



**Notice of a public
Decision Session - Executive Member for Environment and Climate
Change**

To: Councillor Widdowson (Executive Member)

Date: Wednesday, 3 March 2021

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: Remote Meeting

A G E N D A

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4.00pm on Friday 5 March 2021**.

*With the exception of matters that have been the subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent, which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00pm on Monday 1 March 2021**.

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member is asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which he might have in respect of business on this agenda.

- 2. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 2)
To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on 6 January 2021.

- 3. Public Participation**
At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at remote meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is **5.00pm on Monday 1 March 2022.**

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact the relevant Democracy Officer, on the details at the foot of the agenda.

Webcasting of Remote Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this remote public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The remote public meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

During coronavirus, we've made some changes to how we're running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

- 4. Waste Report Update as requested by Executive October 2019** (Pages 3 - 12)
This report considers how the council can go even further in the amount of waste the city recycles. It sets out some high level approaches and what is and isn't in scope and seeks to establish the criteria by which any review of resident recycling should be evaluated.

5. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Executive Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی میا کی جا سکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change
Date	6 January 2021
Present	Councillors Widdowson

15. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member was asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interests she may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

16. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 16 December 2020 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

17. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

David Merrett spoke of behalf of Clean Air York in relation to air quality in the city. He noted the Councils 2015 to 2020 Air Quality Action Plan had seen NO2 emissions fall year on year however, the majority of this decrease happened at the start of the plan. He noted that while COVID-19 lockdown had lowered emissions, by October 2020 emissions in cities across the UK were back to similar levels in 2019. He therefore requested that as the last Air Quality Action Plan ran until 2020, that the Council develop a new plan.

18. York 5 Year Flood Plan Update

Officers were joined by Ben Hughes of the Environment Agency to introduce the quarterly report on the York 5 Year Flood Plan. Discussion noted that the new York flood defences design capacity had successfully dealt with flooding from Storm Bella. It was also noted that work to complete the new defences should not be delayed by lockdown, however,

this would be dependent on supply chains and that the Council and the Environment Agency were working with suppliers to avoid unexpected delays.

The installation of the new Fossgate barrier was discussed. It was confirmed that the stop blocks had been installed and the new gate was scheduled to be installed the week commencing 18 January 2021, however, in the event of a storm delaying this the pumping station would still be in operation.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the updated report and the evidence presented by the Environment Agency in the session.

Reason: To ensure that the Executive Member remains updated on the York 5 Year Flood Plan.

19. Urgent Business

Officers raised the DEFRA Flood Resilience Innovation Programme and sought the support of the Executive Member for the City of York Council's emerging bid. It was noted the bid required one lead authority but that City of York Council would work with North Yorkshire County Council and other partners in the area as part of the bid, The Executive Member requested that the Northern Forest be involved by officers in the bid. The objective of the bid if successful would be to reduce flood risk downstream. Details of the City of York Council's plans would be brought to a future decision session for Environment and Climate Change if successful.

Resolved:

- i. Noted that City of York Council Supported the emerging bid for DEFRA Flood Resilience Innovation Programme.

Reason: To ensure the York and the region continue to access funding to improve flood defences and mitigation.

Cllr Widdowson, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 3.19 pm].



Executive Member Decision Session**3 March 2021**

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy & Place
Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change

Waste Report Update as requested by Executive October 2019**Summary**

1. This report considers how the council can go even further in the amount of waste the city recycles. It sets out some high level approaches and what is and isn't in scope and seeks to establish the criteria by which any review of resident recycling should be evaluated.
2. The council has made the investment to replace its fleet of refuse vehicles and this includes 2 all electric vehicles, which were delivered in January 2021.
3. The council now needs to purchase a replacement fleet of recycling vehicles which are beyond their serviceable and economic life.
4. Before the recycling vehicles can be replaced the council needs to confirm the collection methodology for recycling.
5. City of York Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. Although increasing recycling alone will not reduce the city's carbon output, it will establish a clear expectation that the council will, in partnership with residents, take every step possible to reduce our impact and leave the environment in a better place than we found it.
6. Engaging with residents, and taking them with us on this journey as we carefully consider changes to the waste recycling collection methodology, will be a key part of this project. This will be managed as a project with a communications and engagement plan to ensure all residents understand the change and the rationale for the change.

Recommendations

7. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - 1) Note the Government's waste and resources strategy, in particular the uncertainty over food waste and how collections would be funded which is therefore food waste would be considered as a future development once the government have clarified the national position.
 - 2) Note the Government's waste and resources strategy, in particular the suggestion of a deposit scheme for plastic which is likely to change the way plastics are used and recycled. Therefore considering the recent expansion of plastic recycling agreed by Executive further increasing the range of plastics would be considered as a future development once the government have clarified the national position.
 - 3) Note the environmental concerns with fully mixed recycling that mixes glass, plastics, paper and card and the fact this has been in a number of high profile cases shipped around the world illegally. Also the lack of local outlets for fully mixed recycling is an issue and therefore exclude fully mixed recycling from this review.
 - 4) To accept the recommended options and criteria outlined in the report and request officers to develop a series of different recycling collection methodologies.
 - 5) Request E&P Scrutiny to consider the options developed by officers against the criteria and identify a preferred option to be developed further.
 - 6) Delegate the decision to consult more widely on a preferred option to the Assistant Director of Transport, Highways and Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change.

Reason: To ensure York takes the opportunity to increase its recycling rate.

Background

8. As part of this review there are no changes proposed to residual waste (black bin) and recognises the administration's public commitments to the first green waste bin being free of charge.
9. The Executive committed to a review of recycling methodology in 2019. At Executive in October 2019 the Council increased the range of plastics collected, the impact of which would be kept under review.
10. The move to source separated recycling in boxes significantly increased the rate of recycling and whilst the council performs well and just above the regional average, our recycling performance has not changed significantly in recent years. See the table below

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Household waste sent to reuse, recycling or composting	CYC 44.9% Yorkshire and Humberside 42.4%	CYC 43.6% Yorkshire and Humberside 42.9%	CYC 43.6%

11. Another factor to be considered from the performance reporting is our resident panels views and the % of panel who think that the council and partners are not doing well helping to reduce amount of household waste. This is now over 50% and increasing.
12. The replacement residual waste vehicles (fitted with bin lifts) have been ordered and are starting to arrive including two all electric waste collection vehicles which have arrived and are now primarily working within the Clean Air Zone of the city centre.
13. The recycling vehicles are now beyond serviceable and economic life and replacement is overdue. However, before an order for these vehicles is placed a review of the recycling collection methodology has been requested by Executive and the outcome dictates the type of vehicles to be ordered.

14. The Government has a national waste and resources strategy that the Council will need to be mindful of. Embedded within the strategy is the Government's ambition to mandate separate collections of food waste.
15. Previously Central Government has indicated that any mandating to councils of food collection would be funded. (The cost for York could be several million pounds)
16. Currently food waste is recovered at Allerton Park as all organic matter is processed through the Anaerobic Digester, gas is captured and the residue incinerated. Both the gas and residue are used, through energy recovery, to produce power for 40,000 homes. . This is an integral part of our multi million pound 27 year waste disposal contract.
17. However, should separate food waste collection be mandated then models have been developed that would allow that to be incorporated with associated significant investment.
18. There currently remains no clarity on whether the government would accept that the Allerton Park plant delivers against the strategy's requirement to treat food waste or whether the Government will legislate to ensure food waste is to be separately collected.
19. It is worth noting that separately collected food waste would still be treated in an anaerobic digester to capture the gas, but it could potentially be used as a compost material rather than incinerated.
20. A separate food waste collection service would place extra fleet requirements on the Council.
21. For the above reasons it is proposed that Food Waste is not modelled as part of the future collection methodology until the government's position is clarified.
22. The Governments national waste and resources strategy also details that it will develop specific policies around plastics such as deposit schemes, this will fundamentally change the way plastic is used and how it is recycled. For this reason increasing the range of plastic is not proposed at this time until these proposed changes come into effect and are better understood.

23. Historically some councils have mixed all the recycling materials together. Mixing all recycling materials (often call comingling) significantly devalues the materials collected. This lower value means is often shipped around the world as an unwanted commodity.
24. However, it is worth noting that in 2020, and as a result of the covid pandemic, recycling collections have needed to flex to facilitate social distancing of our staff when collecting waste. The card and paper have been kept separate. The plastic, tins and glass have been mixed but then separated at Harewood Whin using technology at the site since the introduction of the boxes. This change has had minimal cost impact and the recyclate produced has strong UK markets and is a viable option for the future.

Options

25. In terms of increasing recycling there are a number of options that could be considered.
 1. The council could focus on programmes to help encourage residents to recycle more.
 2. Maintaining the weekly collection principle changes could be made which increase capacity by supplying new containers, enabling residents to collect more of their recycling.
 3. Maintaining the weekly collection principle, changes could be made to increase the range of materials collected.

Analysis

26. The vast majority of residents do participate in recycling at some level. The driver for change in recycling is often a very personal one.
27. Option 1 - Whilst programmes of education would support residents it is unlikely to lead to a step change in recycling.
28. Option 2 – By increasing capacity for residents it would enable those who want to recycle more to do so, the choice of container configuration is key to success for residents as making recycling easier is a proven driver of recycling rates.

29. Option 3 – by increasing the materials that can be recycled the rate may increase, however, the streams are not proven and uptake may be low. Additional materials require markets for recycling, possibly additional containers which is not always supported and will increase cost.
30. Each of the options outlined would need further development. In terms of analysis
31. Therefore the three options could be developed further tested. But would need to be analysed against the following criteria.
 - i. Cost, the council faces unprecedented times. Any change to recycling collections must be made within the financial constraints the council faces.
 - ii. Environmental Impact, any change to recycling should increase the proportion of waste that is recycled. In addition, future collection methodologies should support the Councils ambitions to be Carbon neutral by 2030. This is about reducing carbon emissions where possible from our own operations but also from the onward processing of the collected materials. The opportunity to move to a year round garden waste collection service should be considered.
 - iii. Number of containers - York is incredibly fortunate that most of its residents support the recycling effort of the city by separating the recycling to maintain the value of the products that are collected and minimise the costs of onward separation. However, the boxes do cause frustration for some residents. Getting the right balance of containers is to a certain extent dependent on the nature of the property and the storage space. Therefore getting the balance right to maintain resident support for a new collection methodology is an important factor.
 - iv. Service resilience; this has been an issue for York with an aging fleet of differing specialist vehicles for recycling which on occasion compromise vehicle availability for collections.
 - v. Health and safety, to ensure the Council can protect its workforce and offer members of the public appropriate receptacles in managing their waste

Council Plan

32. The Council Plan has Eight Key Outcomes:
- Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy
 - A greener and cleaner city
 - Getting around sustainably
 - Good health and wellbeing
 - Safe communities and culture for all
 - Creating homes and world-class infrastructure
 - A better start for children and young people
 - An open and effective council
33. The proposal clearly support the greener cleaner city outcome. By setting the criteria which the options will be considered the council is further demonstrating its commitment to being an open and effective council.

Implications

34. The following implications have been considered.
- **Financial:** The council budget for domestic waste collection totals £4.5m per annum with primarily expenditure relating to staffing and vehicles. There has been additional investment in waste agreed in recent budgets including £1m to introduce a new waste and street environment service as well as £6.6m capital for new waste vehicles. It is essential that the service is provided as efficiently as possible and this review will give the opportunity to consider collection methodologies that reduce overall costs. There are also opportunities to increase income and reducing processing costs as additional recyclates are taken from the waste stream.

There are additional costs incurred retaining the older recycling vehicles as repairs become more regular and expensive. This potentially leads to additional vehicle hire.

The one off costs of consultation and communications can be contained within the current budget including additional growth agreed in the 2021/22 revenue budget.

- **Human Resources (HR):** Changes to collection methodology may impact on the resourcing requirements for the service. This would be managed through the relevant processes.
- **Equalities:** As the models are developed specific equality impact assessments will need to be developed;
- **Legal:** Under section 45A(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended) (“EPA”) the Council is required to collect “at least two types of recyclable waste together or individually separated from the rest of the household waste.” Recyclable waste is defined in section 45A(6) as “household waste which is capable of being recycled or composted”.

The Consistency in recycling collections in England: executive summary and government response (“Response”) was published by DEFRA in July 2019.

Regarding consultation on mandating the collection of a core set of materials there was strong support and so the government will seek to amend legislation to require all English local authorities to collect at least the following dry materials from 2023:

- glass bottles and containers – including drinks bottles, condiment bottles, jars
- paper and card – including newspaper, cardboard packaging, writing paper
- plastic bottles – including clear drinks containers, HDPE (milk containers), detergent, shampoo and cleaning products
- plastic pots tubs and trays
- steel and aluminium tins and cans

Regarding the consultation on the proposal for the collection of separate food waste to be mandated the Response states the following: “Given the support for separate food waste collection government will legislate to ensure that every local authority provides householders with a separate food waste collection. Government’s preference is that this should be a separate weekly collection of food waste and not mixed with garden waste. However, it is clear that further consideration is needed with respect to local circumstances. We will work with LAs and others to consider how best to deliver this requirement to take account of local circumstances.”

The Response stated that further consultation and guidance would be taken forward over the remainder of 2019 and that more detailed proposals would be taken forward in early 2020, with any changes coming into force from 2023. There has been no further information published.

- The Council's current recycling collection methodology meets the Council's duty as set out in the EPA and the options outlined within this report seek to build on that methodology and incorporate the outcome of Central Government's proposals in respect of consistency in recycling collections once they are known.

Risk Management

35. The development of options will need to be considered carefully, should members be minded to change waste recycling collection methodology it will need to be managed as a project with a communications and engagement plan to ensure all residents understand the change and the rationale for the change.
36. Members are reminded that the delivery timeframe on new waste and recycling vehicles is approximately 7 months from order through to delivery and this will need to be incorporated into any decision.

Contact Details

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Directorate of Economy &
Place

**Chief Officer Responsible for the
report:**

James Gilchrist

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**Report
Approved**



Date 29.01.21

Neil Ferris
Corporate Director – Economy & Place

**Report
Approved**



Date 23.02.21

Specialist Implications Officer(s) List information for all

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Waste Collection Methodology – Executive 24 October 2019

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MIId=11111>

Annexes

None