

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 10 th December 2019
Report Subject	Outcome of the Waste Strategy Review Consultation Process
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene And Transportation)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2011, Flintshire County Council introduced a Managed Weekly Collection waste service (MWC), which changed waste collections in the County from a weekly, black sack and back door service to weekly recycling and food waste collections with fortnightly collections of non- recyclable waste, alternating with garden waste - with all of the various waste streams being pre-sorted by residents and collected at the kerb-side.

This change significantly improved the Council's recycling performance and due to the engagement and efforts of residents, the Council continues to perform well with the recycling performance for 2018/19 confirmed at 69.16%. This is already above the 2019/20 target of 64% with the next significant target being 70% in 2025.

The current recycling performance needs to be celebrated but without operational and policy change, it is likely that performance will now stabilise and any future improvements in performance will become difficult to achieve. Whilst the current waste strategy does not come to an end until 2025, the target set within the document of 70% has been almost achieved and it is important that the Council starts to plan for the future, considering what more could be done to increase recycling rates still further.

In September 2019, the Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of a public consultation exercise to gauge public opinion on the current recycling and waste services and to explore options on the next steps, to further improve recycling levels across the County.

This report provides feedback from the Consultation exercise and makes recommendations on the future recycling and waste service provision in the County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Scrutiny notes the responses to the public consultation exercise on the Council's Waste Strategy.
2	That Scrutiny recommends Cabinet approve the changes to the recycling and waste collection service detailed in this report.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	RECYCLING AND WASTE PERFORMANCE AND CONSULTATION															
1.01	<p>Recycling Targets and Performance</p> <p>In 2010, Welsh Government (WG) published its policy for dealing with municipal waste in Wales 'Towards Zero Waste' (TZW). The policy set out statutory recycling targets for all Council's in Wales to meet.</p> <p>In June 2010, the Council adopted its own Municipal Waste Strategy. The strategy contained a number of key actions which were required to meet the challenging targets set out in TZW.</p> <p>In 2011, WG published its Municipal Sector Plan which was a partnering document to TZW which provided guidance to Welsh Council's in the form of a blueprint describing WG's recommended service delivery for Council's to follow.</p>															
1.02	<p>Working to the Council Municipal Waste Strategy, recycling performance has exceed the statutory targets, with current performance almost at the level required by 2024/25.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Recycling Target</th> <th>FCC's Recycling Performance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>52%</td> <td>54.92%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016/17</td> <td>58%</td> <td>68.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>64%</td> <td>69% (projected)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024/25</td> <td>70%</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Council recycling success is to be celebrated, however, WG are currently reviewing their national policies with a view to revising future targets which could increase targets to 80 or even 90%</p>	Year	Recycling Target	FCC's Recycling Performance	2013/14	52%	54.92%	2016/17	58%	68.2%	2019/20	64%	69% (projected)	2024/25	70%	
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1.03	Waste compositional analysis has shown that items such as steel cans, plastic bottles and food waste are still ending up in the residual waste bin and then inevitably in landfill or being incinerated - rather than recycled.															
1.04	<p>It is widely recognised that not recycling our waste has substantial environmental implications that must be addressed to mitigate future impact on the planet.</p> <p>Some of the most significant effects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continued use of raw materials for the manufacture of new products destroys natural habitats and ecosystems. 															

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased carbon emissions from the mining, transport and manufacture of new products. • Increased pollution as non-recycled items enter the waste stream and pollute the natural environment. Plastic waste, specifically, has recently been highlighted as polluting our sea and oceans.
1.05	There is also a lost financial opportunity by not recycling our waste. There is a cost for every tonne of waste which is treated or landfilled, whilst the sale of the recycled products raises a small amount of income for the Council
1.06	<p>As the current Municipal Waste Strategy comes to an end in 2025, there is an expectation that our current performance will plateau without further changes, there is an opportunity to review the current service provision to identify how recycling performance could be increased further.</p> <p>Therefore, the Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of a public consultation exercise to gauge public opinion on the current recycling and waste services and explore the potential of new operating arrangements to assist with maximising recycling potential.</p>
1.07	<p>Public consultation began on the 25th September 2019 and concluded on the 31st October 2019.</p> <p>To ensure Flintshire residents engagement and participation was maximised, a programme of communication took place which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflet drop to every property (along with a collection calendar) • Leaflets distributed at Household Recycling Centre's and Connects Centre's • Purpose built web-page providing information on recycling • Community drop in events at Connects Centre's (5) • Regular twitter posts throughout the consultation period • Press reports / articles (seven articles issued during the consultation period) • Email to all residents registered to receive Council notifications (approx. 22,000) • Letters to Members, AMs, PMs, TCCs • Presentation at Community Council Forum
1.08	<p>Consultation Response</p> <p>The consultation resulted in very high engagement levels, with 8,770 responses returned. The responses were via a 'Survey monkey' questionnaire presented on the Council website or in paper format distributed at community drop in events.</p> <p>Whilst the survey predominantly took the format of tick box responses to set questions - 3,036 individual comments were also received.</p>
1.09	The survey provided a large amount of information on resident's current recycling behaviour which will enable the service to consider options to improve to the service provision. A summary of the responses to each of

	the fixed questions are detailed in Appendix 1 .
1.10	<p>The additional comments received have been collated into categories that can support the recommendations within this report and answers to the comments will be made available on the Council's web-site in the form of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's).</p> <p>The comments received were categorised into the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on the current service provision • Confusion regarding what can/cannot be recycled • Suggestions for a single bin for all recycling • Concern of increased fly-tipping with less frequent collections • Larger families would struggle with less frequent collections • Paying more council tax for less services
1.11	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>1. Collection Frequencies.</p> <p>With an average of only 13.59% responses stating that they would manage with a smaller black bin or a less frequent black bin collection, it is recommended that these options are not progressed at this time. However, with 32% of responses stating they are unsure whether they could manage with a change in collection frequency and WG preparing to potentially review the National Waste Strategy, it is recommended that this option is reviewed again in twelve months' time - once the impact of the changes recommended in this report can be analysed .</p>
1.12	<p>2. Increased Enforcement.</p> <p>With 60% of the responses supporting a more robust approach to enforcement action against those who do not recycle their waste, it is recommended that this option is implemented. Appendix 2 details a proposed approach to this option. It should also be noted that this approach received wide support at the all member workshops held earlier in the year.</p>
1.13	<p>3. Improved Education and Information.</p> <p>Key feedback from the consultation is the apparent lack of information / understanding Flintshire residents have on what they can/cannot recycle. It is recommended that a further Countywide campaign be undertaken to improve resident recycling awareness and understanding. This will include, but is not limited to, clear information on why we provide our services in the current format (separated waste at kerbside), what can and cannot go in each recycling container, focused community engagement in low participation areas, increased engagement with schools through the Parc Adfer education facility.</p>
1.14	<p>4. Absorbent Hygiene Product (AHP) – Nappy Collections</p> <p>Even with the current residual waste collection frequency, families have</p>

	expressed concerns with the impact of disposable nappies on the capacity of their black bin. It is recommended therefore that the Council introduce a weekly/fortnightly nappy collection service for those who request a service (max. 20% properties), to complement the current medical waste collection service, to remove this waste stream from the black bin.
1.15	<p>Other Service Delivery Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Park Adfer opened to receive residual waste in August 2019 and our waste collection vehicles are now tipping a proportion of waste directly into the facility, thus removing the need for a waste transfer station. On the current collection schedule this is not sustainable as the collection rounds are designed to tip Alltami, meaning the additional time take to travel to Deeside. There is also a need to accommodate future housing developments into the current service provision. Therefore, it is recommended that a full review of the routing of the waste rounds is undertaken to ensure their future efficiency and capacity. This will result in some properties having a different collection day and the removal of Sunday waste collections for those who have this arrangement at present. Approximately 5,000 properties will be effected by either a change in the day of their collection or a switch in calendars (i.e. garden waste to residual waste). A full communication campaign will be undertaken before the changes are made. 2. To maximise income for recycling waste streams, it is recommended that cardboard and paper are collected separately at the kerbside instead of mixed as at present. The current recycling vehicles have capacity to take the recycling streams separately and the material will be processed at Standard Transfer Station. This will significantly increase the value of the material when it is resold thus providing financial benefit to the Council.
1.16	To allow for the service to plan for the recommended changes it is proposed that the service changes be implemented from March 2020 to coincide with the recommencement of the garden waste service.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Two additional Enforcement Officers to resource the additional waste inspection - £70k. The cost of these posts will be funded from the benefit achieved from recycling diversion.
2.02	Additional vehicles to provide AHP collections - £350k (Welsh Government funding)
2.03	The benefit from collecting and reselling cardboard, separately from paper will be approximately £50 – 80k per year.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT	
3.01	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
	Long-term	The recommendation will drive improvements to recycling performance.
	Prevention	The recommendation will help prevent the disposal of recyclable resources reducing the need for raw materials
	Integration	No impact
	Collaboration	The proposals will provide an opportunity for the County Council to work with community groups to promote recycling awareness
	Involvement	Improved engagement with Flintshire residents, schools, community groups
	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – improving reuse and recycling of recycling materials resulting in world leaders in recycling performance
	Resilient Wales	Positive – Less demand for raw materials, promoting circular economy
	Healthier Wales	Positive – reducing vehicle movements and emissions
	More equal Wales	No impact
	Cohesive Wales	No impact
	Vibrant Wales	Positive – Promoting reuse and recycling of waste
	Globally responsible Wales	Reducing the reliance on the extraction of raw materials and destruction of natural habitats and ecosystems by the reprocessing of recyclable materials.
3.02	Only those residents not complying with the waste collection policy will be accountable for their actions. There will be no impact to those residents who continually present their waste correctly and engage in the recycling service.	
3.03	Improved recycling knowledge and understanding, promoting better engagement with Council services.	
3.04	A project team is in place to manage and support the service changes.	

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT	
4.01	Member's workshops were held in June 2019 to seek views on the future provision of the collection service.	
4.02	Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside.	

4.03	Town and Community Councils – invitation for written response/comment.
4.04	Elected Members – invitation for written response/comment.
4.05	Assembly Members – invitation for written response/comment.
4.06	Members of Parliament – invitation for written response/comment.
4.07	With Environment Overview and Scrutiny
4.07	Flintshire residents through expansive consultation process.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Collated consultation responses Appendix 2 – Approach to robust enforcement

6.0	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.1	<p>Cabinet Report and Decision (Waste Strategy Review Consultation) http://committeemeetings.flintshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=28242&Opt=0&LLL=0</p> <p>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report (Waste Strategy Review Consultation) http://committeemeetings.flintshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=28359&LLL=0</p> <p>Towards Zero Waste https://gweddill.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/waste_recycling/zerowaste/?lang=en</p> <p>Contact Officer: Stephen O Jones Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>WG – Welsh Government TZW – Towards Zero Waste MWC – Managed Weekly Collections AHP – Absorbent Hygiene Products</p>