

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 19 MARCH 2015**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (STREETSCENE AND
TRANSPORTATION)**

SUBJECT: **WASTE COLLECTIONS POLICY**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek a recommendation from Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet to approve the changes to the Waste Collections Policy following the 2015-16 Business Planning process.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 In June 2010 the Council adopted its Municipal Waste Strategy. The Strategy contains a number of key actions which were needed to meet the challenging recycling targets set out in the all Wales National Waste Strategy 'Towards Zero Waste'

2.02 On 15th March 2011 the Council's Executive formally approved its Household Waste Collection Policy which supported the introduction of a Managed Weekly Collection (MWC) service, fundamentally changing the way the Council collected all domestic waste in the County. The new MWC service was designed to increase participation in recycling and reduce the Council's reliance on landfill in order meet the challenging targets set out in the Strategy. Revisions to the Policy were approved by Cabinet in December 2013.

2.03 Failure to meet the WG National Strategy landfill targets could result in infraction charges being levied against the Council totalling £200 for each tonne of waste land filled above the defined allowance. This would result in a relatively minor failure to meet the target of (say) 1,000 tonnes or the equivalent of just 1% of the Council's current Municipal Waste arising, resulting in a financial penalty of £200,000 for that year alone. In addition, a further £200/tonne infraction charge could be levied if the Council fails to achieve the Statutory Waste Recycling target in a same period.

2.04 Since the introduction of the Policy and the new collection arrangements, recycling levels across all areas of the County have increased, allowing the Council to achieve the 2012 – 13 statutory target and to be well on track to achieve the subsequent targets - which are shown below:

Table 1 - Summary of municipal waste targets

TARGET FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL LOCAL AUTHORITY:	TARGETS FOR EACH TARGET YEAR			
	12-13	15-16	19-20	24-25
Minimum levels of preparing for reuse and recycling / composting (or AD)	52%	58%	64%	70%
Flintshire CC actual performance	55%			
Minimum proportion of reuse/recycling/composting that must come from source separation (kerbside, bring and/or civic amenity (CA) site)	80%	80%	80%	80%
Flintshire CC actual performance	55%			

2.05 The service is partly funded by WG though the Sustainable Waste Management Grant (SWMG). The level of the Grant was reduced by approximately 5% during the financial year 2013-14, 3% in 2014 – 15 and indications are that further reductions are to be expected in 2015 – 16 and beyond.

2.06 The new Policy has now been reviewed to reflect the 2015-16 Business Planning proposals.

3.00 **CONSIDERATIONS**

Summary of Changes to the existing Policy

Missed collections

3.01 The Council provide up to 264,000 collections every week and it is inevitable that some missed collections will occur. Some are the fault of the collection crews but many missed collections result from residents not presenting their waste containers for collection on time or presenting the wrong bin for collection.

3.02 Returning for these containers and bins creates a significant financial burden for the service in terms of the vehicles and operatives which are utilised on a daily basis to recover the collections.

3.03 From the 1st May 2015 it is intended to introduce a charge hands role to each main waste collection round. The charge hand will be responsible for all of the operations carried out by that round and ensuring all containers presented for collection are emptied and returned to their correct location and that the road or street is left in a clean and tidy state. The charge hand will electronically sign off each street as it is completed.

- 3.04 The Council will not return to collect containers reported as missed once the street has been signed off. Residents will be permitted to take their waste to their local HRC site or it will be collected on the next collection day for that material.
- 3.05 Residents on the Council's Assisted Collection register will be unaffected by these changes
- 3.06 The new arrangements will take effect from 1st May 2015 following an awareness raising campaign for residents.

Household Recycling Centres(HRC's)

- 3.07 HRC's manage approximately one third of the overall municipal waste arising in the County and the Council currently operates 7 HRC'S at the following locations:
- Hope
 - Mold
 - Buckley
 - Sandycroft
 - Connah's Quay
 - Flint
 - Greenfield
- 3.08 The current recycling performance level across all sites is 58%. Top performing Authorities in Wales are achieving 80 to 90% recycling and the WG minimum requirement for all sites is an 80% recycling level.
- 3.09 WG site guidelines clearly promote larger sites which are capable of housing all of the recycling containers and provide space for engagement with users to maximise recycling opportunity. On that basis the site in Hope, which has a small footprint and the highest cost per tonne for material handled, will close on 1st May 2015. In recognition that residents will take their waste and recycling to the Mold site, improvements will be made to this site to provide greater capacity and improve access arrangements. Similarly the facilities in Flint and Connah's Quay will open on Saturday, Sunday and Monday only from 1st May 2015 which reflects the higher usage on these days. Opening hours will also change to reflect the standard working day of the service and the demand from the service users.
- 3.10 The sites will be monitored daily when closed to deal with fly tipping events and action will be taken against any perpetrators. Anecdotal evidence from other Councils in areas where HRC sites have closed does not show increased fly tipping occurs in the wider community as a result of the closures.
- 3.11 The sites are currently operated by staff employed by the Council and whilst the staff assist residents to recycle their waste, improvement is

clearly necessary if the Council are to achieve the statutory targets set by WG. This will be achieved by contracting the operations and management of the HRC sites in a performance based contract which will guarantee the recycling levels at all sites.

3.12 Because of the timescales required to develop the tender and move through the necessary procurement process, the contract award cannot be achieved until September 2015 and a number of operational changes are required at the sites in advance in order to achieve the 2015-16 recycling target. They include:

- Introducing a Charge hand role to supervise and operate each site
- Provision of an additional recycling operative at each site
- Bag splitting to be undertaken at every site
- Application of stricter van permit rules
- Meet and greet with a greater emphasis on recycling education
- Weekly performance reporting for each site

Garden Waste Collections (Brown bins)

Charging for additional brown bins:

3.13 There is no statutory duty on the Council to collect garden waste however garden waste collections contribute significantly to our overall recycling performance through the brown bin collection service.

3.14 Many Local Authorities in Wales have taken the decision to charge for the collection of all garden waste but as they contribute such a significant level of recycling we recognise that this is both beneficial to our performance and is a popular and well received service. Therefore the collection of the first garden waste container for each resident will continue although this position may be reviewed in future years.

3.15 A large number of properties in the County already present additional brown bins for collection with some residents having up to 6 garden waste containers at their property. These have been obtained through payment for a second or subsequent bin or utilising a container from a neighbour who does not require the service.

3.16 As from 1st May 2015 we will continue to collect one garden waste bin from each property however residents who wish to have a second or subsequent bin collected will be required to pay a charge for collection. The charge for 2015 – 16 is proposed to be £24 and this rate will be reviewed annually

- 3.17 Each property requiring additional collections will be issued with a sticker for each additional bin that will make it easily identifiable to the collection crew as a bin that has been paid for.

Cessation of Collections between December and March:

- 3.18 Garden waste tonnages are seasonal with the majority of garden waste collected between March and the end of November. Tonnages collected between December and February represent less than 10 % of the total garden waste collected per annum. Many residents do not present their brown bin during this period.
- 3.19 By stopping collections over this period operational savings will be made in both staffing levels (agency) and vehicles costs. Smaller vehicles with reduced operative numbers will be used to collect food only on the alternate week to the fortnightly black bin collections.
- 3.20 This will be introduced from the 1st December 2015 following a publicity campaign informing residents of our intention to withdraw the service over this period.
- 3.21 HRC sites will continue to accept all garden waste during this period

Delivery of New Waste Containers

- 3.22 The Council currently delivers, direct to the door, all requests for replacement receptacles such as wheeled bins, recycling boxes, recycling bags etc. This is done following a phone call by the resident to our Contact Centre. Given the number of requests received each year and the high cost in terms of labour, vehicles and the cost of providing this service in future is unsustainable.
- 3.23 From 1st May 2015, the Council will no longer deliver recycling boxes, or non-food bags (for paper, plastic, tins and glass – food bags unaffected). Instead, on receiving a request we will provide the resident with a unique reference number and they will be directed to the nearest Council facility to collect the items. Facilities will include HRC's Housing Offices, Council Buildings etc.
- 3.24 On arrival they will also be required to present a household bill containing their home address along with their designated reference number to receive their items.
- 3.25 Replacement requests for wheel bins will continue to be delivered due to their size and weight. We will also continue to provide deliveries of all items to those residents registered on our Assisted Collection register.

Bulky Waste Collections

- 3.26 The Council currently provides a bulky waste collection service for large items householders wish to dispose of. This is a chargeable service with a current rate of £15 for 1 to 5 items. Extra items, up to a maximum of 5, are also collected at an additional charge of £5 item.
- 3.27 Typical examples of bulky waste that are collected include mattress's, bed frames, chairs, tables, TV's, carpets, hi-fi's, cupboards, standard cookers, sideboards, lamps, children's toys, computers, bookcases etc. A three piece suite will count as three items.
- 3.28 Householders in receipt of Income Support, Unemployment Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, State Pension or Guaranteed Pension Credits are allowed up to 2 free of charge collections per year. And the majority of service requests come from those who receive the service free of charge.
- 3.29 Collections are carried out both by in house teams and by a local social enterprise organisation who collect all electrical goods and other items that have a potential for reuse, such as good quality furniture.
- 3.30 The new arrangement will introduce a revised charging arrangement which will more accurately reflect the cost of delivering the service. A charge will also apply to residents receiving benefits (As 3.28)

Cessation of Trade Waste Collection Service

- 3.31 The Council is required to ensure a suitable and effective Trade Waste service is available to all businesses in all areas of the County however it is not obliged to deliver the service itself. Whilst the Council provides the service to approximately 800 businesses, the local commercial service area arrangements are well developed and rates need to be extremely competitive to maintain the contracts. Payment defaults are common and the service requires a high level of back office support to manage the invoicing or billing
- 3.32 The service will no longer be offered and a list of suitable suppliers will be provided to businesses if required.
- 3.33 A normal residential collection service will be provided free of charge to all places of worship in the County and collections from schools remain unaffected by the proposals

Introduction of 7 day Working with no Christmas or New Year catch up.

- 3.34 The waste collection service currently operates over 6 days with the majority of collections taking place on Monday to Friday and 4,500 properties receiving their collections on a Saturday. The introduction of Saturday collections in 2011 has provided significant savings in fleet costs and although there were some initial concerns from residents, the new service is now well received.
- 3.35 The new proposals will extend Saturday collections to a further 5,000 properties mainly in the North West of the County, with a small number of around 1,450 (mainly rural properties) receiving a Sunday collection.
- 3.36 The roll out of 7 day working will begin in the summer of 2015 following a full round review to ensure all of the rounds are optimised taking into account the increasing number of developments and the new collection day arrangements.
- 3.37 The introduction of Sunday collections and extension of Saturday working will increase the capacity of the existing rounds and reduce the vehicle requirements by the equivalent of two front line waste vehicles.
- 3.38 Residents whose collection falls on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day will not receive a collection, other than for food. Their waste will be collected on the next scheduled collection day with HRC sites available to receive all waste types during the festive period and weekly collections of black bins and recycling will also be provided in the run up to and the week after the Christmas period.
- 3.39 Two All Member Workshops have been held to provide some recommendations and support on the content of the new Waste Collection Policy.
- 3.40 The Workshop will make recommendations on the following aspects of the Policy
- 3.41
- HRC opening hours
 - Charge for bulky collections for those on benefits
 - Charging levels for garden waste collection
 - Sunday collection areas

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend approval of the new waste collection policy to Cabinet

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The service is part funded by the Welsh Government through the Sustainable Waste Management Grant. The grant has been reduced over the past 2 years and further reduction is expected in future years.

5.02 The remaining service is budgeted within the Streetscene and Transportation budget.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Impact Assessments has been completed.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Achieving the recycling targets will reduce landfill and also reduce the Council carbon footprint.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 A desktop EIA has been carried out on the individual proposals.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Operational staff will be redeployed to other roles within the service.

9.02 Staffing cost reductions will be achieved through the staffing review.

10.00 CONSULTATION

10.01 With Cabinet Member

11.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 11.01
- Member Workshop
 - Scrutiny
 - Open stakeholders consultation period

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Waste Collection Policy March 2015

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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