



SECTION 4

Towards sustainable services

Guide for services and paths
to improvement for:

WASTE

Sustainable Development at the service level

The Local Government in Scotland Act (2003) established Sustainable Development as a statutory duty within the Best Value regime. The Best Value regime requires all local authorities to continuously improve their performance and secure services of the highest quality at a cost that is acceptable to their local communities. **Sustainable development is an integral part of local authorities' efforts to deliver Best Value.**

'A local authority which secures Best Value will be able to demonstrate a contribution to sustainable development — consideration of the social, economic and environmental impacts of activities and decisions both in the shorter and longer term.'

As well as being a corporate aim, sustainable development should be part of every service's plans and operations. This chapter aims to answer the question **"what would a sustainable development approach to waste look like?"**

As Chapter 7 of the Best Value guidance states, "2. Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development (should be) reflected in the authority's objectives and highlighted in all strategies and plans at corporate and service level"

This chapter provides a **self-assessment questionnaire** outlining **Paths to Improvement**. This is designed to enable you to **assess your current position**. It also sets a framework within which you may, step by step, progressively engage more fully with sustainable development.

On the right hand side of each 'Paths to Improvement' table are three columns headed **'Policy'**, **'Being Implemented'**, and **'Outcomes'**. These stages enable the authority to assess whether they have reached the stage of policy; or progressed to implementation; or have moved on to reach outcomes.

The stages are defined below:

Policy	The Council has considered the topic, then adopted a policy to address it. There is a commitment and decision to seek change and improvement ; and outcomes are being set.
Being Implemented	The Council is implementing policy ; this is reflected in financial allocations ; revenue and/or capital allocations; plans and strategies for the topic; agreement with relevant partner agencies; staff responsibilities and job descriptions. Resources and procedures are in place to secure change and improvement.
Outcomes	The outcomes of the policy are being measured, and there are measurable deliverables. Change and improvement is being achieved, and is being monitored and reported.

It must be stressed that the process of continuous improvement is not prescriptive:

- **If this chapter does not pose the right questions for you please adapt the questionnaire accordingly.** Many local authorities have done this, to great effect.
- **It is also not intended that the questionnaire should be used solely as a checklist with 'yes' or 'no' answers.** Please add detail, such as – what evidence do you have to show that policy is being implemented? Who is responsible for this?



Towards sustainable services: Waste

The National Waste Plan outlines how Scotland will achieve sustainable waste management by 2020. It brings together the Area Waste Plans for the 11 Waste Strategy Areas in Scotland. Together, they set out the basis for a **fundamental shift in the way resources are managed**, and adopt the waste hierarchy of reduction, re-use and recycling.

The **National Waste Plan sets demanding targets for recycling and composting of municipal waste as well as the reduction of waste sent to landfill** to about one third of previous levels. The changes will be evident through the widespread introduction of segregated **kerbside waste collections** and the development of **waste management infrastructure**

supported by the Strategic Waste Fund. In order to make recycling economically viable it is also important to develop and support **markets for recycled products**. Actively procuring products made from recycled materials whether in construction contracts or in areas such as plastics, furniture, paper products and other stationery, can all help to drive the markets for recycle.

The concepts of re-use and recycling also apply beyond traditional waste management. **Charity shops, second-hand dealers and markets are all part of the process of reducing material consumption**. They can have an invaluable role, especially for the less well off who need access to affordable goods, provided they are safe and fit for purpose.

Paths to improvement include:	Policy	Being Implemented	Outcomes
Are measures in place to encourage the reduction of waste from all sources , including from the local authority's own operations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the proportion of waste segregated at source or point of collection being increased, and are facilities to enable this being designed in to new developments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are waste management facilities being provided for the increasing proportion of municipal waste that will be recycled and composted, and are there facilities for waste exchange?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the markets for recycled and composted materials , including use of such products by the Council, being supported and developed, including through the use of such products by the Council itself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do local authority contracts include specifications for recycled content (by value)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are waste facilities located to reduce the overall need for transport ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are existing and proposed waste facilities avoiding the imposition of environmental hazards and nuisances especially to those in already disadvantaged communities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are community projects in waste management supported and monitored (e.g. through Service Level Agreements), and are steps taken to ensure that successful schemes are continued and replicated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there support (e.g. through Service Level Agreements) for projects which re-use consumer products , and make available to disadvantaged groups (e.g. homeless people) safe appliances, furniture and other essentials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This chapter is part of the **Sustainable Scotland Network's Best Value & Sustainable Development Toolkit**. To view the complete toolkit, go to www.sustainable-scotland.net/bestvalue