

## **WDF User Group – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012: Meeting Notes**

Note: The User Group was delivered through a video conference between the SKM offices in London, Manchester, Shrewsbury and Newcastle. This worked well and it was agreed in the AOB session at the end of the meeting that we would use this method of delivery in the future.

### **1) Waste Framework Directive (WFD)**

David Lee (Defra) provided an overview of the progress of the WFD in relation to the definitions of 'waste from households' and WasteDataFlow.

The Defra policy team continue to liaise with the EU Commission to confirm the definitions of 'waste from households' and in particular the classification of what is deemed to have been sent for composting in relation to PAS100 certification. Currently, it looks as if Defra will only be able to report PAS100 certified composting to Europe.

David confirmed that the policy and definitions need to be confirmed before any decisions can be made on whether there will need to be updates to WasteDataFlow. In relation to any updates, these will be made with regard to the objective to reduce the reporting burden on LAs.

David confirmed that a 'two tier' approach to household recycling is likely, with a WFD compliant recycling rate for Europe, and a 'national recycling rate' reflecting national policies. Both of these reports would be generated through WDF.

Once further information is available on this it will be communicated through the WDF helpdesk.

#### **Questions raised by the User Group:**

*Q: If the policy in relation to 'waste from households' is confirmed in 2012/113 reporting year, can you confirm whether the updates will be implemented in this period?*

*A: It is unlikely that any updates will be made part way through a reporting period.*

Other LAs agreed that they would not want to see any updates in the 2012/13 reporting year.

**Action – WasteDataFlow to ensure that any updates in relation to the Waste Framework Directive and WDF reporting are clearly communicated through the helpline.**

### **2) Carbon Metric**

In the review of the Waste Strategy 2011, it was confirmed that a carbon metric reporting tool would be developed for Defra and local authorities, to measure and report on the carbon impacts of waste management. This would be linked into the WasteDataFlow system

David presented the draft report for the carbon metric. The carbon metric will be an LA specific report that applies a carbon factor to the tonnages of recycling, reuse, composting and residual treatment, to generate a report to show the carbon benefit of various treatment options. The current carbon factors are taken from WRAP as a nationally recognisable dataset.

The report will be developed as a flexible report to allow for changes in carbon factors and material reporting. Once developed, the report will be made available to WDF Users (including public users) through the 'Summary Reports' section of WDF.

Currently the development of this is on hold subject to funding requirements. In the interim a carbon report of national and possibly regional figures only (i.e. not at local authority level) will be developed in the same format. It is planned that this will be published along with the other waste statistics in November 2012.

## Questions/Comments from the User Group

*Q. Will vehicle movements be taken into account in the carbon metric?*

*A. An element of transport may have been taken into account when developing the carbon factors. The carbon report will use these factors, however, it will not specifically look at the carbon impact of transport (e.g. transportation type, distance travelled etc). Currently, this data is not readily available in WDF, and there are currently no plans to ask for this information to be provided. Previous research has shown that the carbon impacts from transportation are minimal when compared to the carbon impacts of waste treatment technologies, recycling and reuse.*

*Q. Will this report mean that we have to enter more information into WDF?*

*A. No, the information currently provided in WDF is sufficient to develop the carbon metric report.*

*Comment – As there are a number of other carbon models out there at the moment, it will be important to consider the scope of this carbon metric and ensure that this is communicated clearly in the report.*

*Comment – Once this is published it will lead to more focus on the carbon element of waste management. At the moment the carbon benefits of waste management are not necessarily related to local authority expenditure. As such, until there is some sort of financial incentive/target to operate on a carbon basis, behaviour and decisions will not change.*

*Comments – A number of local authorities commented that the carbon metric was a useful tool to use as a starting point for this type of reporting, and noted that it offered good value for money in providing each local authority with a standardised report for carbon reporting.*

*Comment – There was some concern that the publication of this report would coincide with the decisions on the funding allocations for the ‘Weekly Collection Support Scheme’. The applications for this funding required the local authority to undertake a carbon assessment (within the environmental tool) of the waste management methods.*

**Action – David to raise the above point re the weekly collection support scheme with Michael Sigsworth. However, David did not think it would be an issue as the carbon report that would be released in November would be at a regional/national level, so would not provide individual local authority details.**

**Response – The carbon metric will not affect the bid outcomes of the WCSS. The carbon metric due to be published in November will be for England as a whole and not relate to LAs individually. Information supplied by LAs for WCSS bids relate to the carbon impact of the schemes they are proposing, which in most cases will not cover all LA waste activity anyway, so there is no valid comparisons to be made. Plus, details of bids will not be made public so there should be no risk of conflicting information being out there.**

**Action – Defra to work with SKM Enviros to develop interim regional/national carbon report.**

### **3) Controlled Waste Regulations**

Kate provided an update on the review of the Controlled Waste Regulations, in relation to the changes to the classification of certain types of waste. The following wastes have been reclassified as commercial waste from household waste:

- Domestic property used in provision of self catering accommodation;
- Caravan used as a business to provide self catering accommodation or which is not allowed to be used for human habitation throughout the year (due to license or planning permission);
- Premises occupied by a charity and wholly/mainly used for charitable purposes;

- A campsite or a tent pitched on land other than a camp site; and
- A royal palace.

In relation to WDF, local authorities will be required to update how they report this data into WDF to reflect these changes. These include:

- Tonnages of these waste types recycled/reused which were previously reported in Qu10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 33, or 34 should now be reported in Qu11.
- Tonnages of these waste types disposed should continue to be reported in Qu23, but under an appropriate non household category.

#### Questions/Comments from User Group

No questions were raised specifically on this topic.

*Comment - it was questioned whether with all the changes in definitions (e.g. household waste, waste from households, municipal waste), whether it was possible to have no changes to how local authorities report their data into WDF? David, explained that there may have to be some updates to reporting, but that this would all be reviewed in relation to the objective of reducing the reporting burden on local authorities.*

**Action – WasteDataFlow to develop guidance and send this out to local authorities re updates to reporting.**

#### **4) The Future of WDF**

David commented about the future of WDF post LATS. The system will carry on, as the data is used to report on recycling rates to Europe. Currently, LATS will not be replaced as it is deemed that landfill tax is the main driver for landfill diversion.

#### Questions/Comments from User Group

*Comment - A User Group representative provided feedback from one of their local authorities who commented that WDF should be scrapped as soon as possible. In response to this, David noted the comment and explained that there is an argument that the WDF system averts a number of Freedom of Information requests. For example, last year ~ 20,000 reports were run by external users from WDF and this highlights the benefit of WDF is saving a significant amount of Officer time in collating and providing the information for these types of requests.*

*David also commented that whilst there is unlikely to be consultation on WDF alone, any consultation on reporting in general would be likely to include questions on WDF.*

**No actions in relation to this section.**

#### **5) LATS Mass Balance**

Kate provided an overview of the updates to the LATS mass balance calculation following the review of the definition of 'Municipal Waste'. A summary is provided below:

*The Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003 (Amendment) Regulations 2011 came into force on 21st November 2011. These regulations reflect the new interpretation of 'municipal waste', and introduce the term "local authority collected municipal waste" (LACMW) to differentiate this from municipal waste collected by the private sector. LACMW refers to the previous 'municipal' element of the waste collected by local authorities. That is household waste and business waste where collected by the local authority and which is similar in nature and composition as required by the Landfill Directive. This is the type of waste which will count towards LATS and Landfill Diversion Targets.*

*The definition of LACMW no longer includes construction and demolition waste, and Defra have confirmed that from 1st April 2012 segregated construction and demolition waste will be deducted from the LATS mass balance calculation. This is the only non-municipal waste that will be deducted.*

*WasteDataFlow have developed a guidance note which sets out clear instructions on how English local authorities should be reporting segregated construction and demolition waste within WasteDataFlow as of 1st April 2012. This can be located here:*

[http://www.wastedataflow.co.uk/Documents/GuidanceNotes/LATS/GN61\\_Guidance\\_on\\_reporting\\_LA\\_CW\\_C&Dv5.0.pdf](http://www.wastedataflow.co.uk/Documents/GuidanceNotes/LATS/GN61_Guidance_on_reporting_LA_CW_C&Dv5.0.pdf)

The key updates to WDF reporting are as follows:

- Collected and sent for recycling - all ceramics and tiles from a construction and demolition process to be reported under rubble;
- Disposal Question 23 – All (\*) reported under collected non household waste: construction and demolition waste. \* with the exception of separately collected asbestos which should continue to be reported under separately collected asbestos.
- Rubble disposed at CA Sites – reported under collected non household waste: construction and demolition.
- No C&D to be back allocated to WCAs.

Full details of these updates are provided in the guidance note (see above link).

Kate confirmed that the updates to the mass balance are current scheduled in for July/August 2012, with the view to allow local authorities to use the updated reports for Qtr 1 2012/2013 reporting year.

#### Questions and Comments from the User Group

*Comment – Local authorities requested whether there was some way that we could allow CA site rubble to still be reported under a CA site category, as they use this CA site tonnage information to generate reports and monitor performance.*

*Q. Post LATS what will be the future of the LATS mass balance reports?*

*A. If local authorities find these reports useful they can continue to be generated.*

#### **6) Local Authority Collected Waste Reports**

Currently, there are a number of changes taking place in relation to waste policy regarding definitions of household waste, waste from households and LATS. In response to this, a series of reports looking at Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) (i.e. all waste collected by local authorities and reported into WDF) will be developed. These will be available through the 'Summary Reports' page of WDF, and will allow local authorities to monitor performance in relation to all waste.

The reports include:

- Report 1: Overview of LACW (multiple local authorities and multiple periods) - available through the 'Summary Reports' page.
- Report 2: Overview of LACW (single local authority and multiple periods) – available through the 'Summary Reports' page, and would also be included in the Performance Indicator report available from the data authorisation screen.
- Report 3: Breakdown by material type (single LA, multiple periods) - available through the 'Summary Reports' page.

These reports would look to be developed in September 2012.

#### Questions/Comments from User Group

Kate demonstrated the draft reports and the following feedback was received:

- Report 1 – The User group commented that a dwelling stock figure would be useful to include in the % recycled report. Ensure a note is added to make users aware that although the figure is based on dwelling stock, the waste will include both household and commercial waste.
- Report 1 & 2 (graphs) – The User Group commented that the reports and graphs would be really useful. They commented that it would be useful to have the ability to compare the same Qtr of the previous year, rather than just the annual results. This would allow seasonal variation to be taken into account. It was also commented that it would be good to have a column stack graph to show the variations across the Qtrs.
- Report 3 (materials report) – The User Group commented that they were not sure how useful it would be to run this for one period for one local authority. They would prefer to see this as summarised data for a selected period. For example, if you selected 4 quarters the report would show a summary of all 4 Qtrs. It was highlighted to the User group that due to the large volume of data (in particular reference to the WDA reports) no quarterly breakdown would be available in the multiple period reports. They agreed that this was OK.

The current development schedule for these reports is September 2012.

There was also a few questions in relation to the functionality of the 'Summary Reports' section. Kate advised that this was all explained in the guidance note available from the website.

**Action – Kate to look to integrate the comments above into a revised draft of the reports.**

**Action – Kate to send copy of Reports guidance to User Group.**

#### **7) IBA Metals Report**

Defra confirmed at the end of the 2010/11 reporting year that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, metals from IBA are considered to be recycling. It was confirmed by Defra that the National Indicator reports would not be updated to reflect this change, and that a separate report would be developed – *household recycling including IBA metals*.

Kate provided an overview of the new household recycling report including IBA metals. This would be available through the 'Summary Reports' page, and would also be included in the Performance Indicator report available from the data authorisation screen.

This report was welcomed by the User Group, and when asked a large number confirmed that they would like their WCAs to be able to report the IBA metals as a 'back allocated' recycling tonnage.

Kate explained that currently the system is not set up to allow WCAs to report back allocated IBA metals. If they did this in the current system, the national indicator reports would not calculate correctly as there is no way to separate the IBA metals tonnage from other recycled tonnages. A review of how the system could be updated to allow this would need to be undertaken.

#### Questions/Comments from User Group

*Comment - GMWDA confirmed that they had previously been advised that they should not back allocate the metals to the WCAs. GMWDA will send an email to the WDF helpdesk to confirm this advice.*

**Action - WasteDataFlow to review the guidance re back allocation and confirm this with the User Group.**

**Action – WasteDataFlow to review options to update the system to allow WCAs to report back allocated metals from IBA.**

## **8) Materials List**

Kate confirmed that the 'materials list' would be updated from Qtr 1 2012/13 and the following updates would be visible:

- Qu10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 33, 34, 19, 35 and 19a:
  - Carpets
  - Absorbent Hygiene Products
  - Textiles Only
  - Footwear Only
- Qu19a - IBA and Metals from IBA
- Amended name of cardboard beverage packaging to Composite food and beverage cartons
- Other materials listed on master list, so you will now be able to view a shortened list containing 'other materials'.

### Questions/Comments from User Group

*Q. Would it be possible to add 'street recycling' and 'street composting' to the material categories.*

*A. Currently, this is not something that we would like to consider as 'street recycling' is not a material type and it would be made up of various materials. These should be reported by their material type for accurate reporting and to provide the correct biodegradable diversion for LATS.*

**Action – WasteDataFlow to send a communication out to local authorities to confirm the updates to the material list.**

## **9) Online Validation Spreadsheet**

Kate demonstrated the validation summary report. It is proposed that this report replaces the 'Summ' report available through the data authorisation screen.

The report is a more complex validation tool which looks to:

- Highlights data entry errors;
- Identifies anomalies (based on historic data);
- Identify validation questions;

It allows local authorities to use a detailed tool to check their own return prior to submitting to L30 and re-check data following amendments during the validation process.

Kate confirmed that we would be running a series of training sessions on how to use this tool and further information would be send out shortly through the helpdesk.

Kate also confirmed that the current development schedule for this is for the report to be available to be used by local authorities from end September 2012.

### Question and Comments from User Group

*Comment - The UG commented that this would be a very useful tool.*

**Action – WasteDataFlow to send out details of the training sessions for the validation tool.**

**10) AOB**

A number of questions were asked during the AOB session. These include the following:

Q. Can the dwelling stock information be updated sooner?

A. The dwelling stock is updated when the information is provided from the VOA as a published national statistic. We will review the timescales of these updates and will continue to liaise with the VOA to ensure that this information is provided to WDF within appropriate timescales.

Q. Is there a report where we can see the tonnages of material sent to each reprocessor? As we have now signed up to the Charter to improve public information about end destinations of recycling this type of report would be really useful. Details on the charter are available at: <http://www.resourceassociation.com/news/charter-improve-public-information-about-end-destinations-recycling>

A. Yes, this is listed as the 'Reprocessor report' under the analytical section of the 'Summary Reports' page.

Q. When will the selection lists be updated?

A. We are currently processing a data update for the selection lists. We will advise you through the helpdesk when this has been updated. In the meantime if you have any facilities which are not on the list please email these to the helpdesk.

Q. Will the policy for WCAs to submit data to WDF be reviewed? Currently, the responsibility for data reporting rests with the WDA.

A. We intend that the requirement to enter data into WDF will remain when LATS ends. Waste Data Flow is valued by local authorities, and it serves a number of purposes other than reporting on Landfill Diversion Targets. For example, we have an ongoing European legal obligation to report on the household recycling rate target, and WDF provides the means to monitor this. We will be considering the best way for local authorities to report as part of our broader WDF review.

Q. Is the Waste Strategy still under review and what are the next steps for this?

A. The Waste Review (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/review/>) is our statement of current waste policy, and the WDF specific actions are ongoing. Progress on the carbon metric is described above. The commitment to review WDF has been complicated by our need to understand the implications of the Waste Framework Directive and the future of reporting. We made some changes to WDF in response to an LA user survey we did last year. The intention is to run some form of consultation exercise around the future of reporting which encompasses all of these related issues. Critically we need to understand the value of WDF to public end users in the waste community – without this, any significant change to WDF risks compromising the undoubted value of WDF as a resource and the benefits it provides to LAs, government and the wider public.

Q. When we move from one month to the next within an individual question, would it be possible to ensure that the same question stays on the screen as oppose to moving to the 'question list'?

A. This can be added to the development list, and will be reviewed in relation to the other development priorities and available budget.

Q. I am experiencing problems with the XML upload?

A. Please send your query to the WDF helpdesk and we will look into this.

Q. In Qu19a, is it possible to allow the comments from previous Qtrs to be copied across?

A. This can be added to the development list, and will be reviewed in relation to the other development priorities and available budget.

Q. The disposal questions only allow you to select to copy comments and facilities at the same time. Would it be possible to update this so that we are able to select comments only or facilities only? This would allow us to use the XML upload more effectively.

A. This can be added to the development list, and will be reviewed in relation to the other development priorities and available budget.

**Action – Add developments to ‘Development List’ and review in relation to current priorities and budget.**

**Action – Defra to liaise with the VOA to confirm publication dates for dwelling stock.**

**Action – WasteDataFlow to confirm when selection lists have been updated.**