

Title of report: **Waste and Recycling**

Meeting: Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: Thursday 19 January 2023

**Report by: Head of environment, climate emergency and waste services,
Waste Transformation Lead**

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To provide an update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on the implementation of the Waste Management Review and the Executive Response to the Waste Management Review Scrutiny Report and Recommendations carried out in 2021.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The committee notes the significant progress to date through the Waste Transformation Programme and is assured that the Council is on track for early delivery of the ambitious new targets within the new Integrated Waste Management Strategy, and**
- b) **The committee determines any other actions or recommendations it may seek to make**

Alternative options

None identified, this report provides an update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

Key considerations

Background

1. In 2020 General Scrutiny Committee formed a cross party Waste Task and Finish group to review the waste management collection service across Herefordshire. Through a process of evidence and information gathering, considering the Frith Resource Management (FRM) review, learning from the experience of other local authorities and considering the needs and aspirations of the

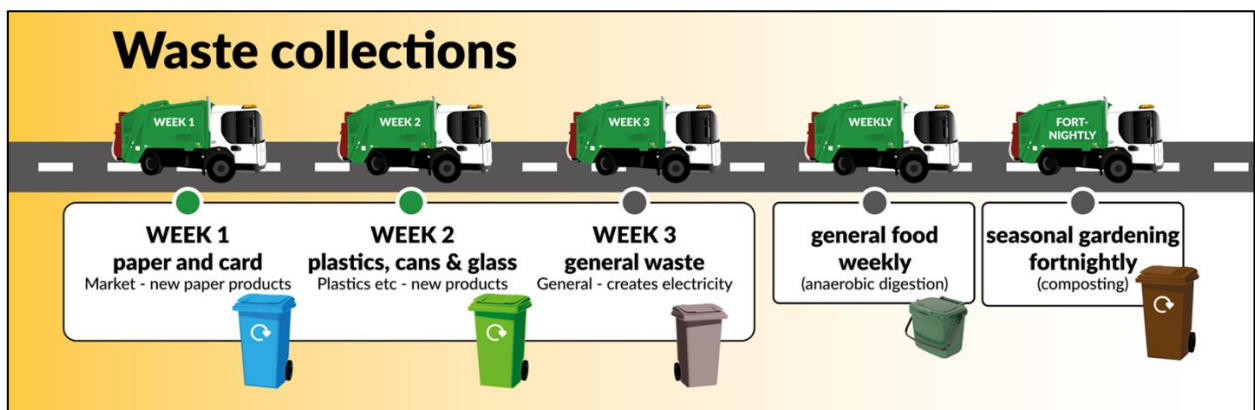
Further information on the subject of this report is available from
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council the group considered what the objectives for future improvements should be and different options for providing the service in future.

2. On 28 September 2020 General Scrutiny Committee considered the findings of the Waste Task & Finish group and recommended that a public consultation exercise was undertaken on the two collection models of:
 - a) Option 1 - Three weekly residual collection with twin stream recycling as detailed below
 - b) Option 2 – Kerbside sort collection
3. This recommendation was accepted in November 2020 and between December 2020 and February 2021 MEL Research undertook a public consultation exercise on the two proposed collection service options for both Public and Business Users. The consultation was promoted on the council’s website, social media pages, print media publications and emails were sent to a representative sample of residents with telephone surveys and postal surveys also available. Trade and non-trade waste customers were sent an email to take part in the business survey.
4. Option 1 was supported by a majority of consultee respondents, 53%, whilst 47% of respondents favoured option 2. The survey results were compiled from returns made by 3,498 residents and 181 businesses.

Progress to date

5. In July 2021 Cabinet approved an ambitious new Herefordshire Integrated Waste Management Strategy and allocated £1.5m from the council’s waste reserve to progress and implement a number of pilot projects. The pilots include reuse, recycling, collection and disposal methods, composting, carbon reduction opportunities, partnership working across Herefordshire and further exploring potential opportunities for cross border working/project development.
6. On 25 November 2021 Cabinet approved the adoption of the three weekly residual collections with twin stream recycling service, as detailed below, as the new waste collection model to support residents to increase recycling.



7. On 25 November 2021 Cabinet also approved, subject to due diligence, an extension and variation to the current Waste Management Service Contract (WMSC), which manages the disposal of waste after it has been collected, with Mercia Waste Management (Mercia) for a period of five years until 11 January 2029. This was concluded and signed on the 30th December 2022.
8. This extension agreed included a number of variations both to:
 - a. Facilitate the new collection model.

- b. Accelerate the reduction of municipal waste to landfill and achieve a maximum of 1% to landfill starting in 2022.
 - c. Introduce new checks and requirements for the downstream processing of our materials to ensure greater visibility and accountability. Here the Council is requiring that Mercia and its subcontractors seek the Council's permission, undertake environmental impact assessments and subsequent auditing of any recycling materials moving beyond the UK and European Economic Area. This will be practically worked through via the 2023/24 service delivery plan and will form part of contract monitoring.
9. Throughout 2022 the Council also commenced a number of innovate new pilot projects to further deliver the aims of the new strategy:
- a. Flats recycling improvement initiative.
 - i. 15 blocks of flats have received new recycling bins with a variety of different style lids, improved signage and direct communication to all residents. Paper and card is being separated from the other recycling items and preliminary results show better quality of this separated material.
 - ii. During quarter1 of 2023 data will be collated as to the impact of the pilot e.g signage use of receptacles, recycling improvements. This will also include surveys. From this information a business case will be developed to look at rolling this approach across the county.
 - b. Re-usable nappies.
 - i. Phase one - 295 vouchers have been issued to parents/guardians and spent on reusable nappies. Following a survey, of those who responded, 35% estimated a waste saving of 2 or more black sacks per week and 65% said they saved 1 black sack a week by using reusable nappies. Based on the success of this initiative a phase 2 is planned during the quarter of 2023. A business case and an option appraisal is in the process of being finalised.
 - c. Repair Cafes grant funding
 - i. We have had 1 successful applicant who are due to launch a new repair café early in 2023. The grant scheme has been extended to allow a longer period for groups to seek advice and experience from others before applying.
 - ii. 14th January 2023 a Repair Café showcase event is taking place; working with Ledbury and Malvern Hills successful and established repair cafes, the aim is to reach out further to organisations and volunteers to extend coverage within Herefordshire.
 - d. 'Getting it Right' – 12-month multi-channel campaign designed to increase recycling and reduce contamination
 - i. Website traffic to the Herefordshire Council [recycling](#) home page increased by over 50 % over the first 4 months of the campaign compared to the previous year.
 - ii. All refuse collection vehicles have new signage on them to encourage the correct items to be recycled and to show people from all walks of life 'Getting it Right'.

10. Following the outcome of the public consultation where residents requested more support to increase recycling and to be able to understand the new collection service, additional and targeted communication, engagement and information is being and will continue to be provided to residents through the 'Getting it Right' campaign and other targeted campaigns..
11. This complements the engagement campaigns with flats and housing associations and there will be additional engagement with rural communities with specific collection needs. Countywide communications on the service changes and extended period of Hypercare to support residents for the initial months of the contract and beyond are also being planned.
12. The Council have also been working with The Industry Council for Packaging and the Environment (INCPEN) on behavioural insights into waste and recycling. We will be using the information and experience gathered from this to help develop the future engagement and communications campaigns.
13. In July 2022, and following a successful soft market test in Feb 2022, Cabinet approved the procurement of the new waste collection service. This included the national first for a cargo bike domestic food waste collection service in Hereford City Centre and a number of service improvement schemes as detailed below:
 - a. Upgrading Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV's) to incorporate weighing and geotagging infrastructure in tandem with bin chips to:
 - i. Modernise the commercial waste and recycling service to a pay by weight model
 - ii. Enhance service monitoring, performance and enable targeted continual improvement and behavioural change projects
 - b. Enhanced requirements for zero carbon collection methods:
 - i. Potential electrification of RCV's and the associated charging infrastructure
 - ii. The requirement for a cargo bike collection model in the historic city centre.

Next steps

14. The procurement of the new waste collection service is currently underway and is the first major contract to utilise the Council's new Social Value Framework.
15. The Council is currently finalising negotiations to extend the existing waste collection service with our current providers FCC Environment until June 2024 when the new service is due to start. This is to help to mitigate the current market uncertainties and supplier lead times for new waste collection vehicles and will ensure a successful mobilisation for the new service at the service commencement date.
16. Development of service policies and customer charter to confirm the criteria and guidelines for household collection container types, the service standards that the council will provide and the expectations of residents and businesses in using the services to ensure these are aligned with the ambitions of the waste management strategy.
17. The due diligence for the extension and variation to the WMSC was completed and signed on the 30th December 2022 the Council jointly issued a Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency Notice (VEAT) with Worcestershire County Council notifying the market of our intention for the extension. Following the completion of the extension it was agreed to undertake a best practice review of contract management to support the future management of this service.

18. In order to plan for the future beyond the WMSC extension period the Council is currently working with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Local Partnerships to undertake a strategic review of future options beyond 2029.
19. The waste management team has been working to develop a number of possible additional pilots and enhanced work programmes to continue to reduce waste, promote reuse and increase recycling. These include:
 - a. Review of re-use and recycling at HRC's,
 - i. A waste analysis of residual waste has been conducted and we are awaiting the results of this which will show the main materials deposited for general disposal by residents at HRCs. We are developing site layout maps to encourage unloading in the order the containers are laid out on site and hope to encourage further charities to collect items from the reuse containers.
 - b. Paint reuse scheme
 - c. Re-use Pop Up shops
 - d. Mattress recycling and diversion of bulky waste from residual waste stream
 - e. Soft plastics recycling scheme
 - f. Food waste reduction and surplus food redistribution
 - i. Officers have established links with all surplus food redistributors and as a result Ledbury Food Bank have started collecting some surpluses and have identified opportunities for new surplus food redistribution. Work is also underway with the Herefordshire Food Alliance and Public Health to deliver events about food waste reduction and surplus redistribution. This also includes engaging with local farmers, growers and suppliers across Herefordshire.
 - g. Supporting property and facilities management and cross referencing to 20.1, in the reuse and recycling of Herefordshire Council (as an organisation) items that are no longer in use within Council buildings/ estate.

Community impact

20. The Waste Management Strategy and associated actions strongly support the delivery of the following County Plan (2020-24) priorities:
 - a. Protect and enhance our environment and keep Herefordshire a great place to live
 - b. Minimise waste and increase reuse, repair and recycling
 - c. Build understanding and support for sustainable living
 - d. Invest in low carbon projects
 - e. Identify climate change action in all aspects of council operation
 - f. Support an economy which builds on the county's strengths and resources;
 - g. Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resource

- h. Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment
- i. and spend public money in the local economy wherever possible

Environmental Impact

- 21. The council seeks to treat waste as a resource, supporting a more circular economy for Herefordshire reducing, reusing and recycling materials so that they stay in use for longer, offsetting use of raw materials and reducing carbon emissions.
- 22. The environmental impact of the Waste Management Review has been integral to the development of the new strategy, new waste collection service, waste disposal extension, pilot schemes and future options review. The associated actions will minimise waste, increase re-use, reduce energy and carbon emissions and consider opportunities to enhance biodiversity.
- 23. The modelling undertaken by FRM indicates that the new service should:
 - a. Significantly increase recycling levels from ~40% to 63%. This will result in early delivery of target 2 to reuse or recycle 55% of municipal waste by 202560% by 2030 and will significantly move us towards achieving 65% by 2035, which will position Herefordshire as a national leader.
 - b. Significantly increase recycling quality
- 24. Through the WMSC the Council has reduced the amount of waste to landfill from 20% to less than 1%. This achieves the new strategy target three years early.
- 25. Through the specific requirements for bidders to include zero carbon collection vehicles, such as both electric RCV's and cargo bikes in the city centre this will further reduce carbon emissions, reduce noise pollution, reduce congestion and improve air quality in the Hereford Air Quality Management Area

Equality duty

- 26. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

 - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 27. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
- 28. As a committee report this will not have an impact on our equality duty.

Resource implications

29. There are no resource implications associated with providing this progress update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

Legal implications

30. There are no direct legal implications from this report.

Risk management

31. There are no risks associated with providing a progress update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

Consultees

- None

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	John Coleman	Date 20/12/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 21/12/2022
Legal	Francis Fernandes	Date 22/12/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 22/12/2022
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 22/12/2022
Procurement	Lee Robertson	Date 20/12/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 20/12/2022
Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 22/12/2022

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.