4.0 The art of Managing Waste for Profit

4.1 Why this theme?

Every business, whether manufacturing a product or providing a service, has an impact on the environment in terms of the resources they consume and the waste they generate. However, increased resource efficiency and waste minimisation can have considerable financial gains as well as environmental benefits.

This theme explains how Corby Waste Not successfully helped local commercial organisations to reduce waste and increase profits.

4.2 What we did

4.2.1 Free CWN Business Waste Projectworkers

As part of the Corby Waste Not Scheme, local commercial organisations were offered a fully funded recent graduate to undertake 10-week in-house waste minimisation Projectwork. 12 businesses accepted the offer and benefited from an environmental audit, report and recommendations specific to them. As well as helping local businesses to reduce waste, the graduates also promoted local cross-community waste reduction projects and gained valuable career experience and contacts.

4.2.2 Introducing the clients

4.2.2.1 Food manufactures

Sias Foods (UK) Ltd.
Sias manufacture fruit preparations used mainly by the dairy industry for the manufacture of yoghurts. Chris Barnett completed the Projectwork.

Pauleys
Pauleys is a leading national chilled distributor to the catering industry, providing a 6 day-a-week delivery of meat, bread, dairy, fruit and vegetables. Yetunde Abdul completed the Projectwork.

Solway Foods
Solway are a leading manufacturer of fresh salads and sandwiches to the retail market. Sarah Gilmour completed the Projectwork.

4.2.2.2 Manufacturing Companies

Ball and Young Ltd.
Ball and Young are manufacturers of carpet underlay. Sarah Gilmour completed the Projectwork.

Recticel Declon
Recticel Declon produce semi-rigid and soft polyester foam products. Dan Green completed the Projectwork.

Marlec Engineering
Marlec manufacture innovative small-scale wind turbines for boats and caravans and solar panels. The company pioneered street lighting powered by wind and the sun. Yetunde Abdul completed the Projectwork.

Benteler Automotive UK
Benteler employs 150 people and makes car sub-frames and chassis components for Jaguar, Land Rover and Vauxhall. Sarah Gilmour completed the Projectwork.

Alfred Engelmann
Alfred Englemann produces components for the automotive industry, specifically Rover and Ford. Sarah Houston completed the Projectwork.

Newteam
Newteam manufactures shower units and parts. Sarah Houston completed the Projectwork.

Baltimore Aircoil Ltd.
Baltimore produce water-cooling units for the engineering industry. Dan Green completed the Projectwork.

RS components
RS components is a leading wholesaler of electric components and employs over 500 people at the Corby site. Diane Stevens completed the Projectwork.

4.2.2.3 Educational institutions

The Tresham Institute of Further and Higher Education
The Institute has four main colleges across three towns in Northamptonshire and offers a broad range of courses from construction to information technology. Diane Stevens completed the Projectwork.

4.2.3 Incentives to reduce waste

There has never been a better time to reduce waste. A general rise in the profile of environmental issues has meant that businesses are expected, encouraged and required to address environmental concerns. Figure 15 outlines the drivers that encourage businesses to minimise waste.

4.2.3.1 Education and awareness

The increases in number and range of environmental organisations and schemes, and the increased accessibility to information through the Internet, have acted as catalysts in helping companies to improve their environmental performance.

The CWN Projectworks highlighted a wide range of wastes (see 2.2.4, 2.2.5 and 2.2.6). These wastes were specifically relevant to the client organisations, so the list is not comprehensive or complete. Envirowise offers all small to medium enterprises a free half-day site visit to identify wastes (see 4.3). Additionally, Envirowise offer information and advice over the phone through the Environment and Energy Helpline (see 4.3, and 4.7.1 for contact details). Links to other organisations promoting waste minimisation can be found in section 4.7.1.

Another way of identifying wastes is through networking with similar organisations. Section 5.2.2 examines how Green Business Clubs have helped companies identify wastes.

4.2.3.2 Supply chain pressure and accreditation

A common request by client organisations was to help initiate the systems required for ISO 14001 accreditation (see 4.2.8). ISO 14001 is a British Standards Institute accreditation for environmental management throughout the organisation. Pressure to adopt ISO 14001 is often exerted downwards onto suppliers from large retail customers.

4.2.3.3 Statutory incentives

The three most relevant statutory incentives for waste reduction were Landfill Tax, Packaging Waste Regulations and the Climate Change Levy.

- Landfill Tax was introduced in the 1996 Finance Act and applies to all waste disposed by landfill. Landfill tax was £12 per tonne in March 2002, but is set to rise by £1 annually until it is capped at £15 per tonne in April 2004. The tax is paid by the landfill licence holder, but is passed on to commercial customers through waste contractor charges. The real financial cost of waste disposal, inclusive of waste contractor charges and tax, is between £40 and £50 per tonne. For organisations producing organic wastes, it should be noted that the EC Landfill Directive will progressively ban organic and biodegradable wastes going to landfill. The targets set are 75% of 1993 quantities of organic waste going to landfill by 2002; 50% by 2005 and 25% by 2015.
- Any business that has an annual turnover of more than £2 million, and handles 50 tonnes or more of packaging each year, is affected by the Packaging Waste Regulations. The regulations require that you recycle or recover a certain percentage of the packaging after disposal. Through the shared producer responsibility principle, all parts of the packaging chain are required to contribute towards meeting the recycling target.