

**Report from Overview and Scrutiny Committee
for Environmental Well-being**

LEAD MEMBER: Cllr Mrs Anne Bradshaw, Chair

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Summary: This report presents both a joint interim report from the Cumbria-wide joint scrutiny panel, recently established to consider waste management issues at a Cumbria level, and the views and recommendations of this Council's Overview and Scrutiny for Environmental Well-being arising from this report.

Recommendations:

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Environmental Well-being Committee's support of the joint scrutiny panel's interim report (appended) is noted.
- 2) That the Executive reaffirms its commitment to achieving and surpassing its own targets for waste management, thereby fully contributing to the targets set for Cumbria as a whole.
- 3) That a Member of the Executive is appointed as a substitute for the Portfolio Holder in order that Member representation at meetings of the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership is assured.
- 4) That major strategy or policy decisions with respect to waste management remain subject to the agreement of the Executive, but that decision-making on all other matters with respect to joint waste work, including the implementation of policies, be devolved to the Portfolio Holder or Substitute and the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services.

Impact on Delivering
Corporate Objectives.

The reduce, reuse, recycle agenda is the major objective of this Waste Collection Authority, who equally has a responsibility to contribute to strategies to achieve County-wide targets.

Financial and Human
Resource Implications

None of this report

Project and Risk Management Any risks involved in the devolution of some decision-making to the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership are vastly outweighed by the hefty fines which will be imposed if Cumbria fails to meet future Government-set targets for the amount of waste going to landfill sites. A cumbersome decision-making process was identified in a recent Audit Commission report as a key factor in the lack of tangible progress to meeting objectives.

Key Decision status No

Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the Cumbria Scrutiny network, a decision was taken to pilot joint scrutiny work last year. An Audit Commission report identified challenges in joint working on waste management and this was chosen as the first pilot.
- 1.2 A first meeting of the scrutiny panel was held on 30th November 2005 to which a scrutiny member of each District and the County were invited to attend.
- 1.3 As a result of that meeting, at which the Audit Commission and representatives of Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership (CSWP) gave evidence, an interim report was agreed, which was submitted to the CSWP. Members of the Joint Scrutiny Panel also requested that the report be presented to the appropriate scrutiny committee of each authority and to their Executive or leadership.
- 1.4 A response to the interim report from the CSWP is due to be considered by the joint scrutiny panel on 22nd March 2006.

Recommendations

- 2.1 The report of the joint scrutiny panel is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Environmental Well-being have been kept fully informed of the joint scrutiny work. They are equally concerned at the lack of urgency to address major waste management issues, including the potential for substantial fines for a failure to meet landfill targets, and the barriers to achieving more speedy progress. Their recommendations above stem from these concerns.

Appendix: Cumbria Scrutiny Network Waste Management Report