

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 2 February 2022

Subject of Report: Waste Strategy

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Mike Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services

Key Decision: Yes

Reason:

The waste strategy will play a key role in driving improvements in the recycling and waste service and ensure we are working with North Somerset Environment Company (NSEC), residents, communities and local businesses, to follow a clear vision and set new and achievable targets for the way we operate the recycling and waste services. It will align with the NSEC Business Plan, legislative changes and allow positive impact on the climate emergency and ongoing financial challenges.

Recommendations

1. That the executive agrees the revisions to the waste strategy set out in this report and informed by the public consultation exercise during summer 2021.
2. That the executive agrees to adopt the North Somerset Waste Strategy as appended to this report, with any further minor amendments prior to publication being approved by the Executive member in consultation with the Director of Place.

1. Summary of Report

1.1 There is no legal requirement to produce a recycling and waste strategy, but it is considered best practice for councils to outline their vision and targets for recycling and waste minimisation. Recycling and waste minimisation has a clear contribution to make to addressing the climate emergency, which was declared by the council in 2019. The waste strategy covers 10 years to align with the climate emergency action plan.

1.2 North Somerset Council's previous recycling and waste strategy covered the period 2013-2017 and set out plans and targets to improve the management of recycling and waste performance in the district. Many of these targets were met and the council has continued to see continued and impressive progress over a short period - in 2020/21 North Somerset had the 7th highest recycling, composting and reuse rate for English local authorities. The new strategy sets more ambitious targets and reevaluates our current waste service to make further progress and improvements

1.3 The new strategy outlines how North Somerset will strive to remain a high performing authority by reducing waste, promoting waste minimisation, reuse, home and community composting and increasing the amount we recycle, all of which will make a positive contribution towards the climate emergency and budget savings. Our aspirational end point is to become a zero-waste authority, and for the strategy to be shared by residents, businesses, statutory organisations and all stakeholders in North Somerset. The strategy will also act as our underpinning document and influence our direction of travel with North Somerset Environment Company (NSEC), and key elements of the strategy will be included in the NSEC business plan.

1.4 Waste is a service that is experienced by the majority of residents and stakeholders within North Somerset. It was therefore extremely important for people to have the opportunity to input into the strategy. Public consultation and engagement with residents and businesses was a fundamental part of the development of the strategy so that we could hear local views on the proposals.

1.5 The draft waste strategy was agreed by Executive on 28 April 2021 after which it was published and went out for consultation between 23 June 2021 until 18 August 2021 via the council's online consultation portal (eConsult). There were two options to respond to the consultation, either via a long or short survey. Residents, businesses and local organisations were invited to take part through several channels including social media and press releases.

1.6 There were 1540 responses to the consultation from individuals, 353 responses to the long survey and 1181 responses to the short survey. We also received 13 organisational responses.

1.7 This report and appendices provides an overview of the responses to the public consultation and recommends changes to the targets contained within the draft strategy, based on these responses.

2. Policy

2.1 The waste strategy directly contributes to the Council's ambitions to:

- be a great place for people to live, work and visit,
- have welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030
- collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes of being greener.

3. Details

3.1 The draft waste strategy was published and went out for consultation between 23 June and 18 August 2021 with the following overarching vision:

- We will be a leading authority in minimising waste and tackling the climate emergency.
- We want to change the way we all think about waste. It is a resource to be utilised and value recovered.
- We will lead our communities to inspire sustainable actions and provide an open, fair and green service.

3.2 The consultation produced 1540 responses from individuals, 353 responses to the long survey and 1181 responses to the short survey. We also received 13 organisational responses.

A detailed summary of the responses is available in Appendix 2 'Recycling & waste strategy consultation report'.

3.3 The demographics of those responding to the consultation was largely typical of that found within North Somerset namely that:

- Age matched the north somerset profile reasonably well with a slight over representation of those aged 50-79 and an under representation of those 18-29
- Housing type of the respondents also matched well. A slight over representation of 53% living in a detached house and under representation of flat residents of 7% (13% live in flats in North Somerset)
- There was a good spread of responses from the towns and rural areas
- Ethnicity was a close match, noting 96% of respondents identified as white British.
- Single person households were under represented 16% of respondents (compared to 31%) and two person households over represented 49% (compared to 37% adult population)

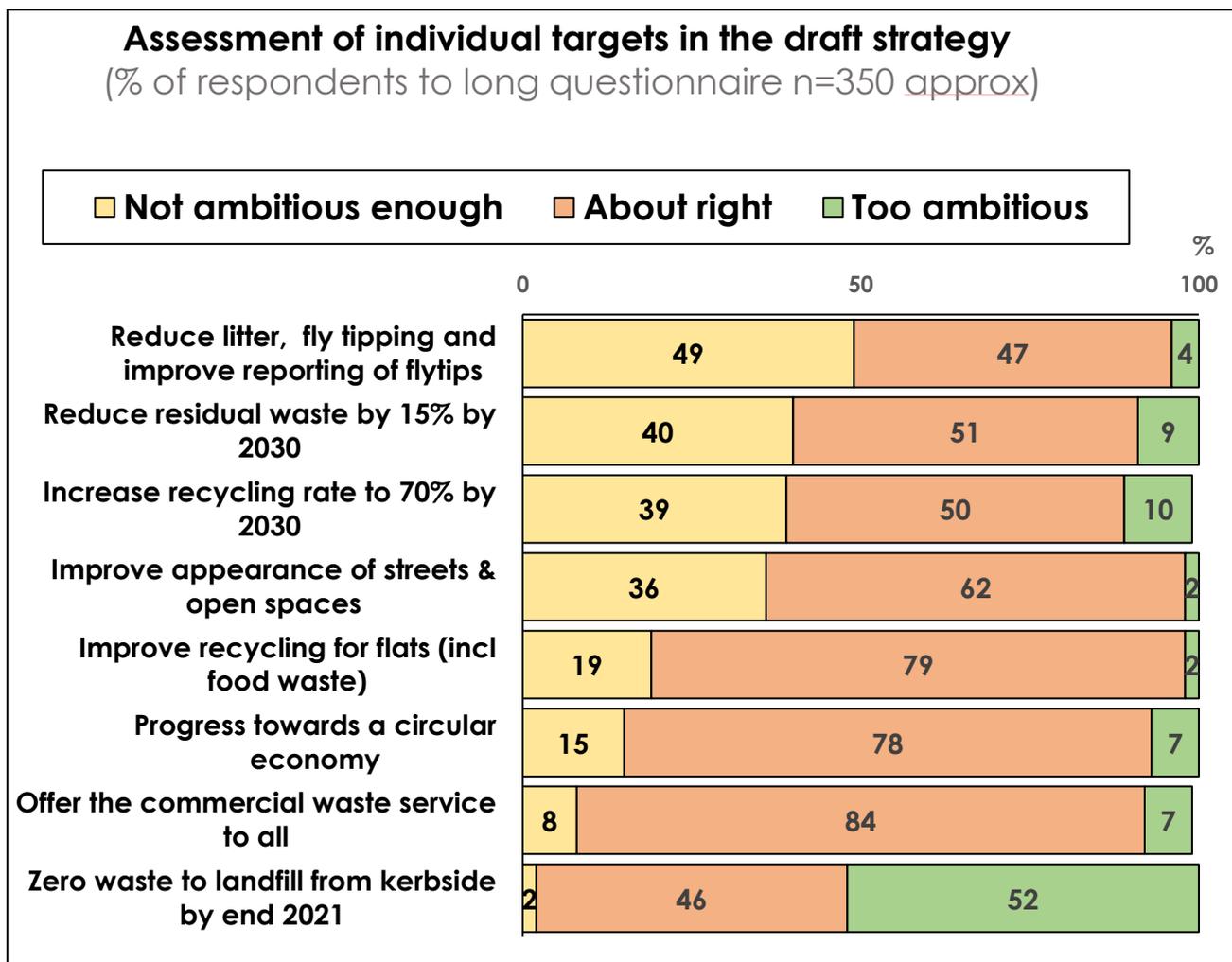
3.4 The draft waste strategy set out 8 targets to achieve the overall vision these were:

1. a reduction in residual waste of 15% the level of 2019/20 by 2030
2. a recycling rate of 70% by 2030
3. zero waste to landfill from household kerbside collections by the end of 2021
4. improved recycling facilities and offer food waste recycling collections to flats
5. offer the commercial waste service to all local businesses and schools and be the main waste removal service for events in the area
6. reduced incidents of litter and fly-tipping and improve reporting of fly-tipping
7. improved appearance of our streets and open spaces
8. progress towards a circular economy

From the responses received, the headlines can be made:

- Overall 61% said targets were about right. 16% not ambitious enough and 23% too ambitious.
- Zero waste to landfill was seen as too ambitious. Some of the comments highlighted that this was mis-understood and needed clarifying.
- The litter and fly-tipping targets were considered not to be ambitious enough.

3.5 A summary assessment of the responses to the individual targets is provided below:



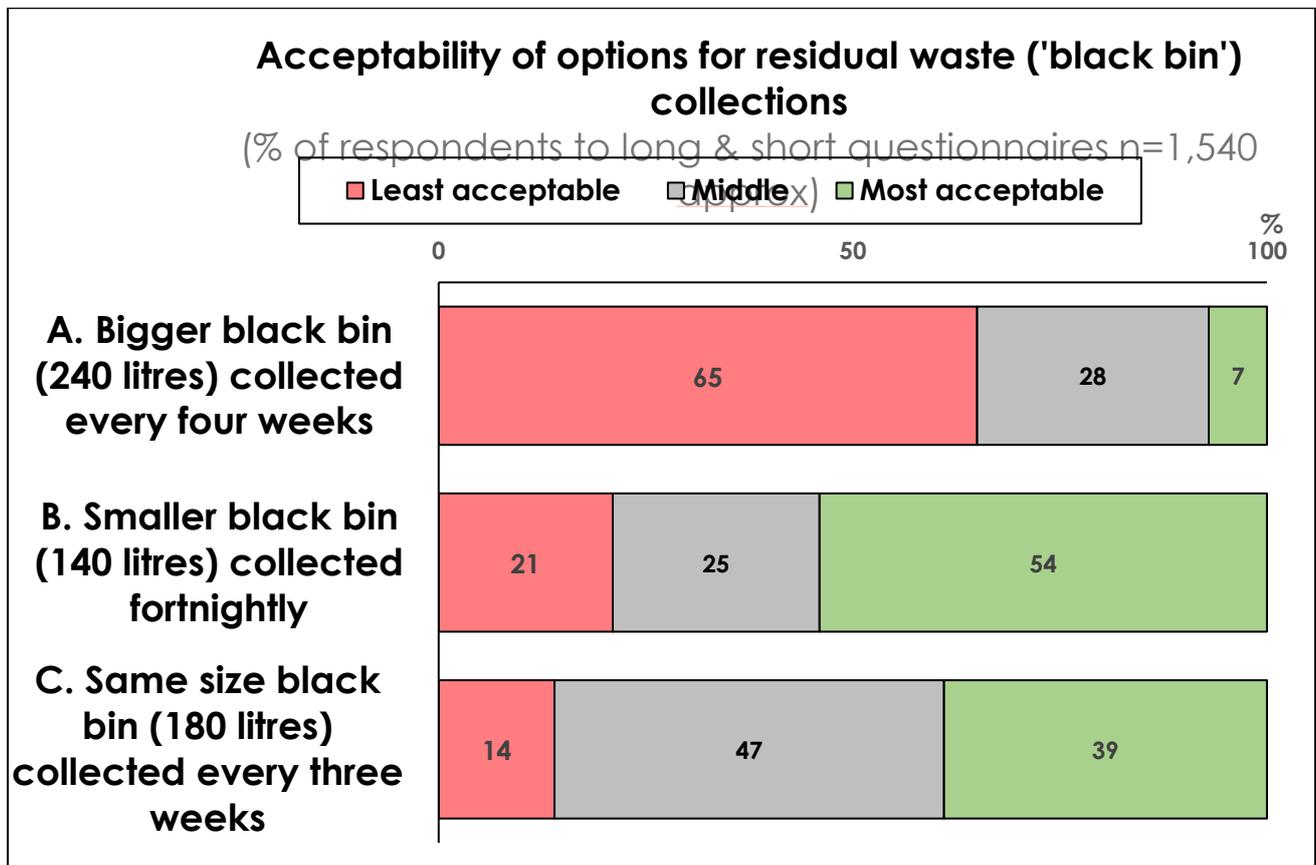
3.6 From the responses received, it is recommended that the original draft targets are updated as follows to reflect the consultation responses:

Draft target	Recommend updated target
3) Zero waste to landfill from household kerbside collections by end of 2021.	Divert all non-recyclable, kerbside collected household waste away from landfill by end of 2022.
4) Improve recycling facilities and offer food waste recycling collections to flats	Review and update recycling facilities at all flat blocks and continue to introduce food waste collections in phases in line with the Environment Bill by 2023.
5) Offer the commercial waste service to all local businesses and schools and be the main waste removal service for events in the area.	Expand the commercial waste service to serve more businesses, schools and events in North Somerset each year.
6) Reduce incidents of litter and fly-tipping and improve how fly-tips can be reported.	Tackle incidents of litter and fly-tipping in north somerset through improved reporting, increasing education and enforcement activities.

3.7 The questionnaires, used for the consultation, further explored and invited responses to the aims contained within each of the targets. These have been analysed and the following provides details of the consultation question and response together with recommended changes to the draft waste strategy:

Revised Action 1: Future options for black bin collections to increase recycling and reduce waste.

Residents were asked what alternative option of residual waste collections would be most acceptable and responses are shown below.



The results show that:

- A smaller bin collected fortnightly scores higher than three weekly collections on both most and least acceptable.
- It could therefore be interpreted that three weekly collections is the preferred option by respondents as the fewest people found it least acceptable.
- It could also be interpreted that a smaller bin fortnightly is the preferred option as it was most acceptable to most people

Recommendation

To update p.18 of the draft waste strategy and appendix 6 & 7 to include the results of the consultation and the comparable support and concerns regarding switching to smaller non-recyclable waste bins and changing the collection frequency to three-weekly collections. To update the strategy to include in the strategy under 'reducing waste' as follows:

Action:	Set up trials of three weekly collection frequencies in two or three different small areas and monitor by end of 2024.
Why:	Reducing capacity for non-recyclable has been shown to increase recycling rate of both dry materials and food waste in other local authorities. Cost saving efficiencies Reduction in emissions contributing to action on the climate emergency.
Supports target:	1) A reduction in residual waste of 15% the level of 2019/20 by 2030. 2) A recycling rate of 70% by 2030.

Revised Action 2: Measures of Success

Residents were asked how we best measured success and there were numerous suggestions including:

- *Successful prosecutions for fly-tipping and other environmental crimes.'*
- *'number of successful prosecutions for fly tipping. Overall value of fines for fly tipping. Overall length of prison sentences for fly tipping.'*
- *'Surveys of residents to gauge satisfaction levels and changes in culture'*
- *'I would like to see the rate of progress on setting up re-use shops at council sites monitored to obtain the measure of success.'*
- *'Publish Annual summary of achievement under each heading'*
- *'Number of adopted streets/enquiries to adopt streets. Decrease in fly tipping Cleaner streets.'*
- *'Compare with the national statistics on percentage rates of recycling.'*

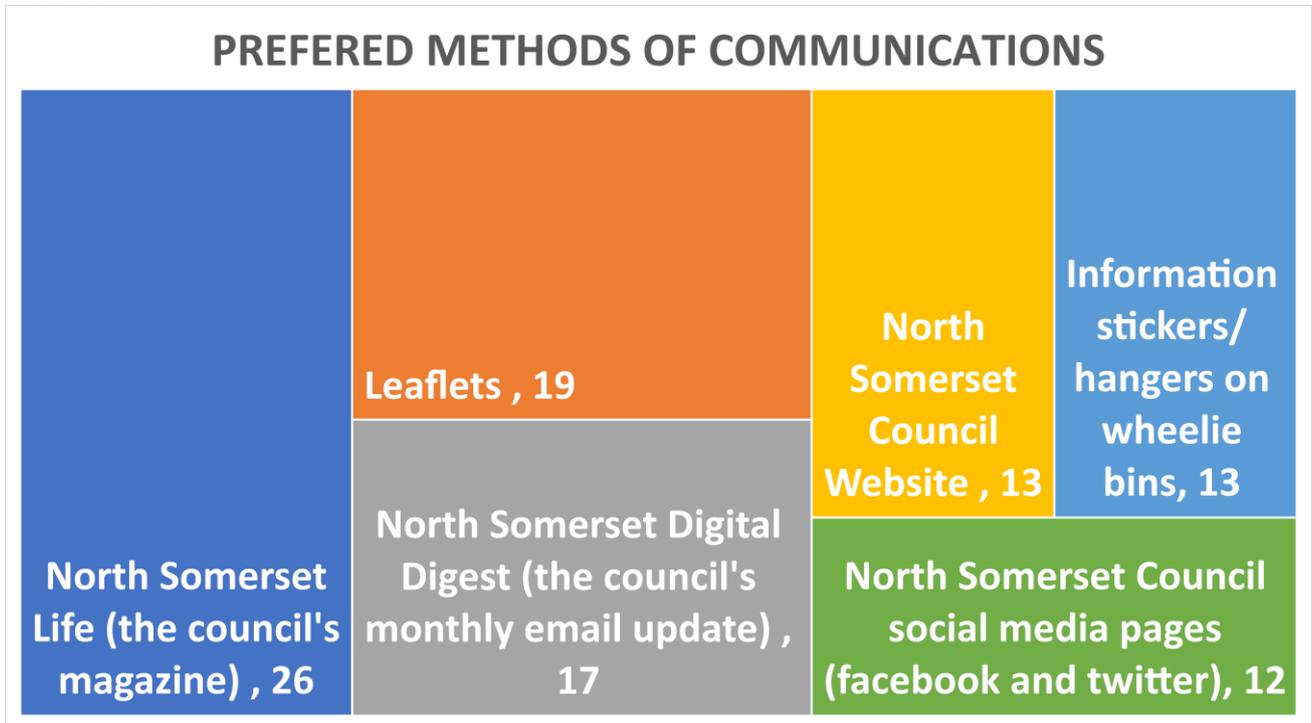
Recommendation: To show progress on the waste strategy, we produce an annual summary made publicly available.

Revised Action 3: Communications

Preferred method of communications on recycling and waste varies a lot by age with the headlines being:

- Among 30-49s NSC social media is the most preferred source at 24%
- In the 60-69 age group North Somerset Life is preferred by 35% compared to just 7% preferring social media.

The % preference of different communication methods is shown in the table below but shows no distinct preference, rather that all types are valid and useful to different audiences.



Recommendation

Continue to use a wide range of communications channels to reach as many people as possible including more email communications and investigating increasing use of MyAccount.

4. Consultation

In addition to the public consultation outlined, the draft strategy and other documents have been compiled in liaison with the Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Engagement and were tested through the following councillor and senior officer groups as follows:

- Waste Scrutiny Steering Group
- Corporate Leadership Team
- Informal Executive
- Climate Change Working Group
- CCO Scrutiny Session (Open to all Cllrs)

The proposed changes to the waste strategy targets have been tested through:

- Place Scrutiny group
- Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services

5. Financial Implications

Costs

The cost of producing the final waste strategy is not expected to exceed £10k and will be available mainly through online methods. There will be paper based copies available via the library service.

Whilst the strategy itself has minimal direct costs, any changes to services will be subject to decision and financial appraisal.

Funding

The costs will be met through the recycling and waste service budget.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

There is no legal requirement to produce a recycling and waste strategy, but this is considered best practice and is in line with the government's recent legislation including:

- Environment Act 2021
- Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England (2018)
- 25-Year Environment Plan (2018)

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

The recycling and waste strategy, when adopted, makes reference to the positive contribution it will make to the Climate Emergency declared by North Somerset Council in 2019.

8. Risk Management

There are no risk management considerations for this draft strategy. Any changes to services will be subject to further appraisal

9. Equality Implications

A full EIA will be carried out prior to the implementation of any service changes which will be subject to formal consultation.

10. Corporate Implications

N/A

11. Options Considered

Not to produce a draft recycling and waste strategy. This was discounted as there was no strategic direction or ambition for the recycling and waste service

Author:

Colin Russell, Head of Environment and Community Services
Lizzie Shepherd, Waste Minimisation Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Draft Waste Strategy

Appendix 2: Draft waste strategy long questionnaire

Appendix 3: Draft waste strategy short questionnaire

Appendix 4: Waste Strategy overview of consultation responses

Appendix 5: Proposed Waste Strategy January 2022

Background Papers:

Draft Recycling & Waste Strategy - Report to Executive 28 April 2021