



To: Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste
Report by: Director of Environment
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment 28/06/2016
Wards affected: All

Shared Waste Service: Performance and Policies Developments Non-Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Single Shared Waste Service (SSWS) between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire DC (SCDC) was designed to facilitate financial savings, greater innovation, increased recycling performance and lower landfill. This report outlines performance and policy measures that can be taken in the current year to contribute to delivering on those objectives.
- 1.2 A further report will be brought for Members' decisions in January 2017 relating to the commissioning of a harmonised vehicle fleet operating for both councils.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve aggregation of recycling and waste performance with South Cambridgeshire DC for official reporting to the Government's national Waste Data Flow system.
- 2.2 Authorise improvements in the Council's policies to make recycling even easier for residents, and discourage landfill waste, as follows: -
 - a) Permit residents to put out reasonable amounts of recyclates for collection next to the recycling bin if it is already full, and put in place arrangements and communicate with residents to allow implementation from 3 October 2016.

- b) Explore opportunities within existing budgets to assist residents in reducing landfill waste, and increasing recycling, particularly packaging, food/organics, textiles and real Christmas trees.
- c) Households of at least six people, or at least two children of nappy age, may qualify on application (and subject to ongoing qualification) for an additional residual waste bin of 140 litre capacity with a red lid. Existing 240 litre additional residual waste bins with red lids will be surveyed to establish continuing qualification and, if approved, be replaced with 140 litre bins in due course.
- d) Remove administration charges for additional residual waste bins on the basis that only households that qualify may receive an additional bin (at no charge).
- e) Remove the charges to residents for the replacement of damaged residual waste bins (black bins) thus ensuring there are no charges for damaged bins for recycling, green waste or residual services.
- f) Remove the need for residents to secure Police Incident Numbers (PINs) in relation to stolen bins, and remove the charges to residents for stolen residual waste bins (black bins).

3. Report

- 3.1 The Single Shared Waste Service (SSWS) between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire DC (SCDC) came into being in November 2015. This comprised co-location of the two councils' vehicle fleets and staff at the Waterbeach Depot.
- 3.2 The top tier of management for the SSWS has been re-organised. The new Head of Waste Resources came into post this year, and the two supporting senior managers in July 2015.
- 3.3 The commercial services staff of both councils transferred line management responsibility to the Head of Waste Resources on 16 May 2016.
- 3.4 The SSWS Board is taking forward a range of projects to deliver £700k of efficiency savings over three years (2015/16 to 2017/18). Savings are being shared equally between the two councils. £120k was saved in 2015/16. The SSWS is on target to save £300k in 2016/17. The remaining £300k (of the £700k) is due in 2017/18.

- 3.5 The councils' decisions to create the SSWS open the door to cross-border working of vehicle fleets. Modelling work is underway to assess technical logistics, and resultant financial benefits. Plans are progressing to facilitate cross-border working in the current financial year wherever possible – particularly with the collections of green garden waste and residual waste. Plans for cross-border working on recycling services are being taken forward with a view to implementation in 2017.

Aggregated Performance Reporting

- 3.6 An inevitability of cross-border working is that it will not be possible to assign tonnages collected in all vehicles to one council or the other. In terms of official reporting of statistics to the national Waste Data Flow system operated by Defra, reported performance will be on the basis of the SSWS under the name of Cambridge City and South Cambs Councils. This will take effect at the latest from 1st April 2017.
- 3.7 However, Defra is willing to facilitate the change now. This enables both councils to secure efficiency savings through cross border working in the current financial year rather than to wait until next year.
- 3.8 A major benefit from aggregating performance, consistent with the SSWS ethos, is that both councils will be recorded as exceeding recycling rates of 50%+. This means both councils will have reached the national target of 50% in 2020 several years early.
- 3.9 All UK councils that reach/exceed 50% in 2020 will be best placed to avoid any fines that are required by the Government from local authorities as included in the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.10 The recommendation to Members is to agree performance reporting on an aggregated basis with effect from 1st April 2016, which Defra is willing to support.

Increasing Recycling, Reducing Landfill

- 3.11 Members will be aware the overall costs to councils, and taxpayers, of recycling are generally lower than for landfill. In large part this is because Waste Disposal Authorities (such as the County Council) have to pay the Landfill Tax to HM Treasury of £84.40 per tonne. This tax is on top of all collection, haulage and treatment costs. Whilst the tax is not borne by the City Council it is right we consider whole system costs to the taxpayer and take action to reduce overall costs wherever possible.

3.12 Increasing the amount of household waste recycled is a major way to reduce landfill, and thus reduce costs. As costs and the legislative framework change over time, it is right that the Council reviews policies to ensure they are up-to-date in encouraging residents to recycle. Additionally, the creation of the SSWS allows Members to consider harmonising policies at the current time.

3.13 Practical policy measures include: -

- a) Allowing residents to put out reasonable amounts of recyclates along side recycling bins if they are already full (this is called side recycling). This policy has been in place at SCDC for some time where the evidence is that residents tend to make use of the side recycling policy at seasonal times of year (e.g. Amazon packaging at Christmas) or after special occasions (e.g. glass bottles). Allowing side recycling rather than the Council needing to promote (and pay for) additional recycling bins is better value for taxpayers. It also means residents do not need to have two recycling bins if space is at a premium, and their need for side recycling is occasional. Members are asked to agree an implementation date of 3 October 2016 in order to put in place internal arrangements and communicate with residents.
- b) Exploring options to further increase the capture of recyclable packaging, food/organics, textiles throughout the year, and real Christmas trees (December/January). Officers of both councils will work together, and with the wider RECAP¹ Partnership, to put in place practical initiatives that help deliver greater recycling capture within existing budgets.
- c) Households with six or more people, or two or more children of nappy age, can qualify (on application) for a second residual waste bin. Whilst the provision of a second bin will remain, the size of bin tends to encourage greater landfill waste rather than recycling. Thus, all new applications for a second residual waste bin, if they qualify, will be provided with a 140 litre bin rather than a 240 litre bin. This will still mean such households have 50% greater residual waste capacity than the vast majority of households. For the 1,200 current households with second bins, work will be taken forward to ensure households still qualify and, if so, to replace the 240 litre bins with 140 litre over time.

¹ Recycle for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The RECAP Partnership comprises all seven district, county and unitary councils.

Removal of Charges to Residents

3.14 A number of charges to residents have been reviewed. For a variety of reasons, it is recommended that these are removed in the following areas: -

- a) Charges for additional residual waste bins will be removed. Currently these are £50 for a 240 litre bin or £25 for a 140 litre bin. Only those households that qualify for an additional bin will receive one (and free of charge). Households that do not qualify will not be able to increase their residual waste by purchasing an additional bin. Instead, households are encouraged to make appropriate use of their recycling bin as the vast majority of households should not need 240 litres of residual capacity a fortnight.
- b) The Council currently charges residents £50 for replacement residual waste bins (240 litre) or £25 (140 litre) if they are significantly damaged. There are no similar charges for green garden waste bins or recycling bins. Thus, bringing the policy into a common position so that no residents are charged for replacement of damaged bins is appropriate.
- c) The Council currently requires residents to gain Police Incident Numbers (PINs) in order to replace stolen bins of any kind. In addition, for residual waste bins only, the Council charges residents £50 for replacement. As PINs are no longer available for stolen bins, the Council needs to remove the requirement on residents. Additionally, bringing the charging policy into a common position such that residents are not charged for replacement of any stolen bins is appropriate.

3.15 It is recommended Members agree the proposals in paragraphs 3.6 to 3.14 to support aggregated performance, increase recycling rates and reduce landfill, and remove charges to residents as outlined.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

All proposals will be contained within existing budgets.

(b) Staffing Implications

Discussions with staff and unions will take place on the collection of side recycling and the implementation date.

(c) **Equality and Poverty Implications**

All of the measures proposed in this report, including removal of charges, are likely to provide positive impacts for residents, particularly people among the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. However, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will be taken forward as part of the implementation of the proposals.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

The recommendations will have a positive medium impact on climate change. Landfilled waste is known to be a high contributor to methane emissions in the UK. Increasing recycling, especially of organic waste, and reducing landfill, is beneficial.

(e) **Procurement**

There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

A plan will be implemented to communicate improvements in recycling services, and removal of charges, to residents in due course.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no implications as a result of this report.

5. Background papers

None

6. Appendices

None

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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