

**The Highland Council**  
**Community Services Committee – August 2015**

Agenda Item	<b>14</b>
Report No	<b>COM 42/15</b>

**Waste Management – National Initiatives**

**Report by Director of Community Services**

**Summary**

This report summarises two national initiatives: Waste Brokerage Service, and the outputs from the Zero Waste Taskforce which was jointly led by Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment and Councillor Stephen Hagan, Cosla Spokesperson for Development, Economy and Sustainability. Both initiatives are being worked on at the present time and both may influence Members' view on how and when a strategy for Highland proceeds.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Scotland's Zero Waste Plan was published by government in 2010.
- 1.2 The Plan amongst other things contained challenging national recycling targets, viz:  
  
2013: 50% of household recycled;  
2020: 60% of household waste recycled;  
2025: 70% of all waste recycled.
- 1.3 It is important to note that these targets are not currently set for individual local authorities, but for Scotland generally and are more demanding than the UK (ie Member State) target (set by the Waste Framework Directive of 50% recycling by 2020).
- 1.4 The 2013 target was missed and the expectation is that the 2020 target will also be missed.
- 1.5 In 2012 the Scottish Government passed into law the *Waste (Scotland) Regulations* which transposed parts of the revised Directive (with respect to recycling certain wastes) and which introduced a ban on the landfill of municipal biodegradable waste by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.
- 1.6 Both the Scottish Government and EU have also made it clear their desire to see the creation of a "Circular Economy" where resources (waste) are recovered and recycled back into the chain of utility thereby reducing the depletion of resource and helping with resource security within the EU and creating jobs.

- 1.7 Whilst further announcements on the EU's intentions are expected it has already stated that issues including the following will be in the package:
- Revision of the Waste Framework Directive
  - Revised EU Landfill Directive
  - Review of the Packaging Directive
  - Communication with regards to the impact of including a new bio-waste target
  - Description of the overall approach to the circular economy

1.8 It is with this background in mind that the Scottish Government and Cosla formed a short-term (1 year) Taskforce with the objective of finding ways to improve recycling rates across Scotland; and the Scottish Government through "Procurement Scotland" initiated work on a Brokerage Service which might be able to aggregate recyclates to a level which might attract re-processors to Scotland, and, to deal more efficiently with residual waste.

## **2. Zero Waste Taskforce**

2.1 The Taskforce held four meetings over the course of the year, the final sitting being in June 2015.

Its terms of reference were:

*The Taskforce will agree a series of recommendations to create the conditions to transform the management of public sector waste into an effective feedstock for an economy that has high community participation in recycling; supports the emergence of new industries; maximises cost benefit to local authorities; and de-risks public and private investments.*

2.2 Updates on the progress of the Taskforce were presented to Cosla's Development Economy and Sustainability (DES) Executive Group.

2.3 The CEO of Inverclyde Council represented the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) on the group.

2.4 The Taskforce drew information from work facilitated by Zero Waste Scotland.

2.5 This included the outcomes of three work-streams:

- Optimising participation in recycling and recycling collections;
- The Circular Economy;
- Managing the Market Interface.

2.6 The Taskforce having completed its term issued a voluntary Charter which is hoped, local authorities will adopt.

2.7 This will be presented to Cosla Members on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

2.8 The Charter will be underpinned by a Code of Practice which is in development at the present time.

2.9 The full press release from the Taskforce can be read at: <http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/new-dawn-recycling-edges-closer>

### **3. Waste Brokerage Service**

3.1 The National Waste Brokerage Service project was initiated in the spring of 2014 by the Scottish Government through its procurement arm: Procurement Scotland.

3.2 The basic functions of the Brokerage Service (ie Workstream 3) will be:

- Sale, treatment and disposal of public sector waste/recyclate;
- Provide critical mass of material to address market inward investment;
- Act as collaboration vehicle to source treatment facilities;

3.3 Procurement Scotland is currently in the process of gathering information on waste and local authority practice.

3.4 It operates through “User Intelligence Groups” one of which is concentrating its efforts on the treatment and disposal of residual waste and the other on reprocessing of recyclables.

3.5 The most recent meeting of the User Intelligence Group took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July. A fourth is planned for late October 2015.

3.6 The current timetable for the Brokerage Service is ambitious with plans to have various contracts in place and available to Councils by mid-2016.

3.7 Councils will not be compelled to use any of the Services offered, and will continue to be able to put their own arrangements in place if the Brokerage Service does not meet individual Council requirements

3.8 However if a Council wishes to take part it has to sign an Agency Agreement (which is signed on behalf of the Council by the Head of Procurement) whereby the Council does commit its waste tonnage to the Brokerage.

3.9 The Agency Agreement would have a Business Case appended to it. This document will be specific to each Council which will include various details such as the risk implications, costs and other resource implications.

3.10 Where a Council commits its tonnage to the Brokerage Service there will be limited opportunities to withdraw, the main one being that the tendered price of the service exceeds the current price (when the Brokerage contracts are in place).

3.11 Otherwise each party to the Agency Agreement has the right (which is normal in contracts) to terminate the agreement giving an appropriate notice period.

#### **4. Conclusions**

- 4.1 Both initiatives detailed above are aimed at improving both the recycling rate and the benefits of recycling to the Scottish economy;
- 4.2 Considerable work remains to be done on both initiatives before the full value of each is realised;
- 4.3 Members will be updated as more information becomes available.

#### **5. Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- 5.2 There are no legal or risk implications associated with this report.
- 5.3 There are no equalities, Gaelic or rural communities implications arising from this report.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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Members are invited to note the contents of the report.
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Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Author: Colin Clark

Background Papers: none