
**Decision Session - Executive Member for
Neighbourhoods**

26 January 2010

Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services

Zero Waste Places

Summary

1. This report informs the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods about the Zero Waste Places initiative and a proposal for City of York Council to apply for accreditation to the Zero Waste Places Standard scheme.

Background

2. The concept of Zero Waste was introduced in Waste Strategy for England 2007 and is defined as being a simple way of encapsulating the aim to go as far as possible in reducing the environmental impact of waste. It is a visionary goal which seeks to prevent waste occurring, conserves resources and recovers all value from materials.
3. The Zero Waste Places initiative was outlined in the Waste Strategy for England 2007. The idea behind the initiative is to help develop innovative and exemplary practice in sustainable waste management where waste is driven out and resources are conserved, reused and recycled.
4. Places which are seen to demonstrate a significant attack on waste, including going beyond targets placed in the Waste Strategy for England 2007, can be accredited as Zero Waste Places. A place can be a street, a market, retail park, high street, village, town or a whole authority.

Zero Waste Places Initiative & Standard

5. Zero Waste is about developing a holistic approach to resource management in terms of wherever waste is generated (households, businesses, schools etc.) with local authorities working in partnership with the private and third sectors to address waste issues. The initiative is in line with the waste hierarchy with a focus on waste prevention, then reuse, then recycling and finally ensuring that all value is recovered from materials.
6. The Government launched a Zero Waste Places initiative in Autumn 2007 with the aim of inviting a number of places (including cities, towns and rural communities) to become exemplars of good environmental practice on all waste. Participating places would be asked to fulfill a pathfinder role in

identifying the barriers and illustrating solutions to enable others to adopt the most effective approach. Underpinning the Zero Waste Places initiative is Government's encouragement of local authorities to use their role as local community leaders in partnership with the private and third sectors to achieve a more integrated approach to resources and waste in their area.

7. In 2008/2009, 6 places were selected as Zero Waste Places projects to go as far as possible to reduce waste in their area. Projects varied in scale and diversity, e.g. London Borough of Lewisham - a single 'Eco Street' was created with various targeted actions to reduce CO2 emissions; West Midlands Region - a project was set up to ensure that sufficient waste treatment facilities are developed by 2020 so that no waste has to be landfilled before it is treated. Further information about the 6 schemes is included in Annex A to this report.
8. Another 6 Zero Waste Places projects have been selected in 2009/2010. Again, the projects vary in scale and diversity, e.g. London Borough of Hackney - A resident of the Follingham Court estate has set up a 'Carbon Club', working with the council to reduce both emissions and waste, and actions will include installing a community composting facility; Dorchester-on-Thames in Oxfordshire - The initiative will focus on waste reduction for materials which cannot be recycled by households, and will also look to work with schools and businesses to reduce residual waste. Further information about the 6 schemes is included in Annex B to this report.
9. The future vision is to increase the number and size of Zero Waste Places throughout England. To progress this aim the Zero Waste Places Standard was launched in October 2009. This has been developed by DEFRA, BREW Centre for Local Authorities and the University of Northampton and seeks to provide recognition of and stimulation to the work of communities for their efforts at driving waste out and maximising the use of resources in their localities. This also aims to encourage local authorities to improve the sustainability of their waste management beyond meeting national recycling targets.
10. Applying for Zero Waste Places Standard accreditation costs £150. A successful application for accreditation lasts for 2 years. Following this a reapplication will cost £100 for a further 2 year period of accreditation. One of the main objectives will be to demonstrate a continual direction of travel in reducing waste.
11. An accredited Zero Waste Place will benefit from:
 - Recognition from DEFRA and the Minister of Waste and Recycling
 - Recognition from the BREW Centre and the University of Northampton
 - Media attention - both locally and nationally
 - Catalyst for sustained and further action
 - Using the accredited status as a platform to promote other related initiatives e.g. Love Food Hate Waste
 - Wider community benefits including community cohesion
 - Sense of pride within the community

- Improvements to the general environment including a reduction in litter and flytipping
12. Peterborough City Council was awarded the first Zero Waste Places Standard in December 2009 in recognition of a high profile waste campaign in the city centre.

Options & Analysis

13. The following options can be considered:

Option 1 - Do not apply for accreditation to the Zero Waste Places Standard

14. Zero waste is a very important initiative for the Government. Since the introduction of the concept in Waste Strategy for England 2007 a total of 12 projects have been rolled out. The launch of the Zero Waste Places Standard further emphasises the significance of the initiative.
15. Failure to apply and gain accreditation to the scheme is likely to be viewed negatively by the media and could be disadvantageous in any future Government audit / assessment of local authority services.

Option 2 - Apply for accreditation to the Zero Waste Places Standard

16. Over the past few years in York there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of household waste recycled and composted and ultimately diverted from landfill. In addition, an effective waste prevention programme has been developed to help control growth in waste arisings. Work carried out includes increasing the number of residents using home composting equipment, food waste prevention, establishing bag free areas and working with charity shops to improve their image and usage.
17. To maintain the momentum in the challenge to keep reducing waste, and gain the benefits identified in paragraph 11, it is proposed that York should work towards being a Zero Waste Place. The first step in this process would be to apply for accreditation to the Zero Waste Places Standard scheme. This would help to provide a clear statement of intent, give a different approach to our work and provide an opportunity of gaining some recognition for our efforts in tackling waste.
18. The Zero Waste Places Standard accreditation scheme also provides a framework on which we can build and focus all of our waste management projects. This could also be used as a platform to build better links with sustainable development work being undertaken by other council directorates, external organisations and community groups. An obvious link with Education Services, for example, is through the Sustainable Schools initiative. By 2020, the Government would like all schools to be models of sustainable procurement, using goods and services of high environmental and ethical standards from local sources where practicable, and increasing value for money by reusing, repairing and recycling as many goods as possible.

19. A successful application for accreditation will be a very positive factor in any future Government audit / assessment of local authority services. It could also provide evidence of effective cross directorate working.
20. A specific Zero Waste Place project, or projects, will need to be identified as part of an application for accreditation. Any project should ideally involve partnership working with a community group, business or other interested party. Each project should have a nominated champion to take the lead in developing and running the project. For each project, it is envisaged that City of York Council would need to provide some element of funding to kick start work together with staff time set aside for attending meetings and helping to keep work on track. The size, scale and number of projects taken on would therefore need to be carefully controlled so that they can be accommodated within annual work plans and existing budgets. There is the possibility that some limited external funding might be available for projects in 2009/2010 but timescales for applying are very tight. The external funding situation for projects beyond 2009/2010 is not clear.
21. Examples of suitable projects are: supporting a village aiming to reduce their collective residual waste (including households, school(s) and businesses) through a number of schemes such as going bag free, increasing the number of home composters etc.; supporting a business park looking to reduce residual waste arisings by establishing, or improving, waste recycling and materials reuse facilities.
22. Any project could also incorporate other environmental and sustainability elements covering such things as energy efficiency. The key point about any project is that whatever the outcome(s) they can be replicated in other parts of the city.
23. To progress this it is suggested that we should invite interested groups to submit proposals for Zero Waste Place projects and that several of the most innovative are considered for inclusion in the application for accreditation. A robust method for evaluating proposals will need to be developed. A secondary process for dealing with unsuccessful proposals also needs to be established.
24. Accreditation lasts for 2 years and reassessment will look at future development plans. The process of inviting interested groups to submit proposals for Zero Waste Place projects could be repeated during the next reapplication process.

Corporate Priorities

25. The Without Walls Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2025 provides a sustainable framework which aim for York to be a city with low levels of pollution and waste production and high levels of recycling. Adopting the Zero Waste Places concept will help to focus waste management work and help make a significant contribution to fulfilling this aim.

26. This work contributes strongly to the corporate strategy direction statement of placing environmental sustainability at the heart of everything we do.
27. This work also contributes to delivering the aims of the Corporate Sustainability Strategy by reducing York's CO2 emissions, increasing recycling and managing waste to the best practice standards.

Implications

28. Implications of seeking accreditation to the Zero Waste Places Standard are:

Financial - The initial application cost is £150 and accreditation lasts for 2 years. The reapplication cost will be £100. Development of the Zero Waste Places initiative can be tailored to fit into annual work plans with any expenditure being met from existing budgets.

Human Resources (HR) - There are no implications in this report.

Equalities - There are equalities implications in this report.

Legal - There are no legal implications.

Crime and Disorder - There are no implications in this report.

Information Technology (IT) - There are no implications in this report.

Property - There are no implications in this report.

Risk Management

29. The risks associated with this report are already contained in the Magique Risk Register for Environmental Services.

Recommendations

30. The Executive Member is asked to consider and approve option 2 for the reasons detailed in paragraphs 16 to 24.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Sally Burns
Director of Neighbourhood Services

Report Approved

Date 18 Jan 2010

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Implication: Technical

Name: Shaun Donnelly

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Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- Waste Strategy for England 2007

Annex A – 2008/2009 Projects

Annex B – 2009/2010 Projects

Annex A

2008/2009 Projects

Borough of Brent - Green Zones: The loss of some privately-owned trees on a residential street motivated a group of residents to use and extend an existing anti-social behaviour Streetwatcher scheme encouraging their neighbours to be 'greener' in their everyday lives. This was done through a door-knocking and educational programme to encourage residents to reduce, re-use, recycle and compost resources and use less energy and water.

London Borough of Lewisham - Green Street: The project supported a range of holistic environmental proposals including waste, recycling, composting, energy efficiency, car use and other sustainability initiatives within a single street. The aim was to create an 'Eco Street' that would serve to test the effectiveness of a 'green concierge' advice service, and other low-cost environmental measures, in enabling citizens to reduce their CO2 emissions.

Milton Keynes - Shenley Church Urban Estate: This project aimed to reduce waste as far as possible in both the household and the commercial sector. In addition an anti-litter/tidy up campaign will be run with the Parish Council.

Peterborough - Central Shopping Area: This project focused on Peterborough's central shopping area to deliver a high profile zero waste campaign to shoppers and retailers. The scheme also looked at the redevelopment of a central town square to design out waste at all levels.

West Midlands Region - Zero Waste to Landfill: The objective of this project was to develop sufficient facilities in the region by 2020 so that the region does not have to landfill any waste until it has been treated and that all the value is recovered from the material.

Kings Lynn - Tuesday Market Place: The Tuesday Market Place is at the historic core of the town of Kings Lynn. It includes parts of the historic docks with its industrial processing, Government offices, areas of traditional terraced housing and new regeneration and brown field developments as well as the historic market place. This project was to enable existing regeneration and development projects to flourish whilst avoiding waste and to boost the diversion of waste produced by commerce, the public sector and residents and from landfill.

Annex B

2009/2010 Projects

Commenting on the choice of places, the environment secretary, Hilary Benn, said: "These six areas will provide innovative and often easy ways for people to get involved in cutting their waste. I look forward to seeing the projects, and how can all learn from them."

Bishops Castle in Shropshire - The project will focus on waste reduction, with measures including enhancing the town's community recycling facility and working with the farmers market to increase composting, with the overall aim of reducing waste to landfill by 6% over the next two years.

Dorchester-on-Thames in Oxfordshire - The initiative will focus on waste reduction for materials which cannot be recycled by households, and will also look to work with schools and businesses to reduce residual waste.

London Borough of Hackney - A resident of the Follingham Court estate has set up a 'Carbon Club', working with the council to reduce both emissions and waste, and actions will include installing a community composting facility.

London Borough of Lambeth - The Brixton 'Low Carbon Zone' will be extended to include residents and businesses within the Coldharbour ward, including running waste audits and installing 'Recycle on the Go' facilities;

London Borough of Newham - Supporting market traders and shops at Queens Market in their efforts to reduce waste, with the target of diverting 375 tonnes from landfill over a three month period;

Suffolk County Council - Seven streets will look to reduce their collective waste by 50% and will be offered advice and guidance on how to minimise and recycling more waste.