



22nd September 2010

Expert appointed to advise on health impacts of waste facilities

Gloucestershire County Council has appointed a health and environmental expert to advise on the residual waste project.

Professor Roy Harrison is one of the world's leading experts on the impact of air pollution on human health and the environment.

His role will involve advising officers and cabinet members on health and environmental impacts of technologies being considered as part of the residual waste project.

Professor Harrison is Professor of Environmental Health at University of Birmingham.

He is currently Deputy Chairman of the DEFRA Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards and a member of the Department of Health Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants.

He was appointed an OBE for services to environmental science in the New Year Honours List in 2004.

Commenting on his appointment, Professor Harrison said: "Waste management raises many health-related questions in the minds of the public, and I look forward to working with Gloucestershire County Council to keep them abreast of the latest knowledge of this topic."

The county council has allocated a budget of up to £10,000 over the next year to fund Professor Harrison's appointment.

Given Professor Harrison's expertise the county council believes this represents very good value for money.

Cllr Stan Waddington, cabinet member for environment and waste, said: "The most important thing in this project is to ensure that the solution we proceed with is safe for the people of Gloucestershire and provides value for money and I look forward to having the benefit of Professor Harrison's advice on this.

"He will be a vital asset in working with members to fully understand any impacts on human health and the environment of waste disposal solutions when we're making our decisions on alternatives to landfill.

"I know that some of the biggest concerns raised by the public have been about the impact on health and the environment and I hope that Professor Harrison's appointment shows how seriously we are taking this."

Currently, we recycle 43 per cent of our waste in Gloucestershire, with the remainder going to landfill.

Gloucestershire buried about 170,000 tonnes of household waste in 2008/2009 and the council expects a landfill tax bill of £7.7 million this financial year alone.



Gloucestershire

COUNTY COUNCIL

Landfill tax is currently £48 for every tonne of waste and is set to increase by £8 per tonne per year next year because the government is imposing heavy penalties and taxes.

This means councils across the UK are looking to find more environmentally friendly and cost effective ways of dealing with rubbish.

Detailed proposals from four waste companies are currently being evaluated.

The core technologies being considered are mechanical biological treatment (MBT)/mechanical treatment and Energy from Waste (incineration).

MBT includes a range of technologies, including composting, anaerobic digestion and bio-drying.

All the proposed solutions make some use of Javelin Park whilst in some cases final processing takes place outside of the county.

Cabinet will be asked to approve a shortlist of companies to be taken through to the next stage of the project in November.

Further information on the residual waste project is available at

www.recycleforgloucestershire.com/real_rubbish

[<http://www.recycleforgloucestershire.com/real_rubbish>](http://www.recycleforgloucestershire.com/real_rubbish)

Ends

Notes to Editors

Professor Harrison has played an active role in his chosen field as Chairman of the Quality of Urban Air Review Group for the Department of Environment and the Airborne Particles Expert Group for the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions. He has been a member of the DETR (now DEFRA) Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards since 1991 and is currently Deputy Chairman.

He is a member of the Department of Health Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants and DEFRA Air Quality Expert Group and NERC Theme Leader for Environment, Pollution and Human Health.

The residual waste project, which is worth up to £800 million over 25 years and provides significant savings of around £75m before PFI credits.

Professor Harrison will provide reports and advice on critical issues such as health, planning and a long term monitoring regime

We have benchmarked Professor Harrison against both the cost of other advisers and academics and found him to be good value for money.

Further information on Professor Harrison's completed and current research projects are available at <http://www.gees.bham.ac.uk/staff/harrisonrm.shtml>

Contact

Issued by Lisa Bonnell, Gloucestershire County Council Media Team, 01452 425226, lisa.bonnell@gloucestershire.gov.uk.



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL