

AGENDA ITEM: 8 Pages 39 – 48

Meeting	Budget and Performance Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	21 June 2011
Subject	Waste and Recycling Performance
Report of	Pam Wharfe, Director of Environment and Operations
Summary	Barnet's performance in terms of the amount of household waste sent for disposal, and the percentage of household waste recycled, composted or reused has remained static. Improvements in recycling performance will reduce the increasing costs for residual waste disposal. In order to deliver future improvements, the Council will need to decide on its approach to future waste collection arrangements.
Officer Contributors	Lynn Bishop, Assistant Director, Environment and Operations Nicola Cross, Environmental Services Manager – Waste Strategy Michael Lai, Group Manager, Waste & Sustainability Team
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	All
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – London Boroughs Waste Performance in 2009/10 Appendix 2 – Service arrangements for top performing London Boroughs (2009/10)
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in	Not applicable

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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the update on the resolutions agreed at the Committee meeting of 1 September 2010.

1.2 That the Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee make comments/recommendations on the report on waste and recycling performance, and the strategic considerations involved in improving this performance.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 The Corporate Plan 2011/12 includes the strategic objective of decreasing overall levels of household waste whilst increasing the proportion of waste being recycled. The Corporate Plan includes the intention to implement a Sustainability and Waste Minimisation Strategy, and as part of the One Barnet programme to conduct a review of street scene services (waste collection, grounds maintenance etc) to assess whether there are better ways in which these services can be delivered.

2.2 The Corporate Plan 2011/12 includes performance targets to reduce the amount of waste sent for disposal to 710 kilograms of residual average household waste per household, and to recycle, compost or reuse 34% of household waste.

3. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

3.1 The Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 1 September 2010 considered a report on Reducing Waste and Increasing Recycling Rates in Barnet (decision item 7).

3.2 The Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 22 February 2011 requested that the Committee receive an in-depth report on Waste and Recycling when reporting Quarter 4 data (decision Item 8).

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 The Council pays for the disposal of waste through a levy payment to the North London Waste Authority (NLWA). Should the Council fail to reduce waste and increase recycling the risks are:

- paying a significantly increased levy to the NLWA
- potential loss of income from the sale of recyclable materials should recycling opportunities not be maximised.
- to the Council's reputation relating to performance.

4.2 It is proposed that as part of the ongoing NLWA procurement of future waste services there would be a move to "menu pricing", whereby constituent boroughs' payments are made directly in line with the quantity and type of waste they generate for treatment and disposal. The most expensive option will be to send waste for disposal.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

5.1 The waste management and street cleansing services are used by all residents of Barnet. Provision is made to enable all residents to use the services. Special collections of refuse are offered during Pesach. All waste recycling services are promoted to residents through a range of means.

5.2 A composition analysis of waste carried out in 2009/10 suggested that in larger housing types, residents recycle an average amount of waste, but produce significantly more waste overall. The analysis showed that there is the potential for residents to recycle or compost 74% of their total household waste using the recycling services currently being provided, compared with an actual performance of 33% in 2009/10.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

6.1 The levy paid by the Council to the NLWA for the disposal of waste includes the cost of Landfill Tax, which is currently £56 per tonne and is set to rise by £8 per tonne per year. The levy payment is £8.3M for 2011/12. Provisional figures from NLWA indicate that the cost of Barnet's levy payments will rise to £11.1M by 2014/15. Figures are based on current collection arrangements staying the same, with the same level of resident participation in recycling services as at present, plus projected increases in charges such as the Landfill Tax.

6.2 The cost of the Recycling Services Contract with May Gurney for recycling from houses, flats, schools, recycling bring banks and the Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre is a cost of £4.0M per year (2011/12) excluding material income received by the Council. A savings target of £171k for 2011/12 has been allocated to this service. The cost of the refuse and green garden/kitchen waste collection services is £5.557M (2011/12). Increases in recycling will lead to increased income from the sale of materials, for which Barnet receives a 50% share. Increases in the amount of refuse collected will lead to increased disposal costs.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

7.1 None save those contained in the main body of the report.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

8.1 The scope of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are contained within Part 2, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution.

8.2 The terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are included in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules within Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

8.3 The Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee has within its terms of reference responsibility for scrutinising "the overall performance, effectiveness and value for money of Council services."

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

9.1 Update on the resolutions agreed at the Committee meeting of 1 September 2010.

9.1.1 The Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 1 September agreed seven resolutions. An update on progress on these resolutions is provided below.

- That Members of the Committee be provided with the Waste Action Plan.
This has been provided to members.
- That the Cabinet Member be invited to write to Councillor Shooter on the topic of a borough Carbon Reduction Strategy.

Since the 1 September 2010 meeting a Task and Finish Group has been convened to discuss Carbon/Carbon Reduction Strategy.

- That officers be asked to investigate the feasibility of placing a sticker containing recycling instructions in the lid of residents' bins to indicate which material is suitable for recycling, and the correct box for it to be placed in.

The funding that was initially identified for stickers to be placed on residents' refuse bins was returned to central funds following budget discussions.

- The Committee affirms the importance of recycling education in schools and encourages officers to continue their efforts in this area.

The Schools Recycling Challenge has now been updated to form the "Watch Your Waste project", with a greater emphasis on waste prevention as well as recycling. As part of this work, schools receive a week of intensive support from Waste & Sustainability officers, and carry out a number of educational activities. The first of these projects was completed at Cromer Road School on 27 May 2011. This scheme is aimed at primary schools, with a related scheme ("Green Matters") aimed at secondary schools. On 10 February 2011 a successful day of school activities was held in partnership with the recycling contractor May Gurney, to incentivise Barnet's secondary schools to recycle and reduce their waste. The Barnet Environmental Action Round Schools (BEARS) scheme continues to match up schools that are recycling well with those that want ideas on how to improve.

- That officers be asked to investigate the instigation of a recycling reward scheme, similar to the scheme currently being offered by Maidstone Borough Council.

Waste & Sustainability officers have met with contacts from the Recyclebank scheme, which has been launched by Windsor & Maidenhead and Halton councils. Officers have also investigated a similar scheme, Local Green Points. Both schemes involve high set-up costs of approximately £2 per household per year. Currently the Council's levy payments to NLWA are based on tonnage two years in arrears, therefore it should be recognised that currently, if such schemes delivered a reduction in waste for disposal, it will take 2 years before the Council sees any benefit for its investment. The NLWA levy payments are intended to change to actual tonnage in that year once menu-pricing is adopted by the constituent authorities. Further ongoing research is to be undertaken by Waste & Sustainability officers to better understand behaviour change, including progress with the Recyclebank scheme at Windsor & Maidenhead and a trial scheme for flats in Lambeth. Any proposals would need to carefully consider the implications set out above before a reward scheme in Barnet could be designed and implemented.

- That officers be asked to continue to work with supermarkets to encourage recycling facilities be installed at their sites.

Barnet residents can now use compostable bags, with the 'Seedling logo' to place their food waste into their green bins. Waste & Sustainability officers have contacted all major supermarkets and have currently gained the agreement of eleven supermarkets in Barnet to display 'shelf talker' notices to inform customers that they can now use compostable bags with the 'Seedling logo' in their green bins.

- That Members of the Committee do communicate any further views on further potential action, directly to the Cabinet Member.

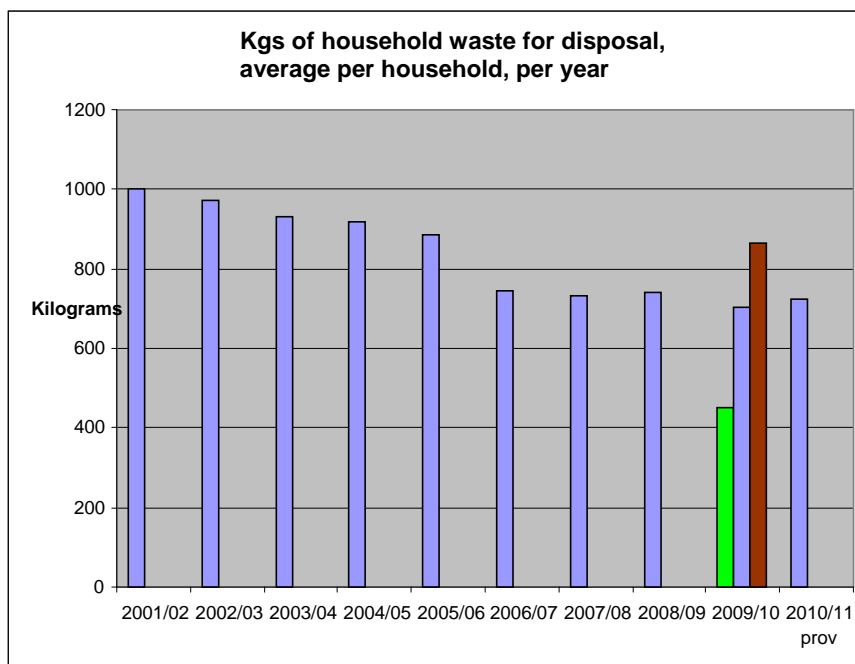
Officers have received no items, Councillor Coleman has received no items.

9.2 National and regional targets

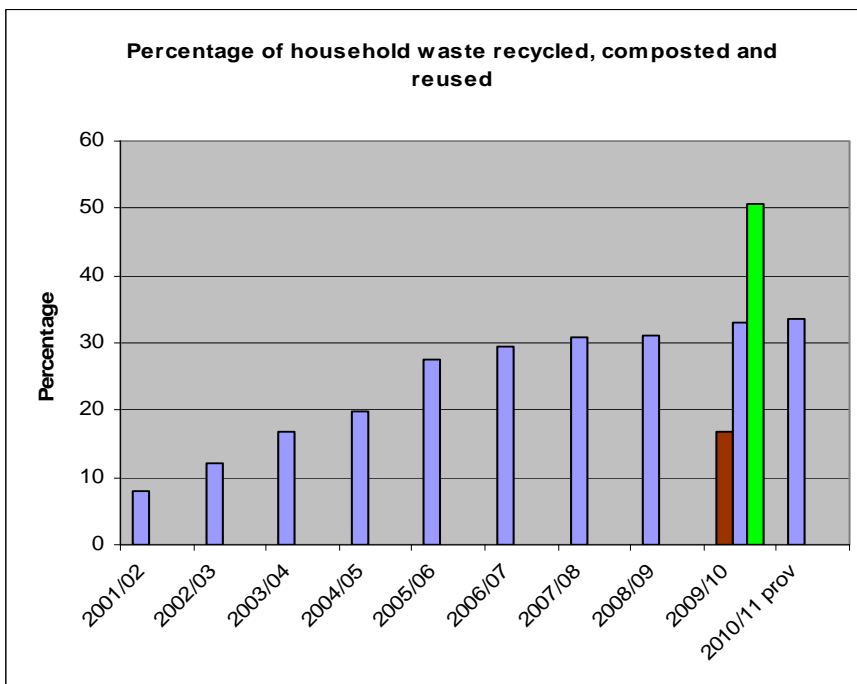
- 9.2.1 The Government's Waste Strategy for England (2007) sets a target of 50% recycling, reuse and composting of household waste by 2020 for all local authorities.
- 9.2.2 The Government is carrying out a review of the national waste strategy, and has suggested that it wishes to work towards a "zero waste" approach whereby recycling is increased and waste disposal is reduced. The results of this review are expected to be announced mid to late June 2011.
- 9.2.3 The draft London Mayor's Municipal Waste Management Strategy proposes a target of a 60% recycling rate by 2031.

9.3 Barnet's current performance

- 9.3.1 The two key measures for waste performance are the kilograms of household waste sent for disposal (formerly NI 191), and the percentage of household waste recycled, composted or reused rather than disposed of (formerly NI 192). These will continue to be used to measure performance on an ongoing basis.
- 9.3.2 The data used to measure performance on the above indicators includes third party tonnage data which is provided to the Council by the NLWA. This data is only available on a quarterly basis. The data is also only available a quarter in arrears, because there is a detailed auditing process that must be carried out. Therefore year end data for 2010/11 is not available until the end of June 2011.
- 9.3.3 The graph below shows the kilograms of household waste sent for disposal per household (NI 191) in Barnet for the past 10 years. There has been a decline in waste sent for disposal between 2001 and 2006, which is largely attributable to the introduction of collections of green garden and kitchen waste for composting, using green wheeled bins. However, the level of household waste sent for disposal in Barnet remains high, and in 2009/10 Barnet was ranked 27th best out of 33 London boroughs. For comparison purposes the brown bar represents the worst performing London borough, and the green bar the best, in 2009/10. A provisional estimate for Barnet's performance for 2010/11 is also included.



9.3.4 The graph below shows the percentage of household waste recycled, composted or reused (NI 192) in Barnet for the past 10 years. Performance has improved substantially over the last 10 years, with significant jumps following the introduction of the kerbside multi-materials recycling service (October 2001), compulsory recycling (March 2005) and the green garden and kitchen waste service (rolled out between September 2002 and January 2006). However performance has plateaued at around 33%, despite the waste composition analysis referred to at section 5.2 showing that with the existing council service provision, there is the potential for residents to recycle or compost 74% of their total household waste. In 2009/10 Barnet was ranked 14th best out of 33 London boroughs. For comparison purposes the brown bar represents the worst performing borough, and the green bar the best in 2009/10. A provisional estimate for Barnet's performance for 2010/11 is also included.



9.3.5 At current rates of performance the Council's target of 40% recycling in 2010/11 is unlikely to be reached. The targets for 2011/12 are 710 kilograms for NI 191, and 34% for NI 192, and are more realistic than previous targets.

9.3.6 The evidence overall suggests that Barnet will continue to make only incremental increases each year with its current approach. A significant change is required if the Council is to make progress towards the national recycling target of 50% in 2020, and even more challenging targets beyond this.

9.4 Comparison to other local authorities

9.4.1 Appendix 1 shows the waste performance for each of the London boroughs in 2009/10. The table includes a combined overall ranking based on the kilograms of waste sent for disposal and the percentage of waste recycled, composted or reused by each borough.

9.4.2 The top four performing boroughs in terms of their overall ranking in 2009/10 were Kingston, Bexley, Ealing, and Harrow. The waste service arrangements (collection type, container, collection frequency, and whether provided in-house or by a contractor) for each of these boroughs are set out in Appendix 2.

- 9.4.3 Two of the top boroughs had all their waste services provided in-house, and two had all of them provided by a contractor.
- 9.4.4 Three boroughs had a weekly “kerbside sort” recycling box collection from houses (as is the case in Barnet) and one had a fortnightly “comingled” recycling bin collection. Flats had a weekly recycling collection using either sacks or bins.
- 9.4.5 Three of the four collect organic waste weekly, using sacks or bins, though the top performer is not yet collecting food waste across the whole borough.
- 9.4.6 Three of the four have fortnightly refuse collections.

9.5 Actions already undertaken/being undertaken

9.5.1 A number of activities have been carried out in Barnet to improve performance, as follows:

- Improved coverage of recycling services for flats – the list of properties used for Council Tax purposes has been reviewed, to identify blocks of flats which have never contacted the Council to take up the offer of free recycling facilities. Through this exercise 186 flat blocks were identified, and work is ongoing to provide these sites with recycling facilities through negotiations with their managing agents.
- “On the go” recycling bins have been trialled near eight underground stations. The trial has shown that these bins were not well used by residents, and that it would not be cost-effective to expand this service further. On the go recycling bins have also been trialled at three libraries. Although this scheme has not produced a significant amount of recycling, it has low ongoing running costs and it is proposed to continue this.
- Participation in the Council’s compulsory recycling policy continues to be monitored by the recycling contractor May Gurney on a rolling basis. Ten collection rounds have been monitored since April 2010 and a further ten rounds will be monitored by the end of September 2011.
- The provision of recycling “bring banks” on streets and in car parks has been reviewed, and it has been concluded that it is cost-effective to continue the service. Officers are currently working to improve the textile banks, and to investigate the potential for Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) banks.
- The use of biodegradable bags for food waste in the green bins has now been agreed with NLWA, and has been promoted to residents through an article in Barnet First, promotion at supermarkets (as set out in section 9.1), and on the Council website.
- All residents that are new to Barnet now receive a guide to recycling and waste prevention with their initial Council Tax mailing.
- The Council and its recycling contractor May Gurney are supporting the Barnet Furniture Centre, which diverts reusable furniture from landfill and provides it at low cost to residents on low incomes. Good quality furniture collected at the Summers Lane, Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre is made available to the Barnet Furniture Centre.
- The Neighbourhood Skip service was discontinued from April 2011, and this will lead to some decrease in the amount of waste sent for disposal.

9.6 Strategic considerations/decisions

9.6.1 Despite the actions set out above, Barnet will continue to make only incremental improvements in its performance each year with its current approach. A significant step change is required if the Council is to make progress towards challenging future recycling targets, and to minimise the costs of waste disposal. There are a number of key strategic considerations and decisions to be made by the Council to deliver on its ambition to minimise waste and increase recycling:

- Decision on future waste collection methods – the Council will need to decide on its future collection arrangements for recycling, organic waste and waste for disposal by April 2012 as part of the ongoing NLWA procurement project to provide waste disposal and treatment services once existing facilities come to the end of their life in 2014-2016. These decisions will have a significant effect on the future levels of performance that can be achieved, and the cost of services. It is proposed that an options report goes to Cabinet in September 2011.
- One Barnet programme – the Council will investigate the options for the future procurement of street scene services, including waste services. This will include consideration of whether there are benefits to grouping services together into one large procurement, and option appraisals on how services are best delivered.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.

Legal – PJ
CFO – JH/MC

Appendix 1 – London Boroughs Waste Performance in 2009/10

Authority	NI 191 Total Residual Household Waste per Household (kg/household)	Ranking	NI 192 Percentage waste sent for Reuse, Recycling, Composting	Ranking	Combined score	Overall ranking
Barking and Dagenham LB	784.30	32	32.75%	15	47	19
Barnet LB	702.49	27	33.07%	14	41	17
Bexley LB	518.02	8	50.70%	1	9	2
Brent LB	683.70	25	28.69%	22	47	19
Bromley LB	590.42	16	40.20%	6	22	6
Camden LB	487.55	4	29.75%	20	24	7
City of London	532.59	10	35.19%	10	20	5
Croydon LB	606.27	18	32.24%	16	34	14
Ealing LB	531.83	9	37.55%	7	16	3
Enfield LB	626.39	22	31.07%	18	40	16
Greenwich LB	622.61	20	35.42%	9	29	11
Hackney LB	569.12	14	24.32%	29	43	18
Hammersmith and Fulham LB	510.36	7	27.24%	24	31	13
Haringey LB	663.53	23	25.12%	27	50	20
Harrow LB	579.05	15	46.09%	3	18	4
Havering LB	709.88	29	34.35%	11	40	16
Hillingdon LB	624.88	21	40.90%	5	26	8
Hounslow LB	680.53	24	33.19%	13	37	15
Islington LB	482.08	3	29.06%	21	24	7
Lambeth LB	495.79	5	27.15%	25	30	12
Lewisham LB	777.36	31	16.85%	33	64	23
Merton LB	593.03	17	33.62%	12	29	11
Newham LB	875.69	33	18.80%	32	65	24
Redbridge LB	698.17	26	31.58%	17	43	18
Richmond upon Thames LB	544.52	12	43.01%	4	16	3
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	455.03	1	30.65%	19	20	5
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames	497.71	6	46.16%	2	8	1
Southwark LB	703.61	28	22.13%	31	59	22
Sutton LB	606.84	19	37.51%	8	27	9
Tower Hamlets LB	473.48	2	26.39%	26	28	10
Waltham Forest LB	734.07	30	27.92%	23	53	21
Wandsworth LB	567.22	13	24.99%	28	41	17
Westminster City Council	538.07	11	24.08%	30	41	17

Appendix 2 – Service arrangements for top performing London Boroughs (2009/10)

Borough	Rank	Recycling	Organics	Refuse	Notes	Operations
Kingston	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly – kerbside sort box collection (houses) Weekly - sack collection (flats) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly - garden waste sacks or bin Weekly kitchen waste caddy (houses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly - sack collection 	Charge for garden waste sacks	Single contractor for all collections. Kitchen waste is collected as part of recycling collections.
Bexley	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly - kerbside sort 3-box collection (houses) Weekly – wheeled bin (flats) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly - garden and kitchen wheeled bin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly - wheeled bin 	Top performer in London on % recycled, composted or reused	In-house. Two recycling vehicles for glass/ plastic bottles /cans, and paper/cardboard. Weekly refuse collection where food collection is not provided (mostly flats).
Ealing	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly – kerbside sort box collection (houses), separate sack collection of mixed plastics Weekly – sack collection (flats) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly – garden waste sacks Weekly – kitchen waste caddies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly – sacks or bins 		Single contractor. Kitchen waste is collected as part of recycling collections. Mixed plastics collected as part of garden waste collections (using split bodied vehicle).
Harrow	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly – comingled bin collection (houses) Weekly - wheeled bin (flats) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly - garden and kitchen wheeled bin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly - wheeled bin 	Compulsory recycling and organics	In-house.