

Waste Update Summer 2010

BAN Waste members have recently been in touch with the council's Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel to ask for some more details pass on their concerns on the Waste Strategy.

Efficiency of the SITA Mechanical Biological Treatment

BAN Waste has asked for more information on the upgrade of the SITA Ellington Road in-vessel composting plant, and the relating impact on SITA's Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT-the biological bit being the in-vessel composter) contractual performance.

After numerous independent reports on this issue an upgrade to the facility was agreed. Officers also negotiated with SITA on a financial settlement and agreed the recycling and composting target for the MBT as a whole to be reduced from be **29.7%** to **26.5%** in 2007. To put that into tonnages, around 100,000T of our residual waste from the green wheelie bins are treated a year so that is 320,000T not recycled or composted.

In 2009 BAN Waste raised their concern that this facility had not met the revised target and that the upgrade had yet to occur.

BAN Waste now has asked what the plant is capable of treating and when the upgrade was carried out or if it is still pending. The downtime this plant will require to carry out the works may have serious impacts on how much is composted and hence the how much biodegradable material is diverted from landfill –a requirement of the LATS scheme. As officers have pointed out each tonne that we miss the target in this scheme leads to £150 fine, so 4500T (around current performance for 3 months) less is £675,000. So it is an extremely important issue.

Green Waste Collections

It appears the council has provided an update on this scheme so BAN Waste has requested a copy and will add this to the Resources pages when it is provided.

High Rise Collections

BAN Waste noted the drop in high rise recycling figures (dropping from 366 T per year to 173 T per year from 2008/9 to 2009/10 -over 50%). After discussions with officers it has become apparent that this is due to the phased inclusion of high rise within the kerbside blue bin scheme due to be complete in December 2010.

BAN Waste is however interested to read the report on the possibility of extending Recycling to High Rise that the panel requested in June 2010.

Waste minimisation Action Plan

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel recommended in March 2009 to the Executive that an action plan to set out measures to achieve, or if possible, exceed the targets of 15% reduction in municipal waste and at least 55% recycling by 2020 be produced. This requested that measures should be costed and a business case developed, so that consideration

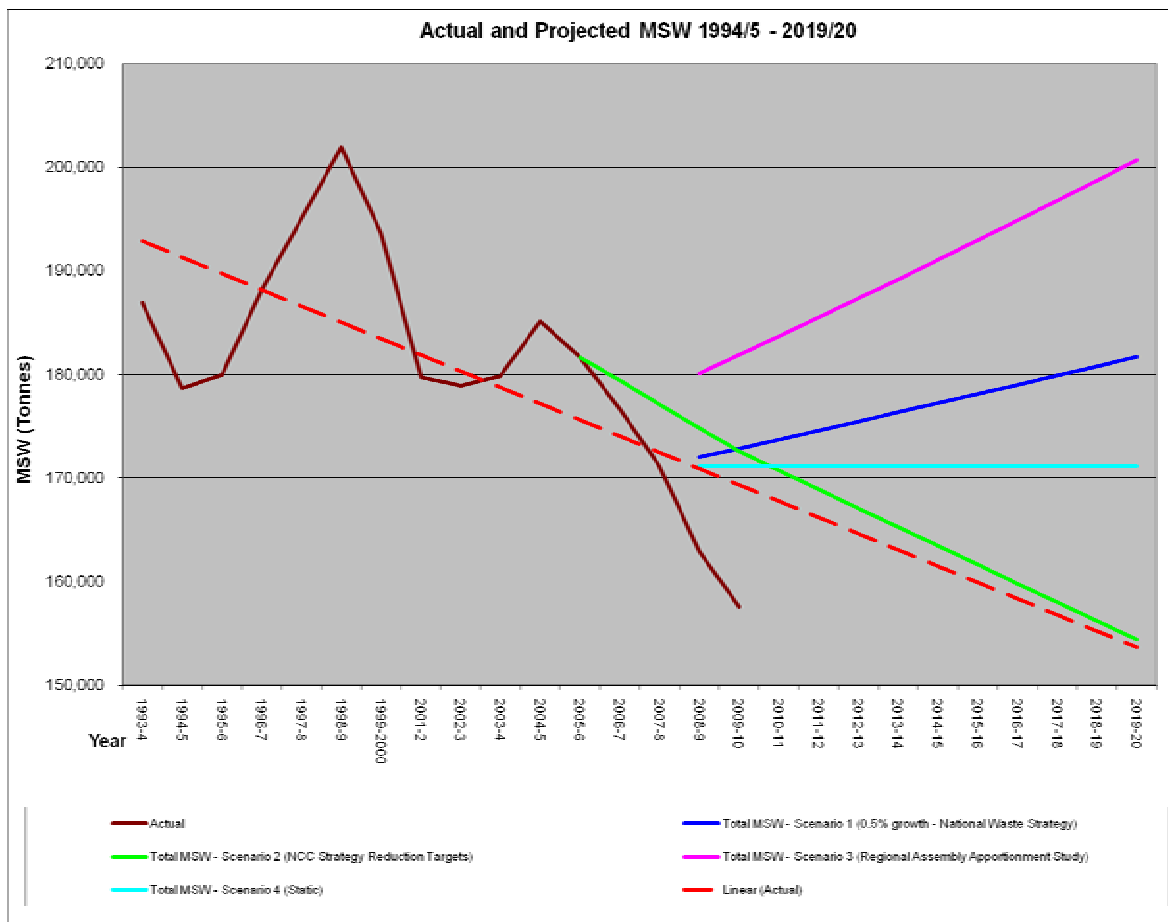
could be given to any additional resources needed to meet the targets. This recommendation was accepted by officers and a March 2010 deadline set.

BAN Waste has therefore raised the issue on the development of this action plan and when it might be expected

BAN Waste propose Waste Minimisation Target applied to MSW

If our calculations are correct, the household waste collected by the council is 21% less than it was in 2005 so we have already reached the 2020 waste reduction target.

And if the target is applied to all Municipal Solid Waste (MSW -includes household, council activities, commercial and industrial) have reduced by 11% on the same baseline.



The 2007-8 SEA public survey did say they felt this was unambitious at the time, but David Slater and other officers have repeatedly said they felt it was challenging.

We therefore propose that now is a good time to change the target to relate to MSW rather than household waste and review the level as part of the action plan.

Future developments

BAN Waste will of course be very interested in the progress over the coming months.

- There is the significant and much delayed **SITA upgrade of the MBT process** due soon and hopefully providing the improved efficiency (and perhaps even meeting the contractual target).
- There will be **waste minimisation action plans** to explain how the council will meet its reduction, recycling, composting and recovery targets.
- There will be **decisions on residual treatment amounts** and technology for the short term and how to make the contract fit the use of 3-5 years of incineration to the SITA 20 year waste disposal and treatment contract which relies on RDF production for advanced thermal treatment.
- There is the outcome of the **builder waste treatment tender**, a significant contributor to recycling and waste arising figures coming from DIY work, vacuums, and a range of other sources -perhaps less visual to residents and members, but important none the less.
- Finally there is the ongoing **procurement exercise for longer term residual waste treatment**. We look forward to the seeing and if possible commenting on **the criteria that will be used to decide how to decide which technology** will best fit Newcastle's requirements for a long term sustainable waste management treatment for our residual waste.