

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No. 13

meeting date: 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2017  
title: PREPARATION FOR REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICES  
FROM 2018 (REPORT 3)  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members of the implications for the current refuse and recycling collection services following the withdrawal by Lancashire County Council of Cost Sharing payments from April 2018, and;
- 1.2 To present Members with options focussing on the implications of changing the frequency of the general waste collection and/ or to the frequencies of the recycling collections.
- 1.3 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
  - Community Objectives – To increase the recycling of waste material.
  - Corporate Priorities – To be a well managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs.
  - Other Considerations – To protect and enhance the environmental quality of our area.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report is the third of a number of preliminary reports that are being presented to this Committee up until August 2017. Each report focusses on one of a range of options available to this authority that may in part, help mitigate the budget shortfall of £430,340 per annum,(based on current service provision), as a result of the withdrawal of the Cost Sharing agreement by Lancashire County Council from April 2018.
- 2.2 Officers are constantly reviewing the options with the amended list of proposed preliminary reports to be presented to this Committee as indicated below:
  - Charging for garden waste collections (Report 1 – 23 August 2016)
  - Options for dealing with mixed paper and cardboard (Report 2 – 11 October 2016)
  - Changes to refuse collection frequency and/or changes to recycling collection frequencies (Report 3 – 10 January 2017)
  - Alternative arrangements for the recycling of all our recyclable / compostable waste streams (This includes possible mixing of waste streams and cessation of collection of one or more waste streams)
  - Mothballing of the Waste Transfer Station

- 2.3 The first report (23 August 2016) presented to Members considered the impact of the introduction of a charge for the collection of garden waste. It outlined the issues around the collection of garden waste including a survey of other authorities of a similar rural nature who had already introduced a subscription based garden waste collection service for residents. Although it was demonstrated that the introduction of charges for garden waste would be unlikely to address fully the financial shortfall arising with the withdrawal of Cost sharing payments in 2018, it did indicate that this was one measure that could help bridge the funding gap if required. The report concluded that it was most likely that a package of measures would be required to address the financial problem that would enable a reasonable level of service to be retained for residents.
- 2.4 The second report (11 October 2016) provided a brief outline of a number of options for dealing with mixed paper and cardboard that may offer savings or generate income for this authority. Members were also advised that even at these preliminary stages there are risks and uncertainties which may affect the decisions to be made by Committee in due course. The report also explained the background behind the current arrangements for dealing with mixed paper and cardboard under the Cost Sharing agreement and the claim of exclusivity by the County Council for this material. The report covered the Council's regulatory responsibilities for the segregation and recycling of all dry recyclable materials which includes paper and cardboard. The report concluded that even if Committee were minded to abandon this separate service, the savings would not independently address the deficit created by the withdrawal of Cost Sharing payments in 2018. but it did demonstrate that it might contribute to the savings required.
- 2.5 Officers have submitted a joint expression of interest with other Lancashire districts for funded consultancy support through the WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme) Framework for Greater Consistency in Household Recycling in England. If the application is successful, technical support would be provided during 2017 / 2018 for the following:
- Appraisal of collection options that would bring local authorities in line with the consistency framework for recycling;
  - Support with the development of business cases and identification of local opportunities and benefits;
  - Advice on collection system design; and
  - Support with commissioning and introducing new collection services.
- 2.6 The framework is not just about local authority collections but about the entire life-cycle of the goods we buy, use and dispose of. It suggests which materials it makes sense for every household in England to be able to recycle at home. It offers greater consistency but at the same time allows local authorities to tailor collection systems to their local needs.
- 2.7 This is potentially a timely opportunity and if the application is successful would support the current review being undertaken by your officers in exploring options on how this

authority could meet the financial shortfall due to the withdrawal of Cost Sharing payments.

### **3 Implications of changing the frequency for kerbside collection of general waste and/or the kerbside collection of recyclable / compostable waste.**

3.1 To date, Committee has prided themselves on providing residents with a weekly collection of general waste, which has also been recognised as a “high quality service” by the Secretary of State as published in his `Guidance to Weekly Rubbish Collections`. However as many of the options being explored will not independently address the deficit it is most likely that a package of measures would be required that would enable a reasonable level of service to be retained for residents. It would therefore be remiss not to consider the implications of changing the frequency of the refuse and recycling collection service within the review.

3.2 This report does not examine in detail the model of each change in frequency option that could be applied to our refuse and recycling collection service, but gives an overview of the most likely operational implications such changes would present. Examples of the various models that could be applied to our refuse and recycling service are as follows:

a) Alternate weekly or three weekly collection of general / residual waste;

b) Alternate weekly or three weekly collection of general / residual waste and integrate mixed paper and cardboard into 3 stream collection schedule;

c) 3 weekly or 4 weekly collection of mixed dry recyclables with the integration of mixed paper and cardboard;

d) Separate collections of each waste stream with a mix of two, three or four weekly collections.

3.3 Members will also appreciate that changes to collection frequency would not be popular with our residents who have enjoyed a high quality service. We would have to address the usual concerns raised by residents on the perceived problems associated with food waste i.e. smell, flies, rats etc. The majority of waste collection authorities in the country are now providing alternate weekly collection of general waste and their experience has proven that the majority of residents concerns are unfounded. However this is not the case where the frequency has been extended to three weeks and longer and this move has resulted in the introduction of separate weekly or fortnightly collections of food waste using kitchen caddies.

3.4 Members are reminded that as a result of the `mothballing` of the Waste Technology Parks and the decision to cease the treatment of mixed food and garden waste by the County Council, that from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 householders in the Ribble Valley can no longer place food waste in their green wheeled bin. Additionally the County Council advised that they would not cover the cost for the treatment of separated food waste. Should this authority decide to undertake separate collections of food waste we would be required to pay gate fees for the treatment of this material although your officers are of the opinion that we could challenge the County Council policy. Furthermore it may also be possible to help offset any collection costs / gate fees by claiming recycling credit payments from the County Council. The introduction of food waste collected as a separate waste stream

would reduce any savings made as a result of changing the frequency of general waste collections.

- 3.5 It is most likely that adopting many of the models for changing frequency of collection may require significant capital investment to replace our collection vehicle fleet and / or to provide householders with larger wheeled bins and /or additional containers (kitchen caddies). Whilst some models may require a return to single compaction vehicles on average the savings would only amount to £45k per vehicle over 8 years but would still require over £1.5m capital investment to change the current fleet. In practice, we would prefer to replace the fleet over several years, in line with our existing replacement timetable, but - depending on the waste streams we eventually select - the existing fleet of split-bodied vehicles might not be suitable. Additionally there may be a requirement to increase the size of wheeled bin where there is a change in frequency which may require significant capital investment of £500k per waste stream.
- 3.6 Any potential revenue savings that may result in changing collection frequencies are as yet unknown due to the uncertainty around staffing implications, diesel costs due to the change of collection frequency etc. However, as mentioned earlier in paragraph 3.4, the separate collection of food waste would reduce any revenue savings.
- 3.7 Officers at all levels are pressing the County Council for information on their waste treatment and disposal plans post 2018 and any possible incentive payments to continue with current segregated waste arrangements.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – None at this stage although the driver for this review is the loss of £430,340 annual income from 2018. One or more of the options could require changes to the collection fleet and the provision of larger wheeled bins or additional containers. To introduce any of the models for changing frequency would be a major logistical task.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None at this stage although we cannot anticipate the response or changes that may be introduced by the County Council.
- Political – None at this stage although any negative changes to frequencies of collection for any of the waste streams would not be welcomed or popular.
- Reputation – None at this stage although any negative changes to frequencies of collection for any of the waste streams would not be welcomed or popular and may generate negative reaction from residents.
- Equality & Diversity – eg No implications identified.

## 5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The implications of changing the frequency of collection are complex and many would require significant capital investment so overall the financial benefits may not be immediately evident. This report does seek to demonstrate that a contribution to the savings required might be found from this area.

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### BACKGROUND PAPERS

Preparation for Refuse and Recycling Collection Services from 2018 (Report Number 2) – 11 October 2016

Preparation for Refuse and Recycling Collection Services from 2018 – 23 August 2016

Options following the withdrawal of recycling credits – 13 January 2016

Minute 495

WRAP - A framework for Greater Consistency in Household Recycling in England

Waste Management Files

For further information please ask for Peter McGeorge, extension 4467.