

Consultation Workshop

A stakeholder consultation was held in Birmingham on the 22nd October to discuss the Waste Capacity Study. A Briefing note was prepared in advance of the workshop and the draft report was made available on the council website, in order to give attendees background to the study in advance of the day.

Workshop Structure

The workshop presentation was structured around three key discussion sessions, waste arisings, existing waste facilities and future waste needs. The following key questions were posed at the end of the relevant discussion session:

Waste Arisings

- Do you agree with the range of growth scenarios considered for each of the waste streams?
- Do you have any suggestions for additional growth scenarios for the individual waste streams that should be considered?

Existing Waste Facilities

- Do you have any views on assumptions regarding exemption capacity throughput for different exempt activities/paragraphs?
- Do you have any opinion on potential capacity at permitted facilities?

Future Waste Needs

- How self sufficient should Birmingham aspire to be in the future?
- How much waste should be exported out of Birmingham for treatment?
- How much waste should be exported out of the region for treatment?
 - How much capacity should Birmingham allow for waste from other areas?
 - Are there specific waste streams Birmingham should be looking to handle within Birmingham that are not currently?
 - Are there treatment facilities Birmingham should be looking to accommodate in line with national/regional policy that aren't currently available e.g. Anaerobic Digestion?

Outcomes of Workshop

The workshop provided some valuable discussion and comments on the day but attendees were also given the opportunity to provide more detailed written feedback following the event. All comments were received were reviewed and where appropriate accommodated in the revised report. The key points arisings from the workshop are summarised below:

Waste Arisings

Attendees were largely in agreement with the scenarios considered for the different waste streams. It was felt that potentially future changes may mean that packaging move from the municipal waste stream to the C&I waste stream. There was also debate about whether the C&I waste stream should consider a reduction in waste/employee as well as changes to number of employees in the different sectors. It was considered that there is no evidence base to predict how the waste per employee may change. No amendments were made to the growth scenarios predicted for the different waste streams as it was felt that it may be difficult to predict these changes.

Existing Waste Facilities

Feedback at the workshop suggested that exemption capacity may be over estimated based on assumptions related to the respective paragraph under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. Following the workshop a telephone survey of the identified companies on the exempt facility list was carried out to confirm the capacity at their facility.

In relation to permitted facilities, comments received suggested that it is likely that theoretical capacity closer to actual throughput at facilities rather than the Environment Agencies permitted band. A report by SLR for the WMRA¹ looking at actual and theoretical capacity at waste facilities concluded that from limited data available, the permitted maximum is similar to the theoretical maximum. The report suggested that further survey should be carried out to attempt to clarify this further. As no further survey work has been commissioned for the purpose of this project, the permitted band was used as an indication of theoretical capacity of waste facilities.

Future Waste Needs

It was felt that it would be impractical for Birmingham to be 'self sufficient' in terms of treating all the waste it generates. It was suggested that as a region the West Midlands should aspire to be 'self sufficient'. However, Birmingham should look to manage the equivalent tonnage of waste generated. It was suggested that Birmingham could focus on specialising in a specific type of treatment e.g. Anaerobic Digestion rather than trying to accommodate many different facility types.
