

Minutes of the 8th Waste Strategy Board

Subject:	Waste Strategy Board, 8 th meeting
Place:	Vantasia Room, Ergon House, London
Date:	23 April 2009
Time:	10:00 – 13:00

Chair:	Daniel Instone	Defra
Board present:	John Burns	Defra
	Will Armitage	Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT)
	Liz Parkes	Environment Agency (EA)
	Caroline Arnold	Non executive board member
	Jiggy Lloyd	Non executive board member
	Kerry Vitalis	Dept for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR)
	Martin Wheatley	Local Government Association (LGA)
	Roy Hathaway	Defra
	Mark Plummer	Dept. Communities & Local Govt (DCLG)
Non board present:	Jonathan Mogford	Defra
	David Mottershead	Defra
	David Milroy	Defra
	Nicola Hopley	Defra
	Laurence Smith	Defra
	Amy Pitch	Defra
	Sandy Shattock	Defra
	Poli Stuart-Lacey	Defra
Apologies	Rowena Limb	Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM)
	Hugh McNeal	BERR
	Sarah Eppel	Defra
	Neil Thornton	Defra

Item 1. Introduction

1. Daniel Instone, chair of the Waste Strategy Board, welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Item 2. Revised risk strategy

2. Sandy Shattock introduced this item which proposed a new approach to risk management within the Waste Programme. This included a methodology for identifying the most mission critical risks and a system of categorisation for identifying critical and other projects within the programme. There was also a new quantitative approach for determining programme level risk as opposed to delivery confidence. The board were asked to provide comments and consider whether to endorse the proposals.

3. In discussion it was suggested that it would be too rigid an approach to base programme risk largely on the status of individual projects, especially as this would put less weight on factors bearing on programme risk outside the projects. It was further suggested that there could be benefits in applying a qualitative approach to assess the delivery of the Programme's high-level outcomes which could be broadly grouped into three distinct areas: consumer and business behaviours, progress with infrastructure and policy interventions. It was suggested that this approach could be used in addition to the proposed quantitative approach to assess the progress of individual projects. In addition, the views of government offices in the regions and other external factors should be taken into account when assessing progress of the Waste Programme.
4. The board were supportive of the new approach to categorise projects according to their relative contribution to the waste programme. It was suggested that the priority waste materials and food waste projects should be re-classified as critical and the rating for the construction sector project should be lowered. The Board agreed that in future commercial and industrial waste policy should be reported on formally and regularly as a piece of ongoing work and all ongoing work should be assigned a RAG status.
5. In summing up this part of the discussion the chair noted the board were supportive of the suggested approach outlined but would like to see projects measured against the 3 high level outcomes of consumer and business behaviours, progress with infrastructure and policy interventions if possible. The board also wished to see a RAG status assigned to ongoing work.
Action: Programme Office to consider adoption of measuring projects against high level outcomes and assigning RAG statuses to ongoing work. It would also consider how best to utilise regional government offices to help inform progress on delivery.

Item 3. Progress review and key issues

6. Daniel Instone introduced the item to update the board on the progress of the programme and the latest risks and key issues. The main areas of risk for the programme were risks associated with obtaining finance for PFI schemes, recycled material prices, issues around communications especially in relation to waste infrastructure and the European Commission's interpretation of the definition of municipal waste. The risks around financing of PFI schemes had resulted in the downgrading of the RAG status of the Waste Infrastructure Delivery Programme from amber-red to red. As a consequence the Waste Programme had been downgraded from amber-green to amber-red.
7. The situation was changing all the time though and since the last review of RAG status the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority PFI project had been signed off with the necessary funding secured after an injection of capital from the newly created Treasury Infrastructure Fund. A further consideration related to the recession was the decline in municipal waste growth. It was too soon to be clear about the full effects but overall the reduction of the central estimate of growth from 1.5% to 1% appeared justified. However the change in estimated trends would make more difference to 2020 targets than for 2013. The board were invited to comment on the RAG status and issues discussed.

8. In discussion it was noted that CLG continued to encourage waste authorities to put in place spatial plans to assist in the development of waste infrastructure. The LGA would support this work wherever possible. In order to help with the delivery of infrastructure projects, it was suggested that Defra should consider establishing a working group to look at facility delivery.
Action: Daniel Instone to discuss further with Martin Wheatley and Rowena Limb.
9. Some board members stated they would prefer to see secondary legislation used for revisions to Controlled Waste Regulations Schedule 2 rather than primary legislation. It was noted that advice to date was that primary legislation would be required.
Action: David Milroy, in conjunction with colleagues in Legal, to consider the need for primary legislation for revisions to Controlled Waste Regulations Schedule 2.
10. In further discussion it was suggested that the LGA should be given advanced notification of any future waste policy announcements and would value sufficient early warning from Defra, including on the expected announcement on packaging strategy. **Action: Roy Hathaway to consider what advance notice could be given to the LGA on the expected packaging announcement.**
11. The board wanted to see more information on how work on waste minimisation was being taken forward. Defra had previously produced a paper on waste minimisation for the European Commission and this could form the basis of a paper for the board at the next meeting.
Action: Waste Programme Office to consider a paper for the board on waste minimisation.

Item 4. Update on strategic communications developments

12. Poli Stuart Lacey gave an update on ongoing strategic communications work. Communications objectives for 2008/09 had included persuading individuals and organisations to give greater priority to producing less waste, recycling more and in an environmentally sound manner and persuading individuals of the need for waste treatment infrastructure to enable greater diversion of waste from landfill.
13. Priorities for 2009/10 were to focus on how the economic climate was shaping policy and communications priorities, ensuring the focus on encouraging recycling did not lose momentum, offering real help and solutions for businesses, waste prevention, reuse and supporting PFI proposals.
14. Current campaign activity included the "Saving Money, it's your business / Real Help campaign" a national campaign aimed at small to medium enterprises (SMEs) providing top tips to help reduce waste and save energy. The "Get a bag habit" was aimed at consumers and encouraged the re-use of bags via the radio and outdoor advertisements. The "Love Food Hate Waste" campaign was designed to tackle food

15. Ongoing communications activities included a research project to identify a clearer approach to communicating key waste issues, work to develop a suitable support package for Local Authorities to support waste infrastructure proposals and the development of a communications strategy to enhance stakeholder engagement work and measure risk and progress. The communications team were currently talking to key stakeholders to produce some pro-active key lines on waste with a possible workshop in June. Poli would report back to the board later in the year to update on its progress.

16. In discussion it was suggested that the LGA be consulted on any communications material that was intended for use by local authorities.

Action: Poli Stuart-Lacey to update board on progress of stakeholder workshop.

17. In further discussion it was suggested that communications outcomes should be incorporated into the quarterly programme report and there was a strong case for classifying the communications strategy as a separate piece of work in its own right within the programme. More measurement was needed of public reaction to waste messages and the extent to which they were influenced by the media. In certain parts of the media, there was a recent noticeable shift towards more balanced reporting of waste issues and a move away from sensationalist reporting and this needed to be measured and analysed.

Action: Poli Stuart-Lacey to present a paper to the next board meeting on evidence gathered on behaviour outcomes in response to communications work.

Item 5. Budget and carbon budgets

18. Jonathan Mogford reported that Budget 2009 set the world's first carbon budgets which set a legally binding 34 per cent reduction in green house gas emissions by 2020 to stimulate investment in low carbon technologies. Sitting alongside the national approach would be departmental carbon budgets and greenhouse gas reduction plans. This would be challenging for Defra as its carbon budget will include emissions from the agriculture and waste sectors (sectors with high greenhouse gas emissions). All departments will need to develop specific projects to reduce emissions with financial penalties imposed for departments which failed to meet emissions targets. Work was currently underway across government to identify projects which could reduce carbon. Defra would establish a board level programme to look at carbon budgets and map out a way forward.

19. The success of carbon budgets would be reliant on developing a strong data set to establish a credible baseline. Another challenge would be the issue of linkages with other areas, for example if waste was diverted from landfill and used to produce biodiesel it would need to be clear if this would count against Defra's carbon budget

or a Department for Transport carbon budget. By July 2009 the Department expected to have in place a statement of strategy to 2020 for climate and energy. By the autumn the department would need to have produced green house gas reduction plans. The board agreed it would be useful to have an update at the next meeting on this topic.

Action: Jonathan Mogford to provide short update on carbon budgets at next board meeting.

Item 6. PPM Health check

20. Nicola Hopley introduced the item which gave information on an internal programme and project management health check of the Waste Programme. The health check addressed the main programme controls as detailed in the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Managing Successful Programmes (MSP). The auditors overall opinion was that the system of internal control within the Waste Programme was adequate. This reflected findings and opinion about a number of different areas including programme planning, risk management and benefits realisation.

21. The report made a series of recommendations for further development of the programme controls which the board were asked to endorse. These included development and implementation of a benefits management strategy, a communications plan and a risk management strategy. To assist with the implementation of the recommendations, a member of the internal audit team with specific expertise in risk control and governance would be seconded to the Programme Office to develop strategies and plans proposed and to assist with their practical application.

22. The board endorsed all of the recommendations and supported the establishment of a clear remit for the Waste Trio (WT) to handle the detail of the programme and the Waste Strategy Board (WSB) to act more strategically. The board suggested that Defra should consider whether WRAP should be represented on either the WT or the WSB to ensure a more joined up approach and whether a senior official from the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) programme should be represented at Waste Trio meetings.

Action: Waste Programme Office to consider WRAP representation at the WSB/WT and SCP representation at WT.

Item 7. AOB

23. The board requested that a timeline should be provided for each meeting to give information about forthcoming milestones.

Action: Programme Office to develop a milestone timeline for future meetings.

24. Defra was planning to publish its annual progress report on the Waste Strategy in the summer. The board felt that the new report should capture the future challenges and reflect more on what is happening in the wider world. It was agreed the report should contain a forward look but it should not become a new mini strategy.

Waste Programme Office
April 2009