

Love food, hate waste
Exchange or donate unwanted items
Purchase durable, long lasting goods

Protect and enhance the environment
Support the pathway towards zero
waste to landfill
Encourage residents and businesses to do more to recycle
and cut down unnecessary waste

REDUCE RECYCLE

USE
Maximise the use of resources
Recognise the economic value of waste
Contribute to the low carbon economy

**Public Consultation on
the Draft Joint Municipal
Waste Management
Strategy for Merseyside**

**FINAL REPORT
NOVEMBER 2011**

**SUPPLEMENTARY
REPORT B**

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1.0 Executive Summary

As part of the review of its Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) for Merseyside, the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership (MHWP) have undertaken two major public consultations to support development of a revised Strategy. Halton Borough Council were not involved in this review as they have a separate Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

A first round of public engagement took place in autumn 2010 with the '**Don't Waste Your Say**' (DWYS) campaign to canvas public opinion on the strategic objectives and delivery options for the Strategy. Activities included face to face surveys with over 3,000 Merseyside residents, a series of roadshows and focus groups across the five Merseyside districts and an online forum. The key findings from the DWYS consultation supported the review process and were highlighted throughout the draft Strategy when it went out to public consultation. A summary of these findings can be found in section 2.2 of this report.

The **Draft Strategy Public Consultation** was conducted over 10 weeks in summer 2011 when residents and other stakeholders were given an opportunity to comment on the draft Strategy content and the proposed objectives, targets and delivery options. Residents engaged in the earlier DWYS consultation were also invited to take part. 145 consultation responses were received with most respondents using the online Feedback system provided.

The key consultation findings are:

- A majority of residents and stakeholders who responded supported the direction of the Strategy;
- In general, the public thought that the strategic objectives and delivery options were appropriate and very much interlinked;
- There was widespread public support for a focus on waste prevention, education and recycling services. This included support for more engagement, consultation and information to help residents participate in recycling and waste services;
- A higher level of engagement was considered important in building understanding and support for the Strategy direction and in promoting positive behavioural change;
- Satisfaction with current household waste management services was generally high;
- Recognition was given to the progress made on Merseyside to increase recycling rates and reducing waste to landfill;
- Proposed options for changes in collection frequencies and charging for green waste raised some concerns about the risk of increased fly tipping and vermin and the options would discourage recycling. However the majority of those asked expressed no view on these options;

- There was a mixed response to food waste collections but wider support for action to reduce the amount of wasted food. The experience of schemes in Knowsley and Sefton appear to have had a positive impact on residents in these areas but there was concerns made by others particularly about hygiene issues;
- There was support for more home composting as an option to manage both green and food waste;
- There were concerns from some residents about whether the amount of council tax they paid would be reflected if there are changes to the waste services they received;
- Residents expressed concerns about the quantity of packaging and an interest in being able to recycle a wider range of materials; and
- On average 78% of Merseyside residents reported that they put as much as they can into their recycling bins and 34% will mend or repair items before they throw them away.

2.0 Introduction

The Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership (MHWP) comprises the five district councils on Merseyside (Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC), Liverpool City Council, St Helens MBC, Sefton MBC and Wirral MBC) and Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA).

The Merseyside authorities have responsibilities for the sustainable management of Local Authority Collected Waste on Merseyside through the delivery of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) for Merseyside 2008 (also referred to as ‘the Strategy’). The Partnership is conducting a review of the Strategy to identify the best ways forward to deliver sustainable waste management on Merseyside up to 2041.

Halton Borough Council, a unitary authority, joined the Waste Partnership in 2006 and having produced an aligned but separate Municipal Waste Management Strategy has not participated in this consultation exercise.

As part of the Review, a short list of strategic objectives and a menu of delivery options have been developed by the Partnership as actions for change.

On behalf of the Partnership, MWDA would like to thank all those who took time to consider the draft Strategy and submitted a response to the consultation.

2.1 Consultation Objectives

The JMWMS review to date has been subject to two major public consultations with the following objectives:

- Support the development of the JMWMS for Merseyside;
- Improve the quality of policy and decision making;
- Reflect views and aspirations of the wider community;
- Raise awareness and understanding;
- Promote social cohesion;
- Inclusion of hard to reach groups;
- Use of new e-consultation techniques; and
- Dissemination of information to the public.

2.2 Don't Waste Your Say Public Consultation Campaign

In autumn 2010, MHWP undertook a large public consultation, Don't Waste Your Say (DWYS), to ensure that the revised Strategy takes into consideration and reflects the views and aspirations of the wider community. The DWYS public consultation, which was managed by Enventure Research in partnership with MWDA, launched on 5 October 2010 and finished on 24 December 2010, and used a three staged approach:

- **Stage 1: Scoping the issues and raising public awareness.** This involved scoping the issues, media briefing, website and a newsletter informing residents about the up-coming consultation and how to get involved;
- **Stage 2: Residents' Survey.** A face to face residents' survey, with a sample size of 3,022, including 600+ representative household surveys in each Merseyside District; and
- **Stage 3: Interactive and Qualitative Research.** This included 5 road shows (1 in each District), 10 focus groups (2 in each District) and an online research community that had 275 registered users.

In addition, residents were able to telephone a helpline with any queries, and could visit the consultation website, which contained all relevant background information on the consultation and how to get involved. A newsletter was also published at the end of the consultation, summarising the findings and the next steps MHWP would take.

The consultees considered the draft strategic objectives and delivery options being proposed and Enventure produced a consultation report in March 2011. Key findings from the DWYS consultation were highlighted throughout the draft Strategy.

In summary, the key findings from the Don't Waste Your Say consultation included:

- Experience of current waste management services in Merseyside is generally positive;
- Many respondents stated instances of waste management behaviour (buying less food, repairing items, buying second hand goods etc) were to a great extent driven by the current economic climate and a need to save money rather than to make a positive environmental impact;
- High levels of kerbside recycling activity reported present an opportunity for encourage activity in other aspects of waste management;
- Despite high reported levels of recycling, awareness of broader environmental, waste and resource management issues was poor and active involvement in related waste activities (e.g. home composting) was much lower across the sample. Opportunity to raise the profile of waste management schemes in the community that involve the commercial sector;
- The education and promotion of schemes that reflect all aspects of the waste hierarchy pyramid is crucial;
- Shock expressed by majority at annual food wastage figures indicates potential to focus efforts on campaigns to minimise food waste;
- Item's value at point of disposal measured by its use as single product in working order not by value of its component parts;

- The need to educate and communicate more with Merseyside residents was a consistent theme raised by respondents at all stages of the public consultation;
- Taking part in the public consultation has increased awareness and understanding not only of waste management issues but the role of MWDA;
- Increasing the number and frequency of high profile educational activities/campaigns with practical benefits highlighted would raise the currently low public awareness of the broader roles and responsibilities of the MHWP and MWDA;
- There was a clear call from residents for MWDA and MHWP to encourage local businesses and the commercial sector to take a more prominent and greater role in effecting change in waste minimisation and prevention activity, with a specific request by respondents for the food retail sector to minimise food waste and reduce instances of excessive products packaging; and
- Initial response to any potential changes to future services (e.g. unified/joint collections, alternate weekly recycling and residual waste collection) was mixed. Short term issues such as disruption, confusion and potential decline in the quality of service delivery were key concerns for most. Most concerns, specifically those raised with regard to alternate weekly residual waste collection were alleviated by positive experiences and reports from respondents living in Sefton and Wirral where such alternate weekly collection schemes are already in place.

The full report on the DWYS consultation will be made available for download on the MWDA website as a supplementary report to the Strategy.

3.0 Draft Strategy Public Consultation Methodology

The second public consultation was launched on 27th June for ten weeks up to 7th September 2011. The Don't Waste Your Say (DWYS) website was re-used to consult with the 550+ people who agreed to further involvement following the previous consultation. The website was also used as a portal to get on-line feedback from other residents and stakeholders. MWDA and district council websites have also been used to promote the consultation and all the reports and full Strategy made available for download.

The main DWYS website provided a link to the download of a shorter summary version of the draft Strategy for consultees along with a feedback form (see Appendix 2). Full hard copies of the draft Strategy were issued on request.

The feedback form consisted of five questions and a general comment section. The boxes related to each of the draft Strategy's key themes and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Report. Consultees were also asked to tick a box to indicate whether they were broadly supportive of the direction of the draft Strategy.

Alongside the websites, a wide ranging group of stakeholders have been directly consulted via email or provided with hard copies of the summary document or full draft Strategy:

- All elected members on Merseyside including parish/town councils;
- All MPs and MEPs;
- Other Local Authorities (LAs) and waste partnerships in the North West plus the regional Environment Agency and North West Development Agency;
- Appropriate public, private and voluntary organisations and community groups on Merseyside including The Merseyside Partnership and Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service;
- Appropriate national bodies including DEFRA and Natural England;
- Waste management companies;
- All participants in the Future Resources symposia project; and
- District Council, MWDA staff and Merseyside based staff of Veolia, Biffa and Liverpool Enterprise.

Email reminders were sent to stakeholders on w/c 25th July and 15th August.

During the period of the consultation, a number of media initiatives have taken place to raise awareness of the draft Strategy and agreed with the Strategy Review Steering Group:

- 3 media releases to media on Merseyside;
- 27 thirty second radio adverts on Radio City during week of 8th August;
- Use of advertorials including the Its Our World page in the Liverpool Daily Post and Echo group of newspapers and quarter page adverts in other local papers across Merseyside during week of 8th August.

As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the draft Strategy, a workshop was held on 5th July for key stakeholders including Friends of the Earth.

The strategic options and the draft Strategy were presented to district council scrutiny committees:

- Sefton 01 February 2011
- Wirral 10 March and 26 September 2011
- St Helens 19 April and 06 September 2011
- Liverpool 22 June 2011
- Knowsley 22 August 2011

Any consultation feedback received after the deadline was considered for acceptance on a case by case basis.

MWDA compiled a summary for the responses from the 1184 residents and stakeholders directly consulted including additional responses submitted by local residents and members of the public. Enventure Research produced a summary on the responses they received from residents, including those previously engaged with through the DWYS campaign.

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis was undertaken on the responses on the feedback forms. Key themes were identified from the comments submitted and the number of comments was recorded.

This report summarises the findings from the draft Strategy public consultation running from 27th June to 7th September 2011.

4.0 Public Consultation Response

This section summarises the findings from the public consultation response to the draft Strategy. It is important to highlight that the amount, detail, quality and overall value of the feedback given by respondents varied. Some respondents provided significant responses on all sections of the 'Summary of the Draft Strategy' document (referred to as the 'Summary' document), whilst others restricted their response to one or two short general comments.

A number of informative technical comments were made by a small number of organisations, including other Local Authorities (LAs), which will be addressed separately from the broader public consultation response covered in this report.

4.1 Overview of responses

A total of 145 responses were made to the public consultation. 111 responses were submitted electronically (77%) and 34 were submitted by post (23%).

A list of the organisations who responded to the consultation and agreed to being identified can be found at Appendix 1.

Table 1 below shows that the overall consultation response was dominated by responses from Merseyside residents.

Table 1 - Breakdown of Combined Consultation Response by Sector

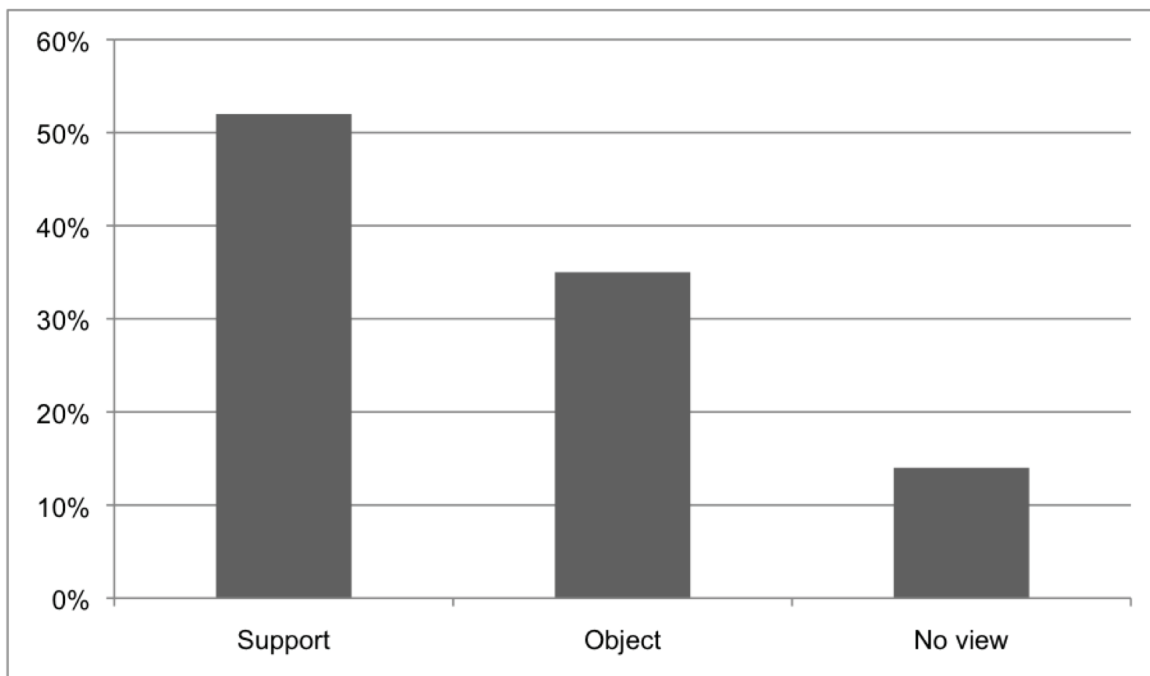
Sector	Number of Respondents	% of Total Response
Residents	121	83
Local government	7	5
National and regional government	1	1
Private sector	3	2
Third sector	4	3
Not identified	9	6
TOTAL	145	100

4.1.1 Support for the general direction of the ‘Summary of the Draft Strategy’

At the end of the consultation feedback form, respondents were asked “After reading the Strategy Summary, are you broadly supportive of the direction of the revised Strategy as set out in the document?”

Figure 1 shows a majority of respondents supported the general direction of the draft Strategy. In total, 75 respondents (52%) were supportive, whilst 50 respondents (34%) objected to the direction of the draft Strategy and 20 respondents (14%) expressed no view (the percentages add up to 101% due to rounding decimal places).

Figure 1 – Support for the general direction of the ‘Draft Strategy’ (145 respondents)

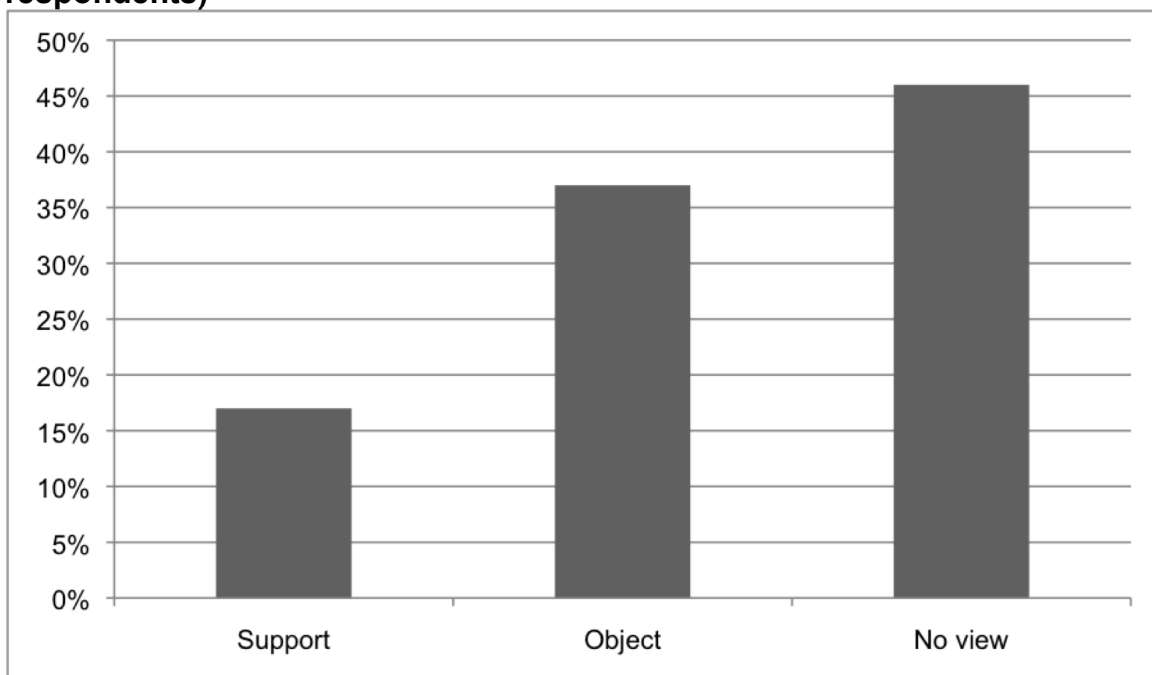


4.1.2 Attitudes towards changing the frequency of waste collections

Each consultation response was assessed for comments which supported or objected to changing the frequency of waste collection.

Figure 2 shows that a large proportion (67 respondents or 46%) did not express a view on changing waste collection frequency. Where respondents did comment on this issue a majority opposed changes to collection frequency. 53 respondents (37%) objected to changes and 25 (17%) supported changing the frequency of waste collections.

Figure 2 – Attitudes towards changing the frequency of waste collections (145 respondents)

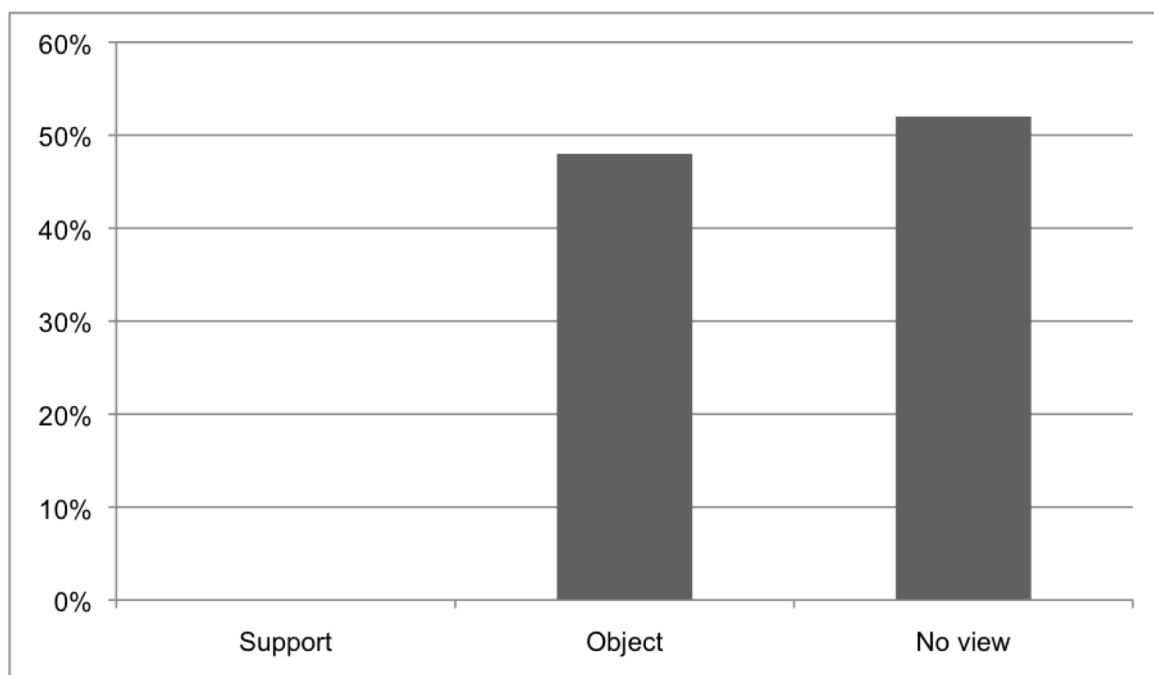


4.1.3 Attitudes towards charging for green waste collections

Each response was assessed for comments which supported or objected to charging for green waste collection.

Figure 3 shows that a majority (75 respondents or 52%) did not express a view on charging for green waste collection. However, where respondents did comment on this issue there were no supportive comments for charging and almost half (70 respondents or 48%) opposed charging for green waste collection.

Figure 3 – Attitudes towards charging for green waste collections (145 respondents)



4.2 Detailed Responses

This section breaks down the responses to each individual question on the draft Strategy consultation Feedback form.

4.2.1 Responses to the 'Introduction' section

The 'Introduction' section of the Summary document outlines the aims of the draft Strategy and how it has been produced. Consultees were asked to comment on this section of the Summary document.

There were 83 respondents to this section or a response rate of 57%.

Table 3 presents the most frequent themes raised by respondents.

Table 2 – Indicative Responses to the 'Introduction' Section

Response	Number of Responses	% of Respondents to this Section
Against green waste collection charges	36	43
Against changes in frequency of waste collections	23	28
Positive comments on this section	14	17
Support food waste collection schemes	7	8
Support changes in the frequency of waste collections	6	7
Support a 'no side waste' policy	6	7
Against a 'no side waste' policy	5	6
Against food waste collection schemes	5	6
Support for more recycling and composting services	4	5
Support more awareness raising and education	4	5

Note: some respondents provided more than 1 response

Charging for green waste collections

Opposition to charging for green waste collection was the most frequent theme in this section and was raised by 43% of respondents. It was felt that charging would encourage fly tipping, reduce recycling rates and penalize those without private transport, those with larger gardens and older residents. There was also a sense that charging would represent a reduced waste service for the level of council tax paid. Responses included:

“Charging for garden waste will increase fly-tipping and will penalise those who can't drive to tip”;

“Green waste charging will lead to less recycling. Also we are an ageing population and less able to remove waste personally”; and

“Please don't charge residents for garden waste! This will lead to real problems with fly tipping”.

Changes in the frequency of waste collections

Opposition to changing the frequency of waste collection was the next most frequent theme being raised by 28% of respondents. There was a concern that reduced residual waste collection frequency would lead to an increase in vermin, fly tipping and street cleansing problems. It was also felt that large families could be disadvantaged and again there was a sense that a reduced waste service and lower council tax value for money would result. Responses included:

“Fortnightly household waste collections would not work for large families, and present a vermin problem in the future”;

“Increased volume build up of household waste will surely increase the level of rat and pest infestations. I also feel people will struggle to keep refuse secure until the next collection impacting on street cleansing, something which already seems to be deteriorating significantly in the Liverpool area”; and

“Frequency should be kept as weekly, as a council tax payer that is what I am paying for. If you went for 2 weekly collections this would add to people dumping which in turn will increase vermin”.

Other comments

There were positive comments and active support for this section of the document (17% of respondents). Responses included *“Good summary and pleased to see recycling being developed”.*

The remaining responses listed in Table 3 provide a mix of support and opposition for food waste collection schemes, no side waste policies and changing the frequency of waste collection. There was also support for developing waste awareness, education and recycling services. Responses included:

“I don't think it is necessary to collect general household waste weekly. If residents are using their recycle bins, then they will find that they are producing more recyclable waste than non-recyclable waste”.

Less frequent responses not covered in Table 3 included:

- some respondents found the document too long or difficult to read;
- concern over storage space for additional waste receptacles;

- support for energy from waste;
- encouragement that the draft Strategy was heading in a more sustainable direction;
- concern over a lack of commitment to zero waste;
- lack of consultation publicity;
- concerns from residents in terraced housing on the impact of additional waste receptacles and reduced residual waste collection frequency; and
- support for action on manufacturers and retailers to improve the recyclability of packaging.

4.2.2 Responses to the ‘Current Waste Management on Merseyside’ section

Section 2 of the Summary document describes the current waste management arrangements on Merseyside, including information about the types of waste residents are recycling and throwing away. Consultees were asked to comment on this section of the Summary document.

There were 74 respondents to this section or a response rate of 51%.

Table 4 presents the most frequent themes raised by respondents.

Table 3 – Indicative Responses to the ‘Current Waste Management on Merseyside’ Section

Response	Number of Responses	% of Respondents to this Section
Against changes in frequency of waste collections	12	16
Good overall recycling rates and reduction in residual waste	11	15
Positive comments on this section	10	14
Support for more recycling and composting services	9	12
Support more awareness raising and education	8	11
Waste composition figures are interesting	8	11
Problems with current waste management system	6	8
Against green waste collection charges	5	7
Support for current waste management system	4	5
Issues faced by terraced housing residents specifically	3	4
Note: some respondents provided more than 1 response		

Changes in the frequency of waste collection

Opposition to changing the frequency of waste collection was the most popular theme in this section and was raised by 16% of respondents. There was a concern that reduced residual waste collection frequency would lead to an increase in vermin and fly tipping. Responses included:

“We don’t want fortnightly collections as we are a set of long terraces and need to leave the bin bags in the entry way if it is fortnightly there is a health risk and increased risk of rats and other vermin”; and

“A fortnightly collection instead of a weekly one is a backward and insanitary step”.

Praise for progress made and support for more action

Several themes emerged in the response which recognised the progress made on recycling and which encouraged further action. 15% of respondents commented positively on recycling performance and reduction in the levels of residual waste, 14% made positive comments on this section of the document generally and 12% expressed support for more recycling services and a desire to recycle more materials. Responses included:

“Good overview of where you are and where you came from”;

“Good news that the amount of waste generated is declining, but I feel that there is still room for further reduction. Shocking, though, that most of the waste from kerbside (residual) collections is recyclable”;

“Once a month collection of textiles, shoes, engine oil as some people have no means to get them to a collection centre”;

“Would be helpful if plastics and cardboards could be collected - these make up a large part of general household waste”; and

“Include more types of plastic in the recycling collection, specify types by HDPE etc. Collect aluminium foil”

Support was also expressed for more waste awareness raising and education (11% of respondents) and the same percentage commented on the revealing information provided by the waste composition analysis. The composition data came as a shock for some respondents who went on to identify raising awareness amongst residents as key to increasing recycling rates. Other respondents felt that residents needed to be educated around topics such as composting, in order to reduce the impact of kitchen waste for example. Responses included:

“The figures for composition of residual kerbside are very revealing; it shows no interest in learning of pollution”;

“Good education and understanding of waste management is essential to further improve active recycling”; and

“As mentioned in your summary, issuing residents with a compost bin that they can either be collected or kept on their properties to use for themselves would reduce this [residual waste]”.

Other comments

8% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the current waste management system, including problems with waste collection crews and concern at the prospect of a reduced waste collection service for the same level of council tax.

The remaining responses listed in Table 4 provided a mix of opposition to green waste collection charges and support for current waste management arrangements.

Specific difficulties related to terraced housing were also raised, for example storage space for additional waste receptacles such as food waste containers. Comments were also made on recycling services in specific Districts. The lack of cardboard and plastic in the Sefton kerbside recycling service was the most frequent comment made.

4.2.3 Responses to the ‘Facing the Future’ section

Section 3 of the Summary document covers waste in the wider context of delivering resource efficiency and exploring the opportunities and challenges facing Merseyside to be a place where nothing goes to waste. Consultees were asked to comment on this section of the Summary document.

There were 75 respondents to this section or a response rate of 51%.

Table 5 presents the most frequent themes raised by respondents.

Table 4 – Indicative Responses to the ‘Facing the Future’ Section

Response	Number of Responses	% of Respondents to this Section
Against green waste collection charges	12	16
Support for waste prevention	12	16
Support for more recycling and composting services	11	15
Support more awareness raising and education	11	15
Against changes in frequency of waste collections	8	11
Positive comments on this section	8	11
Support for reuse and repair	5	7
Support more action by industry on packaging	5	7
Support for energy from waste	3	4
Against a ‘no side waste’ policy	3	4
Note: some respondents provided more than 1 response		

Support for waste prevention, recycling and education

Support for more waste prevention was raised by 16% of respondents. When related responses on packaging and reuse, both raised by 7% of respondents, are taken into account then waste prevention emerges as the strongest theme approaching a

third of the total response to this section. Specific requests were made by respondents for supermarkets and manufacturers to reduce excessive packaging of food and products. Repairing items was seen as a way of saving money, but it was also felt that repairing could be more expensive than buying new. Responses included:

“Waste prevention is crucial. Supermarkets should be encouraged to cut down packaging”;

“There should also be a responsibility on manufacturers to acknowledge the waste produced in packaging etc and their role in minimising waste”;

“In the current economic climate more should be done to encourage ‘make do and mend’ philosophy” ; and

“Reuse and repair - the problem for many households is that it can be more expensive to repair than buy alternatives. My husband can repair most things, so we are fortunate”.

Support for more recycling services and increases in awareness raising and education were frequently raised in this section with both themes mentioned by 15% of respondents. It was felt that recycling and composting services needed to be simple to be effective. Food wastage was a concern of residents, although there was a mixed response towards the merits of food waste collection with hygiene issues raised. An increase in educational activity was supported by respondents to encourage more active participation in recycling and increased commitment towards minimising residual waste. More awareness of home composting was raised as a way of encouraging greater responsibility towards dealing with waste and reducing reliance on collection schemes. Responses included:

“Looks pretty comprehensive. Education of homeowners and tenants is key to future improvements. Would joint discussions with packaging providers, retailers and recyclers help?”;

“Re-education and reminders to people through local council press on what items go in what bins”;

“Challenges of recycling and composting - the system has to be simple and achievable”; and

“Leaflets on how to use food and not waste it may be useful for people who may have a limited knowledge on how to use up food instead of throwing it away, and recycling in general. I see this is being done in educational institutions but a lot of older people are ignorant about recycling and environmental issues”

Charging for green waste collections

Opposition to charging for green waste collection was raised by 16% of respondents. It was felt that charging would encourage fly tipping and the burning of garden waste in particular. Responses included:

“I feel that charging for green waste is a backwards step, when this can be utilised and reintroduced into the community via composting etc”; and

“I am against charging for garden waste removal. We compost a lot ourselves but there is some that just won't rot in 12 months. If charges are imposed I think it would increase the amount of waste in grey bins or increase the number of bonfires or increase fly tipping”.

Other comments

Opposition to changing the frequency of waste collection was raised by 11% of respondents. There was a desire to retain weekly residual waste collection and concerns that reduced residual waste collection frequency would lead to an increase in fly tipping and vermin. Associated comments objected to a 'no side waste' policy (4% of respondents) and there was a concern that reduced collection frequency would not be reflected in lower council tax rates. Responses included:

“I recall the 1980s when Liverpool's waste collection service was not fit for purpose. Some weeks your rubbish was collected other weeks it was left to rot to become infested with maggots and provide generous nourishment for rats. The very idea of abolishing weekly bin collections is ludicrous”;

“I think fortnightly collections would be a disaster. It will breed bacteria, and just cause further fly tipping which is rampant already. Definitely NO to this”; and

“I really don't agree with what you are planning and feel you are again cheating people out of their council tax bills”.

11% of respondents also gave positive comments on this section of the document (see quotes above) and 4% of respondents gave support for energy from waste.

Less frequent responses not covered in Table 5 included:

- landfill targets of 2% are ambitious;
- this section of the Summary could have been more concise;
- the waste prevention aims may be too ambitious; and
- support for trade waste facilities and integrating commercial and household waste streams.

4.2.4 Responses to the 'Delivering the Strategy' section

Section 4 of the Summary document identifies the key aims, objectives, and targets for the draft Strategy. It lists 10 Strategic Aims and Objectives and 21 Delivery Options, which are ranked as primary or secondary options. Consultees were asked to comment on this section of the Summary.

There were 59 respondents to this section or a response rate of 41%.

Table 6 presents the most frequent themes raised by respondents.

Table 5 – Indicative Responses to the ‘Delivering the Strategy’ Section

Response	Number of Responses	% of Respondents to this Section
Against green waste collection charges	21	36
Agree with content / Positive comments on this section	17	29
Against changes in frequency of waste collections	11	19
Support more awareness raising, education and support for residents	4	7
Against bulky waste charging	4	7
Against food waste collection schemes	4	7
Support changes in the frequency of waste collections	3	5
Against reduction in Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) offering residual waste disposal	3	5
Support for home and community composting	3	5
Note: some respondents provided more than 1 response		

Charging for green waste collections

Opposition to charging for green waste collection was the most frequent theme in this section and was raised by 36% of respondents. It was felt that charging would encourage fly tipping and that the green waste collection service should continue to be provided through the council tax. Others expressed concern that charging would lead to additional vehicle movements and pollution from increased journeys to HWRCs. Responses included:

“We pay already through council tax. Introducing more charging will encourage fly tipping. Extra charges are not an incentive for people to recycle”

“I do think that charging residents for waste collection would be counterproductive. If people were charged for having their garden waste collected, people would resort to burning their waste. The carbon emissions that this would produce would conflict with the objective of reducing carbon emissions”

“I am concerned about the proposal to introduce a charge for green waste collection. I expect people will be reluctant to pay this and it will lead to an increase in fly tipping and individual car journeys to the waste depot, neither of which are very ‘green’.

Agreement with / positive comments on this section

29% of respondents expressed agreement with the overall aims and priorities or provided other positive comments on the content of this section. Responses included:

“all 10 aims are commendable and well thought out”;

“Aims are great”;

“I totally agree with the aims...these are all robust” ; and

“We are pleased to see such detailed outlining of the process to be followed and hope that MWDA will continue to update and clarify its position and progress”.

Changes in the frequency of waste collections

Opposition to changing the frequency of waste collection was raised by 19% of respondents. Again, there was a concern that reduced residual waste collection frequency would lead to an increase in vermin. More detailed comments encouraged services to be designed locally around residents and expressed concern over increased unemployment if waste collections are reduced. Responses included:

“If joint working is developed to deliver services, again, one size does not fit all and the frequency of waste collections should be localised. Only when significant strides are made in supporting residents to recycle and reduce waste should collections be less often. Any new system should be designed around residents and consider what would encourage people to recycle and not add to the burden”; and

“To cut waste collections to once a fortnight will result in increased costs directly and indirectly. Vermin, foxes, disease, risk of rubbish and bins being burnt. I live in an end house where bins are already stacked up with weekly collections. Our garden will stink. Its ok saying people must adhere to collections and removing bins but they don't. Jobs will be lost and these incomes will be lost to the economy and a new burden on taxpayers, plus the social impact. This is just another not thought through 'easy solution' that will further erode living standards”

Other comments

The remaining responses listed in Table 6 provide a mix of support and opposition for working with residents to improve waste awareness, bulky waste charging, food waste collection and changes in waste collection frequency. There was also support for home and community composting, but opposition towards reducing the number of HWRC sites offering residual waste disposal. Responses included:

“People need more assistance with knowing how to compost and what the benefits are for their gardens”;

“HWRC recycling/re-use sites only - sounds like this will leave residents with waste that is not recyclable or reusable. Where do they take it? HWRCs should not be reduced”; and

“Bulky waste charging - another disincentive that would increase fly tipping”

Less frequent responses not covered in Table 6 included:

- opposition to additional waste receptacles;
- support for more focus on waste prevention;
- need more challenging waste prevention and recycling targets;
- the value of social enterprises; and
- the benefits of working with businesses.

4.2.5 Responses to the ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment Report’ (SEA) section

This section highlights the key findings from the SEA of the Strategy. Consultees were asked to comment on this section of the Summary document.

There were 35 respondents to this section or a response rate of 24%. Comments were passed to SKM Enviro for consideration in the final SEA Report.

Responses ranged greatly in content, however of those who did respond there was general support for the SEA Report Overview. There was some agreement with the potential increased risk of fly tipping as a result of the draft Strategy. Other concerns raised focused on transport, for example the increased travel distances incurred by siting waste management facilities in outlying areas. There was also some support for energy from waste where it is cost effective.

4.2.6 Responses to the ‘General Comments’ section

This section of the Summary document invited consultees to make any further comments.

There were 105 respondents to this section or a response rate of 72%.

Table 7 presents the most frequent themes raised by respondents.

Table 6 – Indicative Responses to the ‘General Comments’ Section

Response	Number of Responses	% of Respondents to this Section
Against green waste collection charges	29	28
Support for more waste prevention and recycling	20	19
Positive comments on the document	19	18
Against changes in frequency of waste collections	18	17
Support for more public engagement (consultation and education)	16	15
Problems with appearance / ease of reading the document	12	11
Support food waste collection schemes	7	7
Support changes in the frequency of waste collections	5	5
Note: some respondents provided more than 1 response		

Charging for green waste collections

Opposition to charging for green waste collection was the most frequent theme in this section and was raised by 28% of respondents. Concerns included practicalities of implementation, a disincentive to maintain the garden and recycle, insufficient room in residents’ gardens for alternatives such as composting and that people are already paying council tax for this service. Responses included:

“One thing that I am astounded at is the suggestion of charging for the green bin emptying”;

“Not everyone has the space or desire to have a compost heap in their garden, why charge them for disposal via the garden waste scheme. I feel this would have a negative impact as people would dispose of it with their general waste”; and

“If you charge for garden waste, are you not penalizing responsible home owners who keep their gardens clean and tidy”.

Support for more waste prevention and recycling

Support for more action on waste prevention and recycling was the next most frequent theme being raised by 19% of respondents. Despite the progress made there was a sense that more could be done to tackle wasteful behaviour, the amount of packaging and also to expand the range of recyclables collected. Responses included:

“There is still much more that can be done within the existing framework”;

“More emphasis is needed on waste prevention but the success of this will need a big change in society because of our 'disposable' lifestyles and 'ever expanding growth' economy”; and

“If Sefton Council recycled cardboard and plastic my waste bin would be much emptier!”

Positive comments on the document

The Summary document received positive comments from 18% respondents. Responses included:

“Well thought out and realistic” ;

“illuminating”;

“Great that the recycling has improved so much”; and

“In general going in the right direction”.

Against changes in frequency of waste collections

17% of respondents expressed opposition to changes in the frequency of collections with concerns expressed around hygiene and fly tipping for example. Responses included:

“Large families would require more help in disposing of their rubbish if they only had two week collections”;

“I disagree strongly with the fortnightly collection of general rubbish, it simply is not hygienic for many families. I worry too that so many visits are necessary to the local dump to take additional waste because they are not collected from home”; and

“The proposals to introduce a fortnightly waste collection, decrease bin sizes and stop collecting bagged waste seems to me to be an invitation to increase fly tipping”.

Support for more public engagement (consultation and education)

15% of respondents expressed a desire for Local Authorities to engage more with the public, whether by further consultation or through education and awareness

raising activity. The public consultation was welcomed by some, whilst others thought it could have been more open and widely publicized. It was felt that more local level consultation is needed and more should be done to raise the profile of recycling before changes are introduced. Responses included:

“Thank you for this initiative and consultation. I hope the effects as well as the ideas will be positive”;

“I think this needs much more thought and consultation before any key decisions are agreed. Public review within each council should be arranged”; and

“Regardless of the outcome of the current consultation, I would suggest the following: a) have a time when the recycle plant, or recycle operation, can be viewed by the public...The “Open Day” could be every few months for example, or perhaps for a few hours only, every month or so. Hopefully this would promote “recycling” and at a minimal cost to implement”.

Other comments

11% of respondents expressed some dissatisfaction with the Summary document including the format and easy of reading commenting that it was “*complicated*”, “*Too heavy for people to understand*” and would have benefitted from “*More diagrams and colour*”.

There was support for food waste collections (7% of respondents) and support for changes in collection frequency (5%). Responses included:

“Giving out home composting bins and instructions would reduce food waste and have a positive impact on gardens without whilst being more cost effective and less messy than food bin collections”;

“The sooner we have food composting the more pleased I will be”; and

“I am very keen for as much recycling/reuse as possible. Until recently, there were seven adults living in our house and we still only just filled our grey bin every two weeks so I know other households could do the same”.

Less frequent comments not covered in Table 7 included:

- opposition to ‘no side waste’ policies;
- concern over storage space for additional waste receptacles;
- more resources on service delivery, less on developing strategies; and
- need more coverage of the economic and job opportunities and the opportunity to engage with local businesses and social enterprises.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusions

The public consultation ran from June 27th to September 7th and attracted a total of 145 responses. Over three quarters of responses were made electronically, the overwhelming majority of which were received through the DWYS website portal. This facility helped the consultation to achieve its object of using new e-consultation techniques. Those preferring a postal response could also contribute and almost a quarter of respondents used this method.

The vast majority of responses were submitted by Merseyside residents. Responses were also made by organisations across the public, private and third sectors. Some of these responses provided informative technical feedback which could be used to amend the draft Strategy where appropriate.

5.1 Support for the Strategy

A majority of respondents supported the general direction of the draft Strategy, with 52% for and 35% against. 14% expressed no view on the direction.

Support for the draft Strategy was linked to the focus on waste prevention, education and improving recycling services. However, significant opposition was evident and this focused around charging for green waste and alternative weekly residual waste collections.

The responses indicated greater support for the Strategy from those residents previously engaged by the DWYS campaign. This may point to the benefits of greater engagement with residents, particularly where service changes are involved.

5.2 Frequency of waste collections

Where consultees expressed a view, a majority opposed changes to collection frequency with 37% against and 17% for changes. However, a large proportion of respondents (46%) did not express a view on this issue.

Concerns about increased fly tipping and vermin were raised in relation to the possibility of a reduction in collection frequency. There was also concern that a reduced collection frequency would not reflect in a reduced level of council tax.

Analysis of responses indicates a more favourable view of collection frequency changes from Sefton and Wirral residents. These Districts have already moved to fortnightly residual waste collection and it is possible that this response reflects greater familiarity with a different kerbside collection frequency. Conversely, the responses indicated particularly strong opposition to frequency changes from Liverpool residents. These residents currently receive a weekly residual waste collection.

The response to changing the frequency of waste collections suggests that any future changes must be clearly communicated to residents. Communications should address concerns such as fly tipping, vermin and the reasons and purpose for any change, including the cost savings that can be made.

5.3 Charging for green waste collection

Where consultees expressed a view, a clear majority opposed charging for green waste collection with 48% against and no support for charging. Again, a large proportion of respondents (52%) did not express a view on this issue.

Concerns were raised about fly tipping, in particular, if charging was introduced. There was also concern that a charge would disincentivise recycling and that the service should remain free as it is already provided through council tax payments.

The responses identified stronger opposition to charging from Sefton and Wirral residents. This may reflect the greater proportion of properties with larger gardens in these areas and the popularity of free disposal of garden waste from such properties.

Some responses suggested that greater support for home, or community, composting would be more appropriate than charging for green waste collection. Some respondents had tried composting, but sometimes without success. This suggests that the level of ongoing support is important in facilitating a greater take up of home composting by residents.

5.4 Impact of media reporting

Media reporting, including the Liverpool Echo on August 15th, may have had an impact on the views expressed in the consultation response with coverage focusing on the possibility of fortnightly residual waste collection being introduced. There was a peak in the frequency of responses on this date and for a short time afterwards, particularly from residents not engaged previously. The responses provided at this time displayed strong opposition to changing collection frequency and also opposition to the Strategy direction. This points to the power of the media in raising issues and stimulating residents to put their views forward.

5.5 Support for waste prevention, recycling and more engagement

Recycling continues to play a dominant role for residents in their contribution to sustainable waste management. The consultation responses indicated recognition and support for the improvements in recycling performance experienced in recent years and the decline in the amount of waste sent to landfill. Residents felt that recycling services could be further developed and the absence of kerbside facilities for plastics and cardboard in some areas, noticeably Sefton, was commented on. There was also an interest in recycling a wider range of plastics and a view that recycling systems need to be simple to be effective.

The information on waste composition was useful in terms of illustrating the huge amount of waste generated and disposed of annually by households in Merseyside. These figures, particularly the proportion of kitchen waste, were a surprise to residents and the amount of wasted food was a concern. This 'shock' factor could play an important role in raising awareness of the need for greater participation in waste prevention and recycling activity. The food waste example, in particular, lends itself as a focus for residual waste prevention campaigns, eg. Love Food Hate Waste. There was less clear support for food waste collection schemes and hygiene concerns should be addressed where new schemes are introduced. As noted above, there was also a view that home composting could be supported more strongly.

There was a strong view that the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership should invest in more engagement with the public, in terms of developing new services and how to use the services available. More education of the public on the benefits of waste prevention and recycling to support behavioural change was also encouraged. The engagement theme continued and residents encouraged working with retailers to support waste prevention activity, for example around food wastage and packaging. The issue of over-packaging was raised on several occasions, particularly in terms of recycling, and remains a popular cause of concern for residents. To a lesser degree respondents were able to link the packaging issue back to waste prevention and the importance of using resources wisely. A greater focus on raising awareness of waste prevention can help to develop its profile up to the levels currently demonstrated for recycling. Given that landfill costs are increasing, future campaigns and communications should demonstrate the financial benefits alongside the environmental benefits of recycling and waste prevention within Merseyside.

A wide variety of responses were made to the consultation, including residents who have taken some time and effort in preparing their feedback. Their thoughts are valuable in helping the Waste Partnership to understand the concerns, perceptions and aspirations of residents. There was also some positive feedback on the consultation process itself which demonstrates how taking part can have a positive effect on residents by increasing their understanding of waste management issues in Merseyside. Conversely, a significant number of responses may have been influenced by the media coverage, but caution is required in extrapolating this information. However, those responses also demonstrate important concerns held by residents and the potential challenges faced in future engagement.

5.6 Conclusions

The public consultation has demonstrated support for the general draft Strategy direction and broad encouragement for developing waste prevention, recycling and education services. The extent of support, however, was eroded by significant opposition to options such as charging for services (eg. green waste collection) and changing collection frequency (eg. moving away from weekly residual waste collection).

Variation within the overall response suggests that greater levels of engagement with residents could benefit Strategy development and delivery, particularly at District level where changes to collection services are involved. Increased engagement can support residents understanding of strategic issues and the reasons why waste services may need to change and evolve. Higher levels of engagement could also provide some resilience to adverse media reaction. A call for more engagement was a theme of the consultation response.

The consultation has identified a number of concerns linked to specific draft Strategy delivery options that will need to be addressed if these options are taken forward by any Merseyside authority. Concerns around fly tipping, hygiene and vermin were significant in relation to reducing waste collection frequency and charging for collections. Greater levels of engagement could tackle some of the concerns linked to delivery options generally and help build further support for the Strategy direction.

Appendix 1 - List of respondents

East London Waste Authority (ELWA)

Formby Parish Council

Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (GMWDA)

Merseytravel

North West Development Agency

Residents

Sefton Green Party

Warrington BC

Waste Action Group (Wirral Environmental Network)

Plus anonymous responses, including responses from 5 additional organisations.

Appendix 2 – Resident Feedback Form

Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside RESOURCES Merseyside 2011–2041 Public Feedback Form



We are really interested in finding out what you think about the key ideas from the draft Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy as set out in the enclosed Summary document. Please complete this feedback form (both sides) and return it in the pre-paid envelope provided.

To make things easier, we have provided boxes on each of the Strategy's key themes for you to give as much feedback/comment as much as you like on each topic, if necessary use additional sheets and attach to this form. Please write clearly.

Thank you for your input into the Don't Waste Your Say Public Consultation.

1) Introduction

Please use this box to comment on this section of the Summary

2) Current Waste Management on Merseyside

Please use this box to comment on this section of the Summary

3) Facing The Future

Please use this box to comment on this section of the Summary

4) Delivering The Strategy

Please use this box to comment on this section of the Summary

5) Strategic Environmental Assessment Report

Please use this box to comment on this section of the Summary

General Comments

Please use this box to make any general comments you have on the Strategy

After reading the Strategy Summary, are you broadly supportive of the direction of the revised Strategy as set out in the document? [Please tick one box only]

Yes

No

Please tick the boxes below if you are happy & willing for your comments to be passed onto the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership (MHWP) for auditing purposes (otherwise leave blank). Please note your information will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

I agree/give my consent for my anonymous comments to be passed on to MHWP

I agree/give my consent for my comments and personal details to be passed on to MHWP

Name

Telephone