

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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| Date of Meeting | Tuesday 19 July 2016 |
| Report Subject | Review of the Household Recycling Centre Provision |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Waste and Public Protection |
| Report Author | Chief Officer, Streetscene & Transportation |
| Type of Report | Strategic & Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following publication of the Welsh Government (WG) review and subsequent report on the Council's Household Recycling Centres (HRC) provision, the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited to consider the report and the future provision of HRC sites in the County at the meeting on 11 May.

The WG study concluded that the Council's HRC provision (in terms of the number of sites) was greater than was necessary and that the facilities offered at each site did not match the minimum requirements for the high quality sites, which regularly achieve high levels of recycling elsewhere in the Country. It recommended that the optimum solution for a County of the size and demographic features of Flintshire would be just three HRC sites, with each site offering good access and excellent recycling facilities to users.

At the meeting, the Scrutiny Committee challenged the findings of the review and the report has since been the subject of considerable public and media interest. In response, the Cabinet Member for Waste agreed that consideration would be given to other and more supportable options, including an option for two additional large or 'super sites' to supplement the two existing facilities at Sandycroft and Greenfield. The facilities would potentially be located in the Flint/Connah's Quay area and the Buckley/Mold area however this would be subject to the Council being able to identify suitable sites at these locations.

This report provides Scrutiny with details of the progress made in identifying suitable sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That Scrutiny notes the progress made to review the HRC provision and request a full report on the preferred location and individual site layouts be provided to the October Committee meeting. |
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REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW |
| 1.01 | Approximately 30% of the total domestic waste currently produced in Flintshire is deposited at the HRC sites and the average recycling rate achieved at the sites is just approximately 70%. This is due to the lack of facilities and space at the sites to offer the full range of recycling containers for residents to recycle their waste. |
| 1.02 | Welsh Government have recently completed a review of the Council's waste service, which included a review of the Council's HRC provision. The study concluded that the Council's HRC provision was greater than necessary (in terms of the number of sites provided) and that the facilities offered at each site did not match the minimum requirements for the high quality sites, which achieved high levels of recycling elsewhere in the Country. |
| 1.03 | <p>The WG study considered the optimum configuration and location of sites in the County and considered a number of factors, before making a recommendation on the number of sites that should remain after their review. The factors included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of residents within a 20 minute drive of the sites• Development potential of the site to meet the requirements of a high quality and high performing site <p>The report finally recommended just three sites at Nercwys, Greenfield and Sandycroft with the WG indicating that capital funding would be available to bring the Nercwys site up to the high standard of the other two facilities.</p> |
| 1.04 | <p>It was clear from feedback to the report that residents and elected members valued a more localised HRC provision and at the request of both the Cabinet Member and the Council Leader, officers were asked to provide other options which balanced both the expectations of communities and the need for the Council to achieve higher levels of recycling performance, to meet very challenging WG statutory recycling targets.</p> <p>The expected outcome was a solution which would provide customers with modern local facilities to recycle their waste with reduced waiting times and improved safety arrangements.</p> |

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| 1.05 | <p>Suitable land in the Mold/Buckley area has not been identified and as an alternative option to the single "super site", officers from the waste service are exploring options to improve the current facilities in Buckley and Mold, along similar lines to the new facility in Sandycroft.</p> <p>This would include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear separation of operational and service user areas – removing the requirement to close the site when skips are emptied. • Easy step free access to skips • Clear entrance and exits and good traffic management arrangements |
| 1.06 | <p>Options to replace the existing Flint and Connah's Quay sites with a single facility, also with similar characteristics to the Sandycroft facility are being progressed, with a number of potential sites being considered and discussions with land owners (regarding possible land purchases) currently on-going. Until such time as we are able to provide a satisfactory solution in this area, the existing facilities in Connah's Quay and Flint will continue to operate in their current format.</p> |
| 1.07 | <p>Such a set of locally based solutions would balance the twin objectives of meeting the needs of communities whilst driving up recycling performance towards the recycling targets. Positive discussions are continuing with WG regarding the provision of capital grant to develop the network of local sites and the Council have received notification that funding will be made available to develop the Mold and Buckley sites to the same high standard as the existing facility in Sandycroft. Further discussions will now take place to seek WG support for funding for the full proposal.</p> |
| 1.08 | <p>All of the proposals will be brought to a conclusion in readiness for a final report to Scrutiny in October 2016. The report will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide details of the revised layouts at the Nercwys and Buckley facilities 2. Provide details of the preferred location of the replacement facility for Flint and Connah's Quay. 3. Provide estimate construction/remodelling costs for each of the sites. 4. Provide details of the funding arrangements and the level of WG contribution to the project. 5. Provide Cabinet with the construction sequence and timescales for the redevelopment work. 6. Provide clarity on the expected efficiency savings, generated by the improved recycling levels, which will support the business case for the project. |
| 1.09 | <p>The original savings proposal consisted of two elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Savings in operational costs from reduced site numbers 2. Savings from reduced landfill cost through improved recycling. |

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| | <p>As the saving from the first element will be significantly reduced by the revised proposal, the second element will become critical if the majority of the projected Business Planning proposed saving are still to be delivered.</p> <p>The target of 90% recycling at all of the facilities is achievable and the support of all parties and a slogan of "TARGET 90%", together with a clear communications plan for launching the new proposals will be recommended within the October report.</p> |
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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | Reduction in HRC provision and improved recycling levels will partially achieve the savings identified in the Portfolio Business Plans. |
| 2.02 | The existing operational staff employed at the sites will be deployed into other areas of the service. |
| 2.03 | Overall Recycling Performance at the Councils HRC sites was approximately 70% in 2015-16 against the proposed target of 90%. Failure to achieve the 90% target, resulted in approximately 6,000 tonnes of material being sent to landfill, rather than being recycled at a cost of £0.5m. |

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| 3.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
| 3.01 | A full EIA has been completed and the impact on the statutory protect groups was tested at stakeholders workshops. The assessment will be updated once the new configuration has been confirmed. |

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| 4.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 4.01 | The progress of the scheme development are monitored trough the portfolio Programme Board. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | None |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | Contact Officer: Stephen O Jones Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | HRC – Household Recycling Centre |