

Draft Environmental Services Strategy 2020-2030

Introduction – the case for action

The UK committed to recycling 50% of municipal waste by 2020. Cheltenham achieved this by the end of 2018/19 with a recycling rate of 50.74%. Our current recycling rate, at the end of 2019/20, is 51.23% which means 48.77% of the municipal waste thrown away in Cheltenham is not recycled or re-used. Whilst we have all worked hard to meet our target there is still room for improvement and many residents tell us they think they could do better.

The EU's Circular Economy Package (CEP) includes increasing recycling rates for municipal waste up to 65% by 2035. The UK has committed to adopting these CEP targets even after Brexit.

In the 25 Year Environment Plan, the government pledged to leave the environment in a better condition for the next generation. The government's Resources and Waste Strategy published in December 2018 is intended to help meet that commitment. It promotes the circular economy, sustainable production, helping consumers take more considered actions, cutting down on food waste, international leadership, research and innovation and measuring progress.

Cheltenham is committed to delivering sustainable long term change and recognises the need to take action to reduce the impact of climate change and protect our environment for future generations.

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic changed how we all behaved – we stopped driving to work, we stayed at home and recycled more (47% more recycling during the March-May 20 lockdown), we enjoyed our green open spaces, more litter was generated, we did more on-line shopping and disposed of more packaging, our buying habits generated more waste, we did more gardening and with all this our natural environment benefitted. This behaviour change has resulted in a positive step change in the uptake in recycling and how we view waste but we need to be thinking about the years ahead. Cheltenham is growing.

By 2030 planners expect approximately 6,900 new homes, a population increase of almost 15,000 (population estimate formula 2.16 people per household by 2030 – 2.16 x 6,900) and 39,500 new jobs for the whole Joint Core Strategy area.

The Council's medium term financial strategy (MTFS) requires financial savings which can only be delivered by innovation, efficiencies, reducing collection costs and maximising income generation.

Strategic drivers

Our vision, ambition and outcomes are based on the intention that our future environmental services strategy recognises the diverse external and internal forces that impact on waste management, from public demand for more recycling, to the impact of the global market on waste as a commodity. Alongside this, our approach to street cleansing and grounds maintenance recognises the shortage in financial resources but the growing need to value our natural resources and promote biodiversity. Our strategy will need to respond to significant drivers for change, including:

- Demographics – a growing population and number of businesses
- Environmental, sustainability, and carbon reduction ambitions
- Renewed and widespread passion for environmental issues including biodiversity
- Public demand for change
- Legislation, targets, national strategies and policies
- Council's Corporate Plan, Local Plan, local strategies and policies
- Increasing cost pressures / affordability
- Waste Markets and future impact of Brexit

Our long term future strategy will focus on these themes

- Behaviour change and education
- Waste prevention including reuse
- Food waste – homes and businesses
- Recycling, composting and biodiversity
- Operations – efficient, future proofed and value for money
- Planning
- Recovering value - Markets and Technology
- Education, Advice and Enforcement
- Countywide and other partnerships, public and private

Our Vision

“We want Cheltenham to be a clean, green and sustainable town that wastes less and recycles more. We want to work towards being a zero waste town as well as being carbon neutral by 2030”.

Our Ambitions

- To change the way residents, visitors, businesses and organisations think about waste at home, at work and in the community.
- To build communities where excess waste and litter are socially unacceptable and biodiversity is understood and expected.
- To maximise the quality and quantity of reuse and recycling.
- To reduce the production of waste.
- To minimise the use of landfill - a poor option both environmentally and economically.
- Where prevention, reuse or recycling are not possible, to maximise recovery of our waste through sustainable and affordable collection and disposal channels.
 - Work with countywide and other partners, including our waste disposal authority, to maximise value from our waste

- When waste is produced to encourage community and commercial opportunities to use it as a resource.
- To be recognised as a town that learns from world leaders and aspires to lead in resource and waste management.

Our ambitions will deliver these Outcomes

- Benefits should be seen and felt by local people, businesses and the environment.
- Second-hand is no longer seen as 'second best', and repairing is a natural option.
- Communities, public and private sectors naturally work together to minimise the impact of and maximise the value of waste.
- Everyone, whether they live, work or visit the town, takes personal responsibility for waste.
- In time, a stronger local 'circular economy' supporting employment and investment.
- Waste is valued as a resource and managed accordingly.
- There is less waste in the bins and on the streets and Recycle and Go is the norm.
- Cheltenham is a cleaner, greener and more sustainable town that welcomes biodiversity and is an example of best practice nationally and internationally.
- Homes, schools and businesses throw away less food and save money, resulting in a zero-food waste town

Our Vision delivered by our objectives

Our vision will be delivered by the following objectives that we will deliver through an Action Plan that will be kept under review.

Behaviour Change, Education and Public Engagement

- We will develop and implement a number of behaviour change programmes and initiatives that enable residents to change their behaviour to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste and repair items for the long-term benefit for the whole community.
- We will implement our own and Keep Britain Tidy campaigns to increase civic pride and reduce litter and fly-tipping by rewarding, educating, fining and prosecuting. This will target both those groups that we know are more likely to litter and the law-abiding general public to encourage them to challenge negative behaviour.
- We will deliver services as sustainably as possible with biodiversity in mind.

Waste prevention including reuse

- We will lead by example to reduce packaging and the unnecessary use of single-use plastic and encourage other organisations in the Town to follow suit working with partners – plastic free Cheltenham and Vision 21
- We will support local businesses, landlords, retailers, and other organisations both small and large within the Town to understand their waste responsibilities to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste

Food waste

- Through the countywide Resources and Waste Partnership, WRAP and public engagement we will support households, schools and businesses to waste less food and save money, contributing to a zero waste town

Recycling and composting

- We will strive year on year to improve the quality of recycling and increase recovery levels to the highest practical and possible levels
- We will continue to collect a consistent set of dry recyclable materials from households and businesses in line with the consultation on the national Resources and Waste Strategy, and contractual obligations
- We will continue to review our bring site and household recycling centre provision to help residents reduce waste and recycle more

Operations

- We will plan waste and recycling collections to deliver our waste services in a coordinated, quality and cost-effective way that supports recycling and works for all residents of the town
- We will review the strategic waste site, Swindon Road, Cheltenham, its location and infrastructure required to support delivery of future proofed, environmentally sustainable, quality, cost-effective collection services including provision of a household recycling centre
- We will maximise the use of green fleet, minimising our impact on the environment and contributing to a carbon neutral town by 2030

Planning

- We will include the preferred options for waste and recycling for new housing and business development in Planning Guidance
- We will work with developers to consider innovative approaches to waste and recycling

Recovering value - Markets and Technology

- We will work with Gloucestershire County Council and countywide partners to develop a future waste treatment and disposal model which builds in flexibility and ensures the long-term stability of waste management for the residents of the town through to 2030 and beyond
- We will actively work to influence national Government policy including seeking powers for effective enforcement and regulation that helps to drive positive behaviour change and choices

Partnerships, public and private

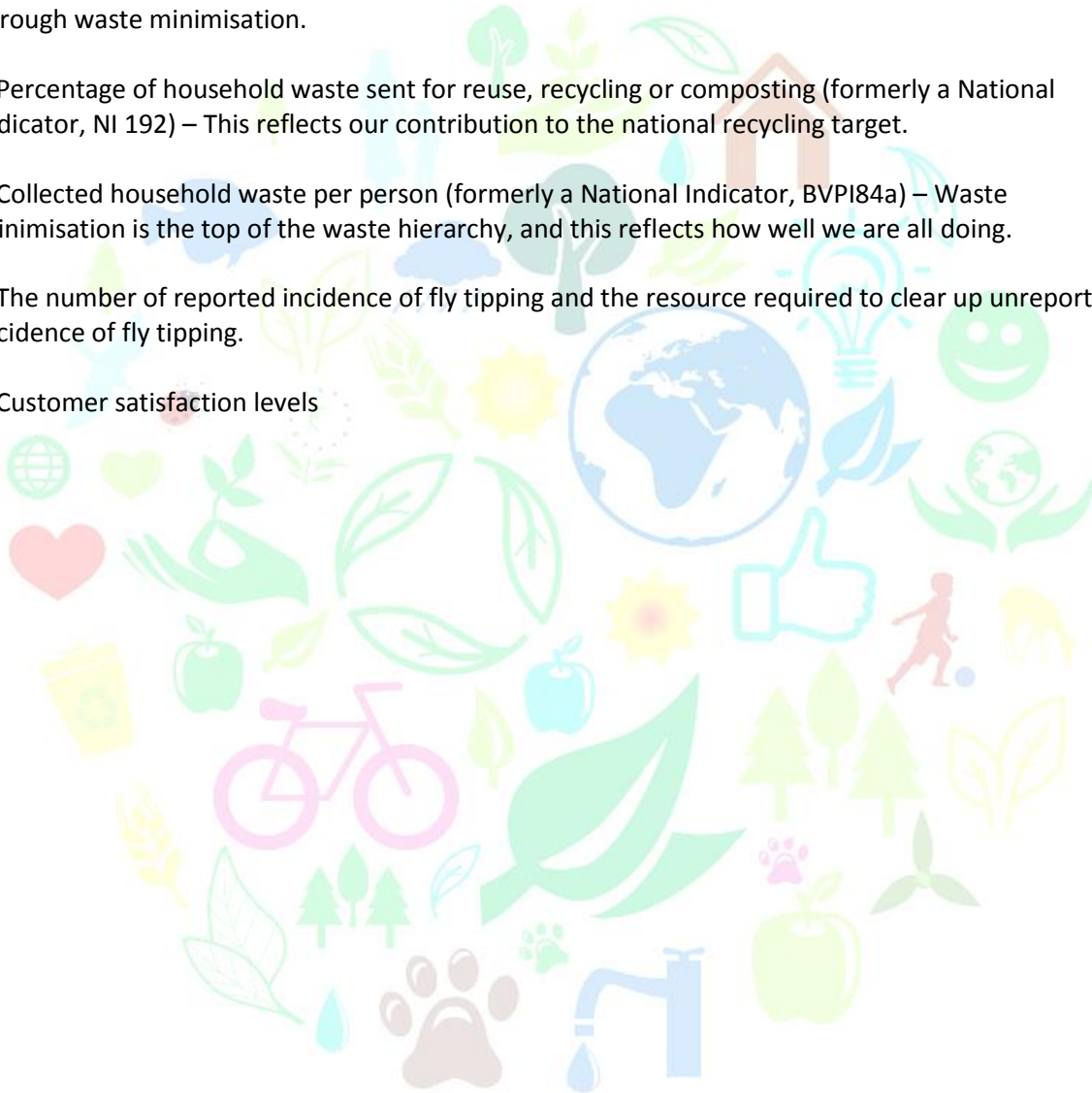
- We will explore partnership opportunities to maximise value from our waste
- We will commission a long term, value for money, high quality environmental services provider/partner to deliver our vision, ambitions and outcomes into the future

How will we know how well we are doing?

To know how well we are meeting our strategic objectives, it is important to establish and report annually on appropriate measures

Key measures which we currently report on include:

- Residual household waste per household (formerly a National Indicator, NI 191) – This is important as it reflects how well we are doing in implementing the waste hierarchy, both by recycling and through waste minimisation.
- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting (formerly a National Indicator, NI 192) – This reflects our contribution to the national recycling target.
- Collected household waste per person (formerly a National Indicator, BVPI84a) – Waste minimisation is the top of the waste hierarchy, and this reflects how well we are all doing.
- The number of reported incidence of fly tipping and the resource required to clear up unreported incidence of fly tipping.
- Customer satisfaction levels



Appendix 2 - The Waste Hierarchy



Reduce - Lowering the amount of waste produced by manufacturers

Reuse - Using materials repeatedly

Recycle - Using materials to make new products

Recovery - Recovering energy from waste such as refuse and food waste

Landfill - Safe disposal of waste to landfill. All our domestic waste arisings now goes to Javelin Park.