

# **Milton Keynes Council Waste Development Plan Document**

**Public Examination October 2007**

**Topic Paper 2 – Approach to Consultation and Appraisal**

## Contents

1. Summary	3
2. Community Involvement in the Waste Development Plan Document	4
3. Statement of Community Involvement	9
4. Sustainability Appraisal	10
5. Soundness of the Waste Development Plan Document	11

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Legislation requires that the Milton Keynes Council Waste Development Plan Document underwent certain statutory consultation procedures. The new planning process requires local planning authorities to involve the community at an early stage in the preparation of planning policy documents and to continue to involve the community throughout the preparation of the document.
- 1.2 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require the plan making process to be appraised. The Waste Development Plan Document was also subjected to a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. These were combined within a single appraisal, called the Sustainability Appraisal Report. Each stage of the document's development underwent a Sustainability Appraisal. This appraisal considered environment, social and economic factors, ensuring that the final plan promoted sustainable development. This report is also subject to statutory consultation.
- 1.3 This Topic Paper describes the approach taken to public involvement in the development of the Waste Development Plan Document. It demonstrates that all the public involvement requirements have been met, including those in the adopted Milton Keynes Council Statement of Community Involvement, where applicable.

## **2. Community Involvement in the Waste Development Plan Document**

2.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 sets out the stages of community involvement and the statutory requirements the community involvement must meet for the document to be considered sound. There were 4 key stages in the preparation of this document:

- ◆ Regulation 25 – Issues and Options
- ◆ Regulation 26 – Preferred Options
- ◆ Regulation 28 – Submission of document and information to the Secretary of State
- ◆ Regulation 31 – Consultation Statement

2.2 As a result of a representation during the submission stage consultation the council also carried out a consultation at Regulation 32 –Site Allocations.

### **Regulation 25**

2.3 The Regulation 25 consultation was a joined-up consultation. It combined with the consultation on the Milton Keynes Municipal Waste Strategy. It took place between 15<sup>th</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005. The consultation was based on the Milton Keynes Waste Development Plan Document Issues and Options Paper and the Municipal Waste Strategy Issues and Options. This described the purpose of the consultation and the integration between the Waste Development Plan Document and Municipal Waste Strategy. It aimed to provoke public thinking about the increasing pressure on dealing with waste.

2.4 The Waste Forum, a waste stakeholder group, had early involvement in the development of the Regulation 25 consultation, advising on and helping to develop the consultation materials.

2.5 A variety of consultation and engagement methods were used at this stage including for example:

- ◆ A Citizens Advisory Group on Waste (CAGoW). This was set up using local consultants, Inform, to facilitate the group independently. The group was selected from the Milton Keynes Citizen Planning to be reasonably representative of the population in Milton Keynes demographically.
- ◆ A short questionnaire available as a “wrapper” on a local paper, online and sent to a wide range of consultees
- ◆ A technical questionnaire for respondents with more technical waste knowledge
- ◆ Public debates
- ◆ A consultation CD ROM containing all the consultation documents which were sent to many organisations, both statutory consultees and other stakeholders
- ◆ Posters displayed around Milton Keynes
- ◆ Exhibitions
- ◆ Articles in various newsletters including “Catch up’ (distributed to around 900 voluntary / community groups in Milton Keynes)

2.6 The responses to this stage of the consultation are set out in the Joint Consultation on Municipal Waste Strategy and Waste Development Plan Document (Issues and Options) paper. The CAGoW group also produced a report, The Milton Keynes Citizen’s Advisory Group on Waste Final Report. These reports are available on the Milton Keynes Council website and in Borough libraries. The Milton Keynes Council Consultation Report on the methods of Pubic Engagement is CDIO\_03 for the forthcoming Examination.

## **Regulation 26**

2.7 The Regulation 26 consultation document, Waste Development Plan Document Preferred Options Report, was produced taking into account the responses to the Regulation 25 consultation. For example, a site was identified by the Milton Keynes Council in the Western Expansion Area to meet the views expressed in the Issues and Options consultation that a site should be found before housing is developed around it. This consultation document was supported by the Sustainability Appraisal Report, the Defra Introductory Guide: Options for the Diversion of Biodegradable municipal waste from landfill, the Municipal Waste Strategy 2005 and the Municipal Waste Strategy Appendix 1 Consultation Report 2005 (to show previous stage and results). This consultation took place between 17<sup>th</sup> August 2006 and 28<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

2.8 Examples of consultation methods included:

- ◆ Hard copy documents available in libraries, Civic Offices and Political Party rooms in Civic Offices
- ◆ All consultation documents and questionnaires available online
- ◆ A questionnaire “wrapper” on a local paper
- ◆ Re-establishment of CAGoW
- ◆ Information at the Growth Strategy consultation exhibitions
- ◆ Posters around Milton Keynes
- ◆ Public Meeting in Old Wolverton
- ◆ Questionnaire in a variety of places boroughwide

2.9 A summary of responses to the Regulation 26 consultation is available online and in the Milton Keynes Waste Development Plan Document Consultation Statement. This is referenced CDSD\_02 for the purposes of the forthcoming examination.

## **Regulation 28**

2.10 The Waste Development Plan Document for submission to the Secretary of State was prepared. This document incorporated comments from the previous consultation stages.

2.11 The Waste Development Plan Document was submitted to the Secretary of State on 31 January 2007. It was available for consultation for the statutory six week period until 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

2.12 The consultation consisted of:

- ◆ Notifying all respondents to the issues and options preferred options stages
- ◆ Making hard copy documents, and respondent forms, available as in previous stages.
- ◆ Making the documents and respondent forms available online
- ◆ A notice advertising the documents submission and consultation in the local paper
- ◆ Public meeting in Haversham

## **Regulation 31**

2.13 A Statement under Regulation 31 was published and made available online, in Civic Offices and in borough libraries.

2.14 This Statement detailed the representations received for the Waste Development Plan Document Submission document.

## **Regulation 32**

2.15 A respondent to the Regulation 28 consultation put forward two areas on one site as additional site allocations (“omission sites”) for a Strategic Waste Site.

2.16 Under Regulation 32 the Council was required to consult on those sites. Consultation methods included:

- ◆ A notice in the local press
- ◆ Letters to statutory bodies and stakeholders on the planning departments consultation database
- ◆ Hard copies of all the documents and plans in libraries and civic offices
- ◆ Availability of information and plans on the Council’s website
- ◆ Members Weekly News
- ◆ Internal electronic bulletin board



### **3 Statement of Community Involvement**

- 3.1 The council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was in preparation during the development of the Waste Development Plan Document. The SCI was adopted on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2006.
- 3.2 The Waste Development Plan Document took account of the emerging SCI, followed the council's Consultation Strategy and was prepared in accordance with the community involvement requirements as set out in Regulations 25, 26, 28, 31 and 32 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.
- 3.3 Regulations 25, 26, 28, 31 and 32 require writing to consultees, sending out copies of documents, putting hard copies in public places such as libraries and electronic copies on the website, placing notices in local papers and holding stakeholder meetings. These requirements were met at each consultation stage. The council took steps to engage hard to reach groups throughout the consultation stages. All documents contained translation information, the short questionnaires at the Issues and Options stage were taken into schools and adult education literacy classes and a sound clip was made for sound news.

## **4 Sustainability Appraisal**

- 4.1 The preparation of the Waste Development Plan Document required a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken. This is required by the Regulations to ensure that authorities have given proper consideration to the issue of sustainability in the preparation of plans and programmes.
- 4.2 In September 2005 a Combined Scoping Report was produced. This combined both the SA and SEA. This report covered the early stages of the Local Transport Plan, the Waste Development Plan Document and the Waste Strategy with the aim of identifying common or cross-cutting environmental/ sustainability themes and baseline data, as well as those specific to each sector. The report covered stage A of the five stage Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (now the Department of Communities and Local Government) guidance on producing a SA report. The development of the Combined Scoping Report required the collation of baseline environmental and sustainability data, an examination of the key sustainability issues and the development of a framework of SA/SEA objectives, indicators and targets. The framework was developed using an iterative analytical process based on the review of relevant plans and programmes, the evolving baseline, and developing analysis of key problems and opportunities.
- 4.3 At the Preferred Options Stage (July 2006) a SA report was carried out on the Waste Development Document Plan by Entec UK Limited. This report appraised the development plan policies and the site selection process. This was consulted on alongside the Waste Development Plan Document Preferred Options Report.
- 4.4 At the Submission Stage the Waste Development Plan Document underwent a final SA. This updated SA was submitted to the Secretary of State as a supporting document and underwent the statutory six

week consultation period. The supplementary report sets out the results of the appraisal process and provides any relevant recommendations that have arisen as a result of the appraisal process.

## **5 Soundness of the Waste Development Plan Document**

- 5.1 Milton Keynes Council believes that all the required steps have been taken to ensure that the level of community involvement is appropriate and meets both the council's own consultation criteria and those of the Regulations. In this respect, the council believes that the document is sound.
  
- 5.2 The council has carried out a Soundness Self-Assessment. The self assessment follows the guidance provided by the Planning Inspectorate and concludes that the Waste Development Plan Document is sound.