

Minutes of the 9th Waste Strategy Board (WSB)

Subject:	Waste Strategy Board
Date:	24 July 2009
Place:	Vantasia Room, Ergon House, London

Chair:	Daniel Instone	Defra
Board:	Neil Thornton	Defra
	Roy Hathaway	Defra
	Paul Croston	Defra
	Caroline Arnold	WSB Non executive
	Jiggy Lloyd	WSB Non executive
	Liz Parkes	Environment Agency (EA)
	James Snook	Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT)
	Pritum Shah	Department For Business, innovation and Skills (BIS)
	Marcia King	Cabinet Office (CO)
Non board:	Steve Creed	WRAP
	Andrew Smith	Government Office for the North East (GONE)
	David Milroy	Defra
	Jonathan Mogford	Defra
	Anil Pillai	Defra
	Sophia Brecknell	Defra
	Nicola Hopley	Defra
	Laurence Smith	Defra
Apologies	John Burns	Defra
	Poli Stuart-Lacey	Defra
	Rowena Limb	GOEM
	Mark Plummer	CLG
	Amy Pitch	Defra
	Martin Wheatley	LGA

Item 1: Introduction

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

Item 2: Update on the implementation of waste audit recommendations.

2. Nicola Hopley introduced the item, which gave an update on a recent Programme and Project management health check of the Waste Programme. The health check concluded that the programme's governance and working processes were adequate for achieving the programme's outcomes although there were some areas that would benefit from being strengthened. The majority of the recommendations related to the day to day functioning of the programme but there several changes worthy of highlighting to the board:
 - A Waste Strategy Implementation Group (WSIG) had been established to provide oversight of the day to day management of the programme and

project progress, freeing up the Waste Strategy Board to focus on providing strategic direction and challenge. WSIG would consist of Daniel Instone, the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the programme, and the two Deputy SROs, Roy Hathaway and John Burns with support provided by Pat Davies (Business Manager) and the Waste Programme Office (WPO).

- Project risks are continuing to be managed at project level but the WSIG will have regular sight of red and amber project risks to ensure they are being effectively managed. WSIG will also identify programme risks and produce a separate programme risk register and will have responsibility for managing and reporting on those risks. As a result the Strategy Board will only have sight of programme risks which have a RAG status of amber or red.
3. The Waste Programme will be subject to Defra's internal assurance process to help deliver its objectives. As part of this process the WPO will need to produce a programme business case.
 4. In response to this, the board made the following comments.
 - i. The board welcomed the new governance arrangements, which were becoming commonplace across Defra.
 - ii. WRAP should be invited to join the quarterly liaison meetings currently attended by WAG, EA, Defra and BIS.
 - iii. There should be an agenda item at the next board meeting to discuss the impact of the revised governance structure of the waste programme to consider the impact it is having on delivering outcomes.
Action: WPO to consider this as an agenda item for next meeting.

Item 3: Waste Programme Progress Review and Key Risks and Issues

5. Nicola Hopley introduced this item which highlighted the progress and risks in delivering the waste programme from the last quarter. Following comments from the last meeting, the analysis of the progress would be grouped into three areas: delivery of municipal waste targets; consumer and business behaviours and policy interventions; and impacts from outside the programme itself. Highlights included:

Critical Projects

- The status of the critical Waste Infrastructure Delivery Programme (WIDP) (red) and the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) (amber red) project meant the programme overall remained at amber red. This was mainly because of continuing issues around securing planning approval for waste infrastructure and the European Commission's ongoing consideration of the basis on which all member states record data for reporting against landfill diversion targets. The majority of the projects and ongoing work within the programme continue to progress well.

Delivery of municipal waste targets

- In response to planning difficulties, work was progressing to provide support to local authorities on communicating around waste infrastructure. This included

the provision of online support to local authorities and the establishment of a working group of stakeholders focussed on residual waste issues.

- In response to the Commissions ongoing consideration of data recording for landfill diversion targets, Defra intends to conduct a second consultation on changing the definition of municipal waste used in the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS).
- Difficulties with financing remaining infrastructure projects appear to have eased. HM Treasury's Infrastructure fund and the fact that the remaining projects are relatively small have contributed to this.

Consumer and business behaviours

- Public support for recycling remains strong. The economic downturn does not appear to have impacted on rates of recycling. Market prices for most materials, except steel, continue to increase mainly due to export demand.

Policy Interventions

- The Secretary of State has announced that Defra will commission a national survey of commercial and industrial (C&I) waste production and management in England. This information will enable the monitoring of the effectiveness of national policies on C&I waste and help inform the direction of new policies and, if needed, new targets. Work is ongoing to develop a C&I policy statement, which is expected to be published in the autumn.

6. The board comments included:

- i. It would be helpful for the board to see the feedback provided by Defra's management board on the progress of the Waste Programme following the quarterly reporting process. This would be difficult due to the close timing of the management board and strategy board meetings, however the WPO would endeavour to provide feedback when possible..
Action: WPO to provide the board with management board feedback on the Waste Programme quarterly report when possible.
- ii. Many local authorities produce future predictions on waste growth in their areas to help them plan for waste infrastructure. This information could be entered into the Waste Data Hub along with the regular waste data recorded by local authorities. This information could be used by Defra to help inform their work on modelling predictions for waste growth. WIDP welcomed this suggestion and would be happy to explore this further.
Action: WIDP in conjunction with Waste Data team to consider recording local authority data on waste growth.
- iii. The board welcomed the new programme plan and risk register however it was important to ensure they measured progress against outcomes rather than progress against activities. The board should be focusing on the strategic vision and not the detail of delivery.
- iv. There should be a clearer link between the critical rated projects on the project dashboard and the risk register and what is being done to manage those critical projects.
Action: WPO to consider revising project dashboard in light of comments

- v. One way in which the Programme could update the board on progress against outcomes is for the work stream leaders to give a short verbal update to the board on the issues most concerning them. This process has been adopted by other board level programmes with the department and seems to work effectively.
- vi. The regional government offices would welcome a C&I waste data survey. It should be noted however that any survey would not capture the full effects of the economic downturn due to the time lag since the last survey. Until an accurate picture is built up of C&I waste data, the risks remain unknown.

Item 4: Update on views from waste businesses

7. Jiggy Lloyd introduced this item which gave details of a sample of business views on the issues of waste and resource efficiency. The main findings were:

- The landfill tax was working but that climate change always overshadowed resource efficiency in terms of priorities and that resource efficiency lacked a big driver.
- Some businesses felt waste was over-regulated and were not clear about where responsibilities lie for waste and resource efficiency following the creation of the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC).
- The recent fluctuations in commodity prices have made businesses more aware of resource efficiency, and they can see the benefits of adopting a sustainable approach.
- Sustainable behaviours adopted at home are feeding through to the workplace. This is especially relevant in small to medium enterprises (SMEs).
- Waste is not normally considered by businesses when they were producing a product or service.
- Government should not lose sight of the fact that businesses need to be rewarded for consistent sustainable behaviours and processes not just those that propose new or innovative approaches.

8. In response the board commented:

- i. Businesses often confuse energy efficiency with waste and resource efficiency.
- ii. Avoiding using the term “waste” can sometimes help to ensure people can see the value in resources and could encourage people to adopt sustainable behaviours.
- iii. It can be hard to engage with the waste industry and establish what their collective view is in comparison with other industries like the energy sector.
- iv. It was important to work with the waste industry and consider how best to influence behaviour.

- v. More work was needed to gain a better understanding of what influences people's behaviours at home and how this could be applied to changing behaviours in the workplace. It would be useful to look at how businesses operate internally and understand how they consider waste issues.

Item 5: WRAP update on Delivery Landscape Review

9. Steve Creed from WRAP gave a presentation to the board on the Resource Efficiency Delivery Landscape Implementation Project. The main highlights were:
 - Identified programme rationalisation benefits are limited to obvious areas of synergies and benefits-of-scale in largely back-office functions such as marketing, PR, admin, some IT.
 - Most of the benefits resultant from the landscape rationalisation options will be delivered from synergies obtained from rationalising and merging programmes of work amongst the delivery bodies.
 - The benefits of achieving this are the creation of a single resource efficiency delivery body able to provide simple inclusive low effort points of entry/access, consistent high quality advice and effective outcomes.
 - The rationalisation will result in £5.7m efficiency savings over two years
 - The strategic steer given by Defra for resource efficiency included engaging key audiences on resource minimisation and eco design; enabling businesses to become resource efficient; ensuring sufficient markets for recovered/reprocessed materials and for energy recovered from waste; and reducing waste to landfill at least cost and effort.
10. In response the board commented:
 - i. The fact that WRAP would be focusing more on energy from waste was welcomed.
 - ii. The next spending review would impact on the future of WRAP and this should be considered as a programme risk.
 - iii. Engagement between WRAP and the EA would be very important to ensure success going forward.

Item 6: Update on carbon budgets

1. Jonathan Mogford gave a short update to the board on the latest developments to establish carbon budgets. The Low Carbon Transition Plan was published by DECC on the 15 July and contained an undertaking from Defra to save an additional 1 megatonne of carbon from the existing waste programme, including an assumed continuation of the 0.3 MtCO₂ reductions estimated from this year's increase in the Landfill Tax. This is on top of the existing carbon savings. DECC would now focus on delivery planning and departments would need to begin detailed planning on how they will produce the necessary carbon savings.

2. Daniel Instone thanked Jonathan for the update and concluded that it would be helpful if he came back to the next board meeting in the autumn for a more detailed strategic discussion on the issue. In addition it would be helpful to set up a meeting with key personnel in the shorter term to discuss the detail around the actions required.

Action: Jonathan Mogford and Daniel Instone along with key personnel to convene meeting to discuss carbon budgets.

Item 7: EA update on Corporate Strategy Review

3. Liz Parkes introduced this item which gave an update on work to produce a supporting strategy for waste and resources management as part of the EA's corporate strategy review. The key points:
 - The 3 high level aims of the supporting strategy are:
 - Clarity on the best options for managing waste and using resources.
 - Businesses and the public sector have the right waste and resource management infrastructure in place.
 - Businesses and the public sector are highly resource efficient, minimise pollution and manage waste responsibly.
 - The strategy will focus on the high impact waste streams which have the greatest potential impact on the environment. These include: Bio-waste, hazardous wastes, construction and demolition wastes and electrical and electronic equipment.
 - The EA are aiming to publish the Corporate Strategy and the Supporting Strategy alongside their State of the Environment report before their annual conference in November.
4. The board commented that the supporting strategy would need to take into account carbon budgets and that the board should take a keen interest in this as it affects the wider world of waste.

Item 8: 08/09 Annual Report draft

5. Nicola Hopley introduced this item, which gave a short update on progress with producing the annual progress report for the Waste Strategy. The key points:
 - The progress report will contain a forward look focusing on priorities for the year ahead but will not seek to rewrite the Waste Strategy.
 - The report will contain highlights and achievement from the past year and as an annex, an update on the 94 actions within the strategy.
 - Defra is aiming to publish the report in October.
6. The EA offered to provide more text on what has been happening with the regulatory framework. In general, the board felt the annex containing updates on the 94 actions was too long and should be condensed. It would also be helpful if the report could contain a snapshot of all the major developments in a one-page table.

Action: PMO to consider revisions to draft report. EA to provide further information on progress with regulatory framework to PMO.