

## **Waste Management CPA Inspection June 2007 – Final Report**

### **Summary**

1. As a follow up to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) inspection in 2004, the Audit Commission completed a further inspection of Waste Management in York during June 2007.
2. The inspection focused on:
  - An assessment of the Waste Services contribution to the Council's strategic priorities and vision for York.
  - An analysis of the steps being taken to improve Value for Money (VfM) in relation to the delivery of Waste Services.
  - An assessment of the relative risks to the Council, associated with its preferred method of future waste service provision.
3. The final report from the Audit Commission is attached as annex 1 to this report.

### **Background**

4. Best value places a duty on local authorities to review services, set targets for improvement, monitor progress and report results.
5. To achieve these objectives the council needs to establish suitable arrangements for the delivery of its services in line with nationally set challenges, whilst accommodating local needs and expectations.
6. The authority had an inspection in 2004 which identified issues relating to customer service, service delivery and performance management arrangements.
7. The Audit Commission identified the need to carry out a further inspection to assess the progress made since the 2004 as, at the time of the inspection, the Council was reviewing its waste disposal arrangements jointly with North Yorkshire, which included future service provision through Performance Finance Imitative (PFI) arrangements.

8. The inspectors considered these proposals introduced risks to the Council relating to cost, performance, operational viability and community acceptance. The satisfactory resolution to these issues, along with the achievement of on going improvements to the waste service provided a considerable challenge to the Council.

### **Scope and Objectives of the Inspection**

9. The scope of the inspection was to look at how waste collection and disposal services are being provided in relation to the needs of local people and the requirements of the national criteria.
10. The objective of the inspection was to determine how well the Council has responded to the findings of the 2004 inspection and to consider the progress made in the proposals for future waste disposal arrangements. This work included a review of the quality of the on-going service provision and the level of risk relating to the Council's proposals for future service provision. An assessment of performance management and waste partnerships formed part of this work.

### **Findings of the Inspection**

11. The inspectors found that there had been significant improvements to the waste management service in York. The report recognised that the Council has adopted a structured and effective response to the waste inspection in 2004.
12. The main conclusions of the inspection noted that:
  - The waste management service has made significant improvement in performance in all areas.
  - Customer contact has improved for consultation about proposed projects and for customer enquiries which are now dealt with by the customer contact centre.
  - There is clear cross-party commitment for the improvement in the waste management service.
  - The service has made effective improvements to its performance management arrangements.
  - The Council, with its partners, is making good progress and taking appropriate advice towards the future provision of waste disposal facilities.

### **Recommendations from the Inspection**

13. As a result of the inspection, five recommendations have been made.
14. **Recommendation 1** – It is recognised that the Council and its partners are making good progress in relation to the long-term provision of waste disposal

facilities, but key issues are still to be addressed including planning and contractual arrangements.

15. **Action 1** - The Council needs to ensure that addressing waste disposal issues remains a high priority.
16. **Recommendation 2** – Improve the Council’s own recycling performance by:
  - consolidating the management and monitoring of the Council’s own recycling initiatives
  - establish clear and challenging recycling targets for departments within the Council
  - disseminate good practice across all Council departments
  - increase public awareness of the Council’s own recycling performance
17. **Action 2** - Good practice is well established at the EcoDepot. Meetings with Property Services and Sustainability Officers are being established. Local recycling champions are being identified
18. **Recommendation 3** – Continue to pursue areas of under-performance including high sickness levels, numbers of missed bins, waste volumes collected and HWRC issues relating to Beckfield Lane.
19. **Action 3** - Sickness monitoring reports are now produced weekly with monthly reports to DMT. The numbers of missed bins is now within the council’s own targets but continues to be monitored weekly, round by round. Waste volumes in York continue to be above the average for unitary authorities with benchmarking being used to try and establish if the high volumes of tourists and the impact of the university is contributing to this position. The situation with Beckfield Lane HWRC will form part of the waste review report going to Executive later this month.
20. **Recommendation 4** – Provide better information about service delivery to customers.
21. **Action 4** - A clear customer charter will be one of the outcomes of the waste review. Improved reporting on calls handled by the customer contact centre is being developed.
22. **Recommendation 5** – The service should improve its service planning procedures by providing clearer linkages between service objectives and corporate priorities.
23. **Action 5** - The standard corporate service planning template has been passed back to the Performance Improvement Team in order that it can be reviewed in the light of the inspector’s comments.

## Conclusion of the Inspectors

24. The improvements show that the Council's efforts are improving performance as a result of investment in the service. Since the service expenditure is lower than most other unitary councils, the waste management service is providing good value for money when compared to similar councils.

## Corporate Priorities

25. The Waste Services contribute significantly to the council's corporate priority to "decrease the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products going to landfill"

## Implications

26. The implications are as follows:
- **Financial** – There are no financial implications associated with this report.
  - **Human Resources (HR)** – There are no implications for CYC staff.
  - **Equalities** – There are no equalities implications in this report.
  - **Legal** – There are no legal implications in this report.
  - **Crime and Disorder** – There are no implications in this report for crime and disorder.
  - **Information Technology (IT)** – there are no implications for information technology.
  - **Property** – There will be a need to establish areas for collecting and storing of recycling materials within the various office areas used by the council. Early input to the Hungate Development has been established.
  - **Other** - There are no other implications to state, relating to this report.

## Risk Management

27. The outcome of the inspection will contribute to the corporate CPA inspection scheduled for the early part of 2008.

## Recommendations

28. The Executive Member is advised to note this report and annex 1.

Reason: To update Members on the Audit Commissions inspection of Waste Management in York during June 2007.

## Contact Details

### Author:

John Goodyear  
Assistant Director  
Environmental Services

Neighbourhood Services  
Tel No. 553204

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

**Terry Collins**  
– **Director of Neighbourhood Services**

Report Approved

Date 16<sup>th</sup> August 2007

Report Approved

Date *Insert Date*

## Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

## Background Papers:

None

## Annexes

**Annex A** – Audit Commission Report