

HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE VAN AND TRAILER E-PERMIT SCHEME

To: Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee

Meeting Date: 21 May 2019

From: Graham Hughes, Executive Director Place and Economy

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: N/A **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To consider the proposal to introduce a Van and Trailer e-permit scheme at the Household Recycling Centres across Cambridgeshire

Recommendation: Committee is recommended to:

- a) Introduce a van and trailer e-permit scheme at the nine Household Recycling Centres across Cambridgeshire.
- b) To consider an exemption for small trailers from the requirement to obtain an e-permit.
- c) Delegate responsibility to the Executive Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee to agree the amendments required to the waste Private Finance Initiative contract in a Deed of Variation and obtain approval from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for the amendments through the submission of a variation business case.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 placed a duty on Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), as a Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), to provide Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) for the deposit of household waste at all reasonable times and free of charge by persons resident in the area of the authority.
- 1.2 The household waste accepted at an HRC must be:
 - 1.2.1 Produced at someone's domestic property through "normal" living;
 - 1.2.2 Delivered to the HRC by the resident who generated the waste.
- 1.3 Household waste cannot be:
 - 1.3.1 From a landlord, business, industry, shop, holiday lets etc.;
 - 1.3.2 Generated by a tradesperson working on someone's property;
 - 1.3.3 From construction and demolition activities (i.e. extensions, taking down walls and renovations from the home, outside spaces and gardens);
 - 1.3.4 From someone else's property.
- 1.4 CCC provides nine HRCs around the county that provide a range of services for residents to reuse, recycle and dispose of their bulky household waste. The sites are operated by Amey as part of the long-term waste Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract.
- 1.5 Although CCC has a statutory duty to provide HRC sites, the acceptance of commercial waste and Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste at the sites, is not a statutory requirement.
- 1.6 The existing HRC policy states that waste resulting from small scale "do it yourself" (DIY) work may be accepted at Recycling Centres under specific conditions;
 - 1.6.1 Plaster and plasterboard is accepted only at a limited number of HRCs with dedicated facilities;
 - 1.6.2 The waste is delivered by the resident and is the result of their own work;
 - 1.6.3 Repeat or regular visits with these types of waste may be refused at the site manager's discretion, and may involve follow up visits by a CCC officer.
- 1.7 The HRC policies in Cambridgeshire were last reviewed in 2007. Since that date, many local authorities have been driven by austerity measures to review and amend their HRC policies. This includes all neighbouring councils that border Cambridgeshire who have introduced changes to their HRC services such as; reducing the opening hours, part week closure of sites, charging for C&D waste and restricting access for large vehicles and trailers (see **appendix 1** for the restrictions introduced by neighbouring councils). These measures have helped neighbouring councils tackle increases in waste growth and reduce abuse of their services as well as delivering significant savings.
- 1.8 Residents have alternative options for the disposal of C&D waste such as, District and City council bulky waste services, privately operated waste disposal/recycling facilities, skip hire and waste bag services.

2 CHALLENGES

- 2.1 Between 2012/13 and 2016/17, the waste collected at all HRCs in Cambridgeshire rose by 20% compared with growth in kerbside collections of 4% over the same period. There have been a number of contributory factors that have led to this higher growth:
- The changes made by neighbouring authorities have resulted in some of their residents using the HRCs in Cambridgeshire as our sites are open every day, access is unrestricted and C&D materials are accepted free of charge without clearly defined quantity restrictions. The St Neots HRC, located close to the border with Mid Bedfordshire, has seen increases in the quantity of waste received of up to 40% between 2012/13 and 2016/17. The 2018 HRC user satisfaction survey showed that over 30% of users of the Wisbech HRC are from neighbouring counties, see **appendix 2**.
 - The cost for disposing of commercial and C&D waste using private waste disposal companies has increased significantly over the last 15 years. During this time, increasing numbers of vans and trailers are being used to dispose of large quantities of waste at the HRCs where there are no direct charges. Some of these visits are suspected to be from people depositing waste generated by commercial activities or C&D waste that we do not have a statutory duty to accept.
 - Kerbside collections in Cambridgeshire restrict the amount of waste that can be disposed of by limiting the bin size and the frequency of collection. Whilst these measures have been shown to encourage waste minimisation and recycling, those residents that choose not to recycle can still use the HRC sites to dispose of their excess residual waste and unsegregated recyclables.
- 2.2 The result of these issues is that the HRC services in Cambridgeshire are open to abuse by residents from neighbouring authorities, people disposing of waste from commercial sources, people disposing of large quantities of C&D waste and excessive quantities of household waste.
- 2.3 The existing HRC infrastructure will be put under increasing pressure as the forecast household growth in Cambridgeshire will lead to increased numbers of HRC visitors and rising waste volumes for treatment and disposal. This is a challenge facing many of our neighbouring authorities who are considering introducing further restrictions at their HRC sites to delay the need for additional infrastructure and to prevent increased disposal costs in their areas.
- 2.4 If CCC does not take action to address these issues, the quantities of waste presented at the HRCs in Cambridgeshire will continue to increase as the population grows, adding to the cost of providing HRC services and bringing forward the requirement for investment in Cambridgeshire's HRC infrastructure to cope with rising demand.
- 2.5 Those Councils that have made changes to their HRC services did not experience any demonstrable increases in fly tipping. In areas where specific, detailed assessments were carried out on the impact of fly tipping following changes to HRC services, the results were in line with the experience shared by other councils. This was further supported by a national survey of 55 councils carried out by WRAP (Waste and Resource Action Programme) which indicated that, of the authorities that responded, only four saw an

increase in fly tipping in line with national trends and 12 authorities saw no link between fly tipping and changing HRC services.

- 2.6 We are already working with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP) and other stakeholders to reduce the amount of fly tipping taking place across the county. The RECAP partnership recently employed a part time officer dedicated to implementing Hertfordshire's successful anti fly tipping campaign in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

3 VAN AND TRAILER E-PERMIT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The majority of councils to the west of CCC have a policy that restricts the use of vans and trailers due to the quantity of waste they can carry along with the potential for abuse of commercial waste and C&D policies.
- 3.2 A van and trailer permit system would bring CCC's service in line with these neighbouring authorities. It is proposed that anyone wishing to visit one of the nine HRC sites in a van or using a trailer would be required to obtain an e-permit before visiting. It is proposed that the number of van and trailer permits be limited to a maximum of 12 each year per household. Vans and trailers that exceed the existing vehicle size restrictions would not be issued a permit.
- 3.3 Residents occasionally use small trailers to deliver waste such as garden waste to the HRCs to avoid soiling the interior of their cars. Members may wish to allow an exemption from the requirement to obtain an e-permit for residents using trailers with a capacity below 386 litres (120cm x 92cm x 35cm) to take their waste to the HRCs to allow this practice to continue.
- 3.4 Permits would be obtained instantly via a paperless online application form, would be issued to Cambridgeshire residents only, and would be free of charge. Site staff would use a mobile device to scan a vehicle's registration on arrival at an HRC site to verify that it has a valid permit, and to check that the waste being carried is as described, before allowing the resident to tip.
- 3.5 An e-permit IT system has been developed by LGSS and recently introduced by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC). It is proposed that CCC's van and trailer permit scheme will adopt the same IT system used in Northamptonshire, with bespoke amendments to meet our local requirements.
- 3.6 The introduction of a van and trailer permit scheme would help identify and reduce abuse of the HRC service, restrict residents delivering large quantities of C&D waste, limit the quantity of waste that residents can deliver using vans and trailers, and prevent residents from neighbouring authorities delivering waste using vans and trailers to CCC's sites. Other local authorities that have introduced similar schemes have seen a reduction in the quantity of waste received at their HRCs resulting in reduced disposal costs.
- 3.7 It is proposed that a communications campaign is developed and delivered, well in advance of the e-permit scheme being implemented. This would give our residents sufficient notification of the changes and make them aware of what they need to do when visiting the HRCs if they wish to use a van or trailer.

- 3.8 It is proposed that additional “meet and greet” staff are deployed on the sites to allow a period of transition until the new arrangements have bedded in with residents and site staff. It is proposed that site staff be allowed to use their discretion and adopt a light touch to enforcement for a limited transition period.
- 3.9 It is proposed that the scheme is reviewed twelve months after implementation.

4 COSTS AND SAVINGS

- 4.1 Officers have commenced the process to amend the PFI contract with Amey to estimate the costs for implementing this change. Amey have estimated the costs for extra staff required on site to ensure the system is implemented efficiently and have also raised concerns that this change will impact negatively of the contract targets for HRC recycling performance and customer satisfaction.
- 4.2 Amey estimate that the total cost to implement the van and trailer permit scheme will be between £37,500 and £40,000 depending on whether the scheme is introduced in winter or summer. This cost is largely to cover additional temporary staff for a minimum four month transition period. To alleviate the concerns Amey have raised regarding the contract targets, it is proposed that recycling rates and customer satisfaction levels continue to be monitored, temporary relief from the contract targets is given where required and the contract targets are reset to a new level that is agreed by both parties.
- 4.3 LGSS IT have quoted the one off costs for introducing the e-permit IT system of £52,360 with an ongoing annual cost of £4,500 a year. It will take between 18 and 23 weeks from receipt of an order for LGSS to develop and implement the IT system before the scheme can be launched.
- 4.4 When the scheme was launched in Northamptonshire, NCC officers received high numbers of enquiries from residents regarding their e-permit scheme. An additional resource may be required in Cambridgeshire if the e-permit scheme is introduced and large numbers of enquiries are received.
- 4.5 An estimated saving of £60,000 was included in the 2018/19 business plan based on the scheme being introduced at all 9 HRC sites from the start of September 2019. Due to the 18 to 23 week lead time to develop and implement the IT system the earliest start date would now be the 1st October 2019 and this ties in with the need for thorough communications before the introduction.
- 4.6 The costs and savings (based on 1st October start) are summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1	Year 1 Costs and Savings	Year 2 Costs and Savings
Estimated PFI Contract	-£37,500.00	£0.00
Estimated IT Installation	-£52,360.00	£0.00
Annual IT Maintenance	-£4,500.00	-£4,500.00
Estimated Saving (1 st October start)	£51,400.00	£102,000.00
Total	-£42,960.00	£97,500.00

5 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 A good quality of life for everyone

There are no significant implications for this priority.

5.2 Thriving places for people to live

There are no significant implications for this priority

5.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

There are no significant implications for this priority.

6 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Resource Implications

The resource implication are set out in the main body of the report.

6.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus De Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Debbie Carter- Hughes
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service	Yes Name of Officer: Elsa Evans

Contact?	
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Joanna Shilton
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Quinton Carroll
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Stuart Keeble

Source Documents	Location
<p>List here details of any supporting or background documents which have been relied upon to a material extent when preparing the report which are not confidential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household Recycling Centres Benchmarking Report. 	<p>Room 209, Shire Hall, Cambridge</p>

Appendix 2

Users visiting the Household Recycling Centres – August 2018 survey results

