

Draft MWMS Consultation Workshop Outputs

The aim of the workshop was to canvass ideas and opinions regarding the draft objectives presented within the MWMS, which will operate until 2020. By obtaining the input and participation of key stakeholders, it is hoped that the final strategy will be one which fulfils its aim of producing the best strategy possible for Gloucestershire.

Invitees to the workshop were taken from the community panel. It was originally intended that the whole panel would attend meeting two which was devoted to discussion of the draft Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Unfortunately poor turn out in meeting one (only 11 of the intended 20 people showed) meant that a second recruitment process was undertaken to make up the numbers. As a result only the original group of 11 were invited to take part in the strategy consultation workshop, with the new recruits using meeting two as a catch up session. Of those 11 invitees, 9 attended. The attendees were:

- Jane Sheppard
- Lucy Parkinson
- Simon Shirley-Rollison
- John Ryan
- Ruth Talbot
- Doris Bottoms
- Shumi Begum
- Paul Huxstep
- Brian Reeve

Outline of the Event

Table 1 below outlines the format for the evening with intended timings. The structure of the workshops allowed for flexibility in the timing of each of the sessions as required. During the discussion of the issues, the group were invited to segregate themselves into two groups. Mike Brown facilitated one group (group 1), whilst Claire Stonier facilitated the second group (Group 2).

Table 1: Workshop Agenda

Time	Activity
6.00	Buffet and Registration
6.30	Welcome & Introduction
6.45	Discussion of Issues
8.30	Meeting Close

Discussion of Issues

The notes below represent the key points that were made during the discussions from each group. It does not reflect every comment made.

General Comments

Group 2 stated that there was a need to get rid of the word 'waste' from the strategy – we should not be trying to get rid of the material as it should be seen as a resource right through the waste hierarchy. The word 'waste' has negative connotations.

Group 2 also felt that there was a need to bring the wording of the objectives down to the lowest level so that all people can understand it.

Questions to Establish the Baseline

1. Is it right for the strategy to place primary emphasis on waste prevention?

Both groups agreed that this should be the case.

Group 1 stated that waste prevention should be a priority and had the following comments initiatives they would like to see encouraged:

- Use compost bins to prevent waste
- Use refillable bottles, cornflakes, biscuits
- Reuse shopping bags
- Reduce polystyrene in packaging
- Efforts to reduce junk mail
- Could offer incentive to householders for less waste

In addition to this list of initiatives, the following comments were made by group 1:

- People tend to buy more than is needed – e.g. buy one get one free
- Waste prevention is particularly tricky and may not be achievable. People may think about reducing waste but will still buy the products.
- It was acknowledged that waste prevention is difficult to administer

- It was thought among the group that businesses have more power over waste prevention than local government. There was also a question over how much pull does Council have with industry, to persuade them to prevent more waste?

2. Do you accept that there is a need to recycle and re-use more?

Both groups agreed that this should be the case.

Group 1 made a number of specific points on the current schemes in place:

- The group would like to see plastic bottles being able to be recycled at the kerbside
- One representative had got rid of their recycling box on freecycle because they can't use it. There is therefore a question over how to engage the disabled community in recycling.
- One group member stated that sometimes she couldn't be bothered to recycle.
- The group liked the textile banks.

In relation to education and enforcement, some members recalled receiving a leaflet saying what can/can't recycle. However it was acknowledged that there is still a lot of work to be done in this area. For example one member thought that they had to wash labels off jars etc before they were put out for recycling. Another person stated in relation to a neighbour: "[the] Daft tart puts garden rubbish in the rubbish instead of using the green bag/box".

The group thought that people who do not use the services properly should be given lines; and the collection crews should carry notes with them and put through 'offenders' doors asking them to correct their actions.

The need for more publicity was widely recognised, including things such as freecycle and the ability to deposit milk bottles at the HRC sites. One suggestion was to include a recycling leaflet with Council polling. Education in schools was recognised as being important.

The group stated that businesses need to do more. Incentive schemes were cited as a good idea to tackle this; e.g. establish inter-business competitions.

Group 2 stated that people need to know what can be recycled or not – the current very confusing, people don't know what you can and can't recycle. For example householders can't recycle margarine pots and some can't recycle cardboard.

Draft Objective 1 – Changing Behaviour

"To further develop our communications campaign and education programme to promote waste minimisation and to maximise participation in sustainable waste management services. In the long term we aim to transform consumer behaviour and society's attitude to consumption and disposal".

Group 1 stated that this is a difficult objective with GCC likely to struggle to get the message across - people have to want to act differently and for this several things are needed:

- incentives
- make them feel good
- penalties
- peer pressure (this is especially important with regards to young people).

The group thought that this objective could be actioned through:

- More advertising
- Championing the cause by inspirational people
- Use waste infrastructure as advertising backdrops including vehicles.
- Force specific information to be put on packaging:
 - o Chemicals used
 - o Energy used to create
 - o Is it recyclable?

The group thought that this objective was important as people continue to use more than they need. If the objective isn't actioned then resources will run out and eventually the county will have to adopt crisis management tools.

Group 2 thought that overall it was a good objective, but suggested that the wording of this objective was too strong, sounding like 'something a dictator would say'.

They acknowledged the need to transform consumer behaviour, but should try to make people feel good about what they are doing.

It was felt that this objective should be worded so to be about education rather than dictating.

Specifically, it was felt that the reference to 'minimise and maximise' in same sentence is confusing and that there is need for some explanation as to what the communications campaign would involve.

Draft Objective 2 – Reduction First

“To reduce Gloucestershire’s municipal waste”.

Group 2 stated that the term municipal waste should be explained. Claire Stonier explained that there is an explanation within the main body of the draft Strategy.

Draft Objective 3 – Segregation at Source

“To provide collection systems that enables all householders to segregate their waste into three streams: dry recyclables, biowaste (kitchen and/or garden waste) and residual waste”.

Group 1 had the following comments to make:

- This objective is fine if you have the space i.e. a house with a garden etc, but it is a problem for mid-terrace houses and flats etc.
- Could set up micro-stations to serve say 15/20 houses.
- If waste charged for, then bins should be accessible by key only.

Much of the discussion for group 2 focussed on the provision of garden waste collections to householders. There were mixed opinions around the table although most felt that a separate collection of garden waste was not necessary and why should the council take away garden waste.

There was also a general feeling that people like landscape gardeners should be able to use the tip for free to encourage recycling and composting.

It was stated that the strategy contains no reference to skips and skip waste. Claire Stonier explained that skip companies are private sector companies and therefore, for the most part do not fall under the definition of Municipal Waste.

The need for education was also made – there is a need to educate on everything – and to put some fun into recycling.

The group stated that there was a need for a bin system that people can understand – e.g. through colour coordination. Many people don't really have space inside their homes to store large bins and having 3 bins takes up a lot of space and is invasive. Space is a key issue for big families. There is a need for systems which all people can cope with.

Draft Objective 4 – Compost Hierarchy

“To promote home and community composting where possible, and also provide facilities to compost biowaste that is collected at the kerbside and received at HRCs. We aim to produce high quality composts that can be used locally”.

Group 1 agreed with the compost hierarchy. Within the group 2 members currently home compost food waste and garden waste and 3 Members do not - 1 due to lack of space.

Group 2 had mixed views on this. The group agreed that home and community composting should be promoted. However, as discussed in relation to Objective 3, the need for separate collections of garden waste was questioned.

In relation to charges, the group again had mixed views although the general consensus was that they didn't want to see charges for garden waste collections as it could act as a disincentive recycle.

One member of the group wanted to see a provision forcing landscape gardeners to shred their garden waste so that it is easier to get rid of it.

Draft Objective 5 – Residual Waste as a Resource

“To maximise recovery of recyclables and gain further value from residual waste before disposal. We will provide residual waste treatment capacity to divert waste from landfill, and find/or develop markets for recovered materials”.¹

Group 1 generally agreed with this objective as it was recognised that the County could not go on landfilling which causes environmental problems e.g. seepage into groundwater and odour problems.

One member made the comment that they don't like recycling plastic as it uses a lot of chemicals.

Another comment was made that AD can get energy without combustion therefore the objective is poorly worded.

Group 2 saw this as a good objective although again the reference to waste should be removed. One group member wanted the wording of 'landfill' to be amended to read 'temporary storage' such that if future technologies generated some use for the material in landfill then it could be extracted.

Incineration was not seen as a popular option, and should only be used where there is no other use for any of the materials being incinerated.

Draft Objective 6 – Delivering the Strategy

“To implement this Strategy, through clear leadership, accountable decision-making, timely investment and resourcing. We will look to secure sustainable funding to continuously improve Gloucestershire's waste management service”.

Group 1 strongly agreed with this objective.

Group 2 saw funding as a critical issue and that it will become more important.

Draft Objective 7 – Working in Partnership

“To develop an effective partnership between the seven Gloucestershire authorities and investigate the formation of a suitable organisational framework for delivering this Strategy. We plan to develop strong partnerships with the Waste Planning Authority, businesses, community groups and other organisations to ensure effective management of the municipal waste stream”.²

Group 1 asked in relation to the phrase “plan to develop”, why this hasn't happened already and how much longer will it take? There was a suspicion among the group that the GWP is not committed to partnership working and that they are only doing it now because they have to.

¹ The group facilitator made a comment that there appears to be a confusing contradiction on recyclables within this objective.

² The group facilitator has made a comment that there are no timescales on this objective. The objective therefore has limited value as it is not measurable.

The group commented that they would like to see some consistency between the WCAs – i.e. get them to use the same methods.

Group 2 saw partnership working as a really good idea, but that it should not just be within the County; cross border and national partnership working should also be undertaken. The group thought that there was a need to work with local authorities in neighbouring areas to deliver correct services for region.

The group did not see a large role for the community sector in the strategy.

Draft Objective 8 – Closing the Resource Loop

“To reprocess waste materials at the most appropriate location; recycling locally wherever practical by supporting reprocessors within Gloucestershire. We will seek to ensure that our waste materials are recycled into high quality products, helping to generate jobs and create wealth and mitigate the impact of climate change”.

Group 1 made the following comments:

- There will be planning problems to dealing with waste locally.
- Should use facilities – not necessarily waste facilities – that are already there.
- Local recycling – do we have the skills and cheap enough labour?
- The objective is a good idea but are there economies of scale to be made?

Group 2 stated that this was a good aspiration and that the emphasis on local is very important. But the County should be prepared to look beyond the borders.

Need to look at ideas for using the materials – e.g. insulation. Need positive approaches to end use of materials. If this is communicated then people are more likely to take part in recycling the materials.

Draft Objective 9 – Depollution of the Waste Stream

“To segregate and safely treat or dispose of hazardous materials from the municipal waste stream.”

Group 1 agreed that this was a sensible objective.

Group 2 thought that there should be emphasis on reducing the amount of hazardous waste in the first place.

Other Questions

What are the barriers to you recycling?

Group 2:

- Limited materials that can be collected.
- Lack of education – there is confusion about what waste go in which bin. This stops you recycling at all.

- Bins not picked up regularly enough, the bins get full. One person has 3 boxes and they are all filled each fortnight.

Do you think that collecting residual waste on a fortnightly basis is a good idea?

Group 1 agreed that it was a good idea, and that it would be needed to encourage the use of food waste collections

Group 2 – this would be OK if households could recycle more and if householders knew what could and could not be recycled. For the scheme to work it was felt that there would be a need for a comprehensive recycling system.

Concerns were raised about health implications.

Do you think that making recycling compulsory is a good idea?

Group 1 stated that it would prefer to see the provision of positive incentives (treating people as adults) rather than compulsory recycling. In addition compulsory recycling should only be introduced if it can be enforced. On a similar vein the group questioned whether it would be cost effective to enforce?

Group 2 - There were mixed views on this. Generally the response was positive although it was stated that there should be positive incentives as well as negative ones i.e. both a carrot and stick approach.

Would you be prepared to segregate your kitchen waste if you were provided with the facilities to do so?

Group 1 agreed that they would take part, but that the food waste needs to be collected responsibly:

- Collection should be weekly
- Residents should be encouraged to wrap food in newspaper to stop smell, insects, rats
- Need education re containment.

Group 2 stated that kitchen waste collections are seen as a good idea, so long as the collection is weekly. Again, there is a need for a good system in place, and the provision of liners was preferred.

Some concern was expressed about rats and foxes.