

# TEXTILE WASTE REPORT – Textile Waste Contract

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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Environment Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014, it was resolved:

2.2 *That the Council will inform all charity shops of the collection scheme to be introduced and seek their views before the final implementation of the scheme.*

- 1.2 Discussions were held with a number of charity shop managers, in order to seek their feedback on the proposed collection scheme. Generally there was negative feedback received, though there is no empirical evidence that can be drawn upon to substantiate such feedback.
- 1.3 Information from neighbouring local authorities indicates that textile collections are in a state of flux, with tonnages reducing on a ‘year on year’ basis.
- 1.4 As an alternative option to the kerbside collection scheme, it’s suggested that the scheme of paying charity shops a recycling credit is extended. This will contribute to BBCs recycling rate.

## 2.0 CHARITY SHOPS

2.1 The following charity shops were approached in order to seek their views on the proposed kerbside textile collection service:

2.2 Saint Francis Hospice, 37 High Street, Brentwood – Manager: Ms S.Smith

2.2.1 Ms S.Smith was visited on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014. Ms S.Smith referred to a Brentwood Gazette article – 13<sup>th</sup> August 2014 – which articulated the concerns of charity shops in the area. Concerning the Saint Francis Hospice shop, the Assistant Manager was quoted as stating, ” it will affect us, because when we recycle stuff it brings money to the charity. I think it is wrong because, obviously, we have been doing this for a while.”

2.2.2 It was explained that a recent waste composition analysis undertaken for the Essex Waste Partnership identified that an approximate 400 tonnes of textiles were sent to landfill annually. It’s assumed that these textiles are low grade – rag quality. Ms S.Smith advised

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that they collect all grades of textiles as, for example, the company they use for collection pays on a weekly basis £250 to £350 for the rag they collect.

2.2.3 Ms S.Smith also advised that textiles are also sent to their Ilford shop, where they are sold at a lower rate than Brentwood.

2.2.4 Ms S.Smith stated that she anticipated a reduction in their donations, should the scheme be introduced, as people will opt for the more convenient method of disposing of their waste. This is despite good access to the Saint Francis Hospice shop from the front or the rear.

2.2.5 Ms S.Smith was unaware of any case studies concerning this issue; she did add that members of the public visiting the shop had been enquiring as to the proposed collection by the Council.

2.2.6 It was suggested as a goodwill gesture to ameliorate the impact of the initiative, whether a payment from the income that the Council will earn would be of interest? Further should the textile kerbside collection be suspended for the moment, would the Saint Francis Hospice be interested in receiving a recycling credit, on the basis a weighbridge certificate or Weighbridge Transfer Note with pertinent information is provided as evidence. Ms S.Smith responded positively to both suggestions.

2.3 Cancer Research, 87 High Street, Brentwood – Manager: Ms C.Arias

2.3.1 Ms C.Arias was visited on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 2014. Ms C.Arias was quoted in the Brentwood Gazette as saying, “ It is something good for the Council but it is going to affect our donations. It is going to mean fewer donations but it is the Council’s idea and whatever I say I don’t think they are going to listen to much.”

2.3.2 Ms C.Arias was also concerned about the impact on the sales targets she has to reach for the charity. Currently the ‘ragman’ she uses takes any quality of rag, paying 44p/kg; they

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usually collect 20 bags weekly, equating to an estimated 160kg ( 8.32 tonnes for the year).

2.3.3 Donations are ‘steady’ at the moment, providing sufficient stock for the shop, however Ms C.Arias is presuming there will be a negative impact on donations should the collection scheme be introduced.

2.3.4 Ms C.Arias stated that she thought it was a good idea for the elderly , or housebound, as she receives calls from residents requesting collections from home.

2.3.5 Ms C.Arias was interested in the concept of benefiting from the income the Council could receive. Regards the payment of a third party recycling credit Ms C.Arias stated that she would be very interested, however she felt that her Head Office would have to be involved.

2.3.6 Ms C.Arias agreed that she was unsure what the impact of the collection scheme would be. She also stated that she was unaware of any case studies within the charity that could substantiate her concerns. Ms C.Arias said she would have to assess the impact after a six month period.

2.4 Sue Ryder, High Street, Brentwood – Manager: Ms C.Long

2.4.1 Ms C.Long stated that it is a good idea, however she is concerned that by making it easy for residents to discard their textiles, particularly the elderly, this will have an adverse impact on donations, whereby those who would normally donate will be ‘tempted to withdraw’ from donating.

2.4.2 Ms C.Long said that it could also impact on the social element of donating, where regular donators would often come in for a chat.

2.4.3 They have a rag collection – 30 to 35 bags per week – however Ms C.Long was unable to say what rate they receive, saying it would be a matter for Head Office.

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- 2.4.4 Concerning the possibility of receiving financial credit from the Council, Ms C.Long stated that issue would have to be handled by their Head Office.
- 2.5 British Heart Foundation – National Stock Generation Manager: Ms K O’Donoghue
- 2.5.1 They currently undertake a kerbside collection service in the Borough of Elmbridge; collections are made three times per year. Ms K.O’Donoghue stated that they collect 60 to 65 tonnes per year, which equates to the tonnage that many Authorities collect with a service that operates on a more frequent basis.
- 2.5.2 Ms K.O’Donoghue stated that residents tend to have a pattern to how they donate, whether to a charity shop, clothes bank or kerbside collection service. She was quite emphatic in stating that despite offering a kerbside collection service there was no adverse impact on the donations made to charity shops.
- 2.5.3 The British Heart Foundation shop in Brentwood currently receives a recycling Credit from the Council - £ 44.42/tonne ( BBC receive a credit of £60.69/tonne from ECC). In 2013/14 BHF claimed recycling credit for 35.561 tonnes.
- 2.6 Save the Children, Baytree Centre – Manager : declined to give her name ( company policy)
- 2.6.1 The Manager stated , “Do you want charity shops to close?” The manager is clearly against the introduction of the collection scheme stating that it would have an impact on their donations, which they rely upon heavily as they don’t benefit from additional stock being provided by a central store.
- 2.6.2 The Manager stated that there was a noticeable adverse impact on donations when the people realized the financial benefits of selling their textiles.

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- 2.6.3 Concerning the possibility of financial incentives from the Authority, the Manager stated that would have to be handled by the head Office. The shop has a weekly ‘rag’ collection, but the Manager was unable to provide any statistics.
- 2.6.4 The Manager ended the meeting with the comment that she was not happy as the convenience of the proposed service would divert ‘rags’ from the shop.
- 2.7 Barnardo’s, 196 Hutton Road, Brentwood – Head of Recycling : Mr J.Ellis
- 2.7.1 Mr J.Ellis stated there was risk of a reduction in donations; but it was agreed it would be difficult to quantify that risk at the moment.
- 2.7.2 Mr J.Ellis advised that their shop in Brentwood sends off approximately 300kg/month to the rag man. As such the suggestion of receiving a recycling credit would be welcome; though he appreciates it would not be a significant amount.

### **3.0 LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

- 3.1 The Principal Street Scene Officer at Rochford District Council – Ms L.Athey – stated the following, “I don’t believe our collections affected Charity Shops at all. If anything I would say that Charity Shops have impacted our collections, we have seen the tonnage drop away quite significantly in the past couple of years partly due to changing markets, cash for clothes and the increasing presence in the High Street of Charity shops.”
- 3.2 The Operational Services Team Leader from Castle Point Borough Council – Mr T.Read – stated that they have run kerbside collections , in one form or another, for the past 15 years, and to his knowledge they have never had any complaints from charity shops, though the amount they collect is reducing annually:

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	<b>Tonnes</b>
<b>2014/15 ( est)</b>	56
<b>2013/14</b>	67
<b>2012/13</b>	69
<b>2011/12</b>	74

Table 1 – Kerbside totals for textiles

3.3 The following comment was made by the Waste & Recycling Officer of Uttlesford District Council in 2012: “we also use Essex Textiles but we have had lots of complaints of missed collections and residents will always call you, even if you tell them to contact Essex Textiles. We also had problems with Essex Textiles not having enough phone lines so the phone number would always be ringing out. We are now terminating our contract because we are collecting through the co-mingled collections.”

3.4 At a recent meeting of the Essex Waste Managers the following minute was recorded concerning textiles:

*The Maldon Officer asked if any of the WCA’s in attendance collected textiles from the kerbside and what revenue they received.*

- § *Rochford – Use Essex Textiles. Tonnages are reducing.*
- § *Colchester – Work with The Salvation Army but tonnages are low.*
- § *Castle Point – same as Rochford*
- § *Southend – work with Cory and have seen a drop in tonnages.*

*The general consensus was that kerbside textiles was not very successful. Textiles often get stolen and that now was probably not a good time to introduce such a scheme.*

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### 4.0 BRING SITES

4.1 BBC currently have six textile banks located within the Borough, which are maintained by L.M.Barry. Tonnages have been dropping off significantly over the years:

	<b>Tonnes</b>
<b>2014/15 ( est)</b>	27
<b>2013/14</b>	29

Table 2

4.2 British Heart Foundation are in receipt of recycling credits from BBC for the textiles they despatch for recycling. The tonnages they collect are significantly higher than BBCs bring site tonnages:

	<b>Tonnes</b>
<b>2014/15 ( est)</b>	38
<b>2013/14</b>	36

Table 3