

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Waste Strategy provides the framework for managing waste in Warwickshire for the next 15 years.

We cannot continue to rely on landfill as our main method of disposal and need to develop more sustainable methods of managing our waste. We need to change how we approach waste management, moving away from disposal to increasing levels of recycling, reuse and ultimately waste prevention.

The Warwickshire authorities have been set challenging targets to increase the amount of material that is recycled and composted. Furthermore the Landfill Directive states that we must significantly reduce the amount of waste disposed of to landfill. By 2020 we will only be permitted to landfill 52,897 tonnes of biodegradable waste, but it is estimated that we are likely to generate in the region of 204,000 tonnes of biodegradable waste. This clearly shows that we need to invest in alternative methods of treatment for residual waste. If we fail to meet our landfill diversion targets, we will receive substantial fines from the Government. We risk being fined £150 per tonne for every tonne of waste that we landfill over our allowances.

We have identified key strategic objectives which have provided the direction for the development of the Waste Strategy. These are summarised below:

- To manage our waste in order to move up the waste hierarchy and work towards resource management rather than waste management.
- To minimise the amount of waste generated in Warwickshire.
- To maximise the amount of material recycled and composted in Warwickshire and to meet and exceed our statutory recycling targets.
- To limit the amount of waste disposed of to landfill and to ensure that we meet our landfill diversion targets.
- To make use of existing waste treatment infrastructure in Warwickshire.
- To contribute to the generation of energy from a non-fossil source.

In developing the Waste Strategy we critically assessed seven potential waste management scenarios against environmental, socio-economic and operational criteria. This assessment indicated that the best practicable environmental option for managing waste in Warwickshire should incorporate the following:

- Reduce the amount of waste produced in Warwickshire.
- Work progressively towards higher recycling levels, exceeding current statutory targets of 30%.
- Aim to reach aspirational countywide targets of between 40-45% recycling to be achieved by 2009/10.
- Limit the amount of waste disposed of to landfill – making use of existing waste treatment facilities.
- After maximising recycling we will treat all remaining residual waste using a thermal treatment system – generating energy from a non-fossil source.

We have set ourselves challenging targets and significant changes to how we currently collect and dispose our waste are likely to be required in order to achieve these targets. This Waste Strategy provides guidance on the required changes in our waste management service to enable us to achieve our goals.

It is important that the Waste Strategy is not a static document and that it should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in legislation, circumstance and evolving waste treatment technologies. It is for this reason that the Waste Strategy will be fully reviewed every five years with a review of the critical aspects at critical review points. The first review of critical aspects of the Strategy is scheduled for 2008/09 as this is a critical review point, because infrastructure for processing biowaste should be in place by 2008/09.