

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 13 November 2017

ITEM 6(e)

Title: Proposals to change the operational arrangements at North Tyneside's Household Waste Recycling Centre

Portfolio(s): Environment

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor
John Stirling

Report from Service Area: Environment, Housing and Leisure

Responsible Officer: Phil Scott, Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure
Tel: (0191) 643 7295

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to change how the Authority operates its Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Wallsend Road, North Shields as set out in the report.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Note the improvements that have already been made to the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Wallsend Road, North Shields;
2. Approve the proposals to introduce the permit scheme and charges outlined in paragraphs 1.5.4. and 1.5.5 of this report; and
3. Authorise the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure to introduce and manage the above changes and to determine the level of charges following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Governance and to undertake all ancillary matters associated with this recommendation.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 9 October 2017.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following priorities in the 2016-19, Our North Tyneside Plan:

Our places will:-

- Be great places to live, and attract others to visit or work here
- Provide a clean, green, healthy, attractive and safe environment

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

On 1 July 2017, restrictions were introduced on the types of vehicles that could use the HWRC. The introduction of the restrictions was to address concerns relating to health and safety issues, as well as to reduce the amount of trade waste being brought onto the site. Following the introduction of the restrictions, there has been a significant reduction in traffic congestion coupled with a significant reduction in waste volumes at the site.

Building upon this success, it is proposed that further measures are introduced to bring about further improvements, namely, the introduction of a permit scheme for specified types of vehicles intending to use the HWRC, as well as the introduction of charges for residents seeking to dispose of non-household waste. The proposed measures will bring the Authority into line with those adopted by neighbouring Authorities.

Over recent years, there has been an increase in the number of visitors and vehicles using the HWRC, which has led to some health and safety concerns. Earlier this year, 'Suez', the Authority's waste disposal contractor, carried out vehicle monitoring, which showed that 40% of all vehicles using the site were vans (on average 200 vans per day).

Also, over the last three years, the Authority has seen a significant increase in the amount of waste being disposed of at the HWRC. For example, from April 2014 to March 2017, the overall waste disposed of at the HWRC increased by 23% (4,123 tonnes).

This increase occurred at the time when neighbouring Authorities were introducing restrictions and permits at their HWRCs, which also resulted in a corresponding reduction in the number of visits and waste disposed at their HWRCs.

1.5.2 Vehicle restrictions

As part of the Authority's 10 year plan for waste, proposals were included within the 2017/18 budget setting process to introduce restrictions at the HWRC.

Following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, restrictions were introduced to the HWRC on 1 July 2017, which meant that very large

vehicles were stopped from entering the HWRC. A vehicle is classed as a “very large vehicle” if it is either:-

- over 2m high;
- over 6m long;
- exceeding 3.5 tonne in weight; or
- has a trailer exceeding 3m in length, including the tow bar.

As part of the approach to implementing the new restrictions, signage and a height restriction barrier were installed at the site at the beginning of July 2017. The site operator also provided an increased staff resource to help manage visitors using the site. These changes were widely publicised using the Authority’s website, leaflets and social media. An article was also included in the Weekly Briefing to Members.

Encouragingly, since the introduction of the restrictions, there has been a reduction of 451 tonnes of residual waste during the months of July and August this year, compared to July and August last year. This represents a waste disposal reduction of 29% and a saving of over £55,000.

Positive feedback has also been received from Suez and site users following the implementation of these restrictions.

1.5.3 Further control measures

Neighbouring Authorities have introduced vehicle restrictions similar to those outlined in paragraph 1.5.2. However, in their experience, this restriction alone is not effective in managing compliance at HWRCs in the long-term and they have introduced more extensive controls at their HWRCs. This includes permits and charges for non-household waste, which has been beneficial in relation to site compliance.

1.5.4 Permits

Notwithstanding the positive feedback relating to the improved health and safety and compliance at the HWRC, the Authority is aware that there are traders who continue to attempt to dispose illegally of their business waste at the HWRC. For example, vans which are smaller than the height restriction can still freely access the site with no restrictions to the number of visits made. Therefore, in order to reduce the extent of this non-compliance, it is proposed that a permit scheme be introduced.

Conditions for the proposed permit scheme are set out as follows:

- Permits will be available to residents of North Tyneside only;
- Residents must apply for a permit before visiting the HWRC;
- Permits are digital (paperless) and will be checked by a site operative on arrival at the site;
- The permits will be free but limited to 4 per household, per year;
- Permits are specific to a single vehicle and address and cannot be transferred;

- Residents may be asked for proof of residence and to confirm that the waste is from a North Tyneside domestic property; and
- Anyone found abusing the permit scheme may be subject to appropriate enforcement action.

1.5.5 Charges

Under section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, construction and demolition waste from households is not defined as “household waste”. Non-household waste can be subject to a charge if presented to the HWRC.

Examples of construction and demolition material include;

- Plasterboard
- Paving stones
- Rubble and hardcore
- Ceramic pipes
- Soil, gravel, and stones
- Bricks and concrete

It is proposed that charges are introduced for the disposal of non-household waste at the HWRC.

1.5.6 Next steps

The introduction of the proposals outlined in 1.5.4 and 1.5.5 will be implemented under delegated authority by the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Governance. This would bring the Authority in line with neighbouring Authorities.

1.6 **Decision options:**

Option 1

Note the improvements that have been made to the operation of the Household Waste Recycling Centre and approve the proposals to introduce the permit scheme and charges outlined in section 1.5.4 and 1.5.5 of this report.

Option 2

Note the improvements that have been made to the operation of the Household Waste Recycling Centre and not approve the proposals to introduce the permit scheme and charges outlined in section 1.5.4 and 1.5.5 of this report.

1.7 **Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

Restrictions relating to specified vehicles have improved the health and safety at the HWRC and reduced the amount of trade waste being brought into the site.

The decision to approve the introduction of a permit scheme and charges will build upon the improvements made at the HWRC and bring the Authority in line with neighbouring authorities.

1.8 Appendices:

None

1.9 Contact officers:

Phil Scott, Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, tel. (0191) 643 7295
Samantha Dand, Senior Manager, Local Environmental Services; Tel 0191 643 7294
Colin MacDonald, Senior Manager, Technical & Regulatory Services; Tel 0191 643 6620
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner; Tel 0191 643 7038

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) Frequently asked questions relating to the HWRC
<http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1123/household-waste-recycling-centre-faqs>
- (2) Environmental Protection Act 1990
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>
- (3) Information on the Authority's website
<http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/news/16075/important-changes-north-shields-household-waste-recycling-centre>
- (4) Rubbish and Recycling section of the website
<http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/82/household-waste-recycling-centretip>
- (5) Budget proposals 2017-2020 HWRC business case
http://october.northtyneside.gov.uk:7778/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=569409&p_subjectCategory=1521
- (6) Equality Impact Assessment
http://october.northtyneside.gov.uk:7778/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=569409&p_subjectCategory=1521

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

Costs have been incurred including the installation of the barrier, signage, leaflets and other publicity, and investment for the development of a permit scheme. This will be managed from within the existing waste disposal budget along with the ongoing costs to maintain the restrictions. However the authority is confident that the proposed scheme will reduce waste disposal costs overall and that this will be scheme is essential in ensuring the authority achieves the 2017/18 efficiency target of £0.200m.

2.2 Legal

Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on Local Authorities to provide HWRCs for residents of the Borough to dispose of their household waste free of charge. However, Authorities are permitted to restrict the availability of such centres for non-household or controlled waste and to charge for the use of such centres for the disposal of such waste.

Section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000 is clear that all functions of the Authority should be discharged by Cabinet unless there is a contrary indication in legislation. There is nothing in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 to indicate that this matter cannot be taken by Cabinet.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Proposals have been developed following informal consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, the Environment Board and via the budget setting process 2017-2020.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Discussions have been held with other local authorities and Suez to understand their approach and lessons learned.

Communications have also been carried out in relation to the proposed changes at the HWRC in Our North Tyneside Magazine. The site operator has been informing regular users over the last few months and distributing a flyer with more information and new signage has been installed at the HWRC. Information has also been shared via the Authority's website.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights matters directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in relation to the changes made and those that are proposed. This is included in the background information to this

report. Blue badge holders will be excluded from the permit scheme and the impact on those with disabilities will be closely monitored at the implementation phase and thereafter.

2.6 Risk management

Residents may feel that the restrictions are an imposition and unnecessary bureaucracy. This will be mitigated through ongoing information and communication.

Failure to introduce the restrictions including the permits and charges at the HWRC will continue to leave the site open to compliance issues by traders. The health and safety of the site may be compromised and waste disposal will continue to increase.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There may be an increase in fly-tipping by traders, however this will be monitored and managed using existing enforcement resources. Other Authorities that have introduced restriction schemes at their HWRCs have observed no discernible long-term impact on fly-tipping that can be directly attributed to the schemes. Where an Authority anecdotally reported a modest increase in levels of fly tipping immediately after introducing changes, particularly in close proximity to the HWRC, residents became accustomed to the charges within a couple of months and fly tipping reverted to its previous low levels.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

The amount of waste going through the HWRC has reduced by 29% and recycling has increased therefore the changes are assisting with good environmental practice.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive X
- Head(s) of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Head of Corporate Strategy X