

ADEPT

Association of Directors of
Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport

WASTE GROUP MEETING 14 June 2023, 10:00-12:30

Microsoft Teams Videoconference

NOTES

	Item Description, Notes of Discussion and Actions Agreed	Action Lead
1	Welcome, Apologies	
2	National Infrastructure Assessment – NIA2 Update (Joanna Pearce and Zeinab Shaikh, National Infrastructure Commission) Joanna Pearce and Zeinab Shaikh provided an update on NIA2 having attended the Waste Group meeting in March to take on member authorities' views. NIA2 will make recommendations on the technology, mix, capacity, infrastructure, costs and milestones of getting the waste sector to net zero in a way that increases circularity. Focus is on creating infrastructure pathways to achieve this. Members were invited to give their views on what NIC have so far identified as priority material streams. There was some discussion about inclusion of hazardous waste including paints and solvents and waste containing persistent organic pollutants (POPs). Also hygiene product waste such as nappies and sanitary products. There were some comments about items such as lithium batteries and vapes, and other things that the waste system is still behind the curve on; that it would be good to reverse this where we can, so possibly the focus needs to shift from recycling to a circular economy. JP commented that with new technologies were not always successful so NIC had may need to focus its analysis on established technologies. There was a comment from one member about encouraging greater join up across government policy areas when looking at waste and resources to ensure we are not investing in competing technologies to tackle the same material (e.g. virgin plastics tax encouraging recycling vs subsidies for sustainable aviation fuel projects looking to target same plastics).	

	<p>The final report will be published in October 2023 and the NIC is in the final stages of identifying its recommendations.</p> <p>JP thanked the group for its input and invited members to email herself or Zeinab with any further comments. Their email addresses are:</p> <p>Joanna.Pearce@nic.gov.uk</p> <p>Zeinab.Shaikh@nic.gov.uk</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>Extended Producer Responsibility: an update (Barbara Leach, DEFRA)</p> <p>Barbara Leach gave a presentation updating members on EPR workstream.</p> <p>DEFRA are looking at efficiency and effectiveness; efficient will be defined in the forthcoming regulation as costs as low as reasonably possible, taking into account the nature of the service provided and any factors specific to the local authority or its area.</p> <p>Authorities will be asked to provide data; DEFRA aren't yet in a position to give a clear vision of what will be required, but will let authorities know as soon as possible. If a lot of extra data beyond what is normally collected is required though, authorities will be able to recover the costs of that from the scheme administrator and ultimately from the producers.</p> <p>BL talked about the modelling DEFRA are doing, looking at what else needs to be incorporated into it both for collection authorities (WCAs) and disposal authorities (WDAs). More information on this process will be shared later in the summer.</p> <p>A contractor has been commissioned this week by DEFRA, to help look at the measures, the metrics, KPIs for efficiency and effectiveness for both WCAs and WDAs. It will prepare some guidance, including case studies on what efficiency and effectiveness looks like, specifically focused on packaging.</p> <p>Producers and local authorities are very interested in contributing to this work, and DEFRA has built in time for stakeholder engagement. There will be a webinar which DEFRA will invite as many people who want to come as possible along to (details will be shared soon).</p> <p>DEFRA have been working with WRAP to devise an average gate fee, and are working with WIDP to gain information from authorities. This work is ongoing and DEFRA will share their findings later in the summer.</p> <p>Waste composition – five projects being planned, some UK wide, the first of which has started and looks at the composition of mixed waste at point of entry to treatment and disposal facilities.</p>	

	<p>The next project on that list is street bin waste, which is out to tender at the moment. Following on from that, there will be projects on waste from flats which will be UK wide and kerb-side collected waste in England only because other nations already have good data on that.</p> <p>Then possibly on to HWRCs depending on funding (which is currently running out). Some authorities have done or are doing composition analytics work at HWRCs and may be able to assist DEFRA with this.</p> <p>DEFRA has shared information about the categories it is using for the work being commissioned and piloted currently, but if anybody would like to see these then please email BL at Barbara.Leach@defra.gov.uk</p> <p>WDAs – payments will go to those organisations that have the statutory duties, which means that WDAs will receive payments directly to cover disposal costs. DEFRA likely to base these on typical gate fees for different technologies. Likely to group local authorities together to represent the different technologies being used. Will cover staff and operational costs of being a WDA and of running HWRCs.</p> <p>For further details around the timeframe of the EPR process and more detail on the above, a copy of the slides BL presented to the group will be circulated after the meeting.</p> <p>Action 3.1: Barbara Leach to send Lucinda Boast category details and a spec of the detail DEFRA requires when looking at composition analysis at HWRCs. Lucinda to circulate to the group and members to contact Barbara if they have data which may assist. Lucinda Boast/Barbara Leach</p> <p>Action 3.2: Lucinda Boast to add an item to the forward plan (date to be agreed with Barbara Leach) for a further item to look in more detail at the modelling, about WDA payments in terms of variation by region and size of facility. Lucinda Boast/Barbara Leach</p>	<p>Barbara Leach/ Lucinda Boast</p> <p>Barbara Leach/Lucinda Boast</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Oflog update and Proposed Waste Metrics (Nick Smith and Aimee Wilmott, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)</p> <p>Nick Smith and Aimee Wilmot from DLUHC attended to give an update on proposals for Oflog and proposed waste metrics.</p> <p>Main points of this update were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministers want Oflog to shine a light on councils that perform well and is an opportunity to showcase best practice. - DLUHC are also looking at how to support authorities at earlier juncture to identify risks of failure. - How this fits into devolution also - Oflog will initially focus on bringing together existing data, making it comparable and contextualised, so can better understand the performance of the sector as a whole as well as national trends. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 policy areas to start off (more will follow later in the year), which are adult social care, adult skills, waste management and finance. - Oflog not seeking to add any new responsibilities to local government. - DLUHC have held workshops to develop the metrics and have met with local authorities and sector bodies. Lead Minister also involved and keen to continue this engagement. - Political engagement with council leaders, leaders groups and through Director General Catherine Frances. - Running usability testing on the Oflog data dashboard; internal advisory group established bringing together people from across political spectrum both within and outside the sector. - Intending to include 4 metrics: proportion of household waste sent to recycling; residual non-recycled waste measure; unit cost information; contamination rates and proportion of waste rejected from the amount sent for recycling. <p>Members asked questions as follows:</p> <p>Q: How can organisations like ADEPT be involved in the process of developing useful metrics that everyone can buy into?</p> <p>A: Involvement is welcomed. Any immediate thoughts please contact Nick (Nick.Smith@levellingup.gov.uk) the team are currently developing next tranche of metrics development for launch in the next few weeks. After that there will be a rolling programme of iterations of the metrics and the data explorer, and want to get as broad a range of engagement as possible.</p> <p>Q: Can you explain how the central collection of data will translate into devolved and more localised decision making? How will residents be able to use this information in the process of telling councils at a local level how they want us to deliver services? Otherwise there is a risk Oflog develops into a mechanism for central government to criticise local authorities.</p> <p>A: This is one of the things we need to investigate more, beyond just publishing metrics. Criticism of local authorities is absolutely not the intention in what we are doing.</p> <p>Action 4.1: Steve Palfrey to convene a separate meeting to explore the detail of waste indicators across the sector, to feed back to Nick and the Oflog team. Steve Palfrey</p>	Steve Palfrey
5	<p>DEFRA update and call for evidence on the near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill from 2028 (Tom Parrott, Head of Residual Waste and Infrastructure Policy, DEFRA)</p> <p>Tom Parrott joined the meeting to talk about the recently issued call for evidence on the near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill. Key points were:</p>	

- The aim of the consultation is to try to build DEFRA's evidence base.
- Composition of two primary mixed waste codes was last established in 2011.
- DEFRA keen to get good evidence and feedback so it can ensure any policy measures to deliver near elimination are properly targeted..
- Currently DEFRA is not minded to blanket ban landfilling of biodegradable waste in England; particularly as for certain emergency situations, that wouldn't be possible.
- Looking at policies that can be developed to encourage alternative infrastructure, so investment, as well as moving waste up the waste hierarchy or preventing it to begin with.

Group members asked questions as follows:

Q: With it not being an outright ban, but about policies to drive biodegradable waste away from landfill, can you talk about the kind of policy areas DEFRA is looking at, the kind of interventions government is exploring?

A: Open mind at the moment. We prohibited waste incinerators and landfill operators from accepting separately collected paper, metal, plastic and glass. Our team is exploring whether we should expand to effectively cover all biodegradable waste streams, or potentially all materials that are separately collected from being sent to landfill or incineration without going through some form of pre-treatment first. That won't change or mandate separate collections; that's being done through consistency and elsewhere. Another avenue DEFRA are looking at is economic incentives. But it's open at the moment and DEFRA is very keen to learn from local authorities who have already done a lot to divert waste from landfill; and is there anything that could be scaled up nationally?

Q: The detail DEFRA have got about biodegradable content in waste dates back to 2011. Does DEFRA want information from waste analysis that local authorities have undertaken themselves, will that help inform the process?

A: Yes that's exactly the sort of thing we are looking for at the moment. DEFRA have a number of waste composition projects looking at treatment transfer and disposal, litterbins and kerbside, for the next year or two. In the interim we are keen to see any data that people have, particularly local authorities or landfill operators that look at that composition. Exploring whether there is benefit to creating a new waste code for waste bins so they can be separated out from other mixed wastes to clarify and make it easier for the regulator for operators.

DEFRA are also looking to set up some working groups to think about longer strategic questions around the management of landfill sites in the future, when they effectively become a strategic reserve for in-case-needed.

6	<p>Stakeholder updates – discussion and matters arising</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ADEPT – an update will be circulated with these notes; newsletter was pre-circulated 2 Environmental Services Association – pre-circulated 3 Environment Agency – pre-circulated 4 LGA – Hilary Tanner gave a brief update. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LGA have written to Rebecca Pow about EPR, saying don't delay it, given councils have been promised full costs paid, and LGA is highlighting opportunity for waste to demonstrate sector-led improvement. - Working with DEFRA and the EA around POPs, and interested in any particular innovation or creative response in dealing with soft furnishing issues. POPs generally on the radar as a long-term issue. 5 WRAP – pre-circulated 6 CIWM – pre-circulated 	
7	<p>Notes of Last Meeting – 15 March 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Accuracy b) Matters Arising <p>Notes were agreed. Following action carried forward:</p> <p>Action: Lucinda to add an agenda item to the forward plan regarding benchmarking and good practice. To also discuss with Hannah Bartram inviting Karen Foxtan along to talk about the model Preview Services have developed for highways, and are now developing for future waste research. Lucinda Boast.</p>	Lucinda Boast
8	<p>Any Other Business</p>	
9	<p>Future Meeting Dates (all 10:00-12:30)</p> <p>Wednesday 13 September 2023 Wednesday 13 December 2023</p>	