

## **CABINET**

**DATE OF MEETING:** 6 JANUARY 2022

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Project Integra Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy

**Report of:** Joint Chief Executive

**Cabinet Portfolio:** Environment

**Key Decision** No

**Confidentiality** Non Exempt

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report sets out the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) and seeks endorsement of the strategic direction for the partnership.
- 1.2 This will be supported by a new operational partnership agreement and detailed action plan to take Project Integra (PI) forward, including meeting the requirements of the Environment Bill.

### **2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorses the principle to move to the “twin-stream” approach to recycling but noting the clear proviso, that no commitment can yet be made to it, until the requirements of the Environment Bill and the associated financial arrangements are made clear, and agreement is reached on any revision to Project Integra with Hampshire County Council.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The collection and disposal of household waste is delivered across Hampshire by an integrated waste management system. The system’s strategic direction is coordinated by Project Integra (“PI”), a partnership of Hampshire County Council (“HCC”), its 11 districts, and unitary authorities Southampton City Council (“SCC”) and Portsmouth City Council (“PCC”). Through the adoption of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (“JMWMS”), PI is seeking partners’ agreement to implement ‘twin stream’ collection systems to comply with the forthcoming Environment Bill (“the Bill”). Agreement on collections by PI partners will enable disposal partners (HCC, SCC and PCC) to proceed with the corresponding disposal infrastructure projects in accordance with the timeframes set out in the Bill.
- 3.2 Through the adoption of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (“JMWMS”) PI is seeking partners’ agreement to implement ‘twin stream’ collection systems to comply with the forthcoming Environment Bill (“the Bill”).

Agreement on collections by PI partners will enable disposal partners (HCC, SCC and PCC) to proceed with the corresponding disposal infrastructure projects in accordance with the timeframes set out in the Bill.

- 3.3 The key objectives of the JMWMS are relatively straightforward and will form part of the overall action plan for the partnership which will follow

#### **4 Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 4.1 The JMWMS was discussed at the meeting of [Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021](#). All Members of the Committee contributed to the debate and information from the debate has been provided direct to the Waste team at Basingstoke to review.

#### **5 The Environment Bill**

- 5.1 The Bill sets out the legislative framework that will enable the Government to establish post-Brexit governance arrangements for environmental matters and implement the Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018), delivering on the ambition of the 25-year Environment Plan to protect and enhance the environment. The Bill has recently passed through third reading in both houses, with amendments now under consideration by the House of Commons.
- 5.2 The key aim of the Bill's consistency in recycling collections measures is to ensure a consistent range of material is collected for recycling at the kerbside across England, increasing the rate of recycling and maximising material quality. The changes suggested by the Bill through recent consultations are: -
- a. Weekly Food Waste collections
  - b. Increased recycling including pots tubs and trays. This would be introduced as part of the change to twin stream collections
  - c. Free garden waste for all households
  - d. The potential creation of a Deposit Return Scheme
  - e. Potential Extension to the existing Producer Responsibility Scheme
- 5.3 From information gathered from the most recent Government consultations, the following dry mixed recycling ("DMR"), materials will need to be collected from 2023/24 (subject to transitional implementation):
- (a) cardboard;
  - (b) paper;
  - (c) aluminium and steel cans;
  - (d) plastic bottles;
  - (e) pots, tubs and trays ("PTTs");
  - (f) cartons;
  - (g) glass; and,
  - (h) plastic film (from 2026/27)
- 5.4 Understanding of the full impact of the Environment Bill will evolve as the Governments position becomes clearer and further reports will be provided to consider the implications.

## 6 CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 In terms of the JMWMS refresh, there are 3 main options available for the Council to consider:

- 1) Endorse the Strategy unreservedly; this option would contribute to the Corporate Strategy but would imply resource commitments that the council cannot reasonably make in the absence of information.
- 2) Decline to endorse the Strategy; this option would not contribute to the Corporate Strategy.
- 3) Endorse the Strategy with conditions; this option is recommended and detailed below

### Conditional Endorsement

6.2 The first strategic objective within the Strategy where the recommendation is for the support to be conditional, is on the topic of making a commitment to move to a 'twin stream approach'.

6.3 The current twin stream system in Hart is:

- Paper and Cardboard co-mingled with plastics, all food and drink cans and aerosols.
- Glass collected separately.

The proposed Twin Stream, which is in line with the government consultation proposals, is: -

- Glass to be co-mingled with plastics, PTT's, all food and drink cans and aerosols.
- Paper and Cardboard would be collected separately.

6.4 The understandable rationale for its inclusion in the strategy is to enable HCC to plan future waste arrangements well in advance so that they can provide the necessary infrastructure. New materials recycling facility ("MRF") infrastructure will need to be built (existing MRFs at Alton and Portsmouth are not capable of processing PTTs, plastic films, cartons or glass). The adoption of a twin-stream system for this set of DMR materials therefore imposes further specific new infrastructure requirements, affecting MRFs, transfer stations and collection fleets. Additional depot capacity for the storage of vehicles and containers may be required.

6.5 Modelling work by Wood Consultants on behalf of PI considered how the introduction of different DMR collection systems would affect the performance, costs and carbon output both of individual authorities and the integrated Hampshire waste system as a whole. It concluded that a twin-stream DMR collection was the best solution as it would lead to a significant increase in recycling performance, and a reduction in carbon emissions equivalent to the kerbside sort option but with lower total costs. Notwithstanding the Government's preference for Kerbside sort, twin-streaming will meet the requirements of the Bill as a solution which is technically and economically practicable.

- 6.6 The principle of this approach in the Strategy is therefore to be supported. However, the concern is that we are unable at this stage to say what the financial costs are of this change. This will only become clear when we know the final outcome of the government consultations as this may involve other service changes and costs including vehicle, bins, and sacks.
- 6.7 To be able to do this it requires collection authorities to commit to future collection arrangements, which in turn will have implications for existing and future waste collection contracts. Depending on the timing and provisions of the Environment Bill, new burdens funding may be provided to enable this twin-stream approach.
- 6.8 However, were the Environment Bill not to make twin stream mandatory and/or not to provide full funding for it, then the financial implications for the councils would be different. If HCC changes its financial relationship with the collection authorities, this will also alter the financial implications. In conclusion twin stream is supported in principle, it could be expected to improve recycling performance, but it is premature to be able commit to it.
- 6.9 It is therefore recommended that the Strategy is supported in principle, but that final endorsement cannot yet be made to the JMWMS. This final endorsement should only be done once until the requirements of the Environment Bill and the associated financial arrangements are made clear and agreement is reached on any revision to the Project Integra agreement.

## **7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 7.1 The following options were considered and rejected:
- a) Endorse the Strategy unreservedly; this option would contribute to the Corporate Strategy but would imply commitments that the council cannot reasonably make without further information which is not available at this time.
  - b) Decline to endorse the Strategy; this option would not contribute to the Corporate Strategy.

## **8 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

### **8.1 Service Plan**

Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan?	Yes
Is the proposal being funded from current budgets?	No
Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal?	No

### **Legal and Constitutional Issues**

- 8.2 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report. Future alterations to waste collection methodologies or the role of Project Integra would be considered in advance and legal advice sought.

## **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.3 It is important to note that there is a specific reference in the Strategy to possible changes to the financial relationship between the county and collection authorities to clarify that support for the strategy is not a commitment to any future financial changes yet to be proposed.
- 8.4 There are no direct financial implications in endorsing the Strategy as recommended. However, there are clear financial implications associated with the risks outlined below.
- 8.5 Currently, we are unable to provide financial details for any service changes until we know the full outcomes of the government's recent consultation. Future reports will be brought to committees with any proposed service changes and financial implications.

## **Risk Management**

- 8.6 If the Council does not approve the JMWMS or the future of Project Integra the Council would be responsible for arranging disposal of all collected recyclable material. HCC are only responsible under current legislation for arranging disposal of non-recyclable material. This was the main reason Project Integra was introduced to spread the costs amongst all Hampshire authorities and provide the most up to date infrastructure for disposal.
- 8.7 The main risk in endorsing the Strategy is the creation of a real or implied commitment to changing waste collection services before the councils know what is required of them by law and before funding support for any changes is clear.
- 8.8 There are financial risks if changes to waste collection are mandated, and full financial support is not provided. There are also financial risks if the Project Integra agreement is revised.
- 8.9 The County Council has endorsed the Strategy and there is a risk that Hart may be required by HCC to unilaterally change its collection methods to fit with the infrastructure HCC plans to develop, regardless of the Environment Bill.
- 8.10 The recommendation mitigates these risks in so far as can reasonably be done.

## **9 EQUALITIES**

- 9.1 There are no equalities implications raised as a direct result of this report. However, this will need to be assessment again as and when we introduce any changes to services or policies in the future. Whilst an equality impact assessment has previously been carried out for the provision of bring banks facilities, this assessment needs to be updated to consider these report's recommendations.

## 10 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are future climate change implications arising from this report which will be discussed in more detail once the final outcomes of the government's strategy are known.

## 11 Action

- 11.1 Cabinet's views will be forwarded to Project Integra.

### Glossary

Term	Definition
JMWMS	Project Integra Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy
PI	Project Integra
HCC	Hampshire County Council
MRF	Materials Recovery Facility
PTT's	Pots tubs and trays
Twin Stream	<p>Twin stream is the collection of recycling materials in two separate streams. Similar to the process we have at present with glass collected separate from other recyclables which are co-mingled into one bin.</p> <p>The change planned is for glass to be co-mingled with plastics, PTT's, all food and drink cans and aerosols. Paper and Cardboard would be collected separately.</p>