



To: Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services
Report by: Jen Robertson - Waste Strategy Manager
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment Scrutiny Committee 15/3/2011
Wards affected: All Wards

KERBSIDE BATTERY RECYCLING COLLECTION Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 As part of the Medium Term Programme and under the vision statement 'Towards a city in the forefront of low carbon living and minimising its impact on the environment from waste and pollution', the council is proposing a kerbside collection of portable household batteries. The Waste Batteries and Accumulators Regulations 2009 requires producers to arrange for collection of batteries and sets UK targets for recycling of 25% by 2010 and 45% by 2016
- 1.2 One of the main benefits of this collection service would be to make the recycling of portable household batteries easier and thereby encourage more residents to do it. Instead of having to take batteries to one of the recycling points where there is a bin or to a retailer that has a box, residents will be able to put batteries out for recycling with their green bin.
- 1.3 The proposed kerbside collection would be carried out in conjunction with a battery compliance scheme acting on behalf of battery producers to fulfil their obligations. There would be no cost to the council and a small income would be generated. The proposal is for residents to be issued with small bags to put their spent batteries in, which they would then stick onto their green bins for collection.
- 1.4 St. Edmundsbury DC and Warwick DC have been operating a collection of this type for a few years. Last year Warwick, which is one of our "Nearest Neighbours", collected 14 tonnes. South Cambridgeshire DC introduced a collection last year and between October and December collected 6 tonnes.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To approve the introduction of a kerbside recycling collection of batteries to houses in the city.

3. Background

- 3.1 In the survey carried out in September 2008 before the introduction of the blue bins, 58% of residents said they would like to be able to recycle batteries. This was the third most cited material after cartons/tetra-pak and plastic pots and tubs.
- 3.2 Batteries are classed as hazardous waste as most contain heavy metals and mercury. These materials are therefore important to recycle and deal with in a controlled and safe manner.
- 3.3 If approved, the intention is to introduce this extra recycling service on 16 May 2011 enabling residents to easily recycle their batteries, through a kerbside collection.
- 3.4 The proposal is for the green bin crews to collect the batteries when emptying the green bins. A small adaptation to the 4 green bin vehicles will be required for the storage of the batteries. The batteries will be off-loaded at the Mill Road Depot into a purpose built storage container. This container will be emptied by a contractor paid for by the compliance scheme.
- 3.5 Specially designed plastic bags will be delivered to residents on their green bins. The bags will include information about the type of batteries that can be collected. For the first delivery there will also be a card delivered with the bag with further details about the scheme. A copy of this artwork is attached at Appendix A.
- 3.6 Residents will place their household batteries in the bag and put the bag out for collection with their green bin. The bags have a self adhesive strip along the top edge and residents will be asked to attach the bag to the back of their green bin. When the crews collect a bag they will deliver another at the same time, leaving it clasped under the edge of the bin lid.
- 3.7 Residents using brown sacks will be asked to put the bag out on top of their brown sack. Replacement bags for these households will be put through people's letterboxes.

- 3.8 If residents have not received a battery bag they may use any other small plastic bag which they can tie onto the bin handle.
- 3.9 Blue bin crews will carry a small in-cab container in case some bags are put on the blue bin by mistake.
- 3.10 Flats will not be covered at this time, but residents will be directed to use one of the seven drop off points in the city or one of the numerous retail points. Consideration has been given to the feasibility of providing flats with collection containers but emptying these cannot be covered by the contractor and it is too resource intensive for the council to collect.
- 3.11 Consideration has also been given to using the blue bins to facilitate the collection but unfortunately there is not sufficient space on these collection vehicles for storage of the batteries as the space is used for the storage of a slave bin needed for emptying boxes.
- 3.12 It is also felt that the collection is best aligned with the recycling week (i.e. blue and green bin week) rather than the refuse week (i.e. black bin week). As this is a service that residents are unlikely to need to use every fortnight, it is felt that even if people are not putting their green bins out every fortnight this should not cause a problem.
- 3.13 The intention is for a battery compliance scheme operator to collect the bulked up batteries from the Mill Road Depot. They will provide the bags for residents, a purpose built storage container, evidence of recycling plus a small income per tonne to the authority. At present there is only one compliance scheme offering kerbside collection bags and an income for the batteries.

4. Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications. It is predicted that we will collect 10 tonnes of batteries in the first year, with subsequent increases as the scheme becomes more widely known about. This will generate a small income.
- 4.2 In terms of the resilience of the scheme an agreement with the compliance scheme, Valpak, will be for 2 years with the option to renew for a further year. St Edmundsbury and Warwick DCs have been providing this type of collection to their residents for about 4 years.
- 4.3 The environmental implications are very positive in terms of avoidance of landfill of this type of hazardous material. However there may be a

small increase in vehicle movements associated with the contractor collections, although our understanding is that the proposed collection sub-contractor is likely to be collecting from retailers in Cambridge.

- 4.4 An agreement with Valpak is being looked at by our Legal Team. The Procurement Team has also been consulted.

5. Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Example artwork for bag and card.

7. Inspection of papers

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

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