

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	15 December 2010
3.	Title:	Submission of BDR Joint Waste Plan (Development Plan Document)
4.	Directorate:	Forward Planning, Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

The Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham (BDR) Joint Waste Plan has been produced by the three authorities in order to provide policies to determine planning applications for waste management facilities, as a Development Plan Document (DPD), which forms part of the Local Development Framework.

Full Council resolved that the formal Publication of the BDR Joint Waste Plan be approved, at the Council Meeting 27th October 2010, minute No. A60.

This formal Publication activates a statutory six week period during which only representations on the soundness of the DPD can be made. After this period, the regulations provide that the DPD should be submitted to the Secretary of State, together with any representations, to be considered by a government inspector who will hold an examination in public to decide if it is 'sound' (fit for purpose and meets statutory requirements). Local authorities are required to Publish the document they intend to Submit to the Secretary of State, under the premise that the Plan is considered sound at the time it is published. Planning officers from the three authorities consider that the Plan is sound and valid for Submission.

In order to facilitate the timely submission of the BDR Joint Waste Plan, it is requested that Cabinet recommend to Full Council, approval for the Submission of this DPD to the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspectorate.

6. Recommendation

That Cabinet recommend to Full Council approval of the formal Submission of the BDR Joint Waste Plan.

7. Proposals and Details

Background

The BDR Joint Waste Plan is a formal Development Plan Document which has already been subject to statutory public consultation and other stages of consultation with public and private bodies, to assist in its development. In addition to providing policies to inform the determination of planning applications, it also proposes to allocate four strategic sites of up to 5 hectares (12 acres), for the development of larger scale waste management centres and to encourage the co-location of similar facilities from the waste industry.

Waste management is a significant issue facing Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Councils. Approximately 1.3 million tonnes of waste are generated by households and businesses annually and this figure is increasing each year. A large proportion of BDR's municipal waste is currently sent to landfill sites but this cannot continue because:

- Landfill is generally harmful to the environment because as it decays it releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.
- Valuable resources such as plastics, metals and liquids, that could potentially be recycled, are being lost.
- The government has set challenging targets to increase recycling and send less waste to landfill. Severe financial penalties will be incurred by Councils if these targets are not achieved.
- More environmentally friendly waste management practices are emerging, such as waste minimisation, recycling, composting and energy recovery.

Proposal

(The BDR "Joint Waste Plan Publication Document" is available on the internet at: <http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/wastedpd> > Downloads > Joint Strategic Waste Plan > Joint Waste Plan).

As a Planning Authority, we are required to develop policies to help deliver sustainable waste management by providing sufficient opportunities for new waste management facilities: of the right type, in the right place, and at the right time: (National Planning Policy Statement 10).

The Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham Joint Waste Plan has been developed by the three authorities working together to produce designated sites and policies to deal with planning applications for all types of waste management facilities. Central government encourages joint working in this matter, particularly where cross-boundary movement of waste occurs.

The BDR Joint Waste Plan provides criteria based policies for the determination of planning applications for all types of waste operations, including recycling, recovery, treatment and disposal.

It also proposes the designation of 4 sites for strategic waste management facilities at the following locations:

1. Sandall Stones Road, Kirk Sandall, Doncaster. – This site already has planning permission for waste facilities.
2. Hatfield Power Park, Stainforth, Doncaster. – This site already has planning permission for waste facilities.
3. Bolton Road, Manvers, Rotherham. – The site is proposed by the BDR Waste Management Departments for the siting of a Private Finance Initiative funded (PFI) municipal waste treatment plant. This will require a full planning application and be subject to planning permission from the Rotherham Council Planning Board.
4. Corus (Tata) Engineering Steels, Aldwarke, Rotherham. – The total area of the Corus Steels Complex is around 150 hectares, and Corus have proposed an area of 5 hectares to the rear of the working plants, for a waste management facility. This will require a full planning application and be subject to planning permission from the Rotherham Council Planning Board.

The four sites have been chosen on the basis of their performance against a range of criteria, such as, proximity to urban areas, transport routes, deliverability and sustainability appraisal. These brownfield sites are located on industrial or employment land with access to the main transport network.

The BDR Joint Waste Plan also proposes to safeguard important existing facilities to protect them from being changed to other uses. The aim is to prevent the loss of waste management sites and to guard against the loss of treatment capacity in BDR, (e.g. Sterecycle Ltd at Templeborough which currently takes 70,000 tonnes of municipal waste from BDR).

Previous Consultation

As part of the process a range of options have been considered in the preparation of the BDR Joint Waste Plan. These initial options and subsequent versions of the Plan have been subject to various stages of consultation, both formal (written/statutory) and informal (events open to the public):

- **'Issues and Options' report** - (February - March 2008) which included a long list of 54 potential strategic sites and the accompanying sustainability appraisal scoping report.

- **‘Towards Publication’ report** - (November 2008 – January 2009) which set out emerging policy approaches and a reduced list of 35 potential strategic sites.
- **Public Events and Stakeholder/Waste Industry Workshops** – Several events held during 2009 and 2010, including public events at Manvers, Bolton-upon-Dearne, Hatfield, Stainforth and Dalton near to the proposed strategic sites.
- **Consultation on the Pre-publication Joint Waste Plan** –(June – August 2010) which set out the final draft version of the Plan with its policies and four strategic sites identified. This also included events open to the public at venues near to the strategic sites.
- **Local concerns for Manvers and Hatfield:** Local residents, particularly from Bolton-upon Dearne and Hatfield, raised objections to allocating Manvers and Hatfield Power Park as strategic waste sites. The main concerns relate to traffic, air pollution, health, safety (i.e. accidents), visual impact (i.e. loss of views) and reduced property prices (the latter not being a planning matter). Many of these points have been raised and considered previously, and would be addressed in detail through the planning application process, with the Plan providing a framework for this. The approach for the BDR Joint Waste Plan is to identify strategic sites in order to comply with national policy and to maximise flexibility for investment within the sector. Therefore four strategic sites have been identified with reasonable chances of delivery.

Next stages:

If the BDR Joint Waste Plan is approved by Cabinet and Full Council for Submission, it will be subject to a 6 week period of statutory consultation, during which it can be challenged on the grounds of its “soundness” as a Development Plan Document, i.e. that it is the most appropriate strategy, founded on a robust and credible evidence base; and it is deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored. Only minor editorial changes to the document are allowed at this time. Ultimately, it will be submitted to government to be examined for “soundness” by an Independent Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. If the Inspector’s Report is favourable, the BDR Joint Waste Plan will then be recommended to Full Council for formal adoption.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications from this report, although continuing to ensure the timely preparation of this DPD will accrue efficiency savings and improved receipts under Government grant incentives.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

(a) The publication and subsequent submission of this document to the Secretary of State is intended to update the Council's policies for waste management planning applications, which currently rely on the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). It will also provide strategic sites for the provision of waste management facilities during the timeframe of the Local Development Framework to 2026. It will attempt to avoid the uncertainty of waste planning applications in other areas, by promoting the potential for waste facilities at the strategic sites, subject to the policies in the BDR Joint Waste Plan.

The Waste Management Departments of Barnsley Doncaster & Rotherham (BDR), have a history of working together and are currently involved in a project to deal with the municipal waste from the three authorities. This proposes to use Private Finance Initiative (PFI) funding, to procure the management of municipal waste by a commercial operator at the Bolton Road Site, Manvers, Wath-upon-Dearne. The BDR Joint Waste Plan will provide the framework for determining a waste planning application on this site, but if not adopted, any planning application would be determined in accordance with the UDP.

(b) The new Coalition Government has embarked upon a review of the current planning system and the regulations for determining planning applications may be subject to change. However, recent guidance to local planning authorities from the Coalition Government is that: *"The abolition of Regional Strategies will provide a clear signal of the importance attached to the development and application of local spatial plans, in the form of Local Development Framework Core Strategies and other Development Plan Documents."*

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The publication and subsequent adoption of the BDR Joint Waste Plan will contribute to the Council's cross-cutting theme of Sustainable Development by increasing the recycling and recovery rates for waste and reducing the amount of waste going to landfill. This will ultimately reduce the amount of greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere and reduce the negative impacts of greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out at each stage of the development of the BDR Joint Waste Plan.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

BDR Joint Waste DPD Issues and Options (Mar 2008)
BDR Joint Waste DPD Towards the Publication (Oct 2008)
BDR Further Consultation Report - (Jan 2009 – Dec 2009)
BDR Joint Waste Plan – Pre-publication Consultation (June 2010)

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