

Somerset Waste Board meeting
27 September 2019
Report for decision

Paper
Item No.

Somerset Waste Partnership – Outline Business Plan 2020 - 24
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Forward Plan Reference:	
Summary:	<p>The Somerset Waste Partnership Draft Business Plan for the period 2020 to 2025 is iterated through a number of meetings, starting in September for a discussion on priority areas and approach, a draft business plan presented to the Board in December 2019, partner consultation in January and February with approval from the Board to the final business plan sought in February 2020.</p> <p>The Business Plan approval timetable is in line with the constitutional requirements on SWP and ensures that business planning and budgeting are considered together. Our approach to business planning has been informed by the work SWP is leading on the 'Waste and Resources' workstream of the joint Somerset Climate Strategy, and on the work being undertaken to consider SWP's own long-term strategy.</p>
Recommendations:	<p>(i) Comments on and approves the broad approach and proposed priority areas for inclusion in the Business Plan 2020-25 as set out in section 2 of the report.</p> <p>(ii) Discuss and provide further ideas for any particular service changes, projects or programmes for potential inclusion in the Draft Plan to be approved for consultation at the December meeting.</p> <p>(iii) Comments on the proposed approach to SWP's long term strategy (as set out in section 3)</p>
Reasons for recommendations:	<p>The Board is required to approve a draft business plan annually for consultation with, and approval by, the partners. Producing an outline at this stage helps the Board to identify key areas for inclusion and to direct officers to prepare more information on</p>

	any area it highlights.
Links to Priorities and Impact on Annual Business Plan:	The Constitution requires the Board to produce a business plan on an annual basis. The five partner local authorities have all declared " <i>Climate Emergencies</i> " and committed to working together towards production and delivery of a Climate Emergency Strategy covering the county of Somerset. Each of the individual authority declarations is slightly different, but all aspire to achieving carbon neutrality of their administrative area and ensuring adaptation to the effects of climate change which are already in motion. SWP has been asked to lead on the Waste and Resources workstream, and this will inform the development of SWP's business plan.
Financial, Legal and HR Implications:	The financial framework and default budget position is outlined in a separate report on the agenda. The detailed financial implications of any new areas of work, or any changes to existing services, as requested by the Board, will be provided when the Board is recommended to approve the draft plan in December.
Equalities Implications:	The Board is required to have "due regard" to our equalities duties when taking any formal decision. Equalities implications will be considered and reported for any service changes or relevant projects proposed by the Board.
Risk Assessment:	<p>There is a risk that the Business Plan may be affected by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) resource pressures on SWP due to the intense workload associated with mobilising a new collection contract, preparing for the Recycle More service change, implementing a new CRM system, managing the risk of service degradation as we end our contract with Kier, and move away from landfill. b) Central Government policy changes that result from the next phase of consultations flowing from the Resources & Waste Strategy (in particular on Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme, and Collection Consistency) c) Brexit and the uncertainty around this process and its knock-on impacts d) the Climate Emergency Strategy (which is not expected to be finalised until after the Business Planning cycle is complete, but which will be developed in tandem as much as possible) <p>Risk assessments will be undertaken for any service changes or new programmes as they are developed and the SWP risk register</p>

	will be updated accordingly as part of the business planning process.
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1. Background

- 1.1. The Board is required to approve a draft business plan annually. The plan is rolling five year plan and therefore the 2020-25 version will include some items already highlighted within the current plan, updated as necessary.
- 1.2. Producing an outline at this stage, along with outlining the default budget position, helps the Board to identify potential service changes or programmes for inclusion and to direct officers to further develop ideas and/or prepare more information on any area it highlights. Feedback from the Board, Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel and other engagement then informs the development of a draft Business Plan. This draft is presented to the Board in December for them to approve and approve as the basis for partner consultation. Following the period of consultation a final draft of the Business Plan is brought to the February board meeting for approval.
- 1.3. Progress against our current business plan is reported to the board at each quarterly meeting through the Performance Report. The board also receive a report at each meeting updating them on progress with mobilising the new collection contract and implementing Recycle More. The work involved in preparing for the new contractor and successful implementation of Recycle More remains the highest priority area within the Business Plan, as it has been in previous years.

1.4. Somerset’s Climate Emergency

The five Somerset local authorities have all declared "*Climate Emergencies*" and committed to working together towards production and delivery of a Climate Emergency Strategy covering the county of Somerset. Each of the individual authority declarations is slightly different, but all aspire to achieving carbon neutrality of their administrative area and ensuring adaptation to the effects of climate change which are already in motion.

Waste and resources is one of 9 workstreams, and SWP’s Managing Director has been asked to act as workstream lead. It is proposed that the officer group made up of senior officers from each partner (SMG) also acts as project board for the Waste and Resources workstream – to ensure that we remain as joined up as possible. The scope of the waste and resources workstream is much broader than SWP’s statutory responsibilities, as it looks at Somerset as a whole, rather than just focussing on household waste and schools. However, this broader scope reflects the questions that SWP was already asking of itself in formulating its own long term strategy (more fully set out in section 4 of this report). The approach to the Waste and Resources workstream will be discussed with the Board at a

workshop in early October, with this workshop helping shape our approach and hence inform the finalisation of our Business Plan.

2. Proposed Approach

2.1. Key issues which will inform the 2020-25 Business Plan are:

Political	<p>The impact of withdrawal from the EU: Whilst SWP recycles over 90% in the UK, waste is a global business and this will have impacts – be they potential short term impacts (e.g. on fuel availability/import controls affecting vehicle purchases) or longer term ones (e.g. on UK recycle prices and legislation).</p>
	<p>National legislative change (Consistency): Whilst SWP is a leader in consistency and supports most of this agenda there are certain aspects of potential changes which SWP do not believe have the evidence to support them (potential for free garden waste and restrictions on residual waste frequency). These changes are not certain and SWP will continue to lobby central government.</p>
	<p>National legislative change (Extended Producer Responsibility): Should these changes be introduced in 2023 it should result in significant funding for SWP, though nothing is yet certain.</p>
	<p>National legislative change (Deposit Return Scheme): Should this be introduced it will have major negative impacts on SWP – with many high value recycling streams being taken away from us, making it harder for us to manage the service as a whole.</p>
	<p>National legislative change (Business waste): SWP see the tightening of requirements on businesses (around separate dry recycling and food waste collection) as an opportunity for us to work with others to make Somerset more sustainable.</p>
	<p>Local Government reorganisation: Should there be any development of proposals for local government reorganisation these may have a significant impact upon SWP.</p>
Economic	<p>Financial pressure on partner authorities: The financial environment in which we operate remains very tightly constrained.</p>
	<p>Recyclate risk: SWP will share risk with its collection contractor on recycling value. This will directly impact upon the SW:EEP fund we have to drive behavioural change</p>

Social	Demographic changes: Somerset's ageing population needs to inform our planning for the future. Somerset benefits from near full employment, which can make recruitment more challenging.
Technological	Social media: Increasing use of social media presents an opportunity to reach more people, but raises expectations about speed of response.
	Big data: The ability to manipulate large data sets (be it around people's behaviour or the life-cycle of resources and waste) can be powerful.
	New materials: New materials may emerge onto the market quicker than our ability to manage them at the end of their life, and they may be difficult to handle using our current processes
Environmental	Somerset's Climate Emergency: SWP have been asked to lead the 'Waste & Resources' workstream and this provides an opportunity for us to work more closely with partners to progress our vision. However, our ability to implement further change will be constrained by resources.
	Public Awareness: Many people are much more aware of climate change and keen to do more, and frustrated if they feel they cannot do more.

2.2. It is proposed that the vision and values refreshed by the Board in 2018 remain unchanged, namely:

Who we are:	Somerset's Local Authorities working together as the Somerset Waste Partnership, ensuring that our household waste is reduced, collected, reused, recycled and effectively treated.
What we do:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve our environment by making every effort to ensure our household waste is not wasted but reused as a valuable resource. • Deliver excellent customer service and value for money to create a more sustainable Somerset.
What we are aiming to become:	An exemplar for how we manage waste as a resource, work with others and support our residents to manage their household waste and make our service the best it can be.
Our values:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight: Working with our partners to understand how and why people behave as they do and use this knowledge to shape our service. • Collaboration: Treating everyone we work with as an equal, knowing we have greater success when we work together. • Innovation: Learning from others and constantly looking at new ways of working to give the best service we can. • Quality: Focusing on excellent customer service and making the best use of the waste we collect.

2.3. It is proposed that the 2019 – 2024 Business plan will maintain a similar focus and approach to the current business plan, recognising the major ongoing pieces of work that remain underway:

<i>Focus</i>	Delivering excellent services	Changing behaviours	Building our capability
<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Household waste is effectively collected, reused, recycled and treated</i>	<i>People trust SWP and see waste as a resource - managing their waste properly</i>	<i>SWP has the capacity, capability and influence to deliver our vision</i>
<i>Activity</i>	Transition to Recycle More	Campaigns (inc. food and plastics)	Transforming ICT systems
	Moving away from landfill	Looking beyond domestic waste	Strategy & Influence
	Improving services (inc reuse, recycling centres & schools)	Community Engagement	Improving processes & partnerships

Whilst there is much consistency with the current business plan (for example implementing Recycle More will continue until 2022, and we will continue to work with partners to ensure new homes are built with waste in mind), it is likely that the next Business Plan will have a greater focus upon:

- How we work with schools to improve their recycling rate (currently only around 25% despite the range of services they can use)
- An expanded Schools Against Waste service utilising the extra funding generated from the SW:EEP fund
- Joint work with both our main contractors (Viridor and SUEZ) and the voluntary and community sector to explore how we can significantly increase Reuse in Somerset
- Exploring how we can improve recycling in commercial businesses and the public sector in Somerset
- Exploring how we can work with others to ensure Somerset businesses are supported to make the right environmental choices (e.g. around packaging)
- Developing a more targeted approach to community engagement and developing stronger strategic partnerships in target communities
- Firming up on our ambition to centralise all customer payments through SWP so that we can improve the customer experience.

3. Proposed Approach to SWP's Long Term Strategy

3.1. Our last strategy was produced in 2003, and whilst a review was undertaken in 2009/10, a new strategy was not produced at that time. SWP needs to refresh its long-term waste management strategy in order to:

- Aligns with and inform the aims and plans of each partner authority (inc. but not limited to the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy).
- Reflects current and emerging national government policy on waste, resources and the environment.
- Is ambitious but realistic about the role SWP can play in achieving a sustainable Somerset and reducing our impact on climate change.

It is proposed to develop a new waste strategy by Summer 2020.

3.2. A SWP Waste Management Strategy will set out a long-term framework for resource efficiency and waste management for domestic waste in Somerset for the next 31 years (to 2050). This length of time aligns with National Government's Resources and Waste Strategy and overlaps with the 25-Year Environment Plan. The Strategy will set out our shared ambition, identify the outcomes we wish to achieve, set high level targets and our over-arching approach to achieving these targets. It will not duplicate the detailed plans of what we will do to achieve our ambitions, which will continue to be set out in our Business Plan (which will remain on a rolling 5-year horizon).

3.3. SWP's waste management strategy will look at how we can reduce waste, improve reuse, recycling and recovery, how we effectively use waste as a resource, and the environmental impact of our household waste. We also wish to explore our role as system leader in Somerset and develop how we work with local businesses to improve their resource efficiency and reduce waste. Our strategy will encompass our immediate ambitions and service developments:

- A strategic framework for how we approach service developments/ pressures
- Our approach to delivering excellent customer service and support (underpinned by appropriate technology)
- How we approach behaviour change, communications and engagement
- How we engage with communities, businesses, schools within Somerset
- How we work with partners on areas like littering, fly-tipping and enforcement, and food waste reduction.

Also our longer term strategic ambitions to become a systems leader in Somerset and help residents and organisations move towards a circular and low-carbon economy. In particular

- How we can help businesses reduce waste, recycle more and move towards more sustainable methods of work and resource use
- How we can support businesses and communities as legal requirements for waste and resource management change

- How Somerset can be an exemplar for partnership working around a wide range of sectors and how we can work together to improve lives and sustainability.

4. Consultations Undertaken

- 4.1.** Initial consultation was held with partners (via the senior officer group – SMG) on 13 August and 10 September. Further consultation will take place over the Autumn, including a workshop with the Board and Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel in early October. Formal partner consultation will take place in the new year, once a draft business plan has been agreed by the Board at its December meeting.

5. Background papers

- 5.1.** SWB Business Plan 2019 – 24 (as agreed by the Board in December 2018)