

Meeting: Environment Sub-committee

Date: 7th January 2015

Title: Waste Collection Options post 2017

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Service:	Environment and Leisure	
Wards affected:	All	

1.0 Purpose of briefing

The purpose of this briefing is to examine the benefits and issues with regard to the options for different collection frequencies including:

- Examining examples of best practice
- Identifying what is happening elsewhere both regionally and nationally
- Providing answers to some specific question in relation to waste management raised by the Committee

2.0 Background

The focus of the Study is to examine the key issues facing the authority in relation to waste collection following the end of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme

The objectives are:

- To consider the various options in relation to waste collection within the borough.
- To identify how waste collection and recycling in the borough can be improved.

The key Questions are:

- What are the various options for waste collection from 2017 onwards?
- What are the views of the public on the various options?
- What can be done to increase recycling/reuse within the borough?
- What do we need to do to further engage the public in recycling and waste minimisation?

3.0 Specific Question relating to Waste Management in general

3.1 *The development of energy from waste at less carbon cost*

The authority is in a long-term waste disposal contract with SITA (part of the GDF Suez family). This runs to 31st March 2022 and already provides energy from waste at less carbon cost than most other waste treatments. In producing the North Tyneside Waste Management Strategy ('Changing our thinking...away from rubbish and towards a resource') environmental consultants were engaged to assess the environmental and cost benefits of a range of waste disposal options. This included a full life cycle analysis. At this time Energy from Waste (EfW), and particularly Energy from Waste with heat off-take, was judged to be the most environmentally sustainable and deliverable technology. The EfW at Teesside where most of North

Tyneside's waste is treated can potentially export it's heat, but there are no viable outlets at this time. SITA have recently gained planning permission for a further extension of the plant, Line 6, which could be available around the time the contract is to be renewed and it is anticipated that this will include full use of the excess heat.

3.2 *The future of garden waste collection*

Currently there are around 70,000 households in the scheme, with around 50,000 active participants. We collect on average 8,500 tonnes per annum, from the beginning of March to the end of November; this is approximately 20 collections per household.

The collections are made using the refuse collection vehicles on Saturday and Monday morning, when there are no normal household waste collections.

The collection crews are employed for up to 12 hours a week under separate contracts to the other waste collection crews and are paid a different rate.

Around 200 properties have more than one bin, around 300 additional bins overall. These can be individual properties or community or church-groups and tend to be good users of the service.

By using the refuse collection vehicles the costs of collection are minimised and fleet utilisation is maximised. The additional costs of operating a garden waste collection service are largely covered through the lower costs of disposal for this material when compared with general waste.

Many authorities have introduced a charge or subscription as garden waste collection is a discretionary service. This has proved to be a significant source of income and has generally not reduced the overall volume of green waste collected or resulted in large amounts of additional general waste.

3.3 *The development of the reuse of waste*

The Authority already supports reuse through the provision of reuse credits and enables the collection of items from the Household waste Recycling Centre by a number of charities, including, Recyke Y' Bike, Machrist Charity, St Oswald's Hospice, Key Enterprises, Community Transport and Shepherd's Voice Ministries. We also have a contract for the reuse and recycling of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) that we collect.

We are delivering, with an environmental charity Groundwork, a waste awareness campaign based on the Council's waste strategy of 'Changing our thinking...away from rubbish and towards a resource'. Fundamental to the strategy is the principle of waste prevention and reuse therefore moving waste up the waste hierarchy.

We know there are other items that can be reused and that there is a market for them through having trialled the sale of these through SITA holding a couple of pilot reuse 'pop-up' shops at the North Tyneside Transfer Station. However, without some investment in the site and promotion of the facility this opportunity for diverting waste is not sustainable in the long-term. To develop this facility the authority has developed a project with SITA and Groundwork and is in the process of preparing a bid to the 'Innovation in Waste' fund administered on behalf of the government by WRAP (Waste Resource Action Programme). The project is for the development of a household goods reuse collection and sorting facility and shop supported by education and awareness-raising to emphasise the virtue of waste prevention and

the benefits of reuse, with opportunities for training and community development. The 'Shop' will be based at or near the North Tyneside Transfer Station and Household Waste Recycling Centre. The submission deadline for the bid is 6th February with an announcement of award expected in the Spring.

3.4 *The possible integration of food waste with sewerage*

Officers have held a number of discussions over the last few years with Northumbria Water who operate two anaerobic digestion facilities in the region, including one in the Borough at Howdon. There are some clear synergies to treat food waste with sewerage through anaerobic digestion, but there are a number of regulatory and financial barriers at this time. There are also many environmental benefits from the collection of food waste, but again there are also some practical and financial barriers.

Collections of food waste are usually weekly so only operate effectively when the general waste is collected less often. There is a also considerable culture change barrier to having what have been termed 'slop buckets' in people's homes. A successful scheme reduces the material collected over time as residents reduce how much food they buy when they can see how much is wasted. This can be an issue if you are relying on the material as a feed stock, for example for anaerobic digestion. The collections usually require a different (if smaller) collection vehicle which can seem wasteful.

For further information there is a useful summary online at <http://www.ciwem.org/knowledge-networks/panels/waste-management/co-digestion-of-sewage-sludge-and-waste.aspx>

3.5 *The development of the sale of specific waste materials*

The authority's current waste disposal and recycling contracts include for the transfer, separation, treatment and sale of the waste materials. This has proved to be a robust model and has protected the authority from what is an international and notoriously volatile market. Regionally there are few examples of councils directly marketing waste materials. Where it does happen councils own the transfer or sorting facilities. The contracts we have are not exclusive and therefore this could be considered now, but would require some capital investment, or at the time of re-procurement.

4.0 Collection options - examples of best practice and what is happening elsewhere both regionally and nationally

An overview of examples of best practice including a regional and national perspective will be presented at the Sub Committee meeting.