

## **Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

**25 March 2021**

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy & Place

### **Recycling Waste Report Following Executive Member Report**

#### **Summary**

1. The Executive Member received a report on the 3 March considering how recycling rates could be increased to determine the type of vehicles it should purchase for future recycling collections.
2. Options and criteria for a future recycling service were considered and the Executive Member requested they be worked up as options for further consideration by this Committee.
3. The Executive Member having defined the criteria by which the options should be developed, has been applied to the options in this report.
4. The committee are asked to consider the options that have been developed and determine a preferred option which meets the criteria and is most likely to increase recycling.

#### **Background**

5. This review does not propose any changes to the grey bins/black bags, household waste collections.
6. The Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change received a report which outlined three options to increase recycling these options were as follows:
  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 by providing additional boxes.
7. The options were constrained by removing food waste and further plastic recycling, based on the uncertainty of the Government's national waste and resources strategy. This document indicates that the government may mandate and fund separate collections of food waste, it also proposed a plastic deposit scheme which will change the way plastics will be used and recycled. The complete mixing of dry recycling is also discounted given the environmental and financial impacts. Although models for recycling should be mindful of how food waste could be collected in the future.
8. However, 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 which has been developed on site after the introduction of the boxes. This collection and process change has had minimal cost impact and the recycling continues to be processed within the region.
9. The Executive member therefore asked officers to develop options against the following three principles.
- The council could focus on programmes to help encourage residents to recycle more.
  - In addition to programmes to encourage residents to recycle more the council could look at collection methodologies. Currently household waste (grey bins/black bags) is collected once a fortnight and this won't change. Recycling currently gets two collections a fortnight -Green waste is collected once a fortnight (between April & November) and the three boxes for dry recycling are also collected once a fortnight (all year round). In effect this a recycling collection every week between April and November. With no change to household waste and maintaining the same principle of a recycling collection

every week changes could be made which increase the capacity by supplying new containers enabling residents to collect more recycling.

- In addition to programmes to encourage residents to recycle more, the council could look at collection methodologies. Maintaining the weekly collection principle, changes could be made to increase the range of materials collected by providing additional boxes

10. The Executive Member approved a set of criteria against which the options should be considered. These are:

- Cost, the council faces unprecedented times. Any change to recycling collections must be made within the financial constraints the council faces.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Health and safety, to ensure the Council can protect its workforce and offer members of the public appropriate receptacles in managing their waste

11. In developing options it is important to stress that residual waste (grey bin/ black bag) collections are not affected in any options.
12. Option A, This an education and encouragement campaign
  - Communications campaign across social and paper media
  - No change to residual waste (Black Bin)
  - April to Nov Green Waste Collections
  - No change to recycling collection
13. Option B is about increasing capacity and ease of recycling
  - Communications campaign across social and paper media
  - No change to residual waste (Grey bin/Black bin bags)
  - All Year Round Green Waste Collection
  - Promotion of a home composting with a discounted compost bin
  - Extra capacity for existing recycling with a new wheelie bin for plastic tins and glass.
  - Extra capacity for Paper and Card through use of 2 boxes.
14. Option C takes is about collecting additional recycling.
  - Communications campaign across social and paper media
  - No change to residual waste (Grey bin/Black bin bags)
  - April to Nov Green Waste Collections
  - Promotion of a home composting with a discounted compost bin
  - Two additional boxes for batteries and textiles.
15. Annex 1 is a table which shows each option in detail and the way the material would be collected.
16. Annex 2 is a table which shows the collection sequencing of how a calendar would work
17. Annex 3 is an assessment of each option against the criteria as determined by the Executive Member.

## **Consultation**

18. Where changes to recycling collections are made it is impossible to find a solution that will work for every residents personal circumstances as they are a reflection of the different nature of the housing types within the city.
19. More targeted work may be required in the tightest terraced streets to develop a solution that works for those residents.
20. In order to determine next steps this Committee is asked to consider the options that have been developed before any further work is undertaken on developing the options.

## **Council Plan**

21. 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
22. 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**

23. 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.

The 2021/22 budget also agreed a saving of £100k relating to general increase of recycling and reducing levels of residual waste.

- **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**

24. 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 rational for the change.

25. 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.

## **Recommendation**

26. To consider the information and options detailed in the report and annex's.
27. Economy and Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee are requested to consider the options developed by officers against the criteria and identify a preferred option to be developed further including public consultation.

### Contact Details

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 29.01.21

Neil Ferris

Corporate Director – Economy & Place

**Report  
Approved**



**Date**  
17/03  
/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

**Annexes**

Annex 1 – Options and Containers

Annex 2 – Options and Collection Sequence

Annex 3 – Options and Assessment