

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE
WASTE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP
WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 14 FEBRUARY 2018

Present: Cllr Peter Argyle, Cllr Michael Roy, Cllr Ian Mollison, Cllr Marion Ewenson, Cllr Eileen Durno, Cllr Anouk Kloppert, Cllr Ron McKail

Officers: Lesley Forrest, Claire Loney, Matt Davis, Andy Sheridan, Ros Baxter, Kat Laakso,

Apologies: Cllr Paul Johnston, Cllr Stephen Calder, Philip Mckay, Yvonne D'Ambruoso, Cllr Jim Gifford

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS.

There was nothing to discuss.

2. WASTE STRATEGY 2019-2025 – Ros Baxter and Kat Laakso delivered a presentation covering the following

The aim of today's meeting is to discuss draft strategy, draft objectives & deliverables. Why do we need a new strategy? What will it deliver? What will we do? Reducing residual waste capacity and collection options.

2.1 Why a new strategy?

Drivers: We're seeking a ban on biodegradable waste going to landfill by 2021. We need to maximise reuse and recycling before recovering energy from the rest. Over half of the materials put into landfill bins are recyclable through existing services. Putting waste to landfill is at least twice as expensive as recycling it.

Full Council - June 2016: Future management of residual waste should be based on recovery option (energy from waste). We have confirmed our commitment to zero-waste. The strategy is to be updated.

ISC - August 2017: Agreed to sign the Scottish Household Recycling Charter.

We undertook a Waste Composition Analysis in 2016 looking at 1,200 properties across 3 areas in Aberdeenshire. According to those figures, 60% of the materials in landfill bins could be recycled using existing recycling services. This is around 30,000 tonnes of recyclable materials being landfilled at a cost of £3.5 million per year.

2.2 What will the strategy deliver?

Objectives - We support the move towards a more circular economy by meeting the following aims:

- Provide a cost-efficient service.
- Meet statutory obligations.
- Provide the same collection service across Aberdeenshire.
- Provide an easy to use service for customers.
- Reduce carbon emissions.

- Operate a safe and efficient waste service.

We are aware of the lack of consistency across sites. There is a lack of clarity and understanding of what can be put in a mixed-recycling bin. There is some variation in different areas as to how well the food-recycling bins are being used.

Objective 1 – support the move towards a more circular economy

Objective 2 – provide a cost efficient service. Make sure we don't increase our revenue costs, it is unacceptable to do so in the current climate. We must think about project costs for rolling out new bins, it will take £2 million to provide a new bin for every household in Aberdeenshire. We will seek funding from Zero Waste Scotland to help with this.

Objective 3 - Enforce a ban on biodegradable waste going to landfill.

Objective 4 – provide the same collection service across Aberdeenshire.

Objective 5 –provide an easy to use service for householders

2.3 What will we do?

Encourage householders to treat waste materials as a resource.

Maximise the quality and value of recyclates collected.

Maximise recycling through reduced residual waste capacity.

Improve the network of household waste recycling centres.

Recover energy from waste that can't be recycled.

2.4 Why reduce residual waste capacity?

We are looking to reduce the amount of landfill waste collected on the kerbside. 60% of the waste material people put into landfill bins is recyclable. Landfill bins could be made smaller or collected less often, if there's less room in the residual waste bin people will be encouraged to use the recycling bin. Results so far from other councils are impressive, the amount of landfill waste collected on the kerbside has been reduced by 30%. The greatest increase is in food recycling.

It is worth the £2 million cost of replacing the bins. £2 million is a one-off cost, but we'll make a saving by the amount of over £2 million over the lifetime of the bins. There has to be policies and procedures to ensure people don't use the wrong bins.

There is a range of reasons why people may not use the food waste bin; composting, hygiene issues, vermin, some just don't like handling it or bacteria. The hygiene concern is prominent. A larger bag for the food waste bin would be welcomed. The public need to know the figures of how much food waste is going to landfill.

A maximum of 80L of residual waste is the target. Providing less frequent collections is the cheaper option. We'll get more income if paper and card get their own bin. We could possibly get a smaller bin and convert the existing landfill bin into paper and card. Aberdeen City Council haven't signed up to the Scottish Household Recycling Charter, they aim to become charter compliant in the long term, meanwhile Aberdeenshire Council aim to become compliant much sooner. 70% of the content of blue bins is paper and card, if this is removed we can make an income of £40 per tonne. £38 per tonne is the lowest price has been in the last year. We have in the past looked at the option of allowing people to put glass into recycling bins, however in terms of cost it would cost more than landfilling waste to recycle the contents of blue bins with glass in them. Glass can't be put into the existing collection vehicles by itself, due to it being an abrasive material it ruins the vehicles. We want our service to be consistent with the rest of Scotland, Aberdeen City are being inconsistent, it is difficult as Aberdeen City are so close to us and we want to be consistent with our neighbour as well as the rest of the country. Financially we should do what's right for Aberdeenshire Council, but the figures don't add up if we line up with Aberdeen City.

10 kerbside collection options are being considered. The current system is a fortnightly 240L residual bin, fortnightly 240L mixed dry recyclable bin and a weekly 23L Food Waste bin, we are not currently charter compliant.

In terms of quantities, if we replace people's bins with a box it would have to be a weekly collection, we're using bins because there were a lot of issues with the boxes in the past.

People are very concerned about stretching out their collections to every 3 weeks, due to the potential of vermin and overspill.

Some options including garden waste are being considered. One would use 5 bins with a 4-weekly collection, another would be a 3-week collection but with a split-body vehicle. One option involves 7 bins, boxes or bags with a 4-weekly collection, this would include textiles and glass as well as everything else.

We had a kerbside sort for 8 years prior to what we currently have. There were issues with manual-handling and more injuries to crew, customers are now required to do everything that was once done on the roadside, returning to a kerbside sort would be a step backwards from a bin system.

We are considering providing the option of an opt-in chargeable kerbside garden waste collection, there could be a £40-50 per year charge, but uptake would have to be at least 40% to make it a viable service. Seasonal village collection points for garden waste are also being considered as they would likely be popular during the summer.

Focus groups with the public show that people really don't want any more bins, it's moving away from keeping it simple.

Why would we provide a separate bin for garden waste but not for glass? Only 4% of landfill waste on the kerbside is glass, more people put garden waste in the bin.

2.5 Assessment criteria and weightings.

Weightings are based on how the objectives should be prioritised. Provide something that we can operationally deliver.

Objective 1, 16% - Maximise recycling rates.

Objective 2, 31% - Looking at cost-effective disposal, move as much waste as possible into recycling, minimise the capital funding from the council. Look to see if we can get funding from Zero Waste Scotland.

Objective 3, N/A - All options deliver.

Objective 4, N/A - All options deliver.

Objective 5, 31% - Service needs to be as acceptable as possible to householders. Looking to maximise the maximum weekly recycling capacity for households.

Objective 6, 6% - Reduce carbon emissions.

Objective 7, 16% - Maximising safety of staff and public, minimise downtime, provide a consistent requirement for staff and other resources throughout the year (difficult due to the different amounts of garden waste in the summer and winter).

2.6 What is happening at the moment?

2.6.1 Online survey in February 2018. Excellent response so far, there are already over 2,500 responses with an 86% completion rate. Closing 28 February.

There is a drop-off of responses after question 7, there could be a message with the question telling people that they can provide their opinions in greater detail in a comment box at the end of the survey to encourage them to finish it. The Facebook page could have short video clips instructing how to carry out your recycling more effectively, as a lot of people won't read leaflets. Supermarkets are part of the stakeholders group. A return system for glass bottles could work out well for us, rewarding the public for returning bottles and cans to a supermarket may work out cheaper than collecting them ourselves and it will encourage more people to recycle.

- 2.6.2 Focus groups will be held in February 2018. They will consist of 6 groups, one in each administrative area.
- 2.6.3 Options appraisal. Data collation is ongoing. The assessment criteria for collection options is being confirmed. Options are being costed. We're working with Zero Waste Scotland to best determine the performance of each option.
- 2.6.4 Supporting policies being developed.

2.7 Timescales for strategy development.

November 2017-March 2018: Options appraisal, policy development and finalise strategy.

January/February 2018: Survey closes on 28 February 2018.

May/June 2018: Pre-consultation reviews

Head of Service

Director

SLT - 16 May 2018

PBSG - 06 June 2018

ISC - 21 June 2018

September 2018: Consultation (public, area committees and internal services).

November 2018: ISC approval, 29 November 2018.

January 2019: Full council, 17 January 2019.

2019: Zero Waste Scotland funding application, procurement process, planning for implementation

2020: Implementation.

Discussion:

The next step after the survey is evaluation, it will be done internally, and evidence of issues will be gathered.

Communicate with public that we may be introducing another bin in order to become charter compliant.

Not everyone is capable of taking recycling to a recycling centre themselves. A 3 bin and box system is working out very well in Moray.

In terms of our communication plan, everything is public. We are currently communicating with the public about supporting the strategy and reducing our contamination levels. There's still some confusion about what goes into the residual bin and recycling bins.

Closing Waste Recycling centres is counterintuitive when we're aiming to increase recycling levels. Only poorly-performing ones, such as ones with a single skip where everything is thrown into, will be considered for closure. The Inch site has low usage, it could be replaced by a site in Huntly, which is more heavily populated while still being nearby.

It's hard to see any kind of scheme where the public would have to pay for garden waste collections, though some people who could afford it do want it, perhaps the price could be reduced. Nice cheap composting bins could be used to allow people to compost their garden waste. Opening garden waste recycling areas during the summer is a viable option.

Missed bins and contamination are big problems for policies.

3. NESS ENERGY PROJECT – VERBAL UPDATE BY ROS BAXTER, WASTE MANAGER

3.1 Procurement process

- The procurement process includes a 3 year build program, the timeframe may be reduced depending on the bidder.

- Dialogue with bidders has closed, bids are due to be received by 05 March 2018.
- Evaluation will take place 07-26 March 2018, a Local Authority panel meeting will be held on 27 March 2018.
- 2 bidders will be shortlisted and informed of their success on 06 April 2018.
- Dialogue sessions will be held with the final 2 bidders in April and May. Their final bids are due in July. The preferred bidder will be identified in August.
- The IAA 3 will be held in September.
- The contract will be awarded to the successful bidder and service will be commenced in October.

3.2 Feedback from the visit to Leeds EfW plant

Photos from a recycling plant in Leeds were shown to give members a general outlook of what the new EfW plant could look like and how it would work. Valuable lessons have been learned from Leeds. There is a system for pre-treatment of the waste. Leeds have had all sorts of issues from it, the recycling they're getting out of the plant is heavily contaminated, as a result we will handle the treatment of waste differently.

A Community fund is in place for the people living in the vicinity of the plant. The whole facility works under a negative pressure impact, this is responsible for the lack of smell and smoke in and around the premises. There's a scrubbing system in place that removes contaminants from the exhaust systems, Leeds have had no problems with it.

3.3 Ombudsman outcome re planning decision

We have finally received the outcome of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman inquiry regarding the complaint received regarding the planning decision filed in January 2017. No action will be done to uphold the complaint and they have made no recommendations regarding Aberdeen City Council procedures.

4. FUTURE MEETING DATES FOR 2018

Wednesday 18 April 2018, 10:00am
Wednesday 29 August 2018, 10:00am
Wednesday 07 November 2018, 10:00am

All are to take place in Committee Room 4, Woodhill House.

