

Meeting of the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services and Advisory Panel

4th December 2008

Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services

Reuse of Waste

Summary

1. To consider the practical application of the existing Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on re-use credits considering both the opportunities and obstacles for the scheme successfully contributing to the Waste Strategy for York.

Background

2. In April 2006, the Government published new guidance on the Recycling Credit Scheme, which stated that *'Re-use is treated in the same way as recycling for the purpose of the scheme and that credit values should be the same for re-use as they are for recycling'*.
3. The guidance goes on to say that, as regards to the risk of fraud, given that adequate audit trails are a prerequisite for any payment under the recycling credit scheme, local authorities would not be expected to conclude any agreement to pay re-use credits unless they were fully satisfied with the audit arrangements.

Scope

4. Credits can only be paid for **waste**, which is recycled or re-used. Second-hand books or clothes, and the use of returnable or refillable containers will not be eligible for credit payments. As an example, goods donated to charity shops are not classified as waste at the point of donation, therefore charity shops would not be eligible to receive recycling credits on goods donated to their shops. With regard to waste discarded from charity shops, as this is treated as household waste, charity shops would be eligible for recycling credits for items that cannot be sold and are then discarded as waste and recycled rather than being disposed of.
5. Re-use credits can only be paid on the tonnage of items redistributed to households.
6. The items are re-used or otherwise diverted from landfill. Materials which would not usually be presented for landfill disposal as they are diverted as part of the municipal waste management strategy of the

local authority would not usually qualify for re-use credit as the value of the credit is based on the saving made by the disposal authority from the payment of landfill tax.

7. Organisations claiming re-use credits must be 'not-for-profit', or charitable organisations and the payments are based on the weight of items re-used, not items collected.
8. The notional third party recycling and reuse credit rate for 2007/08 was £37.31 per tonne.

Tracking items

9. Local authority audit requirements expect a rigorous system of tracking individual items from source to destination in order to prove the weight of those that re-use credits are paid on.
10. Small organisations often find the claiming of re-use credits not to be feasible as it places an overly complicated administrative burden on these projects, which actually incur more costs than can be reclaimed through the payment of the re-use credits.
11. The national Furniture Reuse Organisations (FRO's) of which York's Community Furniture Store is a member, have systems set up that satisfy the complicated audit requirement of tracking from collection through to final disposal to the appropriate outlets, such as local residents.

What is available in York

12. The York and North Yorkshire Partnership, in partnership with Charity Shops and FRO's across the region are running a re-use campaign called **Choose2Reuse**. The campaign aims to:
 - Increase the quality of goods donated to Charity Shops and FRO's.
 - Encourage more people to buy more pre-owned goods.
 - Increase the number of people involved in volunteering in 're-use' activities in Charity Shops and FRO's through the 'Reuse Champion' programme.
13. Community Furniture Store (York) Limited in James Street, welcome items such as:
 - Desks, tables and chairs
 - Wardrobes and chest of drawers
 - Beds, mattresses and sofas
 - Good quality, working white goods are always needed.

14. The items are resold to benefit the community and there are discounts for low income families.
15. To limit the audit and administrative burden, both from the point of view of the authority and the Community Furniture Store, alternative arrangements have been found to more, indirectly, support York's FRO. This has been achieved by offering first call on any appropriate materials collected through the bulky household collection service, professional advice for waste management, the most recent being around the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive, and free disposal of unwanted items.
16. The York and North Yorkshire Waste Partnership (Y&NYWP) has set up a community reuse fund aimed at community groups and charities across York and North Yorkshire, who can apply for funding to set up or improve reuse schemes.
17. The community reuse fund aims to increase the community sector reuse projects and improve existing schemes across York and North Yorkshire and therefore help to divert more waste from landfill.
18. The maximum grant available is £5,000 and applicants are expected to raise at least 25% match funding in cash towards the project costs. The closing date for applicants is November 2008.
19. In addition to the above, the following provide a summary of the reuse schemes operated, or supported by the City of York Council as at 31st October 2008.
20. **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC)** – All sites have reuse facilities for electrical equipment, mobile phones, textiles and shoes. In addition, Hazel Court has facilities for CDs/DVDs, ink cartridges and books.
21. **Bring Sites** – Facilities are located throughout the City:
 - **Textiles** – 17 sites with banks provided by Oxfam, Salvation Army, Scope and the Yorkshire Air Ambulance **(2007/08 - 422 tonnes collected)**
 - **Books** – 13 sites with banks provided by British Heart Foundation and Oxfam. **(2007/08 – 447 tonnes collected)**
 - **Shoes** – 12 sites with banks provided by European Recycling Company and Oxfam. **(2007/08 – 6 tonnes collected)**
22. **Bike Rescue** – is a charity, which refurbishes old and unwanted bikes to sell, with the aim of reducing the number of unwanted bikes being sent to landfill. The City of York helps to support the work of the charity with some funding.

23. **Yorkshire Air Ambulance** – Provides a doorstep collection service for clothes, shoes and textiles. Residents can arrange for collection by ringing a freephone number on any weekday between 8am and 8pm. York was one of the first local authorities approached about this service being provided in the area.
24. **Recycling Credits** – The following organisations are currently in receipt of recycling credits:

Name of Organisation
Bishopthorpe Scout Group
1st Clifton Sea Scouts
1st Copmanthorpe Scout Group
Dringhouses Scout Group
Elvington Scout Group
New Earswick Community Scheme
North Yorks Moor Railway
1st Poppleton Scout Group
Wheldrake Recreation Association
St Andrews Church
Friends of St. Nicolas Fields
Guide Dogs for the Blind

25. **Charity Shops** – The Council’s website lists the charity shops in York that accept donations for items that can be sold, with some accepting donations of specialist items such as toner cartridges, mobile phones, old stamps and spectacles.

Consultation

26. Consultation is on going with all the organisations listed above, plus those who have expressed an interest in dealing with materials that could be diverted from landfill.

Options

27. Executive member to note the contents of the report.
28. Executive member to continue to support the ‘third sector’ reuse organisations who increasingly need to find sources of sustainable material, thus contributing to the achievements of the local waste strategy.
29. Executive member to receive reports on specific organisations who both contribute to the local waste strategy, but also provide a wider society benefit by providing employment, training and volunteering opportunities to the vulnerable or socially excluded people of the City.

Analysis

30. The ‘third sector’ encompasses a wide range of value-driven organisations, including voluntary and community organisations,

charities, co-operatives and social enterprises with particular strengths in waste prevention, e.g. encouraging behaviour change among individuals and re-use, e.g. through the provision of household appliances and furniture to those in need.

31. The Government wants to make greater use of 'third sector' expertise in waste management and to capitalise on the multiple benefits - Social, Economic and Environmental – it can bring to communities. These wider benefits typically involve training and employment opportunities to disadvantaged members of society and provide low cost furniture and other household items to those in need.

Corporate Priorities

32. This report is important for the following corporate priority:
 - Decrease the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products going to landfill.

Implications

Financial

33. The costs will be maintained within the existing waste minimisation budget.

Human Resources (HR).

34. There are no HR issues associated with this report.

Equalities

35. This paper has taken equality issues into account. There will be regular update meetings with the councils Equality Team and access groups will be encouraged to participate.

Legal.

36. There are no legal implications at this stage.

Crime and Disorder.

37. There are no crime and disorder implications at this stage.

Information Technology (IT).

38. There are no direct IT implications at this stage.

Property

There are no property implications at this stage.

Risk Management

39. In compliance with the council's risk management policy the main risks that have been identified in this report are those which could lead to the inability to deliver a service review of sufficient quality (operational) which could lead to damage to the Council's image and reputation and failure to meet stakeholders' expectations (governance).
40. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risks at this point need only to be monitored as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of this report.

Recommendations

41. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member to note the report and the current facilities in York.
42. Reason: To inform the Executive Member of the current opportunities to re-use.
43. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member to support the options in paragraphs 28 and 29.
44. Reasons: To support the Governments objectives to make greater use of 'third sector' expertise in waste management and to capitalise on the multiple benefits - Social, Economic and Environmental – it can bring to communities.

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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None