

West Wiltshire District Council

Cabinet

5 May 2004

Refuse collection – closure of the Westbury landfill site

1. Purpose

To inform Members of the closure of the Westbury landfill site and the potential financial implications, of this, and to get Cabinet approval for the change in refuse collection rounds.

2. Background

The County Council, as the waste disposal authority, has informed the District Council that the Westbury landfill site, operated by Viridor Waste Management, is anticipated to close during 2004/05.

Under the terms of the contract between the County Council and Viridor, the landfill operator is required to provide notice of terminating of the agreement if the site is unable to accept further waste.

On 18 February 2004, Viridor issued notice on the County Council that the Westbury site would close on 30 July 2004 as no void space would remain after that date. The original contract termination date was July 2006, which means that the landfill space has been filled two years earlier than anticipated when the contract was let in 1991.

This is a local example of how landfill will cease to be an option for waste disposal and demonstrates the need to make alternative, long-term arrangements.

The County Council instructed West Wiltshire on 16 March 2004 that from 31 July 2004 the disposal point for municipal waste will be Compton Bassett landfill site operated by Hills Waste Management Limited. Cleanaway has been advised accordingly.

3. Key issues

There are implications for refuse collection in view of the additional travelling distances, particularly from Westbury and Warminster.

The contract for waste disposal and recycling between the County Council and Hills Waste provides for the landfill of residual waste at Compton Bassett. The contract includes a requirement for Hills Waste to provide a disposal site in West Wiltshire following the closure of the Westbury landfill site in July 2006.

The references in the contract to West Wiltshire result from the tendering of disposal and recycling in 2001. There have been significant changes in the management of municipal waste since 2001. The UK Government has announced proposals to introduce legislation that will require waste disposal authorities to significantly reduce the landfill of biodegradable municipal waste. This is in response to EU Landfill Directive and has major implications.

The County Council is reviewing the Municipal Waste Strategy to accommodate the service changes which will be required, and is proposing to consult on the new strategy from June 2004. The South West Regional Assembly has issued a Regional Waste Strategy for consultation, which contains proposals for waste facilities as an alternative to landfill. The County Council has instructed Hills Waste to landfill all residual municipal waste at Compton Bassett as an alternative to investing in a disposal site in West Wiltshire, pending the outcome of consultation on the Regional and County Waste Strategies.

The closure of the Westbury landfill site will inevitably impact upon the current arrangements for household waste collection. Cleanaway has carried out trial runs with collection vehicles from Warminster to ascertain the time of travel to Compton Bassett. The results of these trials have found that it will take two hours to travel to the landfill and return to Warminster. The travel to tip time from Melksham, Melksham Without and Trowbridge is approximately the same for both Westbury and Compton Bassett landfills. Cleanaway has advised that, to maintain the same refuse collection days as at present in Westbury and Warminster (Thursday, Friday), it would require an additional five vehicles at a cost of up to £600k per year. This cost could be reduced by redesigning all routes over a five day period. This service would be provided by an additional three vehicles at a cost of £360k per year.

The current sweep system ensures that there is capacity to provide cover for vehicle breakdowns etc and avoids complaints of missed collections. Cleanaway's proposals will also provide the required flexibility to maintain existing service standards.

Financial implications: The closure of the Westbury landfill site in July 2004 is unavoidable.

In the event that the Council seeks to retain the current sweep system, operating from the north to the south of the district, the additional costs are estimated to be approximately £600,000 per annum. The introduction of a new system with amended collection dates is estimated to cost approximately £360,000.

Hills Waste and Minerals Ltd has advised that negotiations between themselves and Cleanaway are at an advanced stage, whereby they will reimburse Cleanaway the additional costs incurred for the redesigned system. This would mean that there is no additional cost to the Council.

Legal issues: The County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority, is empowered to instruct the District Council where it must dispose of the waste collected and the District Council is required to implement such an instruction.

Under the terms of the refuse collection contract, the District Council shall reimburse the contractor for any additional costs arising from a change of disposal point. However, where the tip is outside the District, the County would pay part of the additional costs.

Human rights: There are no significant human rights implications.

4. Options

Cleanaway could be instructed to retain the current sweep system with no change to collection day. Alternatively Cleanaway could be instructed to redesign the rounds to produce the most cost-effective solution with freedom to amend collection days as necessary.

5. Key decisions

Statement of reason for key decision	Closure of the Westbury landfill site
Options considered and rejected	Retention of current collection days
Date of implementation (not less than five days after date of decision)	19 July 2004

6. List of background papers

Contract between West Wiltshire District Council and Cleanaway for the refuse collection service.

Letter dated 16 March 2004 between Wiltshire County Council and West Wiltshire District Council.

Letter dated 23 March 2004 from Cleanaway Limited.

7. Recommendation (s)

To agree to Cleanaway redesigning refuse collection works such as to limit the increased costs arising from the closure of the Westbury Landfill site.



Plain English guidance given

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26 April 2004
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