

To: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: UPDATE ON RECYCLING LEVELS AND PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS WITHIN WASTE SOLUTIONS
From: HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES AND WASTE SOLUTIONS		
Date: 31 JANUARY 2017	Ref: AMP/HM	

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with information on measures proposed to improve recycling performance and further details on the proposed improvements to the waste collection system, following Committee approval of the outline proposal on 27 January 2015 for implementation in 2017/2018.

2. Background

2.1 There have been significant changes in the methods for domestic waste collection over the last 15 years which has seen a rise in the recycling rate from 1.2% in 2001 to a projected 46% in 2016/17.

2.2 Policy within the area of waste collection and recycling is driven by the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Plan. This Plan has a requirement that 60% of all household waste shall be recycled by 2020 with a further target to recycle 70% of all waste arising within Scotland by 2025 with a maximum of 5% of waste being disposed of at landfill. North Lanarkshire Council and our Clyde Valley partners have agreed the contract divert all of our residual waste from landfill by 2019/20.

2.3 In addition to addressing the targets detailed in 2.2, it is also important to note that recycling is a very volatile marketplace where prices can be significantly affected by global developments.

2.4 Under the current collection schemes the Council collects the following level of recyclable material:

- Food Waste: available to 130,000 households and was introduced in 2012 with Zero Waste Scotland financial assistance. At present, around 6,500 tonnes per annum are collected which is 25% above the initial prediction.
- Garden waste: introduced from 2008 and the quantity collected varies with each growing season but estimated to be around 16,000 tonnes for 2016.
- Glass collections are available to 109,000 households with a number of communal bottle bank facilities across the Council area. This recycling stream has met all predictions and continues to rise with 6,500 tonnes collected annually.
- Commingled Dry Recyclate (Blue Bins) – on average 22,000 tonnes of this material (metal, plastic, paper and card) is collected every year. However the quality of this material is constantly under review and the current mix of materials can lead to processing problems through increased contamination and consequently significant resources have to be committed to ensure the quality remains as high as possible.

- 2.5 Along with achieving the recycling targets set by the Scottish Government, there is also a financial incentive in diverting waste from the "residual bin" and into recycling. The cost of disposal for domestic waste currently sits at around £100 per tonne but the cost of processing good quality recyclate sits at around £22.75 per tonne. This is a price difference of around £77 per tonne and considering that the Council uplifts approximately 177,000 tonnes of waste per annum the potential financial saving/ cost is clearly apparent.
- 2.6 Audits continue to show that recyclable material continues to be disposed of within the residual bin, and consequently further action is required to encourage and assist residents to increase the amount of waste that is recycled.
- 2.7 As detailed in 2.5 above there is a definite incentive for the Council to increase not only the level but quality of recyclate. As previously reported to Committee the Council currently has a yellow and red "tagging" system in place to assist residents to increase the quantity and quality of material within their recycling bins. In order to increase the quality and level of recycling a comprehensive communication programme shall be introduced from Spring / early Summer to once again promote recycling. In particular this will include:
- A re-launch of the yellow and red tagging system. Since its launch in October 2013 65,000 yellow tags have been issued but very few red tags (although over 5,000 blue bins have been rejected for uplift due to the high levels of contamination). However, it will be the intention to formally pursue the red tagging system and to remove blue bins from residents who repeatedly refuse to comply with the advice that is being provided. Colleagues within Protective Services shall ensure that where additional refuse is placed outwith the bin facility at properties where a bin has been removed then appropriate enforcement action is taken against those residents. This will ensure that there is an effective deterrent against people who continually refuse to refrain from contaminating the blue bin.
 - It is recognised that the manual recording of tags previously issued was time consuming, with potential to slow the collection service. It is proposed that this is overcome by the use of mobile handheld devices to record the addresses where contamination tags have been issued on bins. This shall allow the service to identify those residents who are persistent offenders and provide an intervention to educate the residents.
 - As part of the next procurement exercise measures will be included to avoid potential cross contamination from other waste streams being collected at the same treatment plant.
- 2.8 The key to success will be to engage and support service users to recycle, and every effort will be made, using officer visits to households, to ensure they are given every assistance. Measures such as refusal to collect, or removal of bins, would only be in the event that we have exhausted all other means of providing a solution.

3. Proposals/Considerations

- 3.1 As the Council moves towards an alternative collection method, the timing of its introduction will be driven by current and new contractual requirements. The contracts to be extended, secured or terminated are as follows to bring all contracts into line in terms of contract term:
- a) Extend the glass sale contract from 31 March, 2017 to Sunday 1 October, 2017;
 - b) Extend the glass collection contract with ACE from 31 March, 2017, until Sunday 1 October, 2017;
 - c) Secure a new contract for a garden and food waste mix;
 - d) Secure a new contract for a combination of paper and card; and
 - e) Secure a new contract for combination of glass, metal and plastic.
- 3.2 In preparation for new collection approaches the "Fleet Route" system is being introduced across all waste collection routes. This system allows for the most efficient route systems to be

introduced across the Council area but will also allow areas of poor and good recycling to be identified and the routes amended accordingly to ensure that good quality recycling from certain areas is not contaminated with poor quality material from another. Similarly, new technology in the form of front line palmtop reporting will provide further efficiencies within the process and will allow real time reporting and recording of front line activity.

3.3 As with all major operational changes, the key to success will be the proper promotion of the new collection scheme and the effective engagement of all residents. A full communication strategy is currently being devised with assistance from colleagues within the Council's Corporate Communications team and Zero Waste Scotland. We will utilise similar methods to those we employed successfully in roll outs in 2004, 2008 and 2011, but in addition we now have systems such as Facebook, Twitter and the website to enhance the delivery of our message, e.g. we now have 25,000 individuals capable of being reached by electronic means as they have signed up to our update messaging systems. Full details of this communication strategy will be provided within an update report to Committee prior to the "go live" date.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 Financial Considerations

4.1.1 All contract changes as detailed in 3.1 above will be completed fully in accordance with the Council's General Contract Standing Orders, and where possible we will use existing Scotland Excel frameworks to secure best value.

5. Recommendations

5.1 That Committee are asked to:

- a) note the current recycling performance of the service, as outlined in Section 2.1 above;
- b) agree the steps to be taken to improve the levels of recycle as detailed in 2.7 above; and
- c) agree to the securing and extending the contracts as detailed in 3.1 above.



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Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report please contact Henry Morgan, Waste Solutions Business Manager on 01698 504070