

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

13 March 2018

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## Waste Contracts Task Group

### Purpose of the report

1. To present the report of the Waste Contracts task group following its first meeting on 27 February 2018; where the task group agreed their Forward Work Programme (FWP) and the waste service's Communications Strategy and Marketing Plan were discussed.

### Background

2. During the Environment Select Committee (ESC)-Executive Annual Meeting on the waste portfolio, it was agreed that a task group be convened to consider the waste contracts. The ESC then resolved to establish this task group at their [21 November 2017](#) meeting.
3. It is important to note that the ESC has also been considering information related to the drafting of the Council's waste management strategy since September 2017 and the debate and representations made around this item have fed into the task group's Terms of Reference (ToR) and FWP.

### Membership

4. The task group comprised the following membership (as at 27 February 2018):
  - Cllr Peter Evans
  - Cllr Sven Hocking
  - Cllr Ruth Hopkinson
  - Cllr Bob Jones, MBE
  - Cllr Jacqui Lay
  - Cllr Nick Murry
  - Cllr Robert Yuill (Chairman)
5. Unfortunately Cllr Evans was unable to attend 27 February meeting due to illness and, due to a last minute conflict, the Cabinet Member was also unable to attend. Cllr Tom Rounds, Portfolio Holder for Waste, was due to deputise for the Cabinet Member and was also unfortunately ill on the day of the meeting.

### Evidence

6. The task group reviewed their FWP (attached) and, by way of the Waste Service's Marketing Plan, considered the Communications Strategy of the waste services team in regard to changes to household waste collection.
7. Evidence was also received from Tracy Carter, Director – Waste and Environment.

### **Deliberation**

8. In regard to the FWP and ToR, the task group agreed that ToR 1, A be amended to lower case letters to read: 'a review of the Council's commercial waste policy' and, further to this amendment, the task group agreed to proceed with their FWP as drafted. It was discussed that May's meeting be used to outline to the task group what the Council's statutory duties are when it comes to the collection of commercial waste; in order that maximum value can be gained from July's planned interviews with traders and business owners. Cllr Hocking detailed that Salisbury City Council had already been undertaking research with business owners around commercial waste and it was agreed that this information be brought in from Salisbury City Council in July's meeting.
9. As for the Communications Strategy, the task group felt that the proposed stickers ought to contain a line stating 'household waste only' and should also be accompanied by images. For example, they agreed that the images ought to be similar to those seen by passengers at airport customs; stating what can/cannot be placed in each household waste bin. Concern was also raised around the durability and sustainability of the stickers and the task group agreed to review the sticker proofs, as they are developed by the waste services team.
10. The task group also discussed how communal bins may require a different communication strategy and that perhaps an information board (similar to the sticker design outlined above) be adopted for the highlighted 575 communal bin sites.
11. It was explained that household bin collection days needed to be changed because the bin collection rounds' design was being amended; in order to help ensure maximum efficiency and value from each round. Whilst the majority of residents would experience a change, it was felt that this disruption was outweighed by the benefit of efficiencies that would be made in the longer term.
12. Three options were presented around which communication approach to follow, each with different pricing models. The Members felt that they favoured elements of option one (the most expensive), with elements of option two (the second most expensive). For example, the task group argued that it was fundamental that communications be distributed to every household, however,

they felt that bin stickers could be circulated via a bin hanger and not posted, thus making a significant saving. The task group also agreed that an option where stickers were attached with the bin hanger ought to be considered; this is because the decision about which item of waste goes in which bin is made inside the house, when the waste is first discarded and not at the recycling bin. In this respect, the hanger's wording would be crucial and it was felt that pursuing this option could effectively help to minimise any potential contamination.

13. The task group agreed that before they gave their support to a particular option, it was important that they were able to view the pricing models minus the postage costs. Overall, the task group supported the background research undertaken to devise each of the three communication options.
14. Tracy Carter confirmed that she would return to the task group with the additional information requested, in order to allow for the task group to lend their full support to one of the three communication approach options and a meeting has been arranged for 12 April to accommodate this.

## **Conclusions**

15. In summary, the task group felt that their first meeting was informative and productive. However, if Wiltshire is to improve the quality of its recycle and thus add benefit to the environment, it is imperative that the Waste Services Communication Strategy is wholly effective.
16. With this in mind, the task group felt that their discussion and support for a particular communication approach would help to add value and therefore referred their findings to the ESC for discussion and endorsement. However, it is important to note that, due to timescales, the support that the task group may eventually provide to an option within the Communication Strategy may not be able to be referred to the ESC, before Waste Services are required to begin their communications work and thus, the task group felt that the Committee ought to be aware of this.

## **Recommendations**

1. That the Environment Select Committee:
  - a) Support the Waste Contracts Task Group receiving the requested additional information around pricing, before giving their support to a particular option identified within the Waste Service's Communications Strategy, despite the fact that this recommendation may not be able to return to Committee for endorsement;
  - b) Endorse the Waste Contracts Task Group's approach that, in order to help protect the environment, it is imperative that communications about changes to waste services collection be as effective as possible.

## **Cllr Robert Yuill, Chairman of the Waste Contracts Task Group**

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**Appendices:** None

**Background Documents:**

26 February 2018, Waste Contracts Task Group – Agenda & Accompanying Papers