

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet – 8 February 2011

Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy - Publication version public consultation v1

Accountable member	Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
Accountable officer	Strategic Land Use Manager, Tracey Crews
Accountable scrutiny committee	Environment
Ward(s) affected	All wards
Key Decision	Yes
Executive summary	<p>Gloucestershire County Council is the waste planning authority for the county. The County Council has prepared the Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy (WCS) Publication version for public consultation from Monday 13th December until Monday 7th February 2011. Once adopted, it will provide the planning framework for waste management across the county for the period 2012 to 2027 and will form part of the Waste Development Framework and part of the statutory development plan for Cheltenham.</p> <p>This publication stage follows on from previous stages of consultation: Issues and Options (2006); Preferred Options (2008) and Site Options (2009); with targeted ongoing consultation between each stage.</p> <p>The publication version is broadly in line with the earlier strategies and the comments previously submitted by Council. The WCS has allocated four strategic sites, none of which fall within Cheltenham Borough, however there are two sites in proximity at Wingmoor Farm. Aside from these allocations, the WCS places emphasis on a policy based approach to be used in determining future allocations.</p> <p>This stage of consultation will only allow representations discussing the “soundness” of the document rather than the merits of individual sites and falls within Regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations which seeks views primarily on whether the plan is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Legally compliant, and▪ Sound. To be considered sound it must be, justified; effective and consistent with national policy. <p>Members are requested to support the formal publication of the Gloucestershire WCS, subject to appropriate consideration of the issues raised in the response.</p>
Recommendations	That the Cabinet approve the appended consultation response for submission to Gloucestershire County Council.

Financial implications	<p>No financial implications associated with this report, however, the siting of waste treatment facilities could have a significant impact on the transport costs accrued by the Operations Division.</p> <p>Contact officer Andrew Powers: Andrew.Powers@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264121</p>
Legal implications	<p>When adopted, the Waste Core Strategy will form part of the statutory development plan for Cheltenham.</p> <p>Contact officer: Jonathan Noel Jonathan.noel@tewkesbury.gov.uk 01242 77 5117</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>None</p> <p>Contact officer: , @cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242</p>
Key risks	<p>No relevant corporate risks.</p> <p>No divisional risks identified</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>The principles of the WCS support the aspirations of Objective 1, Enhancing and Protecting our Environment, of the Corporate Strategy and the longer term ambition of Promoting Sustainable Living, of the Sustainable Community Strategy</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>The allocation of strategic disposal sites within the WCS at Wingmoor Farm, within close proximity to existing facilities and close to collection areas offers advantages in terms of reducing carbon emissions and provides operational and financial efficiencies. However, this needs to be balanced against the impact of such sites on the existing, and potential, communities living in close proximity.</p> <p>Whilst not within Cheltenham's administrative area, there are likely to be impacts on biodiversity associated with the allocation of the two strategic waste management facilities at Wingmoor Farm. To the south of Wingmoor Farm lies Wingmoor Farm Meadow which is a key wildlife site.</p> <p>Biodiversity has been considered by Gloucestershire County Council in the preparation of the WCS and will be a consideration in the determination of planning applications for waste facilities.</p> <p>A Habitats Regulation Assessment has been prepared alongside the WCS which assesses the potential impacts of the plan on protected European species and habitats/</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the Waste Core Strategy (WCS) Publication Version consultation document and seek approval for the submission of the appended consultation response.
- 1.2 Gloucestershire County Council is the waste planning authority for the county. As part of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework, Gloucestershire County Council has prepared the Gloucestershire WCS Publication version for public consultation from Monday 13th December until Monday 7th February 2011. Once adopted, it will provide the planning framework for waste management across the county for the period 2012 to 2027 and sets out: the key issues; the vision for Gloucestershire for 2027; the objectives to be achieved; and the strategy for achieving them, including the allocation of sites. Once adopted it will form part of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework and part of the statutory development plan for Cheltenham.
- 1.3 This publication stage follows on from previous stages of consultation: Issues and Options (2006); Preferred Options (2008) and Site Options (2009); with targeted ongoing consultation between each stage.
- 1.4 The WCS was originally intended to be submitted for Examination in Public in late 2008. However, changes in Government guidance resulted in the need for the strategy to include strategic sites, as such the County Council undertook the additional site options consultation in 2009.
- 1.5 During the Site Options consultation the importance of submitting specific comments was stressed as the next formal stage of consultation at the Pre-submission stage (i.e. this stage) will only allow representations discussing the “soundness” of the document rather than the merits of individual sites. This current consultation falls within Regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations and seeks views primarily on whether the plan is:
- Legally compliant, and
 - Sound. To be considered sound it must be, justified; effective and consistent with national policy
- 1.6 Cheltenham Borough Council’s previous representations to the Preferred Options consultation and the Site Options consultation can be viewed online, see links contained within *Background documents*.
- 1.7 Cheltenham Borough Council was broadly supportive of the vision and strategy within the Preferred Options document which remain similar and the majority of our policy preferences have been progressed into the final version of the document, with the exception of the comment made in relation to WPO10, now Core Policy WCS8. The council had considered that the chosen option would provide an increasing role for local planning authorities in the planning of waste sites, for which local planning authorities would not necessarily have the relevant skills to perform. However, WCS8 allows for consultation with the Waste Planning Authority and therefore when dealing with applications the council will need to look to the county for advice. This is considered acceptable by the Development Control Manager.
- 1.8 In terms of the Site Options consultation, the Council was broadly supportive of the general principle that waste facilities should be located in proximity to waste arisings and accepts this will necessitate the majority of waste treatment facilities being located within ‘Zone C’. With Zone C focusing on the central area of Gloucestershire, close to the main urban areas along the M5, including Cheltenham and Gloucester. The Council had previously suggested that sites should also be considered outside of this zone. This has been addressed by the inclusion of a criteria based policy (Core Policy WCS4) to address non strategic sites arising both within and outside of Zone C and for if one of the four strategic sites does not progress within Zone C.

1.9 The four strategic sites identified within Zone C are:

- Wingmoor Farm East, Bishops Cleeve (mainly Commercial & Industrial (C&I) waste with potential for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW))
- Wingmoor Farm West (A & B), Bishops Cleeve (primarily MSW with potential for C&I)
- Javelin Park, Haresfield (primarily MSW, but with C&I potential)
- Land at Moreton Valence (primarily C&I, but with MSW potential)

1.10 Gloucestershire County Council has recognised the opportunity at Javelin Park to provide a 'one site solution' to residual waste. Cheltenham Borough Council does not necessarily support this approach, as considers the significance of journey times and distances from collection point to disposal point as an important factor in reducing carbon emissions and making operational and financial efficiencies. The County Council owns a large section of this site. If the decision is taken to have a single site to accommodate residual waste recovery, then this needs to be supported by the provision of appropriate waste transfer facilities elsewhere in the county. Core Policy WCS4 does not make reference to the possibility of a one site solution to residual waste recovery, but it is recommended that the policy or supporting text be expanded to include a requirement to provide waste transfer stations should such an approach be explored.

1.11 The Council also previously commented on the right to comment in detail on site specific proposals at the application stage, as the WCS does not specify the type of waste treatment facilities proposed and as such potential hazards could not be properly assessed. This remains the position within this Publication Stage, the County Council is 'technology neutral' and therefore has no preference for one technology/process over another, the main consideration is that any site identified is suitable for that use and this is generally established at the planning application stage. The council previously stated that it reserved the right to comment in specific detail at the planning stage and this position is maintained and will be reiterated in the response for clarity. The Council would have very significant concerns if support for a specific site implied the processing of hazardous waste, and/or the production of toxic end products in a location close to centres of population.

1.12 The council also retains previous concerns over the potential proximity of residential areas to Wingmoor Farm East and West and will also reiterate previous comments for clarity and reserves the right to further comment at planning application stage. In particular, in relation to any potential health impacts on the use/increased use of the site on local communities, taking account of the most up to date information contained within the Wingmoor Waste Treatment Plant and Landfill Sites Community Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

1.13 The Waste Planning Authority is considering a planning application to extend the life of the landfill at Wingmoor Farm. Due to be determined in Spring 2011, the granting of planning permission would ensure significant capacity for hazardous waste in Gloucestershire for approximately 22 years. In the event that planning permission was not granted, or subsequent applications were forthcoming, Policy WCS6 would be used primarily to determine an application for hazardous waste. The WCS is supportive of proposals to recycle and recover hazardous waste, with disposal as a last option, where it can be demonstrated that the proposal is 'environmentally acceptable.' As mentioned above, the Council would have very significant concerns if support for a specific site implied the processing of hazardous waste, and/or the production of toxic end products in a location close to centres of population.

1.14 In terms of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) work, it will be necessary to ensure that these allocated sites are reflected on the Proposals Map.

1.15 Gloucestershire County Council will consider all representations made on the publication version of the WCS and then formally submit the WCS to the Secretary of State in April 2011. An Independent examination of the document will be carried out by the Planning Inspectorate to explore whether the document is legally compliant and sound. It is anticipated that Gloucestershire County Council will adopt the WCS in January 2012.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 The current consultation seeks views on the legal compliance and soundness of the document. Council has responded to two previous consultations and the majority of the Council's representations have been adequately addressed. Where representations have not been able to be incorporated, particularly with reference to site specific comments, the council retains the ability to comment at the planning application stage. Previous comments in relation to strategic sites have been reiterated within this response for clarity.
- 2.2 The policies and proposals within the WCS are in accordance with national policy relating to waste management and are soundly based.

3. Alternative options considered

- 3.1 None at this stage. Consultation on the WCS is primarily related to the legal compliance and soundness of the consultation, to which there are no objections. The opportunity to comment on strategy and site locations was provided through previous stages of consultation.

4. Consultation and feedback

- 4.1 The Gloucestershire WCS Publication version has been out for public consultation from Monday 13th December until Monday 7th February 2011. Cheltenham Borough Council has been given an extension in order for the consultation response to be agreed by Cabinet.
- 4.2 Internal consultation on proposed consultation response has been undertaken with relevant cabinet members; Assistant Director – Operations; Development Control Manager and Climate Change and Sustainability Officer.

5. Performance management –monitoring and review

- 5.1 Gloucestershire County Council has responsibility for monitoring performance against the WCS.

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Appendices	1. Draft consultation response 2. Map of Zone C

Background information	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy, Publication version December 2010 http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=179912. Waste Core Strategy Site Options consultation 2009 http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=218843. Cheltenham Borough Council's response to Waste Core Strategy Site Options consultation 2009 https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20091208/Agenda/2009%2012%2008%20CAB%207.2%20Appendix.pdf4. Waste Core Strategy Preferred Options 2008 http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=179905. Cheltenham Borough Council Response to Waste Core Strategy Preferred Options 2008 https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20080311/Agenda/2008%2003%2011%20Minerals%20and%20Waste%20Core%20Strategies%20-%20Preferred%20options%20consultation%20App.pdf
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