



MINISTRY OF  
HEALTH & CULTURE  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

# **National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**

**August 2015**

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**National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**  
*August 2015*

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**Message from the Premier Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA**

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I am pleased to be able to present the first National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands.

Through these pages you will find the vision, values, strategic directions and our objectives to suitably manage solid waste in the Cayman Islands for now and generations to come.

Government's vision for the all-important task of waste management is "Integrated, sustainable and effective waste management for the Cayman Islands."

We all know that our current waste management system is under great strain. As the Cayman Islands continues to progress and grow, we need a system that can meet the modern challenge for better sustainability. It is something we owe to our residents and visitors now, and more importantly, to our future generations.

A National Solid Waste Management Policy is important because the antiquated landfills on all three Islands – Little Cayman, Cayman Brac and Grand Cayman – continue to be threats to the environment. This Government sees a definite need for change and we are committed to finding a sustainable way forward. This can only be done with a transparent policy and strategy that will ensure that we improve the performance of waste management to meet the challenges and demands in the most effective and appropriate way for our country.

This policy is the first major step and is made possible because of the hard work done by our steering committee, which was comprised of national stakeholders. I thank them for the dedication and desire to improve our waste management system and thereby our environment. We want to work with all sectors of our community to reduce the waste we produce, promote reusing and recycling and recover energy from the waste that remains.

## **National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**

*August 2015*

The historical cycle of our dependence on landfills as they exist now must come to an end. We must work toward a waste-conscious population. Part of our policy will include the provision that those who use our waste management system pay for it or, more wisely, make use of waste as a resource that benefits the community as a whole.

I can assure you that this Government is committed to protecting the environment for our people today and for those who will come after us.

**National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**  
*August 2015*

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**Message from the Chief Officer Ms. Jennifer M. Ahearn, AICP, JP**



As the Chief Officer for the Ministry of Health and Culture, I echo the Honourable Premier's sentiments in presenting the first National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands.

During the past year and a half, the Ministry worked feverishly to progress the procurement process for an Integrated Solid Waste Management System (ISWMS) and the delivery of a National Solid Waste Management Strategy (NSWMS), for the Islands. This, of course, could not have been achieved without the contribution of the members of the Integrated Solid Waste Management System (ISWMS) Steering Committee who did their part to ensure that the Strategic Outline Case for the proposed Integrated Solid Waste Management System was prepared and finalised in time for Cabinet's approval in April 2014. The Strategic Outline Case was an instrumental document in the procurement process, as it was the resource that guided the Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified consultants to tender for the preparation of a National Waste Management Strategy, an Outline Business Case, and procurement support for an Integrated Solid Waste Management System for the country.

Since that time, AMEC Foster Wheeler has carried out two rounds of environmental and site investigation works on and around the operational landfill sites on Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. The Ministry is now in receipt of the landfill investigation report which will be made available to the public by early September 2015.

In the interim, the Cayman Islands Government (CIG) continues with the development of a National Solid Waste Management Strategy (NSWMS), which will be fully developed and its implementation commenced in the 2016/2017 year. The NSWMS will address and seek to mitigate the key risks identified in this report and in current waste management practices. Until the NSWMS is developed, the CIG urges members of the public do their best to follow the Waste

## **National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**

*August 2015*

Hierarchy model (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover before disposing) to reduce the amount of waste being sent to the landfills.

Each and every resident of the Cayman Islands has a role to play in helping the country achieve our vision of *“integrated, sustainable, and effective waste management for the Cayman Islands.”* I encourage everyone think about the changes they can make in their lives, whether big or small, to do their part as we work together towards achieving this vision.

# National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

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## Foreword

By early 2013, the country's landfills had reached a critical point at which they needed to be addressed and the Cayman Islands Government (the "CIG") recognised that there is an urgent need to research and develop a formal, nationally agreed strategy to address the Islands' long term goals for solid waste management. Accordingly, the CIG agreed to take swift action and move forward with a process to identify and procure an Integrated Solid Waste Management System or ("ISWMS") to address the country's needs in a sustainable manner.

Adhering to their commitment to address the country's waste management needs, the Cabinet issued a policy directive on 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2013 for the development of an Integrated Solid Waste Management System for all three islands. A Steering Committee was then appointed by the Ministry of Health and Culture, in January 2014, which included representation from the Department of Environmental Health (DEH), the Department of Environment (DoE), Water Authority Cayman (WAC), the Public Works Department (PWD), the Ministry of Health and Culture and two representatives from the private sector. A small technical sub-committee was also formed at this time to carry out technical tasks, and to provide reports to the main steering committee. Subsequently, in October 2014, the Ministry employed a Senior Project Manager to oversee the ISWMS project.

The Steering Committee determined that a National Strategy for Waste Management was a pre-requisite before the preferred project options could be identified and considered in an Outline Business Case (OBC). A combined Request For Proposals document, for preparing a Waste Strategy and an OBC, was issued on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 with a return date of 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2014 in an open tender process carried out through the Central Tenders Committee. The consultancy required the services of a financial consultant and technical waste consultant who would work together to provide the strategy and OBC. Hence, on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2014 an Evaluation Summary and Tender Award Recommendation (ESTAR) report recommended award of the tender to AMEC Foster Wheeler as prime consultant for waste management, with KPMG Cayman as their sub-consultant on financial matters.

## **National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**

*August 2015*

Since the awarding of the tender to prepare a national strategy for waste management and develop an outline business case, representatives from AMEC Foster Wheeler have made several trips to the Cayman Islands to gather information that will assist in the identification of a short list of waste management options that can then be considered in more detail as part of the development of the Integrated Solid Waste Management System. In November 2014, representatives from AMEC Foster Wheeler facilitated a workshop in Grand Cayman with the steering committee members to identify a long list of potential waste management options relevant to the National Solid Waste Management Strategy and assessed these against an agreed series of initial criteria. During this time, the team also conducted environmental and site investigations on the existing waste management facilities located on Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Similarly, in April 2015, AMEC Foster Wheeler carried out a second round of environmental and site investigation works on and around the operational landfill sites on all three Islands. The Ministry is now in receipt of AMEC's report on this work and will make these reports available to the public.

This document contains the vision, values, strategic directions, and objectives for the National Solid Waste Management Policy. The Policy will guide the Cayman Islands approach to solid waste management, including the on-going procurement of the Integrated Solid Waste Management System.

# National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

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## Table of Contents

Message from the Premier Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA .....	1
Message from the Chief Officer Ms. Jennifer Ahearn, AICP .....	3
Foreword .....	5
List of Acronyms .....	8
List of Tables and Figures .....	9
Executive Summary.....	10
Background .....	12
Purpose of the National Solid Waste Management Policy.....	12
Consultation on the National Solid Waste Management Policy (NSWMP) for the Cayman Islands.....	12
Policy Framework and Development Process .....	12
Waste Management Policy and Strategy Workshop.....	15
Selection of Long List Evaluation Criteria .....	15
Weighting of Criteria .....	16
The National Solid Waste Management Policy .....	17
Vision and Values.....	18
Values.....	18
Corresponding Objectives for the Strategic Directions .....	19
Annexes.....	21
Annex 1: Steering Committee Reference Documents .....	21
Annex 2: List of Steering Committee Stakeholders .....	23
Acknowledgments .....	25

**National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**  
*August 2015*

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**List of Acronyms**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>AD</b>	Anaerobic Digestion
<b>CIG</b>	Cayman Islands Government
<b>CO</b>	Chief Officer
<b>DEH</b>	Department of Environmental Health
<b>ISWMS</b>	Integrated Solid Waste Management System
<b>IVC</b>	In-Vessel Composting
<b>MH&amp;C</b>	Ministry of Health and Culture
<b>MBT</b>	Mechanical Biological Treatment
<b>MRF</b>	Material Recovery Facility
<b>NSWMP</b>	National Solid Waste Management Policy
<b>OBC</b>	Outline Business Case
<b>PPP</b>	Public Private Partnership
<b>SOC</b>	Strategic Outline Case
<b>SPS</b>	Strategic Policy Statement
<b>WtE</b>	Waste to Energy

**List of Tables and Figures**

**Figures**

Figure 1 Waste Hierarchy ..... 9

**Tables**

Table 1 Key Themes..... 11  
Table 2 Long List Assessment Criteria ..... 12  
Table 3 Weighted Long List Assessment Criteria..... 13

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## Executive Summary

**The purpose** of the National Solid Waste Management Policy (NSWMP) is to provide an overarching guiding policy that outlines the vision, values, strategic directions and the objectives with regards to the future management of solid waste on the Cayman Islands. The document consequently provides a key foundation to the production of the list of short-listed options for the Cayman Islands procurement of an Integrated Solid Waste Management System and will guide the consideration and assessment of waste management options as part of this process.

**An inclusive process**, led by the Ministry of Health and Culture, brought together a broad range of national stakeholders to form a project Steering Committee that participated in a consultation workshop. The Steering Committee members engaged in a policy dialogue that examined and identified criteria considered important to the delivery of a future integrated solid waste management system (ISWMS) for the Cayman Islands. Using a realistic approach that built upon several initial contextual themes, the participants developed and weighted several criteria.

**An analysis of the situation** shows a current waste management system that is under considerable strain and cannot deliver against the modern challenge for improved sustainability. Furthermore, the existing network of three aged and un-engineered landfills on Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman have reached a critical point and pose a potential on-going threat to the local environment. As a consequence, there is a clear need for change and the Cayman Islands Government (CIG) is committed to finding a new and sustainable way forward. This challenge calls for a clear policy and direction for improving the performance of the waste management system, in order to ensure that the new challenges and demands are fully addressed in the most effective and appropriate way for the Cayman Islands.

**Pioneering features** of the NSWMP are the emphasis on the involvement and necessary contribution from all within our community to improve how we manage solid waste in the Cayman Islands. The CIG is committed to engage and work with all sectors of our community on the 4Rs to *reduce* the waste we produce, promote waste *reuse* and *recycle* wherever this is pragmatic and to otherwise *recover* energy from the waste that remains. By doing this, we will end our historic over-reliance on landfill and remediate the existing sites, improve the sustainability of waste management practices and work towards a waste conscious population that is empowered to take action and deliver strong and positive contributions.

**The vision** is *“Integrated, sustainable, and effective waste management for the Cayman Islands”*.

**Values:** We believe that the following value statements should guide the efforts in realising the vision of *“integrated, sustainable, and effective waste management for the Cayman Islands”*:

- We will implement sustainable waste management in a manner that respects the needs of future generations;
- We will apply the waste hierarchy preference for reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover prior to the final resort of disposal;

## **National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**

*August 2015*

- We believe that the generators of waste should be responsible and bear their proper share of costs for waste management;
- We will ensure that environmental impacts of waste management are assessed and understood, and that measures are undertaken to protect human health and the environment;
- We will pursue waste management opportunities that have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels;
- We will ensure that economies of scale are considered in determining suitable waste management practices, having due regard for the geographical aspects of the Cayman Islands;
- We will pursue multi-sectorial collaborations and partnerships with various stakeholders to achieve our vision for waste management in the Cayman Islands;
- We believe in the enhancement of personal responsibility for waste management through advocacy, education, and the creation of opportunities to help realise the national vision for waste management; and,
- We will ensure there is an appropriate legal, regulatory, and institutional framework, embracing good governance principles, to support achieving the national vision for waste management.

### **Strategic Directions**

The following strategic directions are identified and each has appropriate objectives identified in the NSWMP:

1. Apply good governance principles to strengthen institutional capacity and leadership.
2. Broaden the understanding of sustainable waste management issues and practices throughout the entire community of the Cayman Islands.
3. Manage waste in a manner protective of human health, the environment and local amenities.
4. Reduce the proportion of solid waste being landfilled by diverting waste in accordance with the sustainable waste management hierarchy.
5. Implement a waste management system that is principally financed on the basis that the waste producer pays.
6. Establish partnerships with community and business groups with a view to achieve the strategic directions for sustainable waste management in the Cayman Islands.

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## **Background**

### **Purpose of the National Solid Waste Management Policy**

The purpose of the National Solid Waste Management Policy (NSWMP) is to provide an overarching guiding policy that outlines the vision, values, strategic directions and the objectives with regards to the future management of solid waste on the Cayman Islands. The document consequently provides a key foundation to the direction of solid waste management for the Cayman Islands and will guide the consideration and assessment of waste management options as part of this process.

### **Consultation on the National Solid Waste Management Policy (NSWMP) for the Cayman Islands**

This document sets out the vision, values and strategic direction developed by the project Steering Committee, facilitated by the Ministry of Health and Culture. In June 2015, the Cayman Islands Government (CIG) published a draft National Solid Waste Management Policy (NSWMP) for public consultation. This consultation process ran from the 16th June to 15th July, 2015 and was announced through a press release and also reported in the local newspapers, radio and television.

The consultation process confirmed that the vision, values, strategic directions and objectives set out in the draft NSWMP were appropriate; and fit for purpose; with the vast majority of consultees either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the vision, values, strategic directions and objectives.

### **Policy Framework and Development Process**

In developing the NSWMP the Steering Committee has drawn on several existing documents issued or commissioned by CIG, that contain broad based policy guidance, high level strategic objectives and other relevant guidance and recommendations. In addition, the Steering Committee members engaged in a policy dialogue that examined and identified criteria considered important to the delivery of a future waste management system for the Cayman Islands. Using a realistic approach that built upon several initial contextual themes, the participants developed and weighted several criteria.

The themes and criteria were developed with wider ranging consideration of the potential impacts and benefits associated with a new and sustainable solid waste management system for the Cayman Islands.

To produce the vision, values, strategic directions and objectives set out in this NSWMP, the criteria were augmented by policy guidance derived from other relevant existing Government documents and then re-assessed in follow up meetings of the project Steering Committee. The project Steering Committee also assigned the revised criteria as the vision, values, strategic directions and objectives which are now presented in this NSWMP.

Key documents reviewed in the process of compiling this NSWMP are listed below. This list is not exhaustive and excludes documents that are more than ten years old. The documents are as follows:

# National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

## ➤ *Strategic Outline Case Solid Waste Management: Ministry of Health, Sports, Youth and Culture, April 2014*

This document sets out a strategic aim to provide the Cayman Islands with a National Solid Waste Management policy, leading towards a cost-effective, Integrated Solid Waste Management System which:

1. Adheres to the internationally accepted waste management hierarchy for solid waste management (see Figure 1);

Figure 1 Waste Hierarchy



2. Minimises the risks of immediate and future environmental pollution and harm to human health; and
3. Accommodates the islands waste growth over a 50 year period with interim reviews every five years.

Policy guidance provided by the Cabinet directs to providing the Cayman Islands with an environmentally sound and cost neutral (i.e. at no greater cost than existing) solid waste management solution that:

- Integrates programmes for collection, processing, recycling and disposal, with Waste to Energy (WtE) as the preferred core technology;
- Balances public and private sector services in order to ensure public health and safety and protect the environment;
- For the island of Grand Cayman, is located at the current George Town landfill site, but other components of the solid waste management solution may be situated on alternative sites;

## National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

- Takes into consideration the needs of all three islands; and
- Utilises a Public Private Partnership (PPP) if applicable.

This is supported by the provisions of the Strategic Policy Statement (SPS) 2014/15 which states:

“The development of a modern solid waste management facility is crucial to the long term environmental health of the Cayman Islands. The present landfill is quickly exceeding its ability to service the needs of the country and a solution has to be found. The Government is committed to conducting the necessary reviews to identify an appropriate solution which will likely involve some form of public private partnership in order to finance and implement.”

### ➤ *Cabinet Policy Guidance – Proposed Integrated Solid Waste Management System:*

The broad based policy directions provided by CIG Cabinet for the development of the ISWMS states:

1. It is expected that the development of the National Waste Management Strategy will guide effective long term programmes for the collection, processing, recycling, resource recovery and disposal of solid waste.

With the Strategic Outline Case, the Cabinet guidance sets out a framework for the delivery of an environmentally sound and cost neutral waste management solution for the Cayman Islands that promotes the principles of:

- Sustainable waste management – managing waste in a manner that does not compromise the needs of future generations;
- The waste hierarchy – implementing the sequential preference for waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery prior to the final resort to disposal;
- The polluter/waste producer pays concept – ensuring those that generate waste are responsible and bear their proper share of the costs for waste management;
- Environmental protection – by ensuring that environmental impacts of future waste management practices are fully assessed and understood and that measures are undertaken to avoid environmental damage and harm to human health;
- Climate change – by pursuing opportunities for waste to energy and managing waste in such a way as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Proximity principle – ensuring that economies of scale are considered in determining suitable waste management practices in relation to geographical aspects of waste generation;
- Use of waste as an energy resource – thereby reducing the dependence on fossil fuels for energy production; and
- The adoption of a collaborative approach – by encouraging and facilitating partnership with all stakeholders.

# National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

- **Reference List of relevant studies / reports reviewed by the Steering Committee (please see Annex 1 for the complete reference list).**

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## Waste Management Policy and Strategy Workshop

On 19th November, 2014 AMEC Foster Wheeler facilitated a waste management policy and strategic workshop which was attended by CIG Officers from the Ministry of Health and Culture, Department of Environmental Health (DEH) and fellow members of the Steering Committee. The workshop included a presentation by AMEC Foster Wheeler providing technical background information to participants. This included an over-view of waste management and treatment processes including material recovery facilities (MRF), mechanical biological treatment (MBT), waste to energy (WtE), windrow composting, in-vessel composting (IVC) and anaerobic digestion (AD). This also included a description of the main equipment used, an overview of the process and constraints on the process outputs. The workshop was broken down into two parts: 1) *high level strategic themes* and 2) *weighting of criteria*.

### *High Level Strategic Themes*

The first element of the workshop consolidated a series of themes introduced to assist the development and grouping of criteria relevant to policy and against which a long list of potential waste management options could be assessed. The key themes used for this process are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 Key Themes**

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#### **Themes**

1. Environmental
2. Financial
3. Sites
4. Social
5. Technical Performance

## Selection of Long List Evaluation Criteria

Working in groups, the workshop participants used the overarching themes (in Table 1) to guide the production of a series of measureable criteria that could be applied from a strategic perspective to assess alternative waste management options. These criteria are specific to the context of the Cayman Islands and are designed to encompass issues that the participants felt merited consideration as part of the policy development and waste management options appraisal.

A total of twenty evaluation criteria were identified at the workshop and grouped across the five key themes. These are shown in Table 2 along with a further criterion (4e – diversion of waste from landfill) that was added following further review and discussion with the workshop participants.

# National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

**Table 2 Long List Assessment Criteria**

1a	Finance	Compatibility with PPP
1b	Finance	Revenue potential
1c	Finance	Whole Lifecycle Cost
1d	Finance	Short term cost/funding
2a	Environmental	Waste Hierarchy
2b	Environmental	Recycling potential
2c	Environmental	Carbon impact/greenhouse gas
2d	Environmental	Energy generation/green energy
2e	Environmental	Life cycle environmental impact
3a	Social	Employment
3b	Social	Training/Education
3c	Social	Public acceptability/aesthetics
3d	Social	Political buy in
4a	Technical	Track record/Proven technology
4b	Technical	Simplicity
4c	Technical	Applicability to island environment
4d	Technical	Market off takes
4e	Technical	Diversion of waste from landfill
5a	Sites	Planning/site assessment
5b	Sites	Integration across all islands
5c	Sites	Remediation of existing landfills

## Weighting of Criteria

The second element of the workshop exercise that the participants were asked to complete, was to weight the criteria. This process was again completed in participant working groups and was designed to ensure that an appropriate and relative weighting could be applied to each criterion. The weightings applied to the criteria were as follows:

4 – Very important;

3 – Important;

2 – Moderate importance; and

1 – Lowest importance.

Following discussion and dialogue within their relative working group and subsequent review, the criteria weighting shown in Table 3 were agreed. The exception to this is the weighting of criterion 4e (diversion of waste from landfill) which was subsequently assigned a weighting of 4.

# National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

**Table 3 Weighted Long List Assessment Criteria**

Ref	Theme	Criteria	Weightings
1a	Finance	Compatibility with PPP	1
1b	Finance	Revenue potential	3
1c	Finance	Whole Lifecycle Cost	4
1d	Finance	Short term cost/funding	3
2a	Environmental	Waste Hierarchy	4
2b	Environmental	Recycling potential	4
2c	Environmental	Carbon impact/greenhouse gas	1
2d	Environmental	Energy generation/green energy	3
2e	Environmental	Life cycle environmental impact	3
3a	Social	Employment	3
3b	Social	Training/Education	4
3c	Social	Public acceptability aesthetics	2
3d	Social	Political buy in	4
4a	Technical	Track record/Proven technology	4
4b	Technical	Simplicity	4
4c	Technical	Applicability to island environment	2
4d	Technical	Market off-takes	2
4e	Technical	Diversion of waste from landfill	4
5a	Sites	Planning/site assessment	4
5b	Sites	Integration across all islands	3
5c	Sites	Remediation of existing landfills	4

## The National Solid Waste Management Policy

Using the output from both the document review, and the workshop, a series of consolidated criteria were assembled and a number of proposed policy statements were drafted for consideration and review by the Steering Committee. This promoted internal dialogue within the CIG prior to formalisation of the vision, values, and strategic directions in a form suitable for wider, external consultation.

The framework for NSWMP is set out as:

1. Vision;
2. Value Statements (“Values”);
3. Strategic Directions; and
4. Objectives relating to the Strategic Directions.

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## **Vision and Values**

### **Vision**

*“Integrated, sustainable, and effective waste management for the Cayman Islands”.*

### **Values**

**We believe that the following value statements should guide the efforts in realising the vision of “*integrated, sustainable, and effective waste management for the Cayman Islands*”:**

- We will implement sustainable waste management in a manner that respects the needs of future generations;
- We will apply the waste hierarchy preference for reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover prior to the final resort of disposal;
- We believe that the generators of waste should be responsible and bear their proper share of costs for waste management;
- We will ensure that environmental impacts of waste management are assessed and understood, and that measures are undertaken to protect human health and the environment;
- We will pursue waste management opportunities that have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels;
- We will ensure that economies of scale are considered in determining suitable waste management practices, having due regard for the geographical aspects of the Cayman Islands;
- We will pursue multi-sectorial collaborations and partnerships with various stakeholders to achieve our vision for waste management in the Cayman Islands;
- We believe in the enhancement of personal responsibility for waste management through advocacy, education, and the creation of opportunities to help realise the national vision for waste management; and
- We will ensure there is an appropriate legal, regulatory, and institutional framework, embracing good governance principles, to support achieving the national vision for waste management.

## Corresponding Objectives for the Strategic Directions

Strategic Directions	Objectives
1. Apply good governance principles to strengthen institutional capacity and leadership.	1.1. Establish enabling public health and waste management legislation, regulation, and enforcement. 1.2. Establish a framework to encourage multi-stakeholder collaboration.
2. Broaden the understanding of sustainable waste management issues and practices throughout the entire community of the Cayman Islands.	2.1. Institute a programme of awareness, promotion, education, and publicity in partnership with community groups, schools, and other organisations.
3. Manage waste in a manner protective of human health, the environment and local amenities.	3.1. Apply a process, based on recognised best practice, for the assessment and mitigation of health and environmental impacts of existing and proposed waste management practices. 3.2. Assess the capacity and develop a long-term management plans for each of the landfill sites, including measures to ensure that the sites do not pose an on-going risk to the environment or human health.
4. Reduce the proportion of solid waste being landfilled by diverting waste per the sustainable waste management hierarchy.	4.1. Implement and expand programmes to reduce, re-use, and recycle waste materials. 4.2. Promote the development of improved practices and facilities for solid waste management which are demonstrably consistent with the waste management hierarchy. 4.3. CIG will lead by example by examining how it purchases, uses, and manages materials, with the objective of reducing consumption and waste.

## National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

August 2015

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| 5. Implement a waste management system that is principally financed on the basis that the waste producer pays.   | 5.1. Evaluate and adjust the current financing framework for waste management to ensure that the waste producer pays proportionate to the waste that they generate.<br>5.2. Develop and implement initiatives to support waste segregation at the source, both at households and businesses, for the purpose of reducing, reusing, and recycling. |
| 6. Establish partnerships with community and business groups with a view to achieve the strategic directions for sustainable waste management in the Cayman Islands. | 6.1. Promote multi-sectorial partnerships and collaboration for the integrated and efficient delivery of waste management services and programmes.  |

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## Annexes

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### Annex 1: Steering Committee Reference Documents

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## **National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands**

*May 2015*

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# National Solid Waste Management Policy for the Cayman Islands

May 2015

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## Annex 2: List of Steering Committee Stakeholders

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