

Ministerial Response: S.R. 12/2009
required by 15th January 2010

Review title: Funding Waste Recycling

Scrutiny Panel: Environment

Introduction

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services welcomes the majority of the reported outcomes of the Environment Scrutiny Panel's review *Funding Waste Recycling* presented on December 3rd 2009. The broad findings of the review are closely aligned with my current thinking in this policy area with some exceptions which are detailed against the headings below.

Having been directly involved with some of the stages, receiving feedback from my officers and reading the review report I am pleased to say that the exercise was carried out in a thorough and professional way with Scrutiny Panel members and Officers taking the time to understand the issues, visit the operations and collect meaningful evidence from the Department and other sources.

The main recommendations are well received and I concur with the principle that TTS should continue to focus on the more hazardous elements of the waste stream to ensure the environmental effects of their combustion are not realised.

I would however maintain that we have worked very closely in recent years to the key deliverables and targets set out in the Solid Waste Strategy (SWS) approved by the States in 2005. The recycling target of 32% has been achieved for 2009 and many of the actions identified have been delivered despite irrefutable under-funding.

The Department has also faced consistent pressure from previous Environmental Scrutiny Panels to review recycling targets with figures suggested considerably higher than the realistic and financially manageable levels we are pursuing. You will forgive me therefore for being somewhat surprised at the panel's strongly held contention that proposed activities, which would increase the proportion of materials recycled, should be put on hold in favour of segregation of hazardous streams.

For me, the way forward must be to base any re-prioritisation on sound science. To this end I concur with your view that more work is required on both the carbon and air quality impacts of the various options available to deal with different types of waste. The Department has already engaged in a piece of work with the Environment Department to develop a detailed evidence based approach to how this prioritisation should work on environmental grounds – accepting that financial resource will continue to be a limiting factor.

Findings

	Findings	Comments
1	Several key components of the recycling service are currently underfunded. Without continuation of the temporary funding provided in the States Annual	An accurate statement – this is now partially alleviated in the case of revenue by the decision to make the extra funding for recycling ongoing in the States Business Plan debate in December 2009.

	Business plan for 2009, the Department's current revenue allocation for them would not be capable of sustaining, let alone increasing, these recycling activities.	
2	Significant investment has been made since 2005 in expanding the number of collection points around the Island in order to bring recycling opportunities within easy reach of all residents wherever they live around the island. Further expansion of the Bring Bank service would have the effect of increasing the subsidy payments for paper and cardboard.	This is very much part of the delivery of our Solid Waste Strategy and has been successful in raising recycling levels and seems to have been well received by the community. Bring banks are well known as a reliable and cost effective way of collecting recyclables.
3	The Panel notes that deferral of the planned Reuse and Recycling Centre will delay the establishment of an efficient and modern recycling service and hinder the development of recycling initiatives.	A welcome observation – I am keen to progress this facility as soon as funds and practicalities will allow. A combined, purpose-built facility is a basic necessity in the waste management infrastructure for Jersey.
4	Extending the Kerbside Collection scheme to all twelve Parishes is a long term goal for the Department as it broadens the possibilities for households to engage in recycling activities. However, the further expansion of this scheme at the present time, and in particular the integration of the large urban parishes, would significantly increase the department's costs and challenge the limited infrastructure at the Reuse and Recycling Centre.	<p>This is true but must continue to be pursued. A basic doorstep collection service for key recyclables is practically standard service in the UK and more advanced EU states. Apart from convenience, a house-to-house service is more efficient in terms of vehicle movements and does not discriminate against households without access to a car to reach bring facilities.</p> <p>The SWS sets out diversion targets for the key recyclable materials which all tie into modelled levels of residual waste in the future and therefore the capacity of the EfW in future years. These targets must continue to be pursued unless circumstances radically change challenging assumptions made in the strategy which I don't believe is the position we are in.</p> <p>Also to clarify, the materials collected from the bring and kerbside system are not handled at the Re-use and Recycling Centre – they are processed and exported at our contractors baling depot.</p>
5	The Panel applauds the Department's success in developing the recycling of paper and card but is alarmed at the high cost of subsidising this recycling stream. The Panel believes that other, more hazardous waste streams should be given higher priority in the Department's limited budget.	I believe the current costs of the contract to deliver paper and card recycling represents good value. The current 5 year contract was subject to a competitive tender process in 2007. There may be opportunities to reduce these costs such as the relocation of the handling facility to a larger premises near the port to allow larger trailers to be used for shipping.
6	Jersey is currently exceptional (with other Channel Islands) in non compliance with the European Ozone Depleting Substance Directive which has been in place since 2002. The Panel believes that this is unacceptable.	Implementing this Directive in Jersey is more than just dealing with waste equipment containing ODS differently – but for my Department's part the export of fridges to a compliant facility has been tested and proved and is has not yet been implemented due to financial limitations. I have requested that this be made a high priority in the 2010 project

		planning for the waste section.
7	The Panel agrees that removal of WEEE items from the waste stream is imperative and should be prioritised above other services if necessary. It is supportive of the principle that the cost of disposal should be included in the purchase price of such items and believes it is unfair that Jersey consumers effectively already pay this charge but the Island is unable to participate in the existing EU disposal scheme.	<p>Agreed. A major piece of work was undertaken by the Environment Department to review the options for taxation with revenues ring fenced for environmental initiatives. The option of targeted taxes or levies to pay for recycling schemes was not prioritised in the findings due to expected high administration costs and therefore poor performance.</p> <p>There may be an opportunity to somehow tie Jersey into the UK WEEE regulations but a recent informal approach regarding the newly implemented Batteries regulations did not meet with a positive response.</p> <p>I concur with the Panel's view that this option should be revisited more formally on 2010.</p>
8	Recycling of demolition timber would reduce quantities going to incineration or landfill, some of which may include treated or other contaminated wood products. Reducing the amount of such material going to Bellozanne would potentially be beneficial to the environment.	<p>The latest reports from the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) indicate that options are limited for recycling treated timber – best practice dictates that animal bedding and solid fuel products made from recycled timber contain very little treated content.</p> <p>It is our contention that incineration with energy recovery in a Waste Incineration Directive compliant facility offers the best option after efforts have been made to remove clean wood and minimise arisings.</p>
9	Currently hazardous fluids and chemicals from scrap vehicles are being sent for incineration. The Panel considers that this is unacceptable.	A similar situation to waste refrigeration equipment. Our contractor at the scrapyards has been working towards upgrading the existing facility but more space is required and potentially some land requisition. Progressing this will also be part of the 2010 work programme.
10	Efforts to supply biodiesel fuel locally have not been commercially successful thus far. However, it is understood that elsewhere biodiesel has been more extensively marketed and the potential for wider local use remains. If marketing difficulties can be overcome the fuel offers significant environmental advantages and provides for a sustainable use of a waste product that is otherwise costly to dispose of.	Agreed. A new contract was awarded in January this year. The Department is confident that a combination of local use as a fuel with the back-up of export to maintain continuity of the service will be successful in 2010.
11	The Panel believes that a comprehensive review of spending on the green waste operation is essential. The Panel looks forward to the opportunity to scrutinise the outcome of such an investigation. The Panel would like to see the following two key issues addressed within this review: (a) user pays charges for domestic green waste (b) Current subsidies paid to farmers for accepting the compost product on their land.	Agreed a review of this operation will occur during 2010 to include further assessment of a gate charge and the levels of payment made to farmers.
12	The Panel believes that the payment to	The reality of managing compost and other biosolids to land

	farmers is in effect a supplementary subsidy to the agricultural industry in addition to that already provided by the Economic Development department in the form of area payments of £37 per vergée, under the Rural Economy Strategy. Given the recent transition in farming towards fewer and larger units, the Panel questions whether these additional payments for taking the soil improver are still appropriate. It suggests that consideration could be given to whether the farmers' agreement to accept this compost on their fields might in future be linked to the area payments.	is that supply regularly outstrips demand especially in the winter months where land is simply too wet to carry out any application and much land is in crop at other times of the year. For this reason our view is that some financial incentive is required to avoid the situation where we have large quantities of a difficult to store product growing on a daily basis.
13	The Panel agrees that education and awareness of recycling initiatives is important to the success of the SWS and therefore supports the application of funding for this purpose. However, members feel that funds should be carefully targeted to support specific initiatives to obtain the best results.	Agreed. A reorganisation of the Solid Waste team in 2010 and some extra funding in this area should allow us to expand our education and awareness productivity. Closer working with the Environment Department's awareness team has already begun with a partnership on the 'Greener Living' roadshow trailer.

	Recommendations	To	Accept/ Reject	Com
1	Transport and Technical Services should review its recycling priorities and focus its cash limit on updating its treatment of the more toxic elements of the waste stream.	TTS	Accept	Work planning for this emphasis on fridge r scrap metal yard to im further diversion of W hoped that this will no modest improvements services.
2	Transport and Technical Services should be preparing, as part of a wider policy to tackle CO2 emissions, to factor in the cost of carbon into their decisions on how to dispose of waste.	TTS	Accept	Work has already st; analysis of the enviro the various waste available with particul; local air quality impacts
3	Further investment in extending the bring bank system should be deferred for the time being.	TTS	Reject	As stated above the re this service are margi aims to maintain its ot service to include ca number of extra sites.
4	The Council of Ministers should restore the proposed Reuse and Recycling Centre to the Capital programme at the earliest possible opportunity.	COM	Agree	The programme for under review but the be purpose built site in tei service quality are clear
5	The Department should not seek at this time to expand its current targets for recycling paper and card.	TTS	Reject	Current diversion targe work to reach these mu
6	Immediate steps should be taken to ensure full compliance with the EU Ozone Depleting Substance Directive 2002. If necessary this should take priority over the processing of less	TTS	Agree	The compliance with tr managing waste with t compliance being the E For our part, work to in the disposal of equippr

	environmentally detrimental waste materials in the Department's revenue budget.			ODS will continue.
7	The Council of Ministers should support renewed efforts by Transport and Technical Services to negotiate with the UK Environment Agency, and if necessary UK and continental suppliers of electrical goods, to allow the Island to participate in the EU scheme for the funding of disposal of WEEE.	COM	Agree	
8	The problem of smaller electrical items being included in household waste should be highlighted in ongoing education/publicity campaigns.	TTS	Agree	Although it should be items of WEEE with n be worth pursuing frc benefit perspective.
9	The Panel believes that the home composting initiative should be supported by an education programme encouraging islanders to make the most of composting possibilities	TTS	Agree	Proposed major publi awareness week 2010

funding for recycling has been a welcome and well conducted exercise. I am pleased that the Panel's findings are broadly in alignment with our current thinking. The fundamental issue we face is that further development of our recycling activities to bring Jersey up-to-date with current best practice cannot be achieved without greater expenditure. With the current economic climate and forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review, TTS is faced with a serious challenge as the main service provider.

To reconcile these opposing objectives we clearly need to have a fresh look at our priorities and have drawn a similar conclusion to the panel that the drive for tonnage based targets for recycling may have to be tempered to favour a more environmentally focused approach leading to greater emphasis being placed on recycling the hazardous elements of our solid waste arisings.

Recent research in this area does still demonstrate that for the key target materials, such as the higher grades of paper, card, plastics, glass and metals there are significant environmental gains to the recycling process over thermal treatment even with the environmental impacts of transport taken into account. To ensure our strategic decisions are up-to-date and based on good science we intend to carry out a review of the latest position and use the findings to 'health check' our strategy and reprioritise in line with available resources if required.