

AGENDA ITEM 10

RURAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

4th SEPTEMBER 2013

REPORT OF HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES

PROGRESS OF THE NEW WASTE SERVICE AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS 2012/13/

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with a summary of the performance and progress made since the implementation of the new recycling and waste collection service which commenced on Monday 4th April 2012, and to update Members regarding a number of other waste management improvements and developments.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Committee note the performance of the new Waste and Recycling Service and support the ongoing general service developments**

3.0 KEY ISSUES / BACKGROUND

Service up to March 31 st 2012	Changes to service (implemented 4 th April 2012)
Refuse collected fortnightly in a black wheeled bin	No change to service
Recycling collected weekly in recycling boxes. Materials separated by residents and sorted at the kerbside by Biffa	Removal of the weekly recycling box service Introduction of a fortnightly mixed collection service with additional materials added and now collected in the brown wheeled bin. (previously used for garden waste)
Free fortnightly garden waste collection service	Removal of free service, introduction of an opt in subscription based Green Waste Club with an annual collection service charge being applied directly to customers choosing to subscribe, to be managed and administered by Biffa

3.2 Progress of the new service 2012-2013

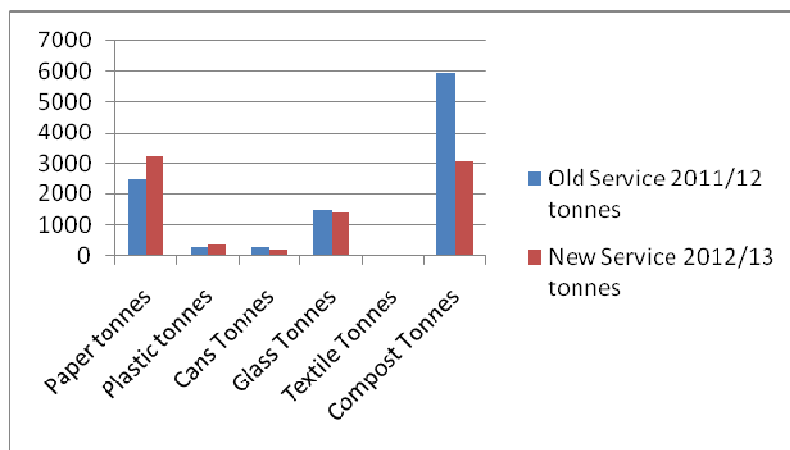
3.3 Recycling

- 3.4 The new mixed recycling service now using a wheeled bin has been running for over 18 months and from customer feedback and our current waste statistics it appears that residents have taken well to the new service. Approximately 1,000 additional brown recycling wheeled bins requests have been processed and delivered to residents requiring additional recyclable material capacity,

3.5 **Kerbside dry recycling (for Melton that is paper glass cans and plastics) has increased by 13% likely due to:**

- The ease of use that wheeled bins offer over recycling boxes
- The addition of materials now able to be collected and recycled (residents had asked for all plastics, cartons and all envelopes to be included in the collections for some considerable time and permitting them in has removed much of the confusion about what can and what cannot be put in the recycling bin)
- The general awareness raising generated by the changes and introduction of a new service.

3.6 The graph below compares the recycling performance of the last year of the old source separated box collection service with the first year of the new mixed wheeled bin collection service



Comparison of Recycling Tonnages		
	Old Service 2011/12 tonnes	New Service 2012/13 tonnes
Paper tonnes	2515	3236
Plastic tonnes	247	329
Cans Tonnes	276	172
Glass Tonnes	1468	1405
Textile Tonnes	31	27
Green Tonnes	5952	3050

3.7 **Graph notes**

Paper-The increase due to ease of new wheeled bin service , the addition of food and drinks cartons , all types of envelopes and the raising of residents awareness to the recycling service provided.

Plastics-The increase due to the ease of the new wheeled bin service, the addition of accepting virtually all types of plastics and the raising of residents awareness to the recycling service provided.

Cans and Glass- The reduced tonnages in 2012/13 was due to the cold wet summer of that year greatly reducing the sale of drinks in glass and cans along with a continued move over to using plastic containers in place of metal cans or glass bottles.

Textiles- These are no longer collected as part of the new mixed recycling service with all the current 2012/13 tonnages being collected through the councils mini recycling sites (see 3.14 and 3.15) or are tonnages accredited to MBC for textiles collected in 3rd party textile charity banks - Oxfam / Scope etc.

Green Tonnes- The performance of green waste collection now established as a chargeable service has exceeded all expectations as detailed below at 3.13 and 3.14.

3.8 **Refuse**

- **The amount of waste sent to land fill has reduced by 2%**, likely due to:
- Household waste being transferred from the waste bin to the recycling bin.
- Better informed residents in regards to waste re-use and reduce options which have been central to a number of campaigns delivered by the Councils Waste Team during the past 2 years

3.9 **Garden Waste - Green Waste Club**

- 3.10 Following the introduction of a subscription based chargeable garden waste collection service - Melton's Green Waste Club - a number of complaints were received from residents who objected to paying for a service that had for over 10 years been provided without any direct or additional charge. No further complaints of this nature have been received for some considerable time and the move to a chargeable garden waste service has now been followed or is under serious consideration by some of the other Leicestershire authorities for very similar reasons.
- 3.11 Biffa manage and operate the Green Waste Club independently, as the Council's agents for the service. Accordingly they provided the marketing materials and literature needed, obtained and delivered the new garden waste green wheeled bins sent out information and collection date calendars and carried out a number of information and guidance meetings with our Customer Services Team, along with establishing their own call centre to which our resident's enquiries could be passed.
- 3.12 The first year's annual subscription charge to householders was set at £32.00 per annum for April 2012, with a start date agreed to be Monday April 4th 2012 The annual subscription increased to £38.00 for 2013/14.
- 3.13 The number of residents joining the club has exceeded all expectations, with over 7,000 (around 30% of households) members currently, and a slow but steady increase in new subscribers every week. This significantly exceeds expectations at the time that the changes to the service were made, when it was anticipated that 'take up' would be as low as 10% of households. This high level of take up has significant implication for the Borough's recycling

rate and financial implications, firstly the council's overall recycling performance standard has held up and reduced by just 5.1 percent whilst the significantly higher than anticipated income from green waste credits (paid to MBC by Leicestershire County Council for diverting such household waste away from landfill) has been well above the budget estimate which greatly assisted the balancing of this budget

- 3.14 The previous 'free of any direct charge' garden waste collection service was used regularly by around 65% of the Borough's households. The new subscription based service has attracted over 30% of the Borough's households, who appear to be maximising its usage by presenting for around 51% of the garden waste generated by the previous service.
- 3.15 The graph above at 3.6 and the table below show the differences between the old 2011/12 and new 2012/13 service:

	Annual tonnages		Change		Comment
	2011/12	2012/13	tonnes	%	
Kerbside recycling	4818	5554	+736	+15%	Significant increase in dry recyclables diverted from landfill
Kerbside refuse	10993	10772	-221	-2%	Sign of recyclables diverted from refuse bins, alongside reducing waste
Kerbside Melton Green Waste	5952	3050	-2971	-50.0%	Large decrease in kerbside garden waste with move to chargeable service
Subtotal kerbside refuse and recycling	15811	16326	-515	-3.3%	Sign of reduction in household refuse waste
Total recycling and composting performance	49.9%	44.7%		-5.2%	This measure of waste performance shows a reduced percentage despite increase in recycling, due to decrease in garden waste

3.16 **Additional Waste and Recycling Service Improvements**

The previous kerbside recycling box service allowed for the collection of batteries and textiles. Due to the nature of these materials and certain operational logistics, the new mixed recycling service was not able to accept them. To ensure that residents were still able to recycle these materials, the following alternative provisions have been developed and implemented.

- 3.17 MBC already had a wide range of mini recycling centres located throughout the Borough. Previously these facilitated the separate deposits of paper, glass, plastic and cans. These sites have all now been rebadged to allow for the depositing of mixed recycling as well as separate textiles, establishing a Borough wide network of such facilities. These modifications were supported by the production of a new information leaflet informing residents of the changes and locations of the Borough's mini recycling centre sites.
- 3.18 Batteries could not be included at these sites due to their hazardous contents, to address this a series of battery containers and boxes were obtained and placed within Melton itself at all Sure

Start Centres, the Library, and the MBC Parkside offices. For the facility outside of Melton, Parish Councils, local schools and local village shops were contacted, asking if they would like to hold a container for their local residents use. A number took up the offer and we are now collecting batteries from them on a regular basis. This service is looking to further expand as further suitable sites for collections emerge.

3.19 A further recycling initiative is the recycling/recovery of street sweepings. The sweepings consist mainly of detritus (small stones, soil, plastic rubber and other organic matter) that collects in the pavement gutters and at the edges of highways kerbsides and footpaths. Up to 900 tonnes of sweepings have been generated and a new countywide contract recently let by Leicestershire County Council now sees the material passing through a process that has the potential to recover for reuse up to 70% of the material (that percentage accordingly being diverted from what was previously land filled).

3.20 **Other Current Waste Service Development**

3.21 **Increasing recycling participation amongst residents living in flats**

3.22 Occupants of flats are often assumed to be a 'hard to reach group because they appear to have logistical and communication challenges. Currently a few areas where residents live in flats do have their own individual refuse and recycling facilities, however the majority have access to communal bin areas for refuse, often provided with brown bags for recycling which can be deposited for collection in those same communal refuse areas, whilst some areas have been provided with communal refuse stores along with their own designated mini recycling site.

3.23 For the residents living in flats or other similar situations where communal facilities have been provided, customer and contractor feedback has identified an under provision and the need for extra capacity in regards to recycling and potentially for refuse. To assess this requirement fully a review of such areas is being undertaken to identify and quantify the improvements required. The outcome from this work is expected to bring about a greater degree of equity in regards to the waste collection services provided for residents living in flats as well as to offer them facilities that fit with their needs and that will encourage them to participate with the recycling services made available.

3.24 These initiatives include investigation and information gathering in regards to:

- Communal Bin store location - accessibility/health & safety/additional locations
- Communal Bin capacity - additional requirement
- Accessibility to communal bins for the collection crews and vehicular access issues
- Measures to tackle barriers potentially stopping residents from recycling such as lack of information on service etc

3.25 A resident service satisfaction questionnaire for those living in flats and other similar types of accommodation is soon to be carried out, the outcome of which will help inform the initiative as well as the development of a 'how to recycle' information pack that will be produced and made available to all flat dwelling residents and similar households.

3.26 **Future Developments**

3.27 **Strategic Joint Working**

As the Committee is aware, the Leicestershire Environment Board (LEB) has agreed to further explore the potential for Strategic Joint working (SJW) in regards to the County's Waste Management provisions. This work is following an agreed route map approach which is now moving to stage 2, that being the modelling of a number of possible SJW scenarios to help determine the degree of potential benefits and accordingly the justification for progressing further along the SJW journey. As this programme moves forward Members will be advised at certain stages of the outcomes to date and asked to support, or otherwise, further progression. An LEB Waste Task Group has been formed to help oversee the process and ensure the initiative maintains its impetus.

3.28 **Kerbside Sorted Recycling versus Mixed (mixed) Recycling**

There has been considerable debate between the waste industry and DEFRA around the acceptability of different methods of recycling mostly focused around source separated recycling vs. mixed recycling. The outcome from a recent Judicial Review about this issue sees a degree of flexibility as being the way forward with local preferences being accepted as validating different methods of recycling in different areas, provided certain standards are maintained. For Melton, with its now established mixed collection, the main consideration is that our collected mixed material goes to a "Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable" (TEEP) compliant sorting facility or MRF (Material Recycling Facility). The "appropriate quality standards" required of TEEP are likely to be ensured through guidance rather than legislation. The Biffa owned and operated MRF that Melton's recyclable material goes to is already considered to be operating fully within TEEP compliant requirements

3.29 **Qualifying criteria that defines materials as recycle or non recycle**

End of Waste Criteria – The EU are working on specific definitive criteria for qualifying materials as having been recycled according to the various uses such materials take in their next life following their recovery i.e. glass reused as an additive in road building aggregate may not count as this use gives the material its final use with further recycling all but impossible, whilst glass that is turned back into bottles and containers which can be recycled repeatedly will clearly be included. This work remains ongoing and any significant impacts from the outcome of that work on this Authority's recycling performance will be reported to Members.

3.30 **Waste Strategy development**

Waste Strategy for England produced in 2011 is currently under examination in regards to its fitness for purpose, it is being considered together with a number of pieces of waste management legislation and updates to legislation to ensure clarity, consistency and a unified direction of travel.

4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The new waste collection service has been in operation successfully for 18 months with the present service configuration not expected to change for the remaining 4 years of the current contract. The results of the current Strategic Joint Working initiative may bring about some significant changes which may in turn bring about some policy and/or corporate implications, however at this stage in that process and in regards to the core contents of this report, that being to update Members in regards to how this Councils' new service is performing, there are no policy or corporate implications resulting directly from this report

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The new recycling service generates an income to the Council based on industry-average values for the collected materials. This is balanced against processing costs made up of transport for delivering the mixed materials to a sorting facility and sorting those mixed recyclable materials back into separate material types i.e. paper plastic cans glass etc for onwards sale.
- 5.2 At the time of the first year of the new service 2012/13 the average sales values for most of the materials we collected were significantly depressed creating a situation where the sales income received was lower than the processing costs incurred resulting in a net deficit.
- 5.3 Towards the end of 2012/13 the average sales values of recyclable materials started to strengthen and has continued to do so, albeit at a moderate pace. Accordingly average mixed recyclable materials sales have now achieved a positive position with the value per tonne received for the first quarter of 2013/14 confirmed at £70.57, compared to processing costs of £69.61.
- 5.4 The increased tonnages referred to in para 3.13 above also result in higher than expected receipts from recycling credits. Based on 'quarter 1' information, it is anticipated that these elements of the budget will both generate a modest budget surplus in 2013/14.
- 5.4 The current examination of Strategic Joint working opportunities within the County is being progressed with a view to achieving increased efficiencies, reduced costs and better considered, integrated and sustainable services, however there are no financial or resource implications resulting directly from this report.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

- 6.1 There are no legal implications resulting directly from this report

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES

- 8.1 There are no direct impacts on equalities issues as a direct result of this report, however members will note the current service development initiative to better assist and facilitate recycling for those residing in flats is in part designed to increase the equity of the Councils' domestic waste management provisions

9.0 RISKS

Probability ↓

Very High A				
High B				
Significant C	2			
Low D	1	4	3	
Very Low E				
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic

Risk No.	Description
1	Non renewal of Melton Green Waste Club subscriptions
2	Service costs offset by recyclate sales diminishes with reduced material values
3	SJW opportunities lost or reduced by inability to agree sufficient benefit to move forward to the next stage
4	End of Waste criteria defines the recycling of certain materials as requiring sustainable reuse to qualify as recycled, making its collection more viable as reuse.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Waste Management Services are known to be a Council service that can impact upon climate change issues. Members may wish to note that the generation of greenhouse gases known to be harmful to the environment and have a negative impact in regards to climate change issues is generally understood to be lower with mixed collections than kerbside source separated collections.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 The new waste service changes were made after many months of debate and discussion with a wide range of views being given due consideration and the outcomes from a public 'survey monkey' questionnaire carried out some time earlier which included questions about the waste services received by the Boroughs' residents was included and helped support the choices and options chosen for the new service.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards are affected; this service applies to the entire community

Contact Officer: Raman Selvon
 Date: 14/08/2013
 Background Papers: None
 Reference: X: Council & Sub-C'tees/REEA/2013