

## **StreetSmart Waste and Recycling Changes 2016/17**

### **StreetSmart, Highways and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

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Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

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#### **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the StreetSmart, Highways and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an update on the upcoming changes to Waste and Recycling service from 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016, supported by a revised Policy and Waste Charter. This follows approval by Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016 for changes to the waste service to deliver service improvements and efficiency savings, and this paper sets out the impact of those changes.
- 1.2 Alongside the changes to the Waste and Recycling collection service, this paper sets out proposed changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and withdrawal of the Recycling Bring Sites.
- 1.3 These changes are aligned with the Council's focus to deliver value for money services and Priority 3 of the Council's Vision for Swindon of ensuring clean and safe streets.

#### **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Take note of the report by the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart.
- 2.2 To ask further questions of the Cabinet Member about the upcoming changes to the Waste and Recycling service.
- 2.3 To provide the Cabinet Member with feedback on proposals in relation to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and withdrawal of the Recycling Bring Sites.

#### **3. Waste and Recycling Collections**

Reason for the change

- 3.1 The current refuse and recycling collection services are based on collection rounds developed over five years ago. A review of the collection schedules has

established that efficiency savings can be achieved by developing new collection routes that balance the workload between the crews and optimise the productivity of each crew over a ten day operating period. Efficiencies will be achieved by reducing the number of front line collection crews by introducing optimised schedules, a new waste fleet, implementing new in-cab technology. Additional savings are expected by the reduction in overtime caused by imbalances in scheduling and incorporating new housing developments into front-line schedules.

- 3.2 The review of collection schedules has been undertaken by the management team working closely with frontline crews and with support by a specialist route optimisation supplier, Webaspx. A new detailed operating model has been developed which has resulted from a root and branch review of current routes.
- 3.3 The new routing incorporates new housing developments built since the last routing exercise and takes into consideration planned housing growth over the next three years. It also takes into consideration other factors that influence productivity such as the performance of the new vehicle fleet and the volumes of waste being generated by the public. Reflecting the increasing pressure on public finances, the focus was to deliver the most efficient service possible and includes engaging with residents to understand the role they can play to help protect frontline services, for example, by increasing levels of recycling, and self-sorting their recycling enabling the crews to collect the material more efficiently.

#### Impact on residents

- 3.4 The Waste and Recycling Service collects from circa 95,000 households. There is currently an imbalance of workload between the collection days within the ten day cycle. Part of this is due to the increasing number of people taking up the Green Waste service which is a paid service that collects green waste from households rather than them having to transport it to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC). It is therefore necessary to change the collection days in many areas to balance workloads and separate the collection day for Green Garden Waste from the other collection days in some cases.
- 3.5 The new operating model means that 55% of households will experience a change to the day in the week when their waste is collected. Analysis of the change is as follows:
  - 27% of households will come forward on their collections;
  - 16% will be a day after their old collection day;
  - 12% will be two days after their old collection day;
  - 0.9% will be three days after their old collection day;
- 3.6 A comprehensive communication plan is in progress to help inform residents of the upcoming changes.
- 3.7 In terms of Green Waste (circa 15,500 households), 80% of subscribers will experience a change in their collection day but similar to the general refuse

service, this will not be more than 3 days and we will communicate to each household that is affected.

- 3.8 With the increasing take-up of the Green Waste service, we have experienced very good interest in the service resulting in us needing to collect green waste in some areas over two days instead of just one. This means that around 45% of subscribers will have their green waste collected on a different day to the rest of their household waste. The purpose of this change is to ensure we have capacity to collect all green waste on the day we promise.
- 3.9 Every household affected will receive a communication from the Council with personalised information as to the new arrangements. A new web page, showing collection arrangements per property, will be available on the SBC web site. Other measures are planned using local media, social media and other communication methods.
- 3.10 It is planned to implement the new routes on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016, to avoid the introduction of services changes during known busy periods such as the build up to Christmas and New Year.
- 3.11 No interim collections are planned given the limited range of the time lapses between collections, but the service will operate with support crews to ensure all rounds are covered and any missed bins can be recovered as easily as possible.
- 3.12 The collection start times for all services will be 6.30am with the exception of Kerbside Recycling, which has a start time of 7.30am. This means the collection of Green Garden Waste and Plastics will change from their existing 7.30am start time. This key message for residents is to put all your waste and recycling out by 6.30am, which is generally what happens already.

#### Benefits of the change

- 3.13 In addition to the financial savings described in paragraph 5.1, the new service is likely to deliver additional savings through improvements in reliability and resilience, cutting the costs of rectifying service failures such as missed collections.
- 3.14 There will be improved information available in customer services to assist with residents' enquiries, and real-time information provided back to the crews to assist with frontline collections. The in-cab units, currently being deployed in the Waste and Recycling vehicles, allow crews to record events such as: bin not presented, side waste, contaminated recycling (e.g. with broken glass) etc. This can then be used to provide live feedback to any resident calling the Contact Centre to report a problem. It is also expected the even distribution of workload to have a positive impact on the wellbeing of our crews.
- 3.15 Optimised routing is also an opportunity to improve safe working methods by considering traffic and safety issues. The new routes include integrated route risk assessments, reflecting best practice and reflecting requirements of the Health and Safety Executive. The routes also help to avoid operating in high risk areas

during peak traffic, such as near schools during drop-off and pick-up, reducing congestion caused by waste collections.

### Future Waste Strategy

- 3.16 While work is underway to drive out efficiencies and improvements to the waste and collection service over the next couple of years, we will be completing an exercise throughout 2016/17 to develop a future waste strategy. This will provide the framework for maintaining and developing waste services in the medium and long term, encompassing all waste collection, treatment and disposal under the authority's control. The strategy will consider statutory obligations, targets and local objectives alongside service improvements and efficiencies.
- 3.17 There may be the potential to achieve further savings through reconfiguring waste services and considering alternative waste and recycling models such as co-mingled recycling or communal provision in locations that are not well suited to individual bins. Such fundamental changes to the service are outside of the scope of the current re-routing exercise, but will be considered within future waste strategy, and may be subject to significant capital investment.

### Proposed changes to waste acceptance controls at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)

- 3.18 This section sets out proposed policy changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to control commercial waste, vans, and to update restrictions on some types of household waste. These changes reflect best practice.
- 3.19 Public Power Solutions (PPS) Ltd operate the civic amenity site on the Council's behalf, providing a site for householders to deposit waste and recycling from their property that is not collected through the Waste and Recycling collection services. There are currently restrictions to prevent commercial waste from being deposited free of charge, ensuring that the costs of disposing of commercial waste are not borne by council tax payers. Many councils also apply other restrictions to ensure that the facilities operate cost effectively and safely and to ensure that legitimate users are able to access the sites without delays. It is proposed to apply the following controls on which waste will be accepted:
- 3.20 Any waste that is defined as Commercial waste within the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (or any subsequent updated regulations) will not be accepted by PPS Ltd in discharging the Council's duties under section 51 of part 2 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Any commercial waste brought to site can be accepted by PPS and the charges for its handling, treatment and disposal will be set by PPS, who are under no obligation to accept waste. In practical terms this means that any commercial waste brought to the site will be handled by PPS outside the scope of its obligations to provide a facility for household waste, charges will be applied and criteria for its acceptance will be set by PPS.

- 3.21 Household waste delivered to the site in vans or trailers will be subject to the following controls to ensure that no commercial waste is 'passed off' as household waste:
- 3.21.1 Site users must provide evidence that they are a resident of the area, for example driving licence or utility bill;
  - 3.21.2 If the van is being used under a short term hire agreement then a copy of the agreement must be shown to establish that it is in the name of a Swindon resident;
  - 3.21.3 Waste will be inspected by site staff to ensure it is legitimate household waste;
  - 3.21.4 Records will be stored of the name, address, vehicle details and waste type to monitor patterns of usage;
  - 3.21.5 Vans and trailers will be limited to 12 visits per year. Additional visits can be arranged by a written request to PPS;
- 3.22 In most cases vans and trailers will be directed to use a dedicated area adjacent to the main household tipping area. This is to improve traffic flows and improve safety by providing a larger area for vehicles to manoeuvre.
- 3.23 Vans and trailers will be accommodated in a separate area of the site and this will require additional staff to maintain safety. Due to the costs associated with operation these vehicles will be allowed on site at the following times:
- |                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Monday to Friday    | 08:00 to 16:30 |
| Saturday and Sunday | 10:00 to 14:00 |
- 3.24 Household waste from properties outside of Swindon Borough may not be accepted. Section 51 of part 2 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 only requires the Council to provide the facility for use of residents of the area. It is not intended to apply rigorous controls at this stage; however, PPS will be directed to undertake periodic monitoring of where site users are coming from. This monitoring will be reported to the Head of StreetSmart who will evaluate if stricter controls would avoid costs of operating the site and who is delegated to make decisions to apply appropriate controls in consultation with the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart.
- 3.25 The Controlled Waste Regulations 2012, set out which wastes from households are not classed as household waste and where charges can be applied for collection or disposal. Subject to these regulations, the following changes to restrictions are proposed:
- 3.25.1 Household DIY waste created by the occupier will be limited to no more than five 25kg bags per vehicle. Waste must be brought to site in sturdy bags to avoid excessive unloading time;

- 3.25.2 All plasterboard and mixed waste containing plasterboard will be charged at £3.50 per bag for up to five bags or at published commercial rates for larger quantities. Plasterboard requires specialist disposal therefore incurs higher charges by disposal sites;
- 3.25.3 Household asbestos must be in a sealed bag or fully wrapped in plastic sheeting. Charges will not be applied for household asbestos waste produced by the householder;
- 3.25.4 Car and motorcycle tyres from residential premises will be charged at £2.80 per item; and
- 3.25.5 Household chemicals will only be accepted if they are in secure, sealed containers.

#### Proposal to withdraw the remaining Recycling Bring Sites

- 3.26 There are currently around 12 public recycling sites across the Borough operated by contractors on behalf of the Council. The sites provide facilities for recycling of paper, glass, cans and tetrapak cartons. The annual operating cost of the sites is approximately £25,000 and 900 tonnes of material is collected for recycling.
- 3.27 In addition to the direct operating cost of the sites, we often experience cases of fly tipping at the Bring Sites as people treat them as mini HWRCs and leave all materials at the site which generate additional pressures on our Street Cleaning resources who are frequently required to clear away the fly tipped waste.
- 3.28 With the exception of tetrapak, the sites provide facilities for collection of materials that can also be recycled at the kerbside, therefore the value of the sites is questionable given that residents can have this collected through their fortnightly recycling collections. There are five sites for tetrapak which together generate around 50 tonnes of recycling annually.
- 3.29 The proposal to withdraw the sites will deliver a direct saving of circa £25,000 through elimination of all of the associated direct costs. It will also remove the need to direct Street Cleaning resources to remove fly tipping which will deliver a further saving in the wider StreetSmart operation, the exact scale of this further saving is unknown as the work to clear away the fly tipping is part of the daily operation.
- 3.30 It is expected a large proportion of the material currently deposited at the sites will be diverted to the kerbside recycling box system, negating the environmental impact of withdrawal.
- 3.31 There are currently arrangements in place with two contractors to service the sites; these arrangements would need to be terminated in a controlled manner. There would also need to be communication targeted at the sites to notify residents that the facilities are being withdrawn and reminding residents of the opportunity to recycle at the kerbside or by bringing the material to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC).



## Revised Waste Policy and Charter

### Reason for the change

- 3.32 Part of the purpose of the changes to the Waste Service is the fact that it offers the opportunity to look at service standards, the behaviours of SBC staff, but also it affords the opportunity to engage with the residents with regard to the expectations the council has of residents to help us deliver a value for money service.
- 3.33 In an effort to help promote a value for money service, we are looking to develop a revised Waste Policy and Charter. It would commit to a level of service and also describe all the behaviours required of the residents in terms of the presentation of their waste and recycling. This involves not only the segregation of recycling, but also, it refreshes information relating to contamination, access, presentation, dangerous animals, timing, side waste, non-SBC container etc.
- 3.34 By publishing a Waste Charter, it presents an opportunity to provide clear feedback to households as why their waste or recycling has or has not been collected. It will also deliver a cost saving in that the Service will not commit resources to revisit households where there is a genuine reason why the waste has not been collected (i.e. not out or recycling contaminated with shattered glass).
- 3.35 In improving the segregation of recycling material, we can safely increase the speed of the kerbside sorting process, which will result in a more efficient service and less time spent in a location.

### Impact on residents

- 3.36 The impact on the residents will be: a full definition of SBC services and standards, a full understanding of their obligations as to the timing and presentation of their waste and recycling, a full explanation of what constitutes a 'missed collection' and the reasons why the staff will not return to collect until the next schedule collection.

### Benefits of the change

- 3.37 The revised Policy and Charter will clarify the service standards. It will also outline all the behaviours required of the residents, in order to maximise the efficiency of the service. It should reduce costs through the reduction of contaminated waste and reduce the incidence of crews returning to locations where the waste or recycling is incorrectly presented.

## **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 In relation to the changes to the waste and recycling service, consideration was given to adopting different operating models (four day week / double shifts etc). However, it was concluded the chosen model delivered greater benefits for residents and enabled a circa £300,000 annualised saving with minimal risks to service delivery.

- 4.2 With regard to the proposed changes to the HWRC, the proposals reflect best practice.
- 4.3 In relation to the withdrawal of the Recycling Bring Sites, we could continue to provide the service at £25,000 per annum plus regular clear up costs. However, given the free fortnightly collection of recycling at the kerbside and opportunity to bring the material to the HWRC, it is felt the withdrawn service will have little impact on the level of recycling and will deliver financial savings and potentially less fly tipping in these specific areas.

## **5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The efficiency savings that will be delivered by the waste and recycling re-routing exercise will reduce the number of front line vehicles by 3 and staff by 9. The net annual saving will be circa £287,000 from 2017/18. The savings in year one will be lower due to being implemented part way through the year and one-off costs, giving a net saving in 2016/17 of £100,000 taking account of implementation costs described below.
- 5.2 Initial Implementation costs are projected to be around £45,000, primarily covering printing costs for communications materials and operational costs during the change-over period. There will also be ongoing costs of £24,000 per year for the in-cab routing system which is accounted for within the annualised saving of £287,000. Additional annualised savings of circa £50,000 are expected to be realised from reduce fuel costs following these changes.

### Staffing implications

- 5.3 The service changes will result in a reduction of 9 posts within the Waste and Recycling collection service. These posts are currently delivered by agency staff, therefore, no compulsory redundancies of permanent staff have occurred.
- 5.4 It is expected the revised Waste and Recycling Policy and Charter will positively impact the staff because it will offer clear guidance as to the standards of the service as well as the expected behaviours of the residents.
- 5.5 Staff and unions have been engaged throughout the process of designing these changes and all necessary staff consultation has been completed.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.6 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) requires every Local Authority to establish an overview and scrutiny function to hold the Executive to account, undertake policy development and review, monitor and improve performance.



All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.7 The changes will improve the efficiency of collection crews and this is expected to reduce overall fuel use and traffic impacts through better routing. We expect the fuel saving to exceed £50,000, this is in addition to the £287,000 annualised saving. This will improve the environmental sustainability of the collection service.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.8 A Diversity Impact Assessment has been produced and is available on request. The outcome of the Diversity Impact Assessment is that 55% of all households will be impacted by the change of collection day but that no minority group would be disproportionately impacted. Those individuals on assisted waste collections will remain on assisted collections despite the potential change in collection day.

Risk Management

- 5.9 Changes to routes and collection days can lead to service delivery issues in the weeks immediately after the changes are implemented. This can be caused by a number of different factors including crews being unfamiliar with routes and unanticipated issues with vehicle access. Householders will also need time to become accustomed to the new schedules and may make mistakes; wherever possible it is intended to assist householders to ensure they are not left with excess waste. This support may be in the form of interim collections, personalised communication and improved (and more accurate) messaging subject to requirement.
- 5.10 In so far as the proposed changes impact on staff, the team have engaged with unions and staff to agree the changes and undertaken a full process of formal consultation. Continued working with the staff to ensure the smooth introduction of these changes is essential.

**6. Consultees**

- 6.1 There are no background papers associated with this proposal

The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports. The Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, The Board Director, Communities and Place.

**7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 There are no background papers associated with this proposal.

**8. Appendices**

- 8.1 There are no appendixes associated with this proposal.