

# **Environment Select Committee**

## **Start Talking Rubbish: Scrutiny Review of Wastes Management and Recycling**



**March 2008**

Environment Select Committee  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
Stockton-on-Tees  
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## **SELECT COMMITTEE – MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Mrs Maureen Rigg (Chair)  
Councillor Michael Smith (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Dick Cains  
Councillor Roy Rix  
Councillor Steve Walmsley  
Councillor William Woodhead  
Councillor Andrew Larkin  
Councillor Mick Stoker  
Councillor Mick Womphrey

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Committee thank the following contributors to this review:

Beccy Brown – Departmental Link Officer  
Jamie McCann – Head of Direct Services – Stockton Borough Council  
Richard Bradley – Care for Your Area Service Manager – Stockton Borough Council  
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Mike Chicken – Environment Policy Manager – Stockton Borough Council  
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Les Grant – Chief Executive – Premier Waste  
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## Foreword



**Councillor  
Mrs  
Maureen  
Rigg  
Chair –  
Environment  
Select  
Committee**



**Councillor  
Michael  
Smith  
Vice-Chair –  
Environment  
Select  
Committee**

## Original Brief

### **1. Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?**

Liveability – Make Stockton a cleaner, greener place to live and work and visit  
Liveability – Tackle climate change and improve the quality and security of the environment for current and future generations  
Organisational and Operational Effectiveness – Improve operational efficiency

### **2. What are the main issues?**

Changing legislation and national waste policy  
The need to improve recycling rates for less cost whilst maintaining/improving customer satisfaction rates  
Heightened environmental awareness amongst residents leading to increased demand for waste recycling options

### **3. The Thematic Select Committee's overall aim/ objectives in doing this work is:**

To achieve real improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of waste collection and disposal services and to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill sites, whilst maintaining/ improving customer satisfaction in the service

### **4. The possible outputs/outcomes are:**

An updated and clear waste collection policy for household waste in the borough  
An updated and clear waste disposal policy for household waste in the borough  
Changes to operational practices in household waste collection and disposal  
Waste Management implementation plan to deliver the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy in Stockton.

### **5. What specific value can scrutiny add to this topic?**

Detailed and expert scrutiny of new and developing national policy and detailed evaluation of the views and opinions of Stockton residents to inform future policy and an implementation plan to deliver the Joint Waste Strategy.

## 1.0 Executive Summary

The report presents Cabinet with the findings and recommendations of the Environment Select Committee following its review of Waste Management and Recycling. A comprehensive scrutiny review of waste management took place during 2004/05 which identified further work for the Select Committee to undertake including a review of the outcome of the kerbside plastics and cardboard recycling trial. In addition, there have been a number of national and local developments as well as stretching new national performance indicators.

The overall aim of the review was to achieve real improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of waste collection and disposal services and to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill sites, whilst maintaining/ improving customer satisfaction in the service.

The National Waste Strategy for England 2007, published by DEFRA in May 2007, explains that as a society, we are consuming natural resources at an unsustainable rate and that if every country consumed natural resources at the rate the UK does, we would need three planets to live on. The most crucial threat is from dangerous climate change. The goal is therefore to move towards “One Planet Living” and reducing waste is an important contributor to this goal. The aim of the strategy is to reduce waste by making products with fewer natural resources, breaking the link between economic growth and waste growth. The Strategy states that most products should be re-used or recycled and energy removed from other wastes where possible. For a small amount of residual material, landfill will be necessary. This can be illustrated in the waste hierarchy:



The key objectives of the Strategy seek to:

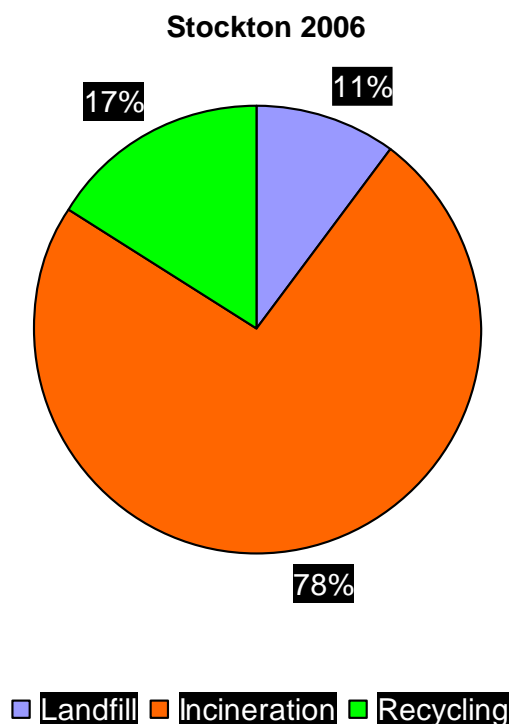
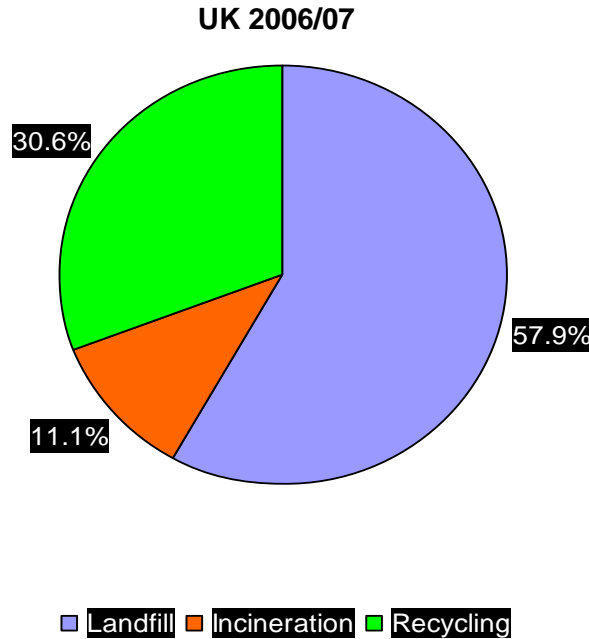
- Emphasise waste prevention and re-use
- Reduce all forms of waste to landfill
- Secure investment in infrastructure to divert waste from landfill
- Encourage use of technology to recycle and recover energy from residual waste

In order to meet the requirements of the National Waste Strategy, the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy has been developed as a joint project with the Tees Valley Authorities. The Strategy focuses on the management of the municipal waste stream and aims to provide a sustainable future for the Tees Valley. Individual Authorities will develop implementation plans to support the delivery of the Joint

Strategy. Each Local Authority will be expected to develop its own approach to collection systems for optimum performance.

Stockton Borough Council is responsible for providing a waste management service for approximately 80,000 households. In 2006, Stockton collected nearly 90,000 tonnes of domestic waste from a population of around 187,000.

The following pie charts illustrate recycling and waste management in Stockton Borough compared to UK rates:





Waste is currently collected weekly via a 240 litre wheeled bin edge of property collection system. Approximately 5000 properties remain on the plastic sack system due to access difficulties. Assisted collections are made from around 2% of households. Second wheeled bins have been issued to larger families and side waste is currently collected.

Glass, aluminium foil, cans/ tins and paper/magazines are collected for recycling on a fortnightly basis in recycling boxes and bags.

A trial took place between November 2006 and July 2007 for fortnightly kerbside collection of plastics and cardboard from 14,000 properties.

Satisfaction with waste collection and recycling services in Stockton is high. In 2006/07:

- 93% were satisfied with the current waste collection service
- 75% were satisfied with the current recycling service
- 84% were satisfied with the current civic amenity sites

New national indicators reduce measurement of performance to three indicators with the focus on waste reduction and recycling. The current top quartile indicator relating to the percentage of household waste used to recover energy has been discontinued.

National Indicator	Definition	Actual 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Target 2010	Target 2015	Target 2020
NI 191	Kgs of household waste collected which is not recycled or composted	375kg	367kg	310kg	270kg	225kg
NI 192	% of household waste sent for recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion	21%	25%	40%	45%	50%
NI 193	% of municipal waste landfilled	9%	10%	47%	33%	25%

Current performance in the recycling and composting indicators places the Borough in the third and bottom quartiles of national performance. Significant improvement is needed to achieve the new targets set for 2010 and beyond.

Ove Arup & Partners Ltd were commissioned by Stockton Borough Council to provide an independent assessment of the climate change impacts of the current and proposed waste management systems in Stockton. The study uses life cycle analysis and carbon footprinting to assess the likely effects of greenhouse gas emissions of a range of scenarios for Stockton's waste management system.

The Arup report looks at the Stockton data in the context of a wider international review of waste management systems carried out by WRAP (Waste Resource Action Programme) which had concluded that "The results are clear. Across the board, most studies show that recycling offers more environmental benefits and lower environmental impacts than other waste management options" This has been considered in the context of Stockton which is unusual in the UK as 70% of its waste goes to incineration and less than 10% to landfill.

The report calculates the CO<sub>2</sub> impact of the annual disposal of municipal waste in Stockton:

	Tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> Equivalent	Notes
100% to Landfill	13,779 tonnes <b>EMITTED</b>	
100% to Incinerator	8,842 tonnes <b>SAVED</b>	<b>SAVING</b> CO <sub>2</sub> by avoiding burning fossil fuels to generate electricity
Recycling the maximum achievable for each material	8,916 – 30,623 tonnes <b>SAVED</b>	<b>SAVING</b> CO <sub>2</sub> by avoiding using fossil fuels to extract, transport & process raw materials. The range of savings depends on the final use of the recyclates.

Whilst the specific findings need to be reviewed in the context of the wider report to understand fully the assumptions made in each scenario, the significant conclusions are that

1. Recycling products generates a range of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that are lower than incineration. However the ultimate end use of a product has a significant impact on the benefit of recycling. The implication for policy development is that Stockton should attempt to increase recycling and reduce use of the incinerator and try to control or influence the destination of its recycled products if it wishes to minimise the carbon impact of its waste.

2. The transportation of waste has a relatively insignificant impact on total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in life cycle analysis. The CO<sub>2</sub> produced by collection vehicles is small compared to the carbon benefits achieved by recycling. The implication for policy development is that Stockton should design its collection and disposal systems to maximise recycling rather than minimise miles travelled if it wishes to minimise the carbon impact of its waste.

Extensive public consultation took place as part of the review primarily through the “Start Talking Rubbish” campaign. There was an excellent response to the campaign. 3,112 responses were received during the 4 week campaign; this represents 4% of the Borough.

In summary the consultation highlighted the following facts:

- The overwhelming majority of households (94%) would like to recycle more.
- They would like this recycling to be collected from home.
- There is a strong demand for a recycling collection of plastic and cardboard.
- 75% of households do not support variable charging based on the quantity of waste collected.
- 92% of households think that the council should encourage waste reduction.
- There is no consensus on the optimal combination of containers / bins to be provided for waste and recycling.
- 70% of households do not support fortnightly waste collection, the main reasons being insufficient capacity and health and hygiene concerns (including smells and concerns about vermin).

- 58% of households do not support a withdrawal of side waste collection, the main reason being insufficient capacity for larger families.
- Given the opportunity to make any comments about waste collection and recycling in the Borough, 966 (54%) of respondents who replied volunteered a positive endorsement of the current service.

The Select Committee acknowledged the need for the Council to significantly improve recycling rates in Stockton Borough in order to meet the aspirations of residents to recycle more and also to meet stretching national targets for recycling and waste minimisation. The Committee particularly note the strong support from residents for the re-introduction and roll out of kerbside collection of plastics and cardboard across the Borough and the desire of the majority of residents for their recycling to be collected from their homes. The Committee therefore believe that the Council should seek to extend the range of materials collected from the kerbside for recycling whilst recognising the need for different options for different areas of the Borough.

**Recommended that the preferred means of 'recycling' is to sustain domestic kerbside sorting supplemented by bring sites already available in the Borough and the Household Waste Recycling Centre.**

**Recommended that a move be supported to extend the range of materials collected through the kerbside collection service Borough-wide by phased introduction of plastics and cardboard as quickly as possible; the precise details of the phasing to be determined by operational considerations however the trial areas should be included as early as possible.  
(This recommendation is dependant upon operational capacity and funding availability to be determined by Cabinet)**

**Recommended that, as far as possible, the carbon impact of the use of items collected for recycling in the Borough is minimised.**

**Recommended that Officers investigate options for suitable containers to include:**

- **Full option appraisal and extensive consultation (to include home centres)**
- **Identification of appropriate solutions for individual areas recognising that different options may be suitable for different areas of the Borough**
- **Options of linking to design colleges, local manufacturing etc.**

The Committee believe that the discontinuation of the collection of side waste is appropriate at the present time given the pressing need to reduce the amount of residual waste produced but that this should be introduced in conjunction with the expansion of the kerbside recycling service.

**Recommended that the collection of 'side' waste is discontinued as soon as possible to dovetail with the expansion of the kerbside recycling service and that this be supported by enforcement activity.**

The Committee were aware that there had been problems with the abuse of community skip provision by commercial operators and felt that this did not support a waste minimisation strategy and should therefore be discontinued at the end of the

current contract. The Committee did, however, feel that the Council should investigate whether improvements could be made to the bulky waste collection payments system to make payments easier to make.

**Recommended that the provision of Community Skips is discontinued at the end of the current contract (March 2009) to further encourage the responsible disposal of waste in the Borough and that Officers investigate whether any changes can be made to the Bulky Waste collection payments system to make payments easier to make.**

The Committee noted the comments made by residents regarding the problems with storage of recycling and refuse containers and recognised the need to make long term provision in new developments.

**Recommended that the Local Development Framework and supporting development documents reflect the need to include sustainable Waste Management Obligations to ensure that any new developments contain appropriate waste and recycling facilities provision and storage and that planning officers are made aware of the importance of such facilities.**

The Committee also recognised the need for continued education and awareness to secure long term sustainability of wastes management.

**Recommended that the success of the consultation undertaken as part of this exercise and the ongoing public support for the waste collection service be acknowledged.**

**Recommended that the excellent award winning work and activities of the waste awareness service and on-street/door canvassing team be recognised whilst acknowledging that there is more activity required in targeting need and continued education and engagement to secure the long-term sustainability of wastes management.**

**Recommended that Officers prepare a waste awareness and education strategy to include recycling, waste reduction and responsible waste disposal, linked where appropriate to national campaigns; the campaign to target manufacturers and retailers and that Officers report proposals to the Environment Select Committee in 3 months.**

**Recommended that Officers explore options for funding through appropriate bodies such as the regional improvement partnership, WRAP, DEFRA, etc to deliver the waste awareness and education strategy.**

The Committee concluded that any review of residual waste collection frequencies should take place after an appropriate recycling infrastructure has been put in place.

**Recommended that there is a review of the impact of the extended recycling scheme six months from its introduction to inform a Cabinet decision on any further collection frequencies or changes that may be necessary.**

The Committee recognised the importance of the Joint Waste Management Strategy in order to achieve deliver the objectives of the National Waste Strategy and make provision for additional waste treatment facilities to divert more waste from landfill whilst continuing the use of the energy from waste plant for residual waste recovery.

**Recommended that the Committee recommends the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy – Implementation Plan to Cabinet for adoption/ approval.**

The Committee noted the recurring concerns from Stockton residents regarding smells and associated problems arising from the storage of food waste. This would also be an important factor in any future consideration of collection frequencies.

**Recommended that the Tees Valley Directors of Environment undertake a review into the developing options for dealing with food waste including a review into the operational and financial impacts of using appropriate new technologies.**

**(The Select Committee wishes to offer support to this in any way it can and requests regular feedback on developments.)**

The Committee felt it important to recognise that implementing changes would have an impact on the workforce.

**Recommended that it be noted that the necessary changes will undoubtedly impact on the workforce and that extensive consultation will be required in implementing new practices and procedures.**

## 2.0 Introduction

The report presents Cabinet with the findings and recommendations of the Environment Select Committee following its review of Waste Management and Recycling. The review took place between November 2007 and March 2008.

Although a comprehensive scrutiny review of waste management took place during 2004/05, this review identified further work for the Select Committee to undertake including a review of the outcome of the kerbside plastics and cardboard recycling trial. In addition, there have been a number of national and local developments including the publication of the Waste Strategy for England 2007 and the development of the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy 2007 as well as stretching new national performance indicators. As a result, following discussion by the Council's Scrutiny Liaison Forum and Executive Scrutiny Committee, the review was incorporated into the Select Committee's work programme.

A scope and project plan for the review was subsequently developed by the Select Committee with the overall aim of the review being to achieve real improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of waste collection and disposal services and to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill sites, whilst maintaining/ improving customer satisfaction in the service. Specifically the committee aims and objectives were:

- An updated and clear waste collection and disposal policy in the borough
- Changes to operational practices in household waste collection and disposal
- A waste management implementation plan which will deliver the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy in Stockton.

### 3.0 Background

#### National Context

#### National Waste Strategy

The National Waste Strategy for England 2007, published by DEFRA in May 2007, explains that as a society, we are consuming natural resources at an unsustainable rate and that if every country consumed natural resources at the rate the UK does, we would need three planets to live on. The most crucial threat is from dangerous climate change. The goal is therefore to move towards “One Planet Living” and reducing waste is an important contributor to this goal. The aim of the strategy is to reduce waste by making products with fewer natural resources, breaking the link between economic growth and waste growth. The Strategy states that most products should be re-used or recycled and energy removed from other wastes where possible. For a small amount of residual material, landfill will be necessary. This can be illustrated in the waste hierarchy:



The Strategy recognises that all parts of society will have to share responsibility. For Local Authorities, this will mean having to commission or provide convenient recycling services for their residents and commercial customers and advice and information on how to reduce waste. They will also have to work with their communities to plan and invest in new collection and reprocessing facilities.

The key objectives of the Strategy seek to:

- Emphasise waste prevention and re-use
- Reduce all forms of waste to landfill
- Secure investment in infrastructure to divert waste from landfill
- Encourage use of technology to recycle and recover energy from residual waste

Key proposals include:

- Incentivising efforts to avoid using landfill (increasing landfill tax from £24 to £48 in 2010 and possible use of financial incentives)
- Reform regulation
- Target action on materials with the most environmental impact

- Stimulate investment in infrastructure to avoid using landfill
- Improve governance

The Waste Strategy also sets new targets for recycling and waste reduction:

Other national drivers for change have included:

- **European Waste Framework Directive** - The Waste Framework Directive aims to encourage the identification of the value of waste materials as a resource either through recycling, composting or recovery.
- **The Landfill Directive** - The European Union implemented this Directive to minimise the environmental impacts associated with landfill sites and introduced targets with regards to the amount of biodegradable municipal waste that may be disposed of to landfill. The Waste and Emissions Act introduced Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) Regulations. These regulations allocate allowances to each Local Authority to specify how many tonnes of biodegradable municipal waste may be disposed of to land fill each year.
- **The Household Waste Recycling Act** - This Act places a general duty on Local Authorities to ensure that by December 2010 they collect at least two recyclable wastes together or individually separated from the rest of the household waste stream provided that the costs of doing so are not unreasonably high.
- **The Stern Review** also required Local Authorities to develop waste policies to mitigate their contribution to climate change.
- **Climate Change** – Recycling, composting and recovery have an important role to play in the protection of the environment in relation to climate change

## Local Context

### Tees Valley Joint Management Strategy

In order to meet the requirements of the National Waste Strategy, the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy has been developed as a joint project with the Tees Valley Authorities. The Strategy focuses on the management of the municipal waste stream and aims to provide a sustainable future for the Tees Valley through the following principles:

- To reduce waste generation
- To be achievable and affordable
- To work towards zero landfill
- To minimise the impact on climate change
- To have an accountable and deliverable structure
- To contribute towards economic regeneration

Individual Authorities will develop implementation plans to support the delivery of the Joint Strategy. Each Local Authority will be expected to develop its own approach to collection systems for optimum performance.



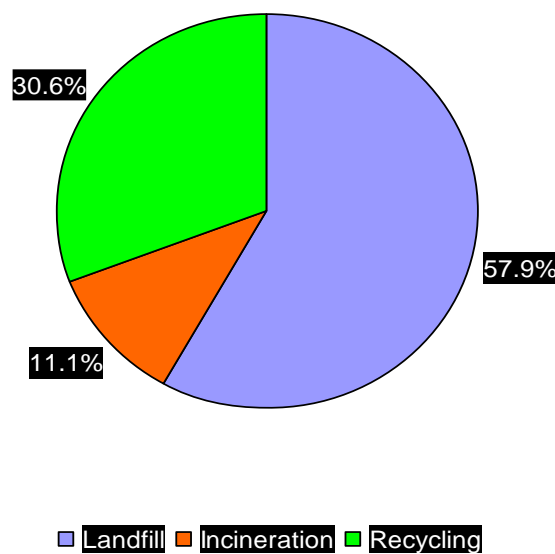
The Select Committee agreed in the early stages of the scrutiny review that the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review would provide input into the implementation plan.

### Waste Collection and Recycling in Stockton Borough

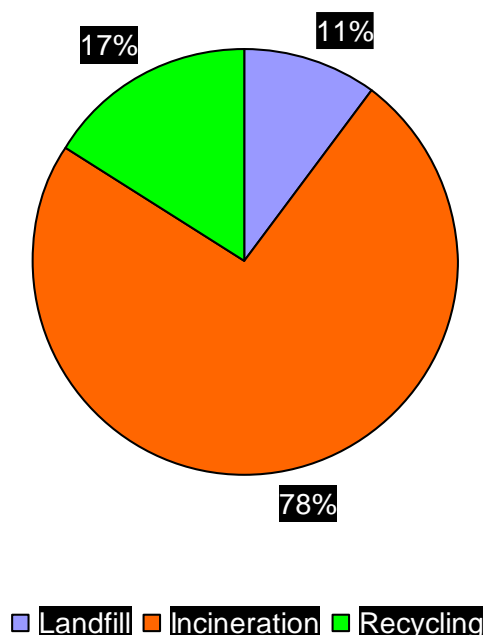
Stockton Borough Council is responsible for providing a waste management service for approximately 80,000 households. In 2006 Stockton collected nearly 90,000 tonnes of domestic waste from a population of around 187,000.

The following pie charts illustrate recycling and waste management compared to the UK rates:

UK 2006/07



Stockton 2006



Waste is collected weekly via a 240 litre wheeled bin edge of property collection system. Approximately 5000 properties remain on the plastic sack system due to access difficulties. Assisted collections are made from around 2% of households. Second wheeled bins have been issued to larger families and side waste is currently collected.

Glass, aluminium foil, cans/ tins and paper/magazines are collected for recycling on a fortnightly basis in recycling boxes and bags.

A trial took place between November 2006 and July 2007 for fortnightly kerbside collection of plastics and cardboard. This trial covered 14,000 properties. The scheme had high participation and satisfaction rates. Average weekly collections of plastics and cardboard during the scheme were 9.1 tonnes. If this is projected to cover the whole Borough, then the annual collection estimate is 2,714 tonnes – this would contribute an additional 2% - 3% to current recycling rates.

The trial also had a knock on effect in terms of increased blue box recycling. The average monthly increase in other recycling was 88 tonnes. Therefore Borough wide projections are 6,034 tonnes per annum. This would contribute 5 – 6% to current recycling rates.

In July 2007, a survey of participants in the trial was undertaken:

- 97.9% rated the service as excellent or good
- 99.5% of respondents found the amount of waste going into the wheeled bin reduced during the trial
- 97.5% found the scheme easy to use
- 91.4% of respondents already used the blue box and bag recycling before the trial started; 8% started using the blue box and bag kerbside recycling as a result of being able to recycle cardboard and plastic

Satisfaction with waste collection and recycling services in Stockton is high. In 2006/07:

- 93% were satisfied with the current waste collection service
- 75% were satisfied with the current recycling service
- 84% were satisfied with the current civic amenity sites

Current performance on the avoidance of landfill is top quartile and exceeds national targets, this reflects the use of the energy from waste plant for the majority of non-recycled waste. However, current performance in the recycling and composting indicators places the Borough in the third and bottom quartiles of national performance. Significant improvement is needed to achieve the new targets set for 2010.

## 4.0 Evidence/Findings

### Methodology

The Select Committee received written and oral evidence to inform the review. In addition the Committee attended a site visit to the aerobic digester waste facility in Easington District and received a presentation on Easington District Council's approach to waste collection and recycling.

The Committee also undertook extensive consultation to seek residents and stakeholder views - full details are set out below.

### Summary of Background Documents

The Select Committee received the following background documents in preparation for the review:

- Waste Strategy for England 2007
- Joint Waste Management Strategy 2007
- Environment and Regeneration Select Committee Report on Wastes Management (2005) and Progress Report
- Arup Report – Carbon Footprinting Stockton's Waste Management System
- Overviews of Beacon Councils
- Viewpoint Survey Data
- BVPI General Survey Data and MORI Survey Data
- Equality Impact Assessment – Recycling Plan

### Summary of Oral Evidence

#### National Perspective - Evidence from Dr Andrew Craig – Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

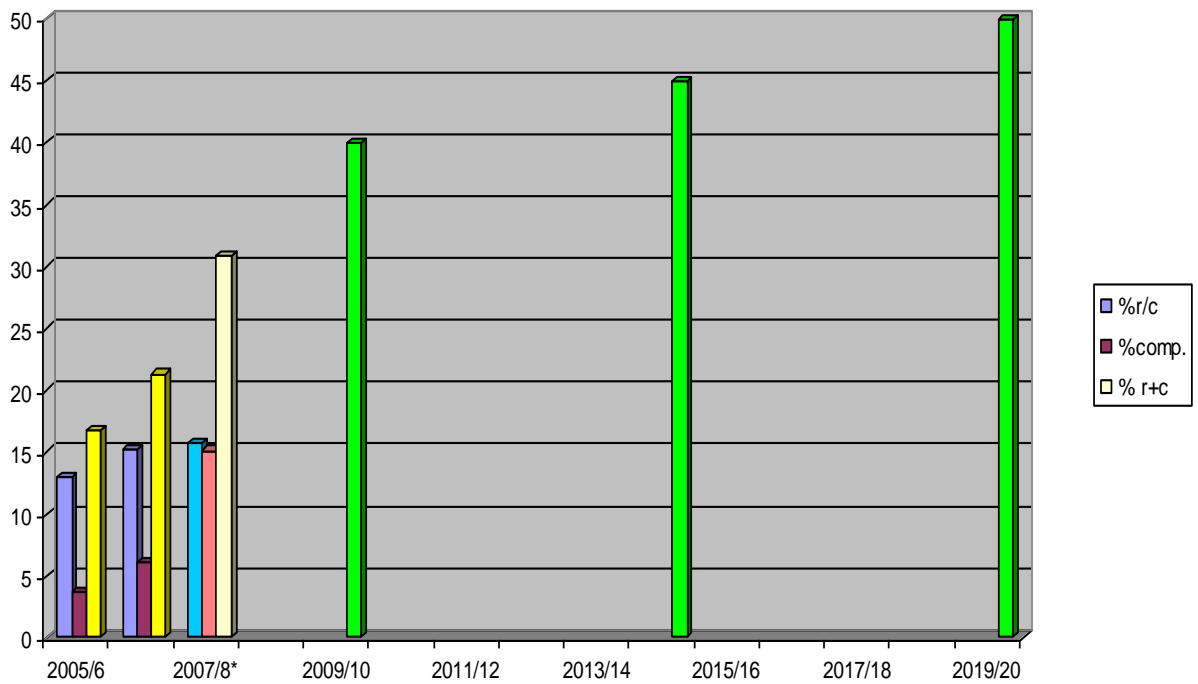
The Select Committee received a presentation from Dr Andrew Craig which provided an overview of the key issues from the National Waste Strategy 2007 and the Tees Valley Joint Waste Strategy 2007. A summary of the key points from these strategies are set out in the background section of this report. Dr Craig highlighted the following points:

- Stockton's current systems will not deliver more than 18 – 20% recycling
- There is a need to restrict/disincentivise residual waste whilst offering ample and convenient means to householders for recycling/composting
- Energy from waste reduces damaging emissions compared with landfill
- However, closed loop recycling is almost invariably better than energy from waste (even if it has to be sent half way around the world, transport emissions are relatively insignificant)
- The Joint Waste Management Strategy advocates a new approach to waste awareness and minimisation through the implementation of new collection systems for optimum performance, additional waste treatment facilities to divert more waste from landfill whilst continuing the use of the energy from waste plant for residual waste recovery
- The Government was seeking pilot Authorities for Waste Reduction Schemes under the provisions of the Climate Change Bill. The schemes would provide for

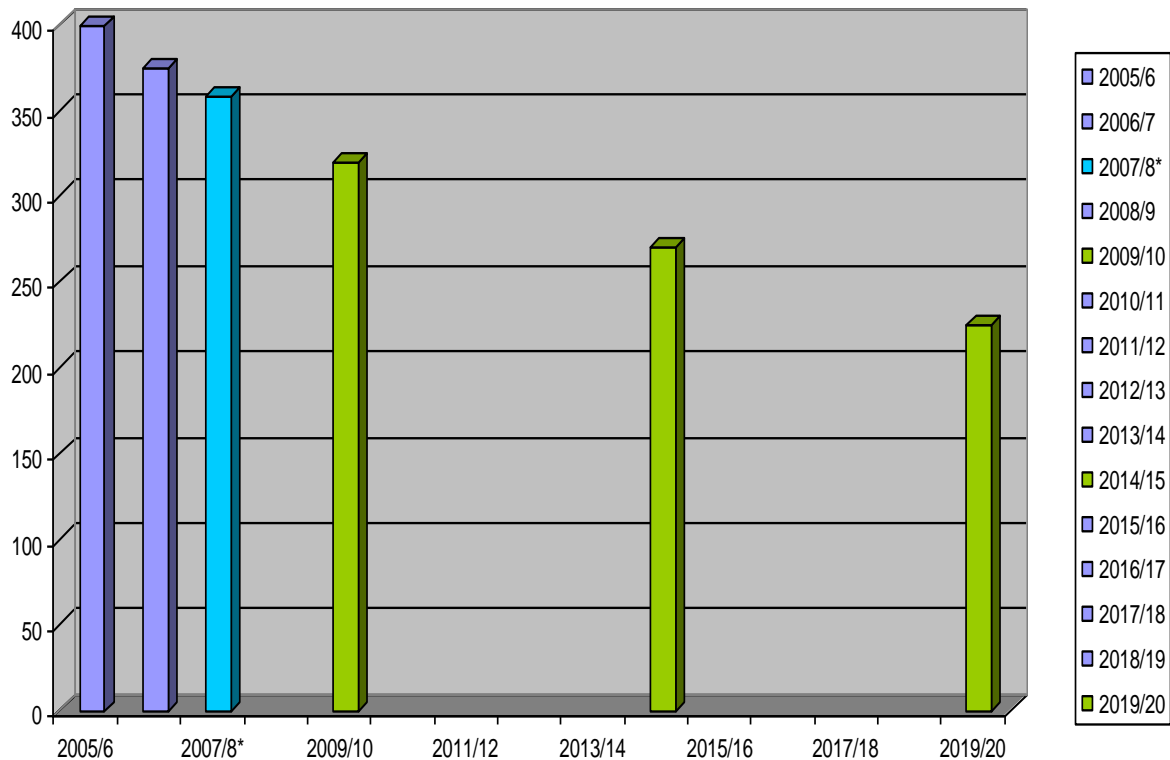
different charges and rebates to encourage waste reduction on a revenue neutral basis

Dr Craig provide the following graphs to illustrate Stockton's position in relation to meeting the new recycling and waste targets:

Recycling targets to 2020



SBC HH residual waste targets to 2020



Dr Craig identified the following long term issues:

- Waste Management should not be viewed in isolation
- Collective action was needed for climate change mitigation
- There was a need to link to the long term vision for the Tees Valley and help lead the Tees Valley as a centre of excellence in new energy technologies and resource management
- The Waste Management Hierarchy should continue to be the guide

### **Recycling in Easington – Evidence from Oliver Sherratt (Director of Community Services, Easington District Council)**

The Select Committee received a presentation from Oliver Sherratt, Director of Community Services at Easington District Council which outlined the Council's strategy to improving recycling and waste reduction rates in Easington District.

Their approach had seen a significant improvement in recycling rates from 9.14% in 2003/04 to 48.17% in 2007/08.

The Select Committee received a tour of the aerobic digester waste facility within the district which was identified as being responsible for 27% of the current recycling rates.

Easington's approach had been to establish the recycling infrastructure prior to considering reducing the frequency of residual waste collection in the District.

The improvements in performance were attributed to the following approach:

- Recycling/ Minimisation promotion
- Side Waste Restrictions under the slogan "A Bit on the Side? Not in District of Easington"
- Limits on second bins
- Charges for special collections
- Green waste collection
- Plastics/cardboard collection
- Promotion of the Kerb It and Pride in Easington initiatives

Oliver Sherratt advised that in relation to side waste, residents received warnings prior to enforcement and there had not been a noticeable increase in fly tipping of household waste. All properties operated a wheeled bin system.

### **Performance – Evidence from Sue Daniels (Business and Performance Manager, Stockton Borough Council)**

Sue Daniels presented the Committee with a summary of the existing and new performance targets to start from April 2008. Details of the performance against the indicators and targets are included at **Appendix 1**. The new indicators are summarised below:

National Indicator	Definition	Actual 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Target 2010	Target 2015	Target 2020
NI 191	Kgs of household waste collected which is not recycled or composted	375kg	367kg	310kg	270kg	225kg
NI 192	% of household waste sent for recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion	21%	28%	40%	45%	50%
NI 193	% of municipal waste landfilled	9%	10%	47%	33%	25%

As set out above, the new indicators reduce measurement of performance to three indicators with the focus on waste reduction and recycling. The current top quartile indicator relating to the percentage of household waste used to recover energy has been discontinued.

Current performance in the recycling and composting indicators places the Borough in the third and bottom quartiles of national performance. Significant improvement is needed to achieve the new targets set for 2010 and beyond.

**Waste Management and Recycling Options Appraisal - Evidence from Jamie McCann (Head of Direct Services, Stockton Borough Council) and Richard Bradley (Care for Your Area Service Manager, Stockton Borough Council)**

The Select Committee received evidence from Jamie McCann and Richard Bradley in relation to the financial and operational implications of different policy options for waste collection and recycling. This is set out in detail at Appendix 2. In addition, feedback from the public consultation, impact on national targets and carbon impact assessment was also included.

The appendix summarises the impact in relation to the following policy options:

- Option 1 – Retail Current Policy
- Option 2 – Introduce alternate weekly collection for recycling and residual waste with Borough wide plastics and cardboard collection and no side waste collection
- Option 3 – Introduce weekly recycling collection in addition to weekly residual collection with Borough wide alternate weekly collection of plastics and cardboard
- Option 4 – Weekly recycling collection and fortnightly residual collection with Borough wide collection of plastics and cardboard
- Option 5 – Start Borough wide fortnightly kerbside collection of plastics, cardboard and textiles
- Option 6 – Change the combination of containers used in kerbside collection, wheeled bins and recycling boxes and bags
- Option 7 – Stop providing community skips
- Option 8 – Change the operation / charges for bulky waste collection
- Option 9 – Increase the number of bring sites
- Option 10 – Introduce a policy of no side waste collection
- Option 11 – Introduce variable charging

In addition, the analysis includes consideration of the costs of workforce re-configuration and additional enforcement/education activities.

## Carbon Footprint of Waste Collection and Recycling – Evidence from Mike Chicken (Environment Policy Manager) and Rachel Birch (Arups Consultants)

The Select Committee received a presentation from Rachel Birch (Arups Consultants).

Ove Arup & Partners Ltd were commissioned by Stockton Borough Council to provide an independent assessment of the climate change impacts of the current and proposed waste management systems in Stockton. The study uses life cycle analysis and carbon footprinting to assess the likely effects of greenhouse gas emissions of a range of scenarios for Stockton's waste management system.

The Arup report looks at the Stockton data in the context of a wider international review of waste management systems carried out by WRAP (Waste Resource Action Programme) which had concluded that "The results are clear. Across the board, most studies show that recycling offers more environmental benefits and lower environmental impacts than other waste management options" This has been considered in the context of Stockton which is unusual in the UK as 70% of its waste goes to incineration and less than 10% to landfill.

The report calculates the CO<sub>2</sub> impact of the annual disposal of municipal waste in Stockton:

	<b>Tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> Equivalent</b>	<b>Notes</b>
100% to Landfill	13,779 tonnes <b>EMITTED</b>	
100% to Incinerator	8,842 tonnes <b>SAVED</b>	<b>SAVING</b> CO <sub>2</sub> by avoiding burning fossil fuels to generate electricity
Recycling the maximum achievable for each material	8,916 – 30,623 tonnes <b>SAVED</b>	<b>SAVING</b> CO <sub>2</sub> by avoiding using fossil fuels to extract, transport & process raw materials. The range of savings depends on the final use of the recyclates.

The Study also considered the carbon footprint of the following scenarios:

- Fortnightly collection
- Collection of non –combustibles only
- Collection of plastics and cardboard
- Increased use of bio-diesel in vehicle fleet

The following table illustrates the impact of the different scenarios:

Scenario	CO2 savings		Cost Savings	Effect on Recycling Targets
	1000T	Benefit		
1. Fortnightly	1 - 2	✓	✓	✓
2. Collection of non-combustibles	No Saving	x	✓?	x
3. Plastics & Cardboard	3 - 8	✓	x?	✓
4. Biodiesel	Small	-	-	-

Whilst the specific findings need to be reviewed in the context of the wider report to understand fully the assumptions made in each scenario, the significant conclusions are that

1. Recycling products generates a range of CO2 emissions that are lower than incineration. However the ultimate end use of a product has a significant impact on the benefit of recycling. The implication for policy development is that Stockton should attempt to increase recycling and reduce use of the incinerator and try to control or influence the destination of its recycled products if it wishes to minimise the carbon impact of its waste.

2. The transportation of waste has a relatively insignificant impact on total CO2 emissions in life cycle analysis. The CO2 produced by collection vehicles is small compared to the carbon benefits achieved by recycling. The implication for policy development is that Stockton should design its collection and disposal systems to maximise recycling rather than minimise miles travelled if it wishes to minimise the carbon impact of its waste.

### Start Talking Rubbish – Consultation

Extensive public consultation took place as part of the review primarily through the “Start Talking Rubbish” campaign. The public consultation was undertaken through a variety of methods:

- Article and questionnaire in Stockton News with Freepost return facility
- On-line questionnaire on Stockton Council Web site
- Promotion of the questionnaire to staff through the Message of the Day facility
- Email link to all Council Members
- Market stalls in Billingham, Thornaby and Stockton
- Questionnaires and posting boxes at 12 public Council buildings across the Borough
- Targeted “door-knocking” in wards with an initial lower response rate
- Targeted distribution of questionnaires to BME community groups
- Targeted distribution of questionnaires to all Parish Councils in the Borough with an invitation to provide additional comments

A copy of the questionnaire is included at **Appendix 3**.





### **Feedback from Consultation**

There was an excellent response to the campaign. 3,112 responses were received during the 4 week campaign; this represents 4% of the Borough.

In summary the consultation highlighted the following facts:

- The overwhelming majority of households (94%) would like to recycle more.
- They would like this recycling to be collected from home.
- There is a strong demand for a recycling collection of plastic and cardboard.
- 75% of households do not support variable charging based on the quantity of waste collected.
- 92% of households think that the council should encourage waste reduction.
- There is no consensus on the optimal combination of containers / bins to be provided for waste and recycling.
- 70% of households do not support fortnightly waste collection, the main reasons being insufficient capacity and health and hygiene concerns (including smells and concerns about vermin).
- 58% of households do not support a withdrawal of side waste collection, the main reason being insufficient capacity for larger families.
- Given the opportunity to make any comments about waste collection and recycling in the Borough, 966 (54%) of respondents who replied volunteered a positive endorsement of the current service.

**Appendix 4** provides further analysis of the profile and content of the responses.

## Other Consultation Activity

In addition, the public consultation campaign was supplemented by other consultation activity including:

- Viewpoint discussion groups
- Attendance at the Disability Advisory Group
- Attendance at the Over 50s forum

## Special Needs Group Feedback

Officers attended meetings of the Disability Advisory Group and the over 50s Forum. Eight Disability Advisory Group members volunteered to attend one of the Adult Viewpoint sessions and other general comments included:

- Support was given for the reinstatement of cardboard and plastic collection
- There was a suggestion for a mobile shredder
- There was a need for special arrangements for collection of incontinence pads etc.
- There was a need for special arrangements for big/bulky items

Comments made at the Over 50s Forum included:

- Need for proper provision in sheltered accommodation
- Storage can sometimes be a problem – would be worse with 2 wheeled bins. Could have separate compartments in wheeled bins
- Could be expensive for the Council to deal with recyclables
- Need to plan space for bins/recycling facilities in new developments
- Council should collect cardboard for recycling
- Need special arrangements for the collection of bulky items and recycling of furniture

## Viewpoint Discussion Group Feedback

A summary of the Viewpoint Discussion Group Feedback is attached at **Appendix 5**.

Key points are summarised below:

- All sessions were strongly in favour of recycling
- Strong support for plastics and cardboard recycling
- Kerbside recycling was generally preferred but local recycling centres were also supported
- There was no consensus on the type of containers but storage was frequently cited as a problem
- There was some confusion about the type of materials which could be recycled, particularly about different parts of the same item
- The majority of participants felt that there could be more publicity
- There was a mixed response to the concept of different charging regimes but, in general, participants felt that this should be on the basis of incentives rather than penalties
- There tended to be a negative response to the concept of fortnightly collections, however, some felt that this could be achieved if more recyclables were collected

- The majority of participants were against discontinuing the collection of side waste owing to fly tipping etc.



## 5.0 Conclusion

The Select Committee acknowledged the need for the Council to significantly improve recycling rates in Stockton Borough in order to meet the aspirations of residents to recycle more and also to meet stretching national targets for recycling and waste minimisation. The Committee particularly note the strong support from residents for the re-introduction and roll out of kerbside collection of plastics and cardboard across the Borough and the desire of the majority of residents for their recycling to be collected from their homes. The Committee therefore believe that the Council should seek to extend the range of materials collected from the kerbside for recycling whilst recognising the need for different options for different areas of the Borough.

The Committee believe that the discontinuation of the collection of side waste is appropriate at the present time given the pressing need to reduce the amount of residual waste produced but that this should be introduced in conjunction with the expansion of the kerbside recycling service. Likewise, the Committee believe that residual waste collection frequencies should be reviewed six months after the extended recycling scheme.

The Committee also recognised the need for continued education and awareness to secure long term sustainability of wastes management.

## 6.0 Recommendations

- (1) That the preferred means of 'recycling' is to sustain domestic kerbside sorting supplemented by bring sites already available in the Borough and the Household Waste Recycling Centre.
- (2) That a move be supported to extend the range of materials collected through the kerbside collection service Borough-wide by phased introduction of plastics and cardboard as quickly as possible; the precise details of the phasing to be determined by operational considerations however the trial areas should be included as early as possible.
- (3) That, as far as possible, the carbon impact of the use of items collected for recycling in the Borough is minimised.

(This recommendation is dependant upon operational capacity and funding availability to be determined by Cabinet)

- (4) That Officers investigate options for suitable containers to include:
  - Full option appraisal and extensive consultation (to include home centres)
  - Identification of appropriate solutions for individual areas recognising that different options may be suitable for different areas of the Borough
  - Options of linking to design colleges, local manufacturing etc.
- (5) That the collection of 'side' waste is discontinued as soon as possible to dovetail with the expansion of the kerbside recycling service and that this be supported by enforcement activity.

- (6) That the provision of Community Skips is discontinued at the end of the current contract (March 2009) to further encourage the responsible disposal of waste in the Borough and that Officers investigate whether any changes can be made to the Bulky Waste collection payments system to make payments easier to make.
- (7) That the Local Development Framework and supporting development documents reflect the need to include sustainable Waste Management Obligations to ensure that any new developments contain appropriate waste and recycling facilities provision and storage and that planning officers are made aware of the importance of such facilities.
- (8) That the success of the consultation undertaken as part of this exercise and the ongoing public support for the waste collection service be acknowledged.
- (9) That the excellent award winning work and activities of the waste awareness service and on-street/door canvassing team be recognised whilst acknowledging that there is more activity required in targeting need and continued education and engagement to secure the long-term sustainability of wastes management.
- (10) That Officers prepare a waste awareness and education strategy to include recycling, waste reduction and responsible waste disposal, linked where appropriate to national campaigns; the campaign to target manufacturers and retailers and that Officers report proposals to the Environment Select Committee in 3 months.
- (11) That Officers explore options for funding through appropriate bodies such as the regional improvement partnership, WRAP, DEFRA, etc to deliver the waste awareness and education strategy.
- (12) That there is a review of the impact of the extended recycling scheme six months from its introduction to inform a Cabinet decision on any further collection frequencies or changes that may be necessary.
- (13) That the Committee recommends the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy – Implementation Plan to Cabinet for adoption/ approval.
- (14) That the Tees Valley Directors of Environment undertake a review into the developing options for dealing with food waste including a review into the operational and financial impacts of using appropriate new technologies.  
  
(The Select Committee wishes to offer support to this in any way it can and requests regular feedback on developments.)
- (15) That it be noted that the necessary changes will undoubtedly impact on the workforce and that extensive consultation will be required in implementing new practices and procedures.