

## **Wales RWP 1<sup>st</sup> Review: Business & Industry Consultation Event**

**10.30am, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007, Millennium Stadium, Cardiff.**

**Welcome Address by Cllr Pam Palmer, Chair of the South West Wales Regional Waste Group, on behalf of the three regional waste groups in Wales**

**The Regional Waste Plans: What are they and why are they being updated?**

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### **[Opening Remarks]**

On behalf of the three Regional Waste Groups in Wales I would like to thank you for attending this event which is part of the wider consultation on the draft Regional Waste Plan 1<sup>st</sup> Review documents.

### **[Introduction]**

In the past, nearly all of our waste has been dumped in landfills – this is a huge waste of resources and can cause environmental problems.

We must now take steps to develop a network of modern waste management facilities – environmentally friendly facilities that are well planned, well designed, well operated and well regulated – to maximise the recovery of valuable resources from our waste and to minimise the disposal in landfills.

Local Authorities in Wales urgently need to develop a new generation of facilities: the landfill tax means that the cost of disposal in landfills continues to increase, and Local Authorities will face large fines if new facilities for diverting biodegradable waste from landfill are not built soon.

In addition, the Regional Waste Plans address all waste streams, not only household wastes, and as such are an important tool in ensuring that materials are recovered and effectively utilised from commercial, industrial and agricultural practices.

For these reasons, we must now make crucial decisions and take urgent action. Some of these decisions will be hard and the financial cost of action may be high – but doing nothing is not an option.

### **[Why are the plans being updated?]**

The Regional Waste Plans are an important step in developing the new generation of facilities.

The first Regional Waste Plans, published in early 2004, set out a strategy for managing waste in each region.

Welsh Assembly Government planning policy requires that the plans are reviewed regularly.

This first review of the plans has enabled us to assess more types of technologies for managing residual waste and also to develop the extent to which the plans guide the location of new facilities.

### **[What are the plans?]**

The draft Regional Waste Plan 1<sup>st</sup> Review documents contain two separate elements:

- a **'Regional Waste Plan Technology Strategy'** – which provides information on the types waste of management facilities required; and

- a '**Regional Waste Plan Spatial Strategy**' – which provides information on the types of locations likely to be acceptable.

The draft plans do not bring the two elements together to identify which technologies should be located at which location – this will be undertaken at the local level through the Local Development Plan preparation process.

The first of the two elements in the draft plans – **the Technology Strategy** – assumes high levels of recycling and composting and, therefore, focuses on setting out a number of alternative options for managing residual waste.

These options have been selected following an extensive and robust process of assessment against environmental, social and economic criteria. The four different assessments undertaken included a strategic Health Impact Assessment.

For each of the alternative options, the plan apportions the capacity required at various types of facility to each local authority area.

The second of the two elements in the draft plans – **the Spatial Strategy** – demonstrates that there is an adequate supply of *existing* and *allocated* industrial sites to meet the demand for sites for new in-building waste management facilities.

The spatial strategy also identifies 'Areas of Search' for use in identifying *new* sites for waste management facilities, based on precise mapped criteria relating to strategic level issues.

The draft plans also contain a 'Next Steps' section outlining actions required by Local Authorities, economic development bodies, and the waste management industry.

In due course the final plans will become:

- a strategic framework for the preparation of Local Development Plans; and
- a material consideration when deciding on planning applications for new facilities.

### **[Closing Remarks]**

These draft plans are the outcome of an ambitious program of partnership working. Over the last two years the local planning authorities in each region have worked jointly to develop and steer the project, all the time benefiting from the close collaboration, and invaluable input, of a wide range of stakeholder organisations through the work of the regional 'Technical Groups'.

Continuing in this spirit of partnership, we consider it is very important to invite comments on the draft plans from as wide a range of interests as possible through an extensive period of consultation.

The implementation of these plans will have impact upon individuals, communities and businesses for many years to come. It is paramount therefore that all those interests have a reasonable opportunity to take part in a dialogue about the content of the plans.

The feedback received during this consultation period will be reviewed by the Regional Waste Groups when formulating the final plan.

I therefore urge the Waste Management Industry and businesses throughout Wales to consider these documents and take the opportunity to respond to the consultation.

Thank you.