to the national policy landscape.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. The Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018) is the long term national waste strategy for the UK. Under the national waste strategy a number of proposals for major change have been consulted upon which will have significant impacts on the waste sector and on the responsibilities of waste collection and disposal authorities such as Southwark, these are as follows;
 - Extended producer responsibility – this will require the packaging industry to pay for the cost of managing packaging waste and to distribute this funding to councils and others to fund the system of waste management and recycling;
 - Deposit return schemes – this will require drinks containers to carry a deposit that can be redeemed by the consumer;
 - Consistency of collections – this will require the collection of a wider range of materials by local authorities, including the collection of food waste at least once a week from all households, along with separate collection streams for certain materials to maintain quality.
6. Many of the changes that may be implemented under these proposals will require significant changes in the current contract arrangements that councils have in place. This could carry significant cost and take some time to implement. While the consultation proposals make reference to this, the responses reflect the need for realistic assessments of how quickly long term contracts can be changed, and the likely costs of doing so.
7. The Council is committed to improving services to residents and recognises that there is a particular need to do this on Southwark Council housing estates where 40% of Southwark residents live and 85% of which are housed in tower blocks where existing waste storage facilities may be limited and making alterations to improve these may be difficult or costly. There are no plans in this iteration of the Strategy to make significant changes to existing waste collection services, and proposed actions to increase recycling included in this document will take account of existing circumstances and challenges in order to minimise the impact on residents.
8. It should be noted that some changes to waste management services in England are being considered at a national level, with changes in legislation expected to progress during the period of this strategy extension, although timetables for change have not yet been confirmed by the relevant government department. In the event that new statutory requirements for waste services are introduced nationally, the council will naturally be expected to comply. The Strategy seeks engagement with relevant stakeholders to adapt to potential changes where possible, including major landlords such as the council's own Housing Directorate and Registered Social Landlords, and other stakeholders.
9. This Strategy recognises the requirement to align with other strategies on Southwark Council housing estates, such as fire risk and pest control, and

the positive impact the waste collection service and arrangements can have on these. We continue to seek funding and potential changes as a result of the government's Resources and Recycling Strategy for England (which become a statutory requirement) may provide the opportunity and funding to make changes. In the absence of such funding, any significant changes, especially changes that would require capital investment, are expected to be deferred for consideration under the long term strategy due to take effect from 2026.

10. As part of this strategy, a cross Council approach will continue to seek opportunities for trials of service changes in order to improve recycling at locations and provide evidence for wider changes.
11. Whilst some legislation linked to the Resources and Waste Strategy for England has been enacted already, the exact requirements and future funding streams for any changes that need to be made are not yet clear. It is expected that detailed requirements will be developed in the next two to three years by the government, which will enable the council to introduce the necessary changes at the appropriate time. In the meantime there is a significant level of uncertainty about the specific nature and impact that the changes will have on local authority collection and disposal arrangements, which makes it difficult to meaningfully set out and adopt a new medium to long term waste strategy for Southwark at this time.
12. In order to address the current position, it is proposed that an extension to the Waste Management Strategy 2003 to 2021 is adopted for the period until 2025. Appendix A attached to this report sets out the proposed Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025. This has been developed to ensure that the council takes actions in the short term that are within its control to drive up the recycling rate in Southwark and includes details of twelve specific projects that are designed to achieve this. These actions focus mainly on how the council can maximise the amount of recycling that is captured from the full range of existing household recycling collection services that are already provided, principally by effecting behaviour changes that will lead to more recyclable materials being placed into the correct containers.
13. During the period of the extension until 2025 the council expects to receive clarity from the government on the major changes to waste collection and disposal arrangements that are required to be made, and will develop a new long term waste strategy to begin in 2026 that incorporates the requirements of those major changes. Therefore, it is recommended that the Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 is approved for the interim period until a new medium to long term waste strategy can be developed. The work towards developing a new long term waste strategy to begin in 2026 will be undertaken alongside the actions for the twelve projects in the strategy extension during the next three years.

Waste Management Strategy - Extension 2025

14. In 2019, the council issued a climate emergency declaration to 'do all it can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030'. In 2021 the council approved its Climate Change Strategy which seeks the development of a more circular economy, reduced impacts of transport including for waste collection, alongside sustainability and carbon reduction projects throughout all council services.
15. The Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 focusses on actions that are designed to increase the recycling rate that will be delivered alongside a range of projects within the council's Climate Change Strategy. The vision of this Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 is as follows:

“To work towards a circular economy and contribute to achieving net zero carbon by 2030 in Southwark. This means managing municipal waste within Southwark in accordance with the waste hierarchy to drive service improvements and efficiencies whilst minimising environmental impacts“

16. This vision is supported by specific strategic objectives and a range of projects to deliver them which will be carried forward from the original waste management strategy to the extended date of 2025. A total of twelve project areas are set out in the draft Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025. These together constitute a programme of action that is intended to increase the recycling rate through a combination of information provision, policy changes, service improvements, efficiency improvements and expansions of existing activities. These will require new approaches from residents and other stakeholders, including housing providers, managers, registered social landlords and businesses. Each of the projects will be further developed with more detailed proposals for Cabinet Member approval to expand current activity or initiate new initiatives. Regular programme reports will be made to set out the progress of the actions that are agreed and taken forward.
17. The Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 is ambitious and sets challenging targets for the period until 2025, when a new long term waste management strategy will replace it. The targets in the Waste Management Strategy - Extension to 2025 for recycling, composting and reuse, aim to increase recycling performance for Southwark from 2021/22 of around 35% recycling rate, to 40% by 2025, and 50% by 2030.

Policy framework implications

18. The main influences on the Waste Management Strategy Extension are as follows:
 - London Environment Strategy (2018)
 - 25 Year Environment Plan (2018)
 - Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018)

- Integrated Waste Management Contract (2008 – 2033)
- Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency and target to be carbon neutral by 2030.

London Environment Strategy (2018)

19. The Mayor’s London Environment Strategy covers actions around waste to make the disposable economy a thing of the past in London and to make London a zero waste city. Targets in the London Environment Strategy include no biodegradable waste to landfill by 2026 and 65% of London’s municipal waste recycled by 2030. The Mayor’s London Environment Strategy will have a significant influence on waste strategy going forward. This is because London boroughs have a general duty to comply with it and because the Mayor must be consulted upon any waste infrastructure that is planned, the use of land apportioned for waste treatment and disposal, and the tender and award of new waste contracts.

25 Year Environment Plan (2018)

20. The government’s 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) has an over-arching goal for improving the environment within a generation and leaving it in a better state than we found it. It includes ambitions to minimise waste, reuse materials as much as possible and manage materials at the end of their life to minimise the impact on the environment.

Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018)

21. The government’s Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018) is linked to the 25 Year Environment Plan. This strategy sets out how we will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. It also sets out to eliminate avoidable plastic waste over the lifetime of the 25 Year Plan, doubling resource productivity, and eliminating avoidable waste of all kinds by 2050.
22. In connection with this strategy three significant consultations have been undertaken, as set out in paragraph 5 above. The implementation of new regulations and obligations that are proposed in these consultations individually and collectively have the potential to fundamentally change the way that waste is collected and disposed of from around late 2023 onwards.

Integrated Waste Management Contract (2008 – 2033)

23. The Integrated Waste Management Contract (IWMC) sets out a range of strategic targets for landfill, recycling and recovery. The targets for landfill and recovery are being met. The estimate of recycling performance for 2021/22 is 35%. Although this recycling performance is amongst the best for inner London authorities, further improvement is required to reach the target of 40% recycling by 2025. The Waste Management Strategy –

Extension 2025 identifies twelve projects that are designed to improve the recycling rate. It is important to note that the improvement of the recycling rate relies in large part on good performance by the waste contractor, Veolia. There are established contract monitoring and management arrangements in place and as part of this there is and will continue to be a specific focus on providing the best possible waste collection, treatment and communication services to improve recycling performance.

Southwark Climate Change Strategy & Southwark 2030

24. Carbon emissions from the treatment and disposal of waste are a contributor towards climate change. Success in reducing the amount of waste generated in Southwark and ensuring that as much waste as possible is reused or recycled, rather than sent to energy from waste or landfill, will have a direct positive impact by reducing carbon emissions.
25. The operation of waste collection and treatment functions make a contribution to the council's carbon emissions. There are opportunities to change the way that operations are performed that can reduce these carbon emissions, for example by using electric fleet. Therefore, the council's declaration of a climate emergency and target to be carbon neutral by 2030 will both have an influence on the waste management strategy going forward.
26. The council is currently consulting on the development of a shared vision for Southwark 2030 to make the borough fairer, greener and safer. Although the results of the consultation will not be available until later this year, it is anticipated that the challenging target of 50% recycling by 2030 in the Waste Management Strategy - Extension to 2025 will closely align with and be an important part of delivering the vision for Southwark 2030.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

27. There are no negative community impacts arising from the proposal to adopt the Waste Management Strategy - Extension to 2025.
28. During the period until 2025 the implementation of actions in the twelve project areas set out in the extension will require new approaches from residents and other stakeholders. Prior to the implementation of each project the potential community impacts will be considered and, where necessary, actions will be taken to address these in the most appropriate way.
29. It should be noted that some types of housing can be more difficult to service, including social housing estates, flat above shops and other properties with restricted space – especially older properties which have been built to outdated design specifications. Actions in these types of properties are expected to focus on maximising use and take up of existing

services to recycle by improving services, communication and capacity, with no major changes to existing services in the short term.

30. The development of the long term waste management strategy after 2025 will review and address the longer term needs for investment and improvement of waste collection/storage infrastructure to deliver improved services to residents in future. This will review alternative methods of service delivery and investment needs to identify long term solutions. The long term waste management strategy will be subject to detailed consultation with affected stakeholders, including residents and property managers.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

31. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in relation to the Waste Management Strategy - Extension to 2025 to determine whether protected groups could be adversely and/or disproportionately impacted. Based on this assessment there are no negative equalities impacts arising from the proposal. The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached to this report at Appendix B.
32. The Strategy seeks to improve the household recycling rate in Southwark and this includes increasing the level of reuse of unwanted items that still have a useful life, for example textiles and furniture. The council promotes reuse by through the separation of household furniture that is fit for reuse at the Household Waste Reuse and Recycling Centre at Devon Street, which is collected and made available through British Heart Foundation shops, and by signposting residents to third sector organisations such as charity shops for all kinds of other items that can be reused. The availability of more items for reuse at lower cost than new items can benefit everyone, in particular residents who are socio-economically disadvantaged, which can help households to manage during the cost of living crisis.
33. During the period until 2025 the implementation of actions in the twelve project areas set out in the extension will require new approaches from residents and other stakeholders. Prior to the implementation of each project specific Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken to determine whether residents within the protected characteristics groups would be adversely affected and, where necessary, actions will be taken to address any impacts in the most appropriate way.

Health impact statement

34. There are no negative health implications associated with the proposed Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025.

Climate change implications

35. In March 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency. This declaration included the intention for the council to “do all it can to make the Borough

carbon neutral by 2030". It also committed the council to 'develop a strategy, working with local stakeholders'.

36. Carbon emissions from the treatment and disposal of waste are a contributor towards climate change. There are opportunities to change the way that operations are performed that can reduce these carbon emissions, for example by using electric fleet.
37. Moving towards a circular economy will have significant benefits to the environment, communities and the local economy. Circular economies use less energy and non-renewable resources, and produce less pollution, waste and greenhouse gases.
38. Moving waste up the waste hierarchy by ensuring a greater quantity of waste is re-used as opposed to being disposed of as residual waste, contributes to the council's commitment to mitigate the impacts of climate change by reducing the carbon footprint of the council's own waste management services.
39. The implementation of the twelve projects set out in the draft Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 will provide the opportunity to work positively with a range of internal services and external stakeholders to take tangible actions that can directly and measurably reduce carbon emissions in Southwark through waste reduction, recycling and reuse. This will include internal services such as Housing, Facilities Management, Parks and Planning. It will also include key external stakeholders such as residents, Property Managers, Registered Social Landlords, schools and environmental interest groups.
40. This will build on a range of actions that are already being implemented to reduce waste and increase recycling in Southwark, such as;
 - Trial food waste collection from blocks
 - Improvement of recycling infrastructure on estates
 - More textile and small waste electrical item recycling with expansion of on-street banks
 - Focused communication campaigns such as the One Bag a Week challenge.
41. Copies of the annual service information leaflets provided to street properties and communal blocks in the borough are shown at appendices C1 and C2 respectively.

Resource implications

42. There are no staffing, vehicle, plant or accommodation implications arising directly from this proposal. All costs connected with this proposal will be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

43. The implementation of the projects contained within the Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025 may require some additional staffing to manage changes. Any staffing costs will be identified within project plans when they are presented for approval ahead of implementation.

Legal implications

44. The Waste Strategy is a non-statutory document that details the Council's priorities and sets the future direction for waste and recycling across the borough. The council has a variety of legal duties and powers in relation to waste and recycling.
45. The proposals in the Waste Management Strategy - Extension to 2025 are in line with current legislation and meet the requirements of other important policies such as the London Mayor's Environment Strategy. They are also compatible with what new legislation is expected to include and are intended to assist the council in meeting new statutory requirements beyond 2025.

Financial implications

46. There are no immediate financial or budget implications arising from this proposal.
47. The majority of proposals to deliver higher recycling rates require changes in resident and other stakeholder behaviour, rather than in services delivered. These changes will generally require policy decisions rather than additional funding. Reaching a higher recycling rate will ultimately depend on requiring or persuading residents and other stakeholders to use existing services differently.
48. Some investment may be needed to support behavioural change activities through targeted communication campaigns and would be subject to detailed project proposals which will be presented to the Cabinet Member for approval.
49. The financial implications of changes set out in the UK Resources & Waste Strategy include many new recycling obligations for local authorities that cannot be fully quantified until the exact requirements of new legislation and associated government support to Local Authorities to deliver them are known. When further details are known and government guidance updated, a detailed assessment of the financial implications will be undertaken and will be incorporated into the medium to long term waste strategy which will be brought to Cabinet for approval.

Consultation

50. The twelve projects identified in the Waste Management Strategy - Extension to 2025 focus mainly on how the council can maximise the

amount of recycling that is captured from the full range of existing household recycling collection services that are already provided. This will be achieved principally by effecting behaviour changes that will lead to more recyclable materials being placed into the correct containers, and also by the expansion to more properties of some existing household recycling collection services that are not already universally provided – such as food waste collections from blocks of flats. Where any actions that are intended to effect behaviour change or to expand existing recycling collection services require significant change or adaptation for groups of residents, consultation with those groups will be undertaken to ensure their views are considered.

51. During the period until 2025 the council will develop a new medium to long term Waste Management Strategy. This will include actions to be implemented within the life of the current Waste PFI Contract up to 2033 that are required to comply with the UK Resources & Waste Strategy. It will also outline preparations to be made for waste collection and disposal arrangements from 2033 onwards. The new medium to long term Waste Management Strategy will be subject to full public consultation.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Head of Procurement

52. There are no procurement implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance

53. This report seeks the Cabinet's approval to the Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025. The development of the Waste Management Strategy is an executive function and as a strategic policy is delegated to the Cabinet to approve in accordance with Article 3B of the council's constitution .
54. There are no significant legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report, but the Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance and her staff will provide advice to officers on any legal and governance issues arising during the implementation of the projects set out in the strategy, approval of which the Leader is asked to delegate to the Strategic Director of Environment, Neighbourhoods and Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks, Streets and Clean Air.
55. The Cabinet's attention is drawn to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED General Duty) under the Equality Act 2010, which requires public bodies to have regard, when making decisions, to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The Cabinet is specifically referred to the community,

equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts statement at paragraphs 27-34, and the Equality Impact Assessment (at Appendix B) setting out the consideration that has been given to equalities issues, which the Cabinet should give careful consideration to when approving the recommendations in this report. The PSED General duty is a continuing duty and as noted in paragraph 33, specific EIAs will be undertaken prior to the implementation of individual projects.

56. There is no statutory requirement for the council to have a waste management strategy. There is therefore no statutory requirement to consult on these changes which relate to an extension to the current strategy. The report clarifies that in the event of any proposed actions that are intended to require significant change or adaptation for groups of residents, consultation with those groups will be undertaken. There will also be a full public consultation when the new waste management strategy is produced.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (FC22/042)

57. This report requests approval from Cabinet for the extension of the Waste Management Strategy to 2025; and that the Leader of the Council delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Environment, Neighbourhoods and Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks, Streets and Clean Air to approve the actions that will be required to implement the projects set out in the Waste Management Strategy. Full details are contained within the main body of the report.
58. The strategic director also notes that the magnitude of any additional financial implications arising from the strategy cannot be quantified at this stage. When further details are known and government guidance updated, a detailed assessment of the financial implications will be undertaken and submitted as part of the annual budget planning process for approval.
59. The strategic director also notes the potential of additional investment to support behavioural change activities through targeted communication campaigns. Costs associated with these activities are expected to be funded from earmarked reserves for the Waste PFI.
60. Officer time to effect recommendations will be contained within existing budgeted revenue resources.

Director of Resident Services

61. There is no immediate impact on the current waste management schedule. However, the action plan will enable the Council, as one, to prepare for any changes that may result from government legislation in the future.
62. Over 40% of households in Southwark live in a council property either as a tenant or a homeowner. Resident Services and colleagues in Environment

and Leisure will work to put in place a communication strategy that will help to educate all residents regarding waste management behaviour and impacts, to encourage the bringing about of behavioural change around how the service is used i.e. using the service correctly, placing recyclable items into the appropriate recycling containers and how it helps the waste collection service.

63. It is also important to note for the purpose of this strategy that the structure of some of estate properties impacts on waste and recycling for collection. There is a need for a more collaborative decision on how to manage the problems this poses to minimise the impact on residents and the environment and moving forward, as one council, Housing and Environment & Leisure colleagues will develop effective new ways of working and modern waste management solutions on estates
64. Resident Services have supported community-led activities through, for example, the recycling bins on Brandon Estate via the Great Estates pilot. Future work across the wider borough will look to implement the success of this more widely, as part of our delivery plan which in the long run will have a positive impact on managing waste.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark Waste Management Strategy – 2003 to 2021	Waste & Cleansing Service 43 Devon Street SE15 1AL	Michael McNicholas 020 7525 3449
Link: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/waste-strategy-and-policy/waste-strategy-for-southwark		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	Waste Management Strategy – Extension to 2025
Appendix B	Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix C1 & C2	Annual service leaflets for street properties and communal blocks

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Catherine Rose, Leisure, Parks, Streets and Clean Air	
Lead Officer	Matt Clubb, Director of Environment	
Report Author	Michael McNicholas, Head of Waste and Cleansing	
Version	Final	
Dated	23 February 2023	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
List other officers here Housing	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	23 February 2023	