

## A guide to Staffordshire Waste Partnership

### Who is SWP?

Staffordshire Waste Partnership (SWP) is an informal collaboration of the ten councils in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to work together on waste management issues. Staffordshire (excluding the city of Stoke-on-Trent) is a two tier administrative area comprising 8 district or borough councils and the County Council. The City of Stoke on Trent operates in a single tier administration.

SWP comprises;

- The Waste Collection Authorities of;
  - Cannock Chase District Council
  - East Staffordshire Borough Council
  - Lichfield District Council
  - Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
  - South Staffordshire District Council
  - Stafford Borough Council
  - Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
  - Tamworth Borough Council
- The Waste Disposal Authority of Staffordshire County Council, and
- The Unitary authority of Stoke-on-Trent City Council.



The district and borough councils are Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs), meaning they are each responsible for the collection of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) in their area. IN the two tier system, Staffordshire County Council then acts as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) for the entire county, meaning it is responsible for the management and disposal of the waste collected by the WCAs. Stoke-on-Trent is a Unitary Authority (UA), meaning it operates as both a WCA and WDA.

### History

SWP was established in 2001 to provide a platform for collaborative working between the WCAs and WDA, to provide a consistent framework for waste management in the county through the production of a strategy, offer knowledge sharing opportunities, and to present efficiency savings with consortium agreements.

SWP is operated through collaborative working between Waste Managers from each authority. Between 2009 and 2012, the main role of SWP was to highlight awareness of waste issues within the communities of the county. In 2013, SWP changed focus to adapt to changing legislation by concentrating on the strategic development of SWP, through the management of key projects and facilitation of the required changes to meet the core objectives of this refreshed strategy. At this

point, a Partnership Manager was employed to ensure the forward projection of the collaboration due to a dedicated resource to facilitate the required works.

## **Governance**

The Partnership is managed on a daily basis by the Partnership Manager, who acts as a central point of contact, a project manager for all collaborative projects, facilitates joint working opportunities and an impartial reference point for any internal concerns. The Partnership Manager reports into various collaborative meetings attended by all councils within the Partnership at differing levels of authority – principally Waste Officers meet every month at SWOG meetings (Staffordshire Waste Officers Group) and Members with Waste in their portfolio meet every 3 months at JWMB meetings (Joint Waste Management Board).

## **Examples of SWP works run by the Partnership Manager**

- Facilitator/co-ordinator of projects and work streams (e.g. contract procurement, Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy);
- Funding applications (e.g. WRAP/Ricardo consistency projects during 2016 and 2017 which resulted in ~£80k funding generated);
- Development of route maps for legally complex challenges (e.g. TEEP Route Map which was picked up by CIWM and income was generated for the Partnership through the delivery of workshops and the sale of the document itself);
- Modelling of future scenarios to inform partnership decision making (e.g. garden waste recycling credits);
- Co-ordinating fly tipping activity (e.g. liaison with other waste partnerships, EA, DEFRA etc);
- Technical research to support Partnership wide policy (e.g. waste and recycling guidance for housing developers, noise in glass collections);
- Developing specific activities to support the Partnership (e.g. waste composition analysis);
- Setting up templates and co-ordinating and reconciling statistical returns (e.g. National Indicator figures for JMWMB, annual service cost data);
- Co-ordinating joint communication activity;
- Liaising with external stakeholders to resolve contract disputes (e.g. engaging legal support for MRF contract);
- Convening and facilitating a range of meetings for partners (e.g. SWOG, TOG) including setting agendas, writing minutes and ensuring follow up tasks are completed;
- Developing pilot schemes accounting for changes to legislation and policy (e.g. NULBC bulky WEEE waste collection with Dixons Carphone);
- Establishing and facilitating the Transport Officers Group;
- Responding to national consultations where appropriate;
- Raising the profile of the Partnership (e.g. presenting at a number of conferences and workshops).

## Joint Strategy

It is a legal requirement that all councils in the UK have a strategy to determine how they plan to manage their waste. SWP has a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy which was developed by all the councils and signed up to by Members. The current Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy was written by consultants in 2007 and refreshed in-house in 2013, both ending in 2020.

The documents are available to download from the SWP website;

<http://www.staffordshirewastepartnership.org/project/waste-strategy/>

With a focus on disposal and related targets, the landscape of waste management has changed considerably in the last decade since the last strategy was written. As the strategy's term is ending soon, works are underway to draft a new document for the strategic development of SWP's waste management for the next 10 years, to 2030.

In addition, the councils are also required to have a planning document which focuses on the infrastructure and facilities required to deliver the waste management services. Within SWP, the Planning Teams from the County Council and City Council are responsible for the drafting of the Staffordshire and Stoke Joint Waste Local Plan 2010-2026 with 5 yearly review. The document is available to download at;

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/policy/thedevelopmentplan/wastelocalplan/wasteLocalPlan>

Due to the timing of the introduction of the Government's Resource and Waste Strategy (RAWS), with lengthy consultations on Extended Producer Responsibility, a national Deposit Return Scheme, and consistency across the waste industry (particular focus on Local Authorities), SWP made the decision to postpone the writing of a new strategy in 2020, to await the legislative changes as a result of the above national strategy. Along with Brexit and then the global pandemic, the waste sector has seen much fluctuation in the 2020 / 21, and therefore notification was provided to DEFRA to inform them of the SWP decision to postpone the creation of our new strategy. It is expected that we will begin drafting a new strategy upon completion of the RAWS documentation in 2022.

## SWP consultancy work

If a council within the Partnership plans to undertake a project singularly that they require assistance with, the council can hire the Partnership Manager for a set fee of £250 per day, subject to the approval by Officers and Members based on current SWP work load, instead of hiring an external consultant at a much greater rate who doesn't have the local knowledge. This arrangement has occurred mainly for councils requiring support for large waste contract procurements, such as Cannock Chase District Council's procurement for a waste collection contract in 2015 or Stafford Borough Council's procurement for a waste collection and processing contract in 2017. The funds go into a centrally held pot of money for the use of any future SWP projects, such as funding collaborative communications campaigns.

## System review

In recent years, SWP has obtained funding for several impartial reviews conducted by consultants. In 2016 and 2017, Local Partnership (an arm of DEFRA) and Ricardo (a consultant, supported by WRAP) reviewed SWP waste services in great detail (reports available from your local Waste Officer). These reports highlighted that the works undertaken in recent years to improve our current arrangements have produced efficient systems with no substantial further efficiencies to make, as collection and disposal costs are very low compared to other authorities. The reports noted that the only way to improve the financial situation was to generate income, such as to implement a charge for the collection of garden waste (as this is a non-statutory service).

#### **A short guide to the variety of waste systems operated in SWP**

It is a legal requirement for Waste Collection Authorities (WCA) and Unitary Authorities (UA) to collect residual waste and dry recycling from the kerbside, and for the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and Unitary Authority (UA) to organise for the disposal of this waste. In many two tier systems, it is common for the WDA to delegate the powers of disposing of recyclable materials, such as dry recycling, garden and food wastes, to the WCA, for which the WCA then receives a recycling credit. As a Unitary Authority is its own WCA and WDA, no credit system is required here. This system applies to SWP. The WDA and UA are also responsible for the operation of the HWRC network (Household Waste Recycling Centre).

As SWP is an informal partnership, each council retains its own sovereignty and therefore has its own jurisdiction over how it chooses to operate its waste systems. The two tables below aim to provide a brief overview of the different systems operating across the partnership.

**Overview of waste collection systems within SWP (as of January 2019)**

Council	Status	Service provider	Residual waste	Dry recycling	Garden waste	Garden collection charges	Food waste	HWRC waste
Cannock Chase	WCA	Contracted out (Biffa)	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly Comingled – dual stream from Spring 2022	Fortnightly	No	In residual waste	As WCAs, districts and borough do not operate the HWRC network.
East Staffordshire	WCA	In-house	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly Two-stream (separate paper) – fibre separate from Spring 2022	Fortnightly	No	In residual waste	
Lichfield	WCA	In-house (Joint Waste Service)	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly Comingled – dual stream from Spring 2022	Fortnightly	From January 2018 - £36 p.a	In residual waste	
Tamworth	WCA							
Newcastle-under-Lyme	WCA	In-house	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly dual stream (fibre separate)	Fortnightly	From February 2019 - £36 p.a	Weekly separate	
South Staffordshire	WCA	Contracted out (Biffa)	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly Comingled – dual stream from Spring 2022	Fortnightly	From June 2020 - £46	In residual waste	
Stafford	WCA	Contracted out (Veolia)	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly dual stream (fibre separate)	Fortnightly	From Jan 2021 - £36 p.a.	In residual waste	
Staffordshire Moorlands	WCA	Teckal* company AES (with High Peak and Cheshire East Councils)	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly comingled	Fortnightly (includes food)	Legally cannot charge as food and garden mixed	Fortnightly mixed with garden	

*Last updated January 2019*

Stoke-on-Trent	UA	In-house	Fortnightly	Alternate fortnightly Two-stream (Paper separate)	Fortnightly (includes food)	Winter charging from 2021	In residual waste	2 HWRC locations
Staffordshire County	WDA	As the WDA, SCC does not collect waste from the kerbside like the WCAs and UA.						15 HWRC locations (to be brought in house in 2021)

\*A Teckal company is a council owned private company who operates on behalf of the council with certain benefits (e.g. pensions)

#### Overview of waste disposal systems within SWP (as of January 2019)

Council	Status	Residual waste disposal contract	Dry recycling processing contracts	Garden waste processing contract	Food waste processing contract	Joint garden and food waste processing contract	
Cannock Chase	WCA	As the WCAs, the districts and boroughs work with the WDA and UA for waste disposal.	Biffa MRF	Bloomfield Recycling	N/A	N/A	
East Staffordshire	WCA		Biffa MRF (Suez from April 2022)	Biffa IVC			
Lichfield	WCA		Biffa MRF	Biffa IVC			
Tamworth	WCA		Container mix to Biffa MRF (Veolia from April 2022) fibre to UPM	Veolia	Biffa		
Newcastle-under-Lyme	WCA		Biffa MRF	Veolia	N/A		
South Staffordshire	WCA		Part of their collection contract with Veolia	Mill Farm Recycling			
Stafford	WCA		Comingled – Via AES	N/A			Vital Earth
Staffordshire Moorlands	WCA						
Stoke-on-Trent	UA	Hanford Energy from Waste Plant	Regen MRF	N/A		Vital Earth	

Last updated January 2019

Staffordshire County	WDA	Veolia Four Ashes PFI contract	Power of direction for processing contracts handed over to WCAs in the two tier system based on a rebate of recycling credits
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