

What is the BEaR Project?

- The Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling (BEaR) Project has been set up to deliver a long term waste treatment solution for Central Bedfordshire.
- Different options are available to treat the household waste that is not recycled or composted. The purpose of the BEaR Project is to let a contract for the most suitable solution in terms of both quality and price.
- Competing companies for the contract will also be required to put forward proposals for the following additional services:
 - Re-development of the Household Waste Recycling Centres at Ampthill, Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard and re-location of the Dunstable site;
 - Provide gritting salt storage barns in strategic locations;
 - Provide a Waste Transfer Station so that various types of waste can be bulked up before being sent for treatment; and
 - Provide a solution to treat organic waste collected from households.

Why is the BEaR Project needed?

- Strict Government and European legislation require that by 2020, household waste sent to landfill has to be reduced to 35% of the levels landfilled in 1995.
- Currently, over 110,000 tonnes of household waste is produced each year in Central Bedfordshire, with more than 50,000 tonnes still sent to landfill.
- Landfill tax is rising by £8 per tonne per year, currently standing at £48 per tonne, rising to a staggering £80 per tonne by 2014 with further increases likely in the future.
- Local councils have also been given an allowance of waste they can send to landfill each year. Should the Council exceed this allowance, we could face fines of up to £150 for every tonne over our limit.
- A solution is therefore required to meet these strict national targets, reduce the future cost of waste disposal and establish greener ways to treat all our waste.

Where are we now?

- Central Bedfordshire must run a competition for their waste contract to achieve the most cost effective and environmentally friendly solution to treat your household waste.
- The Council will not hand the contract to one company without open competition and do not intend to narrow technology choice to a single type.
- To ensure maximum innovation and competition are achieved the Council will consider all solutions proposed.
- A Notice for the Council's waste treatment contract was published through the 'Official Journal of the European Union' in May 2010.
- Ten waste management companies submitted 'Pre-Qualification Questionnaires' in July 2010, providing information about their company and evidence to demonstrate they are financially sound and capable of providing what the Council needs.
- No information on technologies or locations was requested at this early stage.

Next steps

- The Council expect to short-list between 5 and 8 bidders and will announce the selected bidders in October.
- Bidders selected to progress to the next stage will then be invited to submit their outline ideas of how they intend to manage Central Bedfordshire's waste.
- Pre-determined evaluation criteria will be used to select the best bid in terms of both quality and price.
- The number of bidders in the competition will reduce through several distinct stages of evaluation until a 'Preferred Bidder' has been selected. The successful contractor is likely to be appointed in 2012.
- The Council must run the competition in compliance with Public Contracts Regulations and all bidders must be treated equally and fairly throughout the whole selection process.

Communications

- Leaflets and newsletters distributed via council offices, recycling centres, libraries, community groups, directly delivered by local newspaper, parish councils and leisure facilities.
- Regular press releases sent to local and national media.
- Articles in 'News Central' Council magazine.
- Website regularly updated with latest Project developments, including a Frequently Asked Questions page.
- A series of ten road shows across Marston Vale area in October/November 2009 to encourage participation in a survey created to understand local resident concerns.
- Parish councils sent regular updates and a Parish Council Involvement Group established.
- Radio interviews provided by BEaR Project Spokesperson.

Recycling remains top priority

- The current recycling and composting rate in Central Bedfordshire is 50% and residents are to be congratulated for all their efforts to help reduce the waste sent to landfill, however more needs to be done.
- Whatever solution is chosen, waste reduction and recycling remain top priority for Central Bedfordshire Council, who will continue to improve recycling services and raise awareness about how to reduce and reuse waste.
- Central Bedfordshire Council has set its sights on achieving 60% recycling and composting through various initiatives in the coming years.

Contact information

- You can write to us: The BEaR Project, Central Bedfordshire Council, Technology House, Amphill Road, Bedford, MK42 9QQ
- Call the BEaR team: 0300 300 8034
- E mail: bearproject@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Or visit our website: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/bear

