



**Report to:** Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

**Subject:** Study visit to: 1. Metabolon Innovation Site, Cologne, Germany and research centres VITO in Tournai and /or Mol, Belgium  
2. Eden Project, Cornwall

**Date:** 22 August 2014

**Reporting Officer:** Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, ext

**Contact Officers:** Sarah Jayne Smith, EU Officer, Ext 3326  
Frankie Smith, Project Sponsor, Ext: 3575

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to gauge if Members would like to go on a study visit to the former landfill site – Metabolon and research centres in Tournai and /or Mol, Belgium as part of the ReNew (Resource Innovation Network for European Waste) project that the Council is a founding partner in.
1.2	This project is EU Interreg North West Europe funded and is being led by Queen’s University, Questor Centre. The project is scheduled to run for 36 months and is now in its second year. The visit will be of particular interest to Members interested in the development of the North Foreshore and also in regard to Waste Management.
1.3	The aim of ReNEW is to create a network of organisations which work together to deliver innovations for the recovery of valuable materials from waste, in emerging terms to support the development of “ <i>the circular economy</i> ”. Further details on this EU funded project are available at <a href="http://www.renew-network.eu">http://www.renew-network.eu</a>

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	Metabolon is one of the partners in the project. :metabolon - waste-to-energy & waste-to-resource.

2.2	<p>Metabolon was the central landfill site North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. It has been transformed to a centre of research and expertise - a facility of the Cologne University of Applied Sciences (CUAS). The main focus of this new research centre is material conversion, sustainable resource efficiency as well as the development of site-related environmental technologies and techniques.</p> <p>The central landfill has many uses and is well situated in the metropolitan area of Cologne-Bonn.</p>
2.3	<p>There are four sections to the site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation support; technology facilities with state-of-the-art pilot plants and laboratory equipment for pre commercial use. There is also participation in a broad international network of research partners collaborating on innovative technical and structural solutions.</li> <li>• Bergisch Energy Competence Centre: Knowledge and information sharing were the key players from the competence fields of energy, energy efficiency and climate protection have joined forces.</li> <li>• Demonstration sites.</li> <li>• Hands-on learning supporting schools' curriculum - pupils can spend a morning working on the topics waste prevention, recycling and energy.</li> </ul> <p>( Please see attached appendix 1)</p>
2.4	<p>VITO research institute focuses on climate change, food security, the scarcity of raw materials, a sustainable energy supply and an ageing population.</p> <p>CTP research institute has the aim of meeting the needs of its clients and partners and in particular of helping them to resolve problems and challenges linked with the treatment and recovery of solid materials (ore, industrial minerals, sludge, by-products, and waste).</p> <p>In 2009, CTP committed itself to setting up a close partnership with other Walloon Research Centres and to creating EMRA - Environment and Materials Research Association</p>
2.5	<p>The Council has been involved in the ReNew Project to develop potential resource management projects. An emerging project being developed by QUESTOR – CASE, ReNew's lead partner in a cleantech renewable energy innovation centre.</p>
2.6	<p>The reason for the visit is to see how the Metabolon site has been redeveloped to incorporate a renewable energy competence centre, resource research facility, sustainable business park and public open space it is also to learn about the innovative approach and the different sources of funding that were used to develop the Metabolon site that could be applied to the redevelopment of the North Foreshore site. As Members are aware the North Foreshore a closed waste landfill site which is to be developed as an environmental resource park, is a strategic project contained in the Investment Programme 2015. Appendix 2 provides an update on current environmental park projects at North Foreshore.</p>
2.7	<p>The proposed visit will be in October 2014, likely to be 16 October, for approximately 3</p>

2.8	<p>days. The visit will be 100% funded by the Renew project. An agenda will follow once dates are confirmed.</p> <p>It is anticipated that approximately 3-4 MLA's from the Environment Committee may also attend.</p> <p><b><u>Eden Project</u></b></p> <p>The Eden Project is a globally recognised major ecological project with huge tourism returns situated in a former china clay quarry in Cornwall. Two botanists from the Eden Project are currently advising Council in regard to the restoration of the Tropical Ravine in Botanic Gardens.</p> <p>The botanists were asked for their opinion on the future potential of the 200 plus acres of open space at North Foreshore and were very excited about various possibilities.</p> <p>They have offered to host a study visit to Eden Project for the North Foreshore Steering Group to give Members an impression of what is possible and to discuss further ideas.</p>
-----	---

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	The visit will be 100% funded by the Renew project.
3.2	The Eden Project visit is within existing budget resources.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	It is recommended that Committee nominate representatives to attend Metabolon with an interest in the North Foreshore and waste management (one Member from each party). Members are to contact Sarah Jayne Smith, <a href="mailto:smithsj@belfastcity.gov.uk">smithsj@belfastcity.gov.uk</a> or 028 90 270666 to reserve a place by 5 September.
5.2	It is also recommended that Committee nominate representative with an interest in the North Foreshore open space to undertake this Eden Project study visit (one Member from each party). Members are to contact Frankie Smith ext: 3575 to reserve a place by 5 September 2014.
5.3	Final dates will be confirmed if Committee approve the study visits.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
<p>Timeline: September 2014</p> <p>Reporting Officer: Gerry Millar</p>	