

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services
2.	Date:	21st March, 2005
3.	Title:	Waste Management – 10 Easy Ways to Prevent Waste
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods

5. Summary

Nationally waste arisings are increasing year on year. Recycling, re-use and composting schemes are a positive way in diverting waste away from landfill sites. However, if you prevent waste from being created in the first place, in addition to the obvious environmental benefits that can be gained, there are financial savings gained from not having to collect, recycle or dispose of waste. This report examines 10 easy ways to prevent waste and encourages everyone including local authorities to become more active in promoting waste prevention.

6. Recommendations

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO:

- a). **NOTE THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT WHICH SUMMARISES THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION 10 EASY WASYS TO PREVENT WASTE.**
 - b). **SUPPORT THE PRESENTATION OF FURTHER REPORTS ON WASTE MINIMISATION INITIATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION.**
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7. Proposals and Detail

Waste prevention can be tackled at a local level and schemes can impact on environmental, cost, and social benefits. Local waste prevention initiatives can be developed in partnership with local communities, schools, charities and business. The Local Government Association has recently published a report outlining 10 ways to minimise waste, a summary of which is detailed below:

Junk Mail

Approximately 21 billion items or 550,000 tonnes of junk mail not including free newspapers are sent out every year in the UK. Many householders who prefer not to receive such mail can register with the Mailing Preference Service (MPS). The MPS can effectively reduce up to 95% of junk mail by removing names and addresses from direct mail links. Stickers can also be placed by householders on their letter boxes to discourage leaflets, free newspapers or un-addressed mail being delivered.

Charge for Excess Waste

Waste collection authorities can specify the size and usage of refuse containers. In some cases; such as family size, householders may apply for a larger capacity container for an additional fee. However, with the introduction of additional containers for recycling and composting the available capacity for storing waste has generally increased. This however, can lead to an increase in waste arisings as more space is released in the residual waste bin.

Encourage Food Waste Digesters, Home and Community Composting

Approximately 35% of household waste can be removed from the waste stream through home composting. By diverting this waste it also allows Councils to meet stringent targets set under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS). Many local authorities offer subsidised or free home compost bins. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) are currently working with a number of local authorities on this initiative of which Rotherham is one, to promote home composting. Community composting projects can cater for householders in flats or houses without gardens offering a service to compost kitchen waste.

Support Re-Use Schemes

Re-use schemes include: furniture and white goods, computers, paint, bicycles, wood etc. The schemes are often run by the voluntary and community sector in partnership with local authorities. Many items are re-distributed to individuals on low incomes. These projects can create local employment and training opportunities.

Support or Develop the Local Second Hand Sector

This sector includes: car boot sales, salvage yards, auctions and bric-a-brac markets, jumble sales, charity shops etc. Again this sector can provide employment

and training opportunities and can deal with house clearances, re-furbishment projects and finding uses for bulk batches of unwanted or unsold items.

Promote Sharing and Hire Schemes

Increasing the hire and leasing of business and household goods reduces the amount of bulky, expensive and limited use items that are bought, stored and eventually disposed of. Community sharing schemes can help low income groups access equipment and promote community development. Schemes include: books, videos, toys and music libraries, local equipment hire centres and car sharing clubs.

Work Intensively with Local Residents

Tackling waste at a household level can be time consuming and expensive but can ultimately reap rewards. Targeting a whole family with waste awareness messages which can also be spread on to their friends and family can make a significant impact on waste reduction. One example is for a family to keep a waste diary to cover areas such as the reduction of packaging from shopping, home composting, re-use, and the use of real nappies.

Promote Real Nappies

With 8 million disposable nappies thrown away every day in the UK, nappy schemes play a key role in local authority waste prevention initiatives. The purchase and laundering of real nappies can save parents hundreds of pounds per year compared to the use of disposable nappies. Nappy laundering schemes are also becoming popular with parents who prefer not to do their own washing and are often comparable in cost to the purchase of disposables. Around 3% of household waste is made up from disposable nappies and by removing these from the waste stream has obvious environmental and cost benefits to local authorities.

Prosecute Excess Packaging

Packaging is a term used to include: glass bottles, cardboard, yoghurt pots, shrink wrap, wooden pallets etc. The Producer Responsibility (Packaging Waste Regulations 1997) requires businesses to recover or recycle a percentage of their packaging waste. Packaging can be used for safety, hygiene and quality; however, some is not essential and is primarily used for marketing or to enhance a product's appearance. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) are currently working with retailers to reduce the amount of unnecessary packaging. Local authority trading standards officers can also investigate incidences of over packaging by companies and in some cases prosecute offenders.

Reduce the Use of Plastic Carrier Bags

150 million plastic carrier bags are used in Britain every week. These often single use items are adding to the growing amount of waste discarded in landfill sites. Tesco and Safeway stores now have in store plastic bag recycling facilities; however more could still be done to avoid their use by persuading customers to re-use them

or alternatively using a bag for life instead. Recently Ireland has introduced a plastic bag tax and results so far have shown a reduction in their use of almost 90%.

8. Finance

A useful measure is the cost savings gained on landfill disposal. From April 2005 the landfilling of domestic waste will cost £34.26 per tonne. Therefore, for every tonne of waste that is diverted away from landfill the Authority will potentially save £34.26.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Council needs to support policies to encourage waste minimisation and the segregation of waste for recycling. The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme places diminishing limits on the amount of biodegradable waste Rotherham can dispose of in landfill sites between 2005–2020. A failure to divert waste from landfill could lead to the Council being fined for exceeding permit limits.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The development of waste minimisation schemes can contribute towards slowing down the growth in waste arisings. Such initiatives, if successful would contribute to key performance indicators:

BV 82 a - % of waste recycled
BV82 b - % of waste composted
BV 82 d - % of waste landfilled
BV 84 – Kgs of waste collected per head

Background Papers and Consultation

10 easy ways to prevent waste published by the Local Government Association 2004.

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