

Somerset Waste Board meeting  
29 June 2018  
Report for decision

Paper  
Item No.

Somerset Waste Partnership Vision and Strategic Direction

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<b>Forward Plan Reference:</b>	<b>Plan</b>
<b>Summary:</b>	This report reviews the Somerset Waste Partnership's (SWP's) current vision and seeks approval to an updated vision. It also seeks approval to commence work on a long term household Waste Management Strategy for Somerset.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p><b>It is recommended that the Board:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Approves the revised vision as set out in paragraph 2.3 of this report, subject to any suggested changes made at the Board meeting;</b></li> <li><b>2. Amends the action in section 5.2 the Business Plan 2018-23 (to refresh SWP's waste prevention strategy) to produce a longer term waste management strategy as outlined in paragraph 2.4 of this report.</b></li> </ol>
<b>Reasons for recommendations:</b>	To ensure that our vision clearly reflects who we are, what we value and what we want to become, and that we have a clear approach to realising our vision, informed by the national 25 year Resources and Waste Strategy (expected in Autumn 2018).
<b>Links to Priorities and Impact on Annual Business Plan:</b>	The proposal would impact on both section 3 of the SWB Approved Business Plan 2018-23 (SWP's current vision), and task 5.2 (the refresh of SWP's Waste Prevention Strategy).
<b>Financial, Legal and HR Implications:</b>	Our vision and strategy should shape everything we do and hence will have implications for the whole of SWP. The strategy is not predicated on a certain level of funding.
<b>Equalities Implications:</b>	None.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	The risk of not having a clear vision and strategic direction is that we are not clear on what success looks like, have unrealistic ambition or make sub-optimal decisions in the short term.

## 1. Background

- 1.1. SWP has not reviewed its vision since 2013, and has no current overarching long term strategy. We now plan to move away from landfill, to recycle even more at the kerbside, to introduce new technology to our services, to change our kerbside collection contractor, to review our Recycling Centre contract, and we're in the process of reinvigorating the way we engage with the public – from our schools against waste programme to our active social media presence. The world around us is also changing – the 'Attenborough effect' means the public mood is changing, industry (supermarkets and producers) have significant plans to move away from single use plastic, waste is back on the national policy agenda, and Somerset's demography continues to change.

SWP needs to refresh its long-term waste management strategy because we need to be clear about our long-term ambition in order to ensure our activities are as joined up as possible (internally and externally), and so that we are clear against what expectation we are tracking our performance. The first step in developing a long-term strategy is to ensure that we are very clear on our vision – who we are, what we value, and what we want to become.

## 2. Refreshing our vision

- 2.1. Our current vision (as set out in the 2018-23 and previous Business Plan) is to:

- *Drive material up the waste hierarchy and, where sustainable markets exist, into the circular economy\**
- *Avoid landfill and encourage high participation in waste avoidance, reuse, recycling and food waste collection schemes*
- *Engage with local people, support economic wellbeing and use efficient, sustainable and affordable solutions at every stage of the process*
- *Encourage and facilitate innovation, joined up strategy, policy and operations across the county*

\* A circular economy is one where resources once used are not disposed of, but become feedstock materials or energy for making new products, thus reducing reliance on raw materials and waste disposal. A "closed loop process" is a variation of this where recovered materials are recycled into the same product. The benefits of a circular economy include reduced energy consumption, resource security and lower environmental impacts. A circular economy works most effectively where there are clear incentives for all persons on the loop (manufacturers, retailers, consumers, local authorities, reprocessors) to move the material around the loop.

- 2.2. An effective vision needs to be widely understood and collectively shared, and only matters if it actually shapes what we do. It should describe who we are, what we do, what we value and where we're going. In a simple and clear way it should describe to stakeholders:
- *our reason for being*

- *how we aim to serve stakeholders (customers, workforce & partners)*
- *our values (beliefs and guiding principles)*
- *where we want to be in the future*
- *our purpose and aspirations: what we want to become*

**2.3.** Discussions with SWP staff, the Strategic Management Group, stakeholders and members have shown that our current vision doesn't do this as clearly as it might. Accordingly the following revised vision is proposed for SWP:

*Our reason for being:*

**We ensure our household waste is never wasted but given new life as a valuable resource. We deliver excellent customer service and value for money through our work to create a more sustainable Somerset.**

*Who we are:*

**Somerset's Local Authorities work together as the Somerset Waste Partnership to ensure our household waste is reduced, reused, collected, recycled and treated effectively.**

*What we want to become:*

**Through the passion, care, insight and expertise we bring to everything we do we will be seen as an exemplar for how we manage waste, how we work with others, and how we support people to change their behaviour.**

*What we value:*

<b><i>Collaboration</i></b>	<b><i>Quality</i></b>	<b><i>Insight</i></b>	<b><i>Innovation</i></b>
We treat everyone we work with as an equal, and know we have greater impact when we work with others	We focus on quality in the way we serve our customers and in the way we get the most of the resources we collect	We work with our partners to generate and share insights about how and why people behave the way they do, and use it to shape what we do	We innovate and learn from others, recognising that we learn even when things don't go to plan

## 2.4. Waste Strategy

SWP needs to refresh its long-term waste management strategy because we need to be clear about how we will deliver our vision and our level of ambition over the longer term. It should 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). An effective waste management strategy won't sit on the shelf but inform the Business Plan and how we report our performance to the Somerset Waste Board.

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 25 years (to 2042). This length of time aligns with National Government's 25 year Environment Plan (published in Spring 2018) and the expected focus of the national Resources and Waste Strategy (expected in Autumn 2018). SWP's strategy will also need to align with SCC's Waste Core Strategy 2013 – 2028 (currently being revised).

The following objectives are proposed for SWP's waste management strategy:

1. Sets ambition for the future and key milestones
2. Provides clarity as to whether we're on track to achieve our goals
3. Shapes what we and our partners do (and don't do)
4. Is understood by staff and stakeholders
5. Reflects how we expect Somerset and our sector to change

As part of this it will encompass:

- A strategic framework for how we approach service developments to improve waste reduction, reuse, recycling and treatment
- 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 and schools
- How we work with partners on areas like littering, fly-tipping and enforcement

### **3. Next steps**

Whilst we can start work on SWP's strategy ahead of publication of the national Resources and Waste Strategy (expected in Autumn 2018), it would not make sense to conclude work on our strategy until after we have fully understood the direction of travel for national policy.

A key challenge for the strategy will be how we set realistic ambition when we cannot be certain of the level of funding for services in the future (or other changes beyond our control). It is proposed that the scoping phase of the project will explore scenarios of different levels of ambition, with the minimum trajectory being the EU circular economy package targets announced earlier in 2018, the high level target being 55% by 2025, 60% by 2030 and 65% by 2035. The zero waste strategies in Wales and Scotland may also provide useful benchmarks.

It is proposed that the Strategic Management Group of senior officers from each partner authority will act as the project board. Members will be consulted through the Somerset Waste Board and the Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel. To support the development of the strategy an expert advisory panel will also be established to shape the development of the strategy. This will include representatives from industry, local green groups, local communities, SWB representative, and potentially local MPs. Subject to national government policy timetable, consultation with these groups will be at the following key milestones:

- June/July: To agree the scope and approach, and to explore ambition
- Autumn: To review the implications for Somerset of the national Resources and Waste Strategy
- Winter: To review (and endorse the final draft of the strategy)

### **4. Background papers**

#### **4.1. None**

## Appendix 1: Summary of National Government's 25 year Environment Plan

Theme	Ambition	Action/area of work
<b>Targets</b>	<b>Zero avoidable waste</b> by 2050	New <b>Resources and Waste Strategy</b> to be published in 2018 will set out UK's approach to reducing waste, promoting markets for secondary materials, incentivising producers to design better products and how we can manage materials at the end of life by targeting environmental impacts. Recognises need to stop producing so much waste, more efficient production processes, better designed products that reduce waste and use recycled/reused materials wherever possible, and that we must ensure that we are not simply exporting waste to other countries
	<b>Eliminate avoidable plastic waste</b> by 2042	
	Meet current targets & develop <b>ambitious new targets</b> and milestones	
	Work towards no <b>food waste</b> entering landfill by 2030	
<b>Plastics product lifecycle</b>	<b>Production stage:</b> encourage producers to take responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products and rationalise the number of different types of plastic	Working with industry
		Reforming and possibly extending producer responsibility systems
		Exploring whether other problematic materials with suitable alternatives should be banned, like microbeads have been
		Seeking to accelerate innovation of more sustainable materials
	<b>Consumption stage:</b> reduce the amount of plastic in circulation through reducing demand for single-use plastics	Removing all single use plastics from central gov't estate
		Extending the successful 5p plastic bag charge to small retailers
		Seeking to significantly extend refill points to top up water bottles
		Working with retailers to introduce plastic free supermarket aisles
	<b>End of use stage:</b> making it easier for people to recycle by	Continuing to support industry led on-pack recycling labelling system and encouraging take up
		Implementing voluntary & regulatory interventions to cut the amount of litter and improve recycling and packaging reuse
	<b>End of use stage:</b> Improve the rate of recycling	Working with the waste management industry and reprocessors to significantly increase the proportion of plastic packaging that is collected and recycled
		Develop a standard for biodegradable plastic bags
Develop a new cross-sector commitment to tackle plastic waste (applying circular economy principles), starting with packaging		
<b>Residual Waste</b>	Improving management of residual waste (particularly <b>Energy from Waste</b> )	Explore different options for managing residual waste beyond electricity (including the production of biofuels for transport)
		Increase the use of heat produced at waste facilities through better connection to heat networks
		Investigate ways to cut carbon dioxide emissions from EfW facilities by managing the amount of plastics in residual waste

<b>Collections</b>	Committed to supporting <b>comprehensive and frequent waste and recycling collections</b> which protect local amenity & ensure that products are recycled as much as possible, returning high quality materials back to the economy	Accelerate the shift to consistency in materials collected through the WRAP Framework for greater consistency working with industry and local authorities to ensure that a consistent set of materials are collected by all local authorities (especially plastics)
<b>Litter</b>	<i>Continue to implement the Government's <b>Litter Strategy</b> for England (note that this is not SWP responsibility, but is of relevance)</i>	<i>Introducing new regulations to improve local authorities' enforcement powers, supported by new guidance on its proportionate use.</i> <i>Developing a national antilittering campaign, led by the government and funded by the private sector</i> <i>Distributing a £450,000 litter Innovation Fund to pilot, implement and evaluate small scale local research projects that could be replicated more widely</i>