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Sustainable waste management is a priority for Dudley Council, and we are committed to minimising the amount of waste produced by households and organisations in the borough. This is a commitment which is declared in the council plan.

This strategy sets out planned improvements in waste management services for the next seven years, along with the mechanisms for achieving those improvements.

Dealing with our rubbish and recycling is a day-to-day activity, and is something which affects everyone. Whilst the convenience of any future recycling services needs to be considered, the sustainability (both environmental and economic) is of paramount importance. In October 2010 we began a trial recycling service in selected areas across the borough, using two reusable bags as well as a box, collecting plastic bottles and cardboard in addition to glass, cans and paper. The results of this trial have shown that Dudley residents are willing to separate their recycling into these three containers, and by doing so are ensuring that the recycling is of an excellent quality. The council is committed to delivering an easy-to-use recycling service which is also truly sustainable, providing quality materials which generate income rather than being a financial drain.

This strategy has two main objectives. Firstly to increase the amount of waste which gets recycled or composted; and secondly to decrease the amount of waste which is sent to landfill. Unlike many other councils in the UK, the majority of waste collected by Dudley is treated at an EfW (Energy from Waste) plant, rather than being buried in expensive and unsustainable landfill sites. Very little of the waste collected by the council is sent to landfill (just 9% in 2011/12), however we want to reduce this amount even further and aim for zero waste to landfill by 2020.

The challenge before us is significant and will require us all to do our bit. For the council’s part, we will provide a modern recycling service which will see all of the mainstream materials collected. However, recycling is the tip of the iceberg and it is hoped that Dudley’s residents will embrace this challenge and make choices which will further reduce waste. The average household throws away an astonishing amount of food (around £420 worth per year), when taking simple steps such as checking date labels and freezing foods could reduce this significantly. The council would ultimately like to see every household, which has a garden, home-composting their fruit and vegetable waste. This is another simple measure which would make a positive contribution to the sustainability agenda.

The council has already committed to this programme of improvement through the recent successful bid for £1.8 million government funding to enable us to roll out a plastic bottle and cardboard recycling collection service borough-wide. In addition, it is the council’s intention to move from the outdated plastic sack collection service for all household non-recyclable waste, to a more modern wheeled bin service, whilst still retaining our ongoing commitment to weekly collections.

Councillor Tracy Wood
Cabinet member for environment and culture
Progress to date

- There has been a notable decrease in the total amount of unrecyclable household waste collected by the council in recent years. In October 2010 the council moved from a ‘clear-all’ policy with regards black bags, to collecting a maximum of three bags per households. This resulted in a significant decrease in the amount of waste collected in 2011/12 compared to previous years.

- There has been a significant reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill, primarily due to the introduction of ‘burnable waste skips’ at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) during October 2009. This has allowed waste which is unsuitable for recycling to be treated at the Energy from Waste plant, rather than being sent to landfill.

Source: Waste Data Flow
• The introduction of green wheelie bins, along with an expansion and increased promotion of the black box recycling service has resulted in a steady increase in the combined recycling/composting rate.

• Over 32,500 compost bins have been sold between 2005 and 2011. Each home compost bin results in the diversion of approximately 160 kg of waste per household per year. (Dudley residents are therefore composting over 5,000 tonnes of waste annually).

• Through promotion of the national love food, hate waste campaign (LFHW), the number of committed food waste reducers (CFWR) increased from 19.5% in October 2008 to 26.1% in February 2010, compared to a national average of just 13%. Each additional CFWR avoids 76 kg of waste per household per year.

• The use of real nappies has been incentivised through the payment of 223 real nappy cash back claims (between 2007 and 2012). Each child in real nappies avoids approximately 367 kg of waste per year.

• 65 out of 78 primary schools have received one or more educational visits on recycling and waste prevention since 2007.

• Over 11,600 individuals signed up to the mailing preference service (MPS) between March 2008 and January 2013, avoiding approximately 7 kg per household per year, equating to approximately 41 tonnes per year (assuming two adults per household).

• The majority of high rise housing blocks have communal recycling facilities near the entrance ways.

• A new green waste ‘bulking-station’ has been constructed at the Lister Road depot, improving the efficiency of the green waste service.
A summary of our future plans

This strategy outlines our plans to improve the waste and recycling services in Dudley by:

- Offering an extended recycling service to all residents in the borough to include plastic bottles and cardboard, as well as cans, glass and paper.

- Providing households with wheelie bins for their non-recyclable waste.

- Introducing an incentive scheme to reward those residents who recycle their waste.

- Making improvements to the cleanliness of the borough’s recycling bring sites with the view of making them more appealing to users, and undertaking a review of their locations.

- Further reducing the amount of food which is thrown away by promoting the national love food, hate waste campaign.

- Continuing to promote home composting and making low-cost compost bins available to residents.

- Introducing a trade waste recycling service for paper, plastic bottles, cans and glass.

- Developing interactive education initiatives to support the borough’s schools in delivering the ‘reduce, reuse, recycle’ message.

- Introducing a free of charge paper and cardboard recycling service to all borough schools, as well as plastic bottle and can recycling for those schools that request it.

- Increasing the amount of waste taken to the borough’s HWRC that is recycled or reused, whilst decreasing the amount sent to landfill.

- Reviewing HWRC provision in the borough.

- Working with council planners to ensure modern waste and recycling arrangements are in place in all new housing developments.
A significant issue to emerge over recent years has been the quality of waste sent for recycling. The rapid push to increase recycling rates has seen many local authorities across the UK introduce fully mixed (or co-mingled collections), whereby all recyclable materials are collected together in a single bin or bag. These materials are then sent for sorting at a central materials recycling facility (MRF) before being transported to reprocessors. Whilst such schemes are proven to divert high tonnages of material for recycling, the quality of the materials is often low and the sorting process can be costly for local authorities.

Current guidance from WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) states that fully separated kerbside collections are the preferable option, followed by partial mixing of recyclates in two or more different streams, with fully mixed or co-mingled collections least favoured.

Kerbside recycling

For the majority of households in the Dudley borough, recycling is collected in a 55 litre black box. Residents are able to recycle food and drink cans, newspapers and magazines, as well as glass bottles and jars. The materials are separated into the three fractions at the kerbside and are then bulked at a new council facility, before being sent to various reprocessors.

In 2009 Dudley Council approached WRAP to complete an options appraisal, to help determine the most cost effective way of collecting recycling from within the borough. A number of options were considered, including the mixing of all recyclables in a wheelie bin. However, the system determined to be most efficient involved the use of two reusable bags and a box. This method of collection was subsequently adopted on a trial basis in 10 separate areas of the borough. Since October 2010, approximately 11,000 properties have been trialling a service which collects plastic bottles and cardboard, in addition to the cans, glass and paper which are collected across the whole borough. In these trial areas residents have been given a 60 litre blue bag for paper and card, a 60 litre green bag for plastic bottles and cans, and in these areas the box is used solely for collecting glass.

The trial has been very well received by residents, with almost eight out of every 10 households still recycling 18 months after the introduction of the service. Following the change in service, there has also been a significant increase of around 68% in the weight of materials collected for recycling from these trial areas.

In terms of plastic recycling the existing and planned expansion of the trial service focusses on plastic bottles only. Other plastic items such as yogurt pots, margarine tubs and meat trays (‘pots, tubs and trays’) tend to be made of lower grades of plastic which are more difficult to recycle. Under the current market conditions, the inclusion of these plastics would result in a reduced rebate for the council. Although some other local authorities do collect all plastic items, this often results in the mix having to be sent abroad for reprocessing. Whilst the recycling of mixed plastics is not therefore considered either economically viable or environmentally sustainable at this time, the situation will continue to be monitored and re-evaluated on an annual basis.
Future plans

The council has been successful in obtaining grant funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to fund an expansion of the trial service to all remaining households.

By extending this service to all households, it is estimated that an additional 8,500 tonnes of waste will be recycled - a weight equivalent to 4,250 elephants!

We also plan to introduce an incentive scheme to reward those residents who recycle their waste. A number of different schemes have been tried in different areas, with the majority proving to be broadly effective at increasing recycling. Dudley Council is also keen to exploit the significant advertising potential that would be associated with such a scheme to drive economic regeneration. It is envisaged that local companies will be approached and asked to offer rewards, and in return would benefit from free advertising associated with the service.

By implementing these measures, Dudley residents will be recycling and composting 43% of their waste by December 2014.

Mini recycling centres

Dudley Council currently has around 50 publicly accessible sites where residents can take items to be recycled. These sites have continued to be well utilised despite the fact that a kerbside recycling service has been in place for a number of years.

At many of these sites residents are able to recycle materials which they are not able to recycle through the kerbside service. Notable examples include plastic bottles, cardboard, tetra paks and textiles. As the kerbside service evolves to allow residents to recycle a greater number of materials, it is envisaged that these sites will have a less significant role, and the number of sites across the borough will be reduced.

Due to the high market value of old clothes (or textiles), a number of local authorities, including Dudley, have experienced problems with third party collectors placing textile banks on council owned land without permission. As well as reducing revenue which the council can use to offset the cleaning and running costs of these sites, it can lead to clutter - with a number of different textile companies placing banks on each site. The council removes any improperly placed banks as soon as possible, and recovers the costs of doing so from those responsible.
Future plans

It is recognised that the cleanliness of these sites has a direct bearing on people’s willingness to use them, and in the past this level of cleanliness has not been to a sufficient standard. Dudley Council will seek to improve the cleaning regime on all of its sites, and in the worst cases of fly-tipping will take enforcement action against those responsible.

The council will continue to take action against improperly placed textile recycling banks at its own sites, whilst working with our appointed contractor to offer a recycling service for old clothes.

Dudley Council will seek to rationalise the number and locations of recycling bring-sites.

Food waste

Roughly 1/3 of the rubbish that Dudley residents throw away in their black bags is food waste. The vast majority of this wasted food could have been avoided through better planning, purchasing, storage or preparation (WRAP, 2009). Wasted food costs the average household £480 a year, rising to £680 for a family with children, the equivalent of around £50 a month.

Future plans

Dudley Council will continue to promote the national love food hate waste campaign which encourages individuals to take simple steps to avoid food wastage. Our aim is to reduce kitchen organic waste by 10% by the end of 2016/17 (from the February 2012 baseline). This is equivalent to around 2,000 tonnes of avoided waste.

The Animal By-Products Regulations (2005) place restrictions on the way in which waste originating from within a kitchen can be dealt with by the local authority. The legislation was introduced primarily to stop the spread of diseases such as Foot and Mouth, and means that any waste originating from within a kitchen (despite its potential suitability for home composting) needs to be sent for special treatment (either in-vessel composting or anaerobic digestion), both of which are expensive options. The contents of Dudley’s green wheelie bins are currently sent for open-windrow composting and this limits the collections to green organic garden waste only.
Garden waste

Residents are able to recycle garden waste in a 240 litre green wheelie bin which is collected on a fortnightly basis during the spring, summer and autumn (collections cease for a number of weeks over the winter months). For an extra charge residents can pay an annual fee to have a second green bin (with a brown lid) collected.

In addition to the green wheelie bin service, residents can choose to have large quantities of garden waste collected via a chargeable ‘bulky waste collection service’.

Although the council offers a garden waste collection service, residents should be encouraged to use other (more sustainable options) where these are available. All garden waste which is collected through the green bin service incurs a charge for the council - this is contrary to the belief of many residents who assume that the council makes money from composting their waste. There is also an environmental impact which results from the collection of the waste using large diesel powered vehicles. Both these environmental and economic costs can be avoided if residents deal with this waste in their own gardens by home composting. By composting their waste at home, residents can also include fruit and vegetable waste which it isn’t possible to collect in the green bins. Between 2005 and 2011 over 33,500 compost bins were sold to Dudley residents.

Future plans

The on-going use of home composting bins will be encouraged, as well as promoting the sale of new bins to residents who have not previously composted. The bins are currently available to purchase through a national framework agreement to which Dudley has signed up (www.getcomposting.com).

Residents will be encouraged to only use their green bins for waste which they are unable to home-compost.
Residual waste and energy from waste

All black bag (residual) waste which is collected by the council is processed at the EfW (energy from waste) plant located at the Lister Road depot. This facility burns the waste and uses the heat to produce steam that drives turbines which generate electricity, with the plant producing approximately eight mega watts. This makes the plant self sufficient in energy, with the remainder exported into the local grid and this electricity contributes to national renewable energy targets.

Future plans

With current plans to extend the kerbside recycling of plastic bottles and cardboard, it is predicted that the collected waste could drop by 8,500 tonnes. The requirement to offer business waste recycling will further reduce the amount of collected waste sent through the plant, requiring additional waste from other sources to be found. The council, through a number of planned initiatives, are to address this shortfall by further waste separation at its HWRC and through seeking third party waste from organisations currently using landfill sites. The current contract with Dudley Waste Services (DWS) runs until 13 February 2023. At this time, ownership of the plant will pass back to the council. Future options for dealing with residual waste have not been considered within this seven year strategy, however, it is recognised that large scale contracts of this nature take a number of years to plan and implement, and therefore options will need to be evaluated in the coming years and detailed in future revisions of the strategy.

Residual waste is currently collected in black sacks, with households limited to three sacks per week. At the same time as the expansion of the kerbside recycling service, wheelie bins for residual waste will start to be distributed to residents. Each household will be issued with a 180 litre bin as standard, however residents will have the option to request a smaller 140 litre bin. By containerising the residual waste in wheelie bins, a number of the problems associated with black bag collections will be avoided. Black bags are often split open by animals creating a mess on people’s driveways and the public highway. The move to wheelie bins will also reduce manual handling of waste, and should therefore make the collections safer for our crews. Inevitably there will be some streets which will need to retain their black bag collection due to the unsuitability of wheelie bins, and these streets will be separately assessed prior to the roll-out.
Landfill is the least environmentally friendly way of dealing with waste, and as a result of the landfill tax-escalator it is also one of the most costly. In 2011/12 around 9% of Dudley’s waste was sent to landfill sites, and this came predominantly from four sources:

1. Planned maintenance to the EfW plant results in a shut-down period. During this time waste is delivered direct to landfill.

2. The council operates a bulky waste collection service from households. These items are physically too big to fit through the feed chutes at the EfW plant, and this necessitates the waste being sent to landfill.

3. Similarly large items which are collected at the HWRC also have to be sent to landfill.

4. Street sweepings are currently sent to landfill.

**Future plans**

A new contract is being put in place, which will allow for the recycling of street sweepings by the end of 2013.

The council will investigate whether waste could be sent to an alternate EfW plant while planned maintenance is carried out on the Dudley plant, thereby negating the need to landfill waste collected at this time.

Additionally, the council will investigate whether shredding technology could be utilised to macerate bulky waste to such an extent that it would be suitable for treatment at the EfW.
Business waste

The Government’s Review of Waste Policy (2011) encourages local authorities to take a more strategic view with regards to business waste. Despite similarities in the composition of both business and household waste, previous legislation has necessitated that the two be treated differently. However, changes to the Waste Regulations (2011) have introduced a legislative requirement to offer a similar recycling service to both businesses and households, creating an additional driver to deal with these two waste streams in a similar way.

Approximately 10,000 tonnes of trade waste is collected within the Dudley borough each year.

Future plans

In line with the new requirements of the waste regulations (2011), Dudley Council will introduce a trade waste recycling service for waste paper, plastic bottles, food and drink cans, and glass by January 2015.

Additionally, the council will aim to recycle 50% of all trade waste (approximately 5,000 tonnes) in the first full year following roll-out (2016/17 financial year).
Education

Waste education is a useful mechanism for driving up the amount of waste which gets recycled, and also for maintaining the quality of recycling by ensuring that the correct materials are being placed in the correct containers. Targeting school children with a fun and educational message about the 3Rs (reduce, reuse and recycle) is widely used by most local authorities as a method of ensuring that future generations think about waste responsibly, and as a method of indirectly influencing the behaviour of parents or carers.

Future plans

The previous focus of waste education activities has been to send a waste education officer into schools to deliver sessions with pupils. Whilst this work will still continue, a number of resources and presentations will be developed which can be delivered either directly by school teachers, or by volunteers. This approach will give schools more flexibility, particularly regarding the timing of delivery. These resources will be developed to promote the proposed changes to the recycling service and will therefore incorporate information on the recycling of plastic bottles and cardboard. Additionally, a section of the council website will be developed, allowing these resources to be downloaded and utilised.

Following the successful bid for government funding, Dudley Council plans to introduce free-of-charge paper and cardboard recycling for all primary and secondary schools in the borough from the summer of 2013. Additionally, schools will have the option of recycling plastic bottles and cans should they wish to. Although a chargeable recycling service is already offered, many schools are unable to justify the cost. By making the service free, it is hoped that the vast majority of schools will start recycling, resulting in around 390 tonnes of waste being recycled each year.
A new five year contract for running the council’s HWRC in Stourbridge commenced on 1st July 2012. It is envisaged that the contract will result in a significant increase in the segregation of materials collected at the site. The new contract includes a target to reuse or recycle 65% of material, segregate 20% for incineration, and reduce landfill to 15% within the first two years. Based on a total site throughput of 22,800 tonnes in 2010/11 this should result in the following tonnages by 2015/16:

- 14,800 tonnes reused / recycled
- 4,600 tonnes for incineration
- 3,400 tonnes to landfill

The council’s current site in Stourbridge is located in a residential area in the south-west corner of the borough. In addition, Dudley Council pay an annual fee to Wolverhampton Council allowing residents living in the north of the borough to utilise the Anchor Lane site in Coseley.

Future plans

The council is committed to further improving HWRC facilities for residents of the borough.
Planning and new developments

When residents move into new-build properties they rightly expect that their developer will have considered the waste and recycling arrangements. All too often this is not the case, and retrospective solutions to deal with waste and recycling have to be found.

Where communal bin areas are planned for new developments, the council advocates a multi-bin recycling system, rather than providing individual apartments with recycling boxes. Wheelie bins need to be provided for each material / or mix of materials that the council is able to collect. Currently, this means a bin for food and drink cans, one for newspapers and magazines, and another for glass bottles and jars. Large 1100 litre wheelie bins also need to be provided for unrecyclable waste.

Further guidance on appropriate waste management facilities can be found at this link: - www.dudley.gov.uk/wasteplanning.

Future plans

In addition to the ‘waste planning’ guidance which is currently available, the council is developing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Sustainable Buildings. This document will include a section on waste management and should give the subject more gravitas with developers. The SPD is due to be adopted in 2013.
Waste Strategy  Timeline of key projects

2013
- Commence roll-out of extended recycling service for plastic bottles and card and roll-out of wheelie bins for non-recyclable waste

2014
- Introduce an incentive scheme to reward those residents who recycle their waste
- Launch new waste education initiatives
- Complete the roll-out of extended recycling service for plastic bottles and card and roll-out of wheelie bins for non-recyclable waste
- Introduce a trade waste recycling service for paper, plastic bottles, cans and glass

2015
- Complete a review of HWRC provision in the borough
- Review the key projects undertaken and our recycling and waste minimisation performance targets
Relevant legislation

Waste framework directive
The revised Waste Framework Directive was published in 2011, and implemented in England and Wales through the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011. Part 5 of the regulations covers the ‘improved use of waste as a resource’: -

13.—(1) An establishment or undertaking which collects waste paper, metal, plastic or glass must, from 1st January 2015, take all such measures to ensure separate collection of that waste . . .

The implication of the amendment is significant for Dudley Council. Existing plans will ensure that all households are offered a recycling service for plastic bottles, however the requirement will also apply to waste collected from businesses within the borough (so called ‘trade waste’). The previous focus of government policy and legislation has been on household waste, however a similar focus will now be required for business waste.

EU landfill directive
The EU Landfill Directive 1999/31/EC was transposed into English law as the Landfill (England & Wales) Regulations 2002. The primary purpose of this legislation is to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill. One of the mechanisms that this is achieved in the UK is through the landfill tax escalator, meaning that the tax on waste sent to landfill increases by £8 per tonne each financial year. This will mean that landfill tax will be £72 in 2013 and £80 in 2014. It is also possible that future governments may choose to further extend the escalator, making it increasingly more expensive to send waste to landfill. Whilst only a very small proportion of municipal waste collected by Dudley Council is sent for landfill, the majority being treated at an Energy from Waste (EfW) facility, the escalator will act as an economic incentive to further drive down that tonnage in pursuit of zero waste to landfill.

Review of waste policy in England 2011
Another significant document to be published in 2011 was the Government’s Review of Waste Policy in England. Whilst there is clear advocacy for separate food waste collections, and subsequent anaerobic digestion, both the review and the governments Anaerobic Digestion Strategy fall short of making such collections compulsory.

Environmental Protection Act (1990)
The EPA is the primary legislation which not only defines ‘waste’ but also dictates how businesses and the Local Authority are to deal with it.

The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012
A recent revision to the Controlled Waste Regulations came into force in March 2012, the 2012 Regulations give local authorities powers to charge for waste disposal from a wider range of non-domestic premises than the 1992 Regulations allowed.