

**25<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**Environment, Enforcement and Housing Committee**

**Improving the Councils Waste & Recycling Service**

**Report of** *Greg Campbell – Director of Operations*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report follows the decision of the Environment and Enforcement Committee on March 20<sup>th</sup> Min Min 395. This gave authority for officers to commence working up a business case and implementation plan for the introduction of a revised method to collect recycled waste and in doing so make environmental improvements whilst reducing the service cost of the operation.
- 1.2 The report confirms the approach to the revised collection service including financial information identifying a cost benefit.
- 1.3 The information within the report and the business case at Appendix A identify the scope, procurement and communication plan.
- 1.4 It provides further details on the scheme and how the waste will be split from one recycling bag in to two which is beneficial to both the Council financially and the environment as a whole.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 **The committee approve the**
  - **redesigned recycling scheme**
  - **to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment,**
  - **draft communications plan and**
  - **timescales for implementation.**
- 2.2 **That final draft calendar and guidance information to be published to residents be consulted with members prior to release**

### **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 Following the agreement at the Environment and Enforcement Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019 Min 395 work began to draw together the relevant information in order that Members can make an informed decision as to whether to progress with a scheme to separate mixed dry recycling.
- 3.2 Following work with our consultant a revised collection method for recycled waste was identified. This scheme would have minimal impact on the resident, staff, resources and have significant impact on the service cost.
- 3.3 Further, there is a social responsibility that directs councils to provide services that consider the environment not only for now but also for the future.
- 3.4 The Council has not made any significant changes to its waste service since the introduction of food waste caddies in 2013, and certainly none recently that have affected residents. Any suggested change is therefore subject to careful scrutiny and implementation.
- 3.5 The introduction of this change supports the government strategy 'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England' published December 2018, which will impact on all local authorities. The recommendations in this report support the main overarching objectives of part of that Strategy which are:
- To maximise the value of resource use; and
  - To minimise waste and its impact on the environment.

### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The current scheme requires residents to place paper, cardboard, plastics and tins within the orange recycling sacks. These are collected and then delivered to a Material Recycling Facility (MRF) for treatment, where it is sorted, and recyclables are then sent onto processors. The delivery of the sacks to the MRF currently attracts a significant gate fee of £25 per tonne.
- 4.2 The proposal is to separate the recycling out into waste streams which in turn will improve the quality of the recycling material and turn a cost burden into one that would create a revenue.
- 4.3 The scheme will require residents to separate their waste into two separately marked hessian bags. One for cardboard & paper and the other

for plastic & tins. These will be collected along with residual and food waste each week however the collection will be split. Paper & card collected one week and plastic & tins collected the following week.

- 4.4 Advice and information were sought from Street Care Support Ltd, Tendring District Council, Chelmsford City Council and Viola to ensure we had good information on which to base our scheme. Street Care Support Ltd acted as our advisors and have implemented many different schemes large and small up and down the country. The Councils and Viola have introduced similar schemes to ours over the last few years and provided good information.
- 4.5 Further we are due to meet with Brentwood Access Group to identify any issues they could foresee. Any that are identified will be fed back verbally to Committee.
- 4.6 Following the work to identify the best scheme and method to deliver the revised service a Business Case has been produced and is contained in Appendix A to this report.
- 4.7 The main headlines of this Business Case are as follows:

**Improvement to Service Headlines:**

- There will be two recycling streams: Paper & Card and Plastic & Tins
- Those on the Assisted Collections list will be contacted to ensure there are no negative impacts to the service they receive
- Recommended that reusable hessian sacks be used to collect the recycled waste streams.
- Communal bin areas will be provided with paper and card recycling bins with an aperture to reduce contamination
- Bins will also be provided for plastic and cans at the communal sites
- There are significant environmental improvements from the introduction of this change including less haulage and the reduction in processes to get the material back into a useable material
- This scheme has minimal impact to the resident
- This scheme if agreed will be delivered in one go
- Implementation will be during the Autumn 2019 dependent on procurement
- The introduction of this scheme will require minimal changes to the depot layout & process

**Financial Headline Benefits of the new scheme:**

- The Gate Fee charged to the Council will no longer apply
- This method of collection will enable the Council to reduce the service cost

- The Council will be in a far better position financially moving to this scheme even if the commodity prices drop. Any commodity price drop would be reflected in a Gate Fee increase that we would otherwise be paying
- There will no longer be a need to purchase Orange Recycling sacks or deliver them twice a year
- Hessian Sacks are reusable and have a life expectancy of approximately 5 years. The capital cost is also cheaper than orange bags currently distributed.

4.8 The proposal will create a beneficial financial position for the Council and deliver a number of environmental benefits. Although we represent a small proportion of the bigger global issue it is important the local authorities are seen to be promoting the right services and right behaviours. Some of the environmental benefits taken from the Business Case are listed below:

- Reduce number of processes and handling which increase the carbon footprint
- Reducing the carbon footprint by reducing vehicular movements
- Quality recycled waste will ensure recycling industries in the UK will want our product and therefore not transfer abroad.
- The recycling waste we produce will all be able to be recycled. There should be minimal contamination and no rejection
- Promote recycling plastics to reduce the amount in the wrong waste stream
- Reduce Brentwood Council contributing to the plastic waste by ceasing the purchase of Orange Plastic Sacks

4.9 Communication will be key to the successful delivery of this project. Braintree Council have provided support to bring together a draft Communications Plan which forms part of the business case. Communication will start as soon as the scheme is agreed.

4.10 Braintree have had experience of delivering other similar schemes across the county including Tendring Council who we visited.

4.11 The critical path to deliver this project on time and effectively to meet its objectives is based around procurement of the production and delivery of the Hessian sacks, the delivery of the Hessian sacks to residents and the contracts with companies to take the waste from us. Work on this has already begun and in most cases, it appears there are frameworks which we can use which will speed up the process and keep us on track

4.12 Based on the Business Case at appendix A and the draft Communications Plan included within that appendix it is recommended that the revised

recycling scheme implementation be introduced this autumn from October 2019 depending on the procurement process.

- 4.13 In order to make this switch, the Council would require residents to separate the recyclables they place in their orange sack, into two discrete waste streams: namely: 'paper & card' and 'plastics & tins'.
- 4.14 Therefore, the collection service for general household waste (black sacks), food waste, garden waste and mixed glass collections would remain the same; with the two new streams (replacing the current single stream) being collected on separate weeks.
- 4.15 The financial implications for the initial outlay are set out below:
- The cost of hessian bags £91k
  - The cost to distribute hessian bags £20k
  - Promotion and communication £40k
  - Purchase of alternative communal and commercial bins £23k

There will be an annual contribution of £20k in order to replace the hessian bags due to their expected lifecycle being 5 years.

4.16 **Potential income generation and savings:**

- The reduction to the gate fee is £122k
  - Saving on orange sacks £91k
  - Paper & Cardboard anticipated income £90k
  - Plastic & Tin anticipated income £8k
- 4.17 The Council also receive Recycling Credits for the amount of waste we recycle. It is expected that this figure will reduce due to the fact that the new method of collection will reduce the amount non recyclable material and single use plastics currently placed in the orange bag. Based on Tendring Councils experience they witnessed a 24% fall in recyclable waste. Therefore, our Recycling Credit could fall by a potential £80,000
- 4.18 Overall it appears from the figures sourced the Council would realise a saving of £230k in year 1 with ongoing savings of £210k. The £20k reduction is due to the purchase of replacement Hessian bags required.

**Implementation Plan:**

- 4.19 The following provides a high-level implementation plan. Detail of each workstream will be worked up.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
June	Commence Procurement of Hessian Bags
June	Commence Procurement of waste collection contracts
July/August	Initial communication feeds go out to the residents and other stakeholders and staff informed
July/August	Information distributed at Summer Community Events
July/August	Specific Groups targeted (Assisted collections, Communal and Commercial)
August	Procurement Contracts Agreed
September	Continue with communication Communication Boards onto Refuse vehicles
September	Hessian Bags & Calendars delivered to residents
September	Replace communal and commercial bins where appropriate
October	Update website and text messaging
October	Service Begins

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 The benefits and non-benefits include 'inter alia':
- Increase in revenue and a reduction in costs.
  - Improvement in the quality of recycling collected.
  - Minimal change in the service provided to residents.
  - Manageable budgetary pressures.
- 5.2 Members are requested to agree to the recommendations as they will enable the evolution of the Council's Waste Management Service to meet current and future challenges.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Consultation with Brentwood Access Group, Tendering District Council, Chelmsford City Council and Viola was undertaken. Further the consultant specialist – Street Care Support Limited were engaged to advise the Council on positive solutions to improve the waste recycling service. The scheme has been developed and takes into account the advice and information gained from the consultations.
- 6.2 A verbal update following consultation with Brentwood Access Group will be provided on the evening of the committee

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 The Council will continue to ensure the provision of efficient and effective services.

- 7.2 The eventual implementation of this change of service will enable the Council to continue to work towards minimising waste by collecting waste effectively and increasing recycling rates.

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Phoebe Barnes Interim Financial Controller**

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- 8.1 The improvement of the Councils waste and Recycling scheme requires an initial revenue investment of £174k. This revenue pressure can be funded from the Waste Management earmark reserve, which currently has a balance of £583k, utilising this reserve would reduce the balance to £409k.
- 8.2 The scheme has potential to generate savings within 19-20 but this is dependent on meeting the procurement dates as outlined in the report. Any savings generated within this financial year will be reported through the Council's budget monitoring process. The full year saving of £230k will be achieved in 20-21 and will be allocated against existing savings targets already built within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- 8.3 The income revenue generated from this scheme is market led. Therefore, if the market price of the commodity increases or decreases the savings outlined in the report will reflect this fluctuation. This potential fluctuation will be captured through the Council's budget monitoring process and reported accordingly.

### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Paula Harvey, Deputy Monitoring Officer**

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- 8.4 The recommendations to implement the proposed changes to recycling services are within the Council's powers and duties. The Council has a statutory duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to arrange for the separate collection of recyclable waste.
- 8.5 The Council has a duty to undertake its waste responsibilities in general conformity with government strategy: these proposals comply with this obligation.
- 8.6 There is no express duty to consult on the proposed changes and the form and content of the consultation is therefore not prescribed. The outcome of any consultation which has been undertaken must be conscientiously taken into account as part of a lawful decision-making process.

8.7 An Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out to enable decision-makers to comply with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010, to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity between different groups of users. Decision-makers should consider the equality impact assessment and how their decision will contribute towards meeting the Council's public sector equality duties, whilst also taking into account other relevant circumstances such as economic and practical considerations.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

8.8 An equality impact assessment will be undertaken

**9. Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

9.1 Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England' published December 2018,

**10. Appendices to this report**

- Appendix A - Business case: Council Recycling and Environmental Improvements

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