

**CABINET MEMBER FOR WASTE, PROPERTY, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL SERVICES – CLLR T R STURGIS**

DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PLANNING

OFFICER CONTACT: John Geary (01225 713150) email: john.geary@wiltshire.gov.uk

REFERENCE: WPED- 006-11

TRANSFORMATION OF WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICES

Purpose of Report

1. To seek formal approval for certain clarifications and additions to the policies and implementation plan previously agreed by the Council's Cabinet at its meeting in October 2010 in support of the service changes within the Waste Collection and Recycling Service.

Background

2. At the meeting on 19 October 2010 Cabinet resolved to implement the proposal for transformed waste and recycling collection services, which had been the subject of public consultation from June to August 2010.
3. Following the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) the Council was notified that any savings were likely to be front-loaded in 2011-12, so a proposal to defer implementation of the new services to 2012-13 was considered. Further work was carried out on the Council's business plan following publication of the detailed settlement on 13 December 2010, which resulted in a revised proposal for implementation of the new services during 2011-12.
4. The revised proposal has required a new implementation timetable that seeks to introduce the new services at the earliest practicable time during 2011-12, whilst taking account of seasonal and other factors.

Main Considerations for the Council

5. The original timetable submitted to Cabinet was based on the new plastic bottles and card, and garden waste collections commencing before the introduction of Alternate Weekly Collection (AWC) of residual waste in the North and South. The revised proposal takes account of seasonal variations and the delay in implementation due to the CSR. The collection of plastic bottles and card would still be introduced some months in advance of AWC, to allow residents time to adapt to creating less residual waste. However, it is proposed that collection of garden waste now be introduced at the same time as the move to AWC (where this is not already in place). This would result in the plastic bottle and card collection being introduced in time for Christmas, when residents typically produce more of these recyclable materials. However, garden waste collected enters a period of sharp decline in the late autumn. By introducing new garden waste collections in early spring, households will still benefit from the service being introduced with AWC. In the meantime, the Council can direct its resources at the plastic bottles and card rollout during the autumn, learn from the experience and better prepare for the garden waste collection and AWC changes. **Table 1** shows the new implementation timetable.

Table 1

Service Change	Original Timetable	Revised Timetable
Plastic bottles and card collection	May – June 2011	October – November 2011 (North, West and East)
Opt-in garden waste collection	May – June 2011	February – March 2012 (North, East and South)
AWC of residual waste	October – November 2011	February – March 2012 (North and South)

6. The report to Cabinet in October 2010 also contained a detailed Communications Plan to support the new services. When the timetable was changed to accommodate the budget uncertainty arising from the CSR, the communications plan was changed accordingly. Some aspects, particularly vehicle livery, are being funded externally following a successful bid to the Waste Recycling Action Partnership (WRAP) which has increased the budget available by £139,000. Key communication activities are identified, together with revised dates, in **Appendix 1 above**. Most of the detail is unchanged with the timing simply altered to support the revised implementation timetable outlined in **Table 1**. Some adjustments are described in **Table 2 below**.

Table 2

Communication activity	Original timing	Revised timing dates
Events, road shows and Area Board meetings	From January 2011	From June 2011
Leaflets and articles trailing new services with progressively increasing levels of detail	From spring 2011	From summer 2011, starting with 'Coming soon' leaflet posted to all households in early July
Collection Calendars	Delivered with new bins	Mailed to all households with instructions shortly before new bins delivered

7. The report to Cabinet explicitly recognised that special arrangements would need to be developed for residents in flats and other types of dwelling with limited access and space, such as terraced housing, where wheeled bins cannot be readily accommodated. The report contained specific reference to 'exceptions'. For terraced and other similar housing which cannot accommodate additional bins, the policy was agreed that refuse sacks and bags for recyclable materials would be provided as alternatives. However, for flats and other grouped dwellings it simply stated that "the Council will determine the most suitable means of containment....." and further stated that "work will need to be done to ascertain whether all flats can receive the new waste service, or whether there are constraints to accessing the service, for example, because of bin store size. A project group has already been set up to investigate these issues." Although the report contained guidance on exceptions and highlighted the alternatives available, it did not contain any detail of how this could be implemented. This has now been progressed by project staff and **Appendix 2** to this decision paper contains a proposed 'Flats Protocol' which sets out a detailed process for staff to follow which will ensure that:
- (i) The Council continues to comply fully with the requirements of the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003;

- (ii) Residents in these types of dwelling receive a broadly equivalent suite of services to those in other types of housing;
 - (iii) Health and Safety considerations are fully observed.
8. Discussions with the Housing Associations have taken place and all such accommodation has been identified and listed for assessment. It is, however, recognised that a small number of such dwellings, for example some flats located above shops, will be difficult to identify early in the process. Our communications materials will contain a request for such residents to make contact with the Council, if they have not been contacted prior to the start of the rollout of service changes.
 9. Due to the need for Waste Technical Officers to visit all such premises (in conjunction with an officer from Hills to ensure black box arrangements are agreed) service changes to residents in flats may lag behind the main rollout a little. With the available resources, this is unavoidable. It is expected that completion will take place no more than six months after, and hopefully within three months of, the rollout to other households not requiring special arrangements.
 10. Some clarification of policies is required in respect of both the new garden waste bins and residual waste bins in order that all areas of Wiltshire receive the same service in future.
 11. The new opt-in garden waste service allows households to purchase additional capacity at an initial annual charge of approximately £30 (the first provided bin being free of charge). The former District Councils each had different policies, which resulted in some households being able to purchase more than one additional bin, whilst in the West, the former Council provided a free of charge service but allowed no additional bins. The proposal is that residents be permitted to purchase one additional bin only. This will help contain the cost to the Council (which has to pay for additional composting capacity) whilst allowing for the promotion of more environmentally sustainable alternatives, such as home composting.
 12. The issue of how to deal with households which already have more than two garden waste bins is addressed in the proposed policy set out at **Appendix 3** to this paper.
 13. The October 2010 Cabinet report also contained broad policy advice on residual bin capacity, but stopped short of defining the nature of 'additional capacity' or the process by which households would be able to request it.
 14. **Appendix 4** contains a proposed policy, key points of which are:
 - The standard residual bin capacity of 180 litres will be increased, upon satisfaction of certain criteria, to 240 litres;
 - Where households can satisfy more stringent criteria the 180 litre bin may be replaced by a 360 litre bin;
 - Any authorised increase in capacity will be subject to regular review to ensure the circumstances warranting the increase remain in place;
 - Households with additional bins giving capacity in excess of the agreed limits, due to former District Council policies, will be gradually moved to the new standard capacity in line with the protocol.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

15. There are no specific impacts associated with the variations covered here that were not previously covered in the report to Cabinet held on 19 October 2010.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

16. The Flats Protocol presented as part of this decision is intended to meet equalities considerations by helping to ensure that certain residents are not excluded from being able to receive new services simply as a result of their type of dwelling. The Protocol sets out a clear process for matching service delivery to customer need.

Risk Assessment

17. There are no new risks arising from these decisions. Risks arising from the project were highlighted in the report to Cabinet held on 19 October 2010.

Financial Implications

18. The financial implications arising from these decisions have been addressed as part of the process for setting the Council's budget for 2011-12 and agreeing the Council's Business Plan.

Legal Implications

19. None applicable.

Options Considered

20. Options for the future kerbside recycling and collection service were presented to Cabinet in October 2010. No further options are presented here. The decisions being made herein develop some detail of the previously selected option for the Council's future service.

Reason for Proposal

21. To provide a clear mandate to proceed with aspects of the new service implementation that have been developed in more detail since Cabinet approval was given. Whilst these decisions may not specifically require a formal delegated Cabinet Member Decision as set out in Parts 3 and 5 of the Council's Constitution, it is considered that such a decision would enhance the transparency of the decision-making process in relation to a set of service changes that will attract a great deal of public and Member interest. Protocol 5 of the Constitution helpfully provides the definitions of such decision types which provide the justification for a Cabinet Member delegation. Section 3(a) describes "service development" as "progressing schemes already approved by Cabinet to completion", whilst 3(b) refers to "review and development of non major policies". These allow for the decisions included within this paper.

Proposal

22. That:

- (i) The revised implementation timetable be approved;
- (ii) The revised communications timetable and activities be approved;
- (iii) The Flats Protocol and timetable be approved;
- (iv) The policy for the provision of additional garden waste bins be approved;
- (v) The policy for the provision of additional residual waste capacity be approved.

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

None