

Report of the Assistant Director Communities & Equalities

Waste Collection Calendar 2017

Summary

1. This report proposes a revised waste collection calendar, for implementation in April 2017, as part of an initiative to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the city's recycling arrangements.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - (i) Approve the revised calendar.
 - (ii) Approve the communications strategy to inform residents about the changes.

Reason: To improve the efficiency of York's household waste collection service and in particular the roll out of recycling collections to rural areas of the city.

Background

3. The Council aims to increase the level of re-use, recycling and composting to reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfill. By doing this we can reduce the risk of climate change, help to preserve the world's natural resources, save energy, and reduce the cost of landfill charges to the Council Tax payer.
4. The percentage of waste being recycling has plateaued over the last two years, which mirrors the case across the country. This review shows our commitment to increasing our levels of recycling, helping, for example, to address the collection of recycling materials in rural areas of the city which has been inconsistent for some years, due to the way resources have been deployed.
5. Provision of bring banks, which were introduced at various locations across the city, prior to kerbside recycling, will also be reviewed

early in 2017, with a report to be brought back to the Executive Member.

6. Over a number of years the household waste collection service has been operating with a significant annual over-spend. The principal reasons for this are:
 - (iii) A number of new homes have been added to the rounds in recent years with no additional resource being provided.
 - (iv) The kerbside recycling collection service doesn't run at full capacity.
 - (v) In 2015/16 over 2,900 tonnes of recyclable material was comingled which costs the council c. £200k compared to if it was separated. The current charge for comingled recyclable material is £65.03.
 - (vi) The vehicles used for collection in terraced areas have become uneconomical to use and will be replaced (see paragraph 8 below and photo at Annex 1).
7. Whilst it has been possible in the past to mitigate this overspend through underspends elsewhere in the Council's budget, in view of the Council's overall financial position it is now imperative that spending on this service is brought within budget. Failure to do this would mean that an additional £400k p.a. would need to be allocated to the service leading to additional cuts elsewhere in the Council's services.
8. A comprehensive review of all aspects of waste services is being undertaken. This review has been split into 2 phases so that efficiency savings can be delivered and the effectiveness of the service improved:
 - Phase one: Recycling collections, to be completed and implemented by April 2017.
9. The reason for reviewing recycling first is that there is obvious capacity in the vehicles and, by decoupling grey and recycling in terms of the collection day we can take out the spare capacity. This is combined with the fact that replacement of the existing "FAME" vehicles, which is in hand, gives us the opportunity to decrease comingling, bringing a big cost benefit, as well as to introduce more efficient collection regimes. The two new vehicles are bespoke and are being manufactured to suit our methods of collection.

- Phase Two: Grey and Green collections, to be completed and implemented by April 2018.
10. This part of the review will focus mainly on the opportunities arising from a change of vehicles in 18/19, when the current finance leases expire, including looking at full implementation of in-cab technology.
 11. The review to date has:
 - (vii) Looked at practice in other local authorities.
 - (viii) Consulted extensively with front-line staff.
 - (ix) Trialled new vehicles.
 - (x) Updated the assisted collections service removing around 3,000 properties from the collection lists, where the service was no longer required.
 - (xi) Reviewed the collection rounds using specialist route planning software.
 - (xii) The new rounds will include the capacity for known and planned new builds.

Proposals

12. The proposals contained within this paper represent the outcome of the first phase of the review. They will enable the service to operate within its budget and remove the overspend of £400k. It is anticipated that the second phase of the review which is ongoing, will deliver further savings for 2018/19 which will support future overall council budget reductions. Options arising from this second phase of review will be brought back to the Executive Member during 2017.

Proposal 1:

13. The current collection arrangements of collecting recycling materials on the same day of the week as grey and green bin collections are inefficient. This is because it is not possible to use the spare capacity that exists within the recycling rounds. By de-coupling the collection days it will be possible to use this capacity and reduce the number of non terraced recycling rounds by one vehicle and four full time equivalent (FTE) employees and reduce the number of terraced recycling rounds by one vehicle and four FTE employees.
14. The pattern of fortnightly collection of grey bin and kerbside recycling collections will be retained but we will move, where required, to a changed day of the week for the recycling collection.

This will enable the number of recycling rounds to be reduced by two.

Proposal 2:

15. The type of waste currently collected in rural areas is not the same in all locations; by reviewing the rounds and the way in which we collect from rural properties, it will be possible to expand the collection of all types of waste to all locations and properties.
16. It will now be possible to include properties in Kexby, as well as approximately 800 other individual rural properties, into our green waste collection service and to provide them with a glass recycling collection service so that they have the full kerbside recycling collections.

Proposal 3:

17. In order to mitigate any waste not being collected due to confusion of the new collection dates, we will provide a rapid response consisting of a mini refuse collection vehicle and driver to respond to reports of uncollected waste, for a period of 12 weeks. This will be funded from within existing resources.

Proposal 4:

18. In order to encourage increased recycling we will offer free recycling boxes, lids and nets to residents, during the first six months of 17/18. These will be made available for collection by residents where households have boxes or nets missing. These boxes have been purchased through the Increasing Recycling fund and will be made available as long as stocks last.

Communication Strategy

19. All properties affected by the changes with the service delivery will receive a new collection calendar. This will identify the collection days for their recycling days and their grey and green collection days.
20. A planned and timetabled communications strategy is attached at Annex 2.
21. We will promote the use of the One Planet York App, while using the app to publicise the new collection calendars.

Options and Analysis

22. The principal option to the Executive Member is whether to implement the new waste calendar. The new arrangements deliver the efficiency savings required by this service, as well as service improvements and are therefore recommended.

Future Developments

23. Undertake and implement recommendations of Phase 2 of waste services review.
24. Ensure at least annual route optimising to take into account the increase in property numbers.
25. Continued work with planning and developers in relation to provision of waste collection services and timetable of when new developments 'come on line'.

Council Plan

26. The proposals contained in this report assist with the priority of a Focus on Frontline Services.

Implications

Financial:

27. The waste collection service has overspent for the previous 3 financial years and in 2016/17 is currently forecast to overspend by £360k. The implementation of the proposals within this report will enable the service to operate within the allocated budget.
28. The cost reductions will primarily be delivered by reductions in staffing, both from the permanent establishment and the use of casual staff. The reduction of 8 FTEs will decrease staffing costs by £262k. A further £116k will be saved by the decreased reliance on the use of casual staff.
29. Further savings will be achieved by reduced co-mingling of recyclate. This should lead to an increase in income of £40k from the sale of recyclate. This forecast is based on prudent assumptions and could potentially be higher. These savings will initially be offset by costs associated with the rapid response refuse collection vehicle and potential redundancy costs which are yet to be confirmed.
30. The free supply of recycling boxes, lids and nets will be funded from existing waste minimisation budgets.

31. The supply of wheeled bins for properties brought into the green waste collection service will be funded from the existing capital provision for purchase of wheeled bins.
32. **Human Resources:** The proposals involve a reduction of 8 FTEs. This will be achieved through the deletion of 4 vacancies and accepting 4 requests for voluntary redundancy.
33. The proposals involve a reduced reliance on use of casual staff. This will be achieved by revised working practices including the introduction of group task and finish across the rounds, new agreed protocols with regard to minimum and maximum staffing levels and updating of the workforce agreement framework. These changes have been introduced following consultation in line with the Council's management of change procedures.
34. There are no equalities, legal, crime and disorder, property, IT or other implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

35. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks identified associated with the areas of work covered in this report are financial: affecting the ability of the Council to meet its financial commitments, and operational: affecting delivery of the Council's business objectives and its image and reputation. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score has been assessed at 10 which equates to "Low". This is acceptable but means that regular monitoring is required of implementation of the new arrangements.

Contact Details

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Wards Affected:			All ✓

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Photo showing style of new vehicle

Annex 2 – Communications strategy

Abbreviations:

FTE – Full Time Equivalent