

Recycle More – Domestic Waste Collection Services

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Purpose of the Report

1. Members will recall that the work to develop a new collection model has been a major part of the Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) Business Plans over the last three years. SSDC members endorse this work when the Business Plans come to District Executive in February each year.
2. The work is now complete and costs have been received from the contractor. If members choose to support this business case the Council will enhance services to its residents and decrease current, and future collection costs.
3. Somerset Waste Board (SWB) recommended in October 2016 that Recycle More is the preferred collection option for the future. All partner councils are now consulting with their own members to feed back into a final decision by SWB, hopefully at their December meeting. Therefore, this report and appendices outline the proposals, the benefits and risks, potential savings and seeks SSDC approval for the new collection model.

Forward Plan

4. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of December 2016.

Public Interest

5. Our residents have often told us in feedback that they would like to recycle more materials, in particular plastic pots, tubs and trays which take up significant volume in wheelie bins. Other items that residents would like recycled at the kerbside for recycling include small electrical appliances and batteries.
6. SWP has trialled a scheme called Recycle More in several areas of Somerset. It received extremely high satisfaction from residents and increased recycling tonnages. Residual waste volumes dropped and 86% of those residents preferred the model to Sort it+ (our current model)
7. Recycle More essentially collects more materials weekly from the kerbside. The smaller amount of residual waste after the recycling collections will be collected every three weeks. However, it should be noted that existing policies to help those with specific needs will remain. In particular:
 - Those with children in nappies will still be able to ask for an additional bin to manage the volume of nappies.
 - Those who struggle to carry their bins and boxes can request an assisted collection.

Recommendation

8. It is recommended that members support the new waste service model, Recycle More, as outlined in Appendix One and its accompanying appendices, A, B & C.

Background

9. The collection of domestic waste is a responsibility of the district councils, with the final disposal costs being the responsibility of the County Council.
10. SSDC like all others in Somerset meet their statutory requirements through the Somerset Waste Partnership who manage the domestic collection and disposal on our behalf.
11. The rising costs of waste collection and disposal has been a matter of concern for the partner councils for some time and SWP were asked to look for alternative models that would limit our exposure to cost increases as the number of properties, contractual costs and landfill tax continues to rise.

Why move to *Recycle More*?

12. Put simply, residents want us to collect more including plastic pots tubs and trays, the council has a stated aspiration to recycle more in its Council Plan, Recycle More brings a range of environmental benefits and the council needs to find savings. Recycle More can deliver all of these benefits.
13. The reports attached as appendices are produced by SWP following a number of discussions at SWB over more than two years and a workshop at SSDC in November 2015. They look at various aspects and impacts of the proposals and one is commercially confidential.

Appendix One: Recycle More – Recycling and Refuse Collections.

14. This appendix outlines the current service position and where improvements could be made to the recycling performance. It summarises the trial of Recycle More, the response of the public and the evaluation of the trial's success. It discusses the options considered and why other options have been rejected. It also indicates how the changes will be communicated to the public should members agree the model. There is a section that looks at the risks of delivering the new model. The report is a summary of the information gathered during the development of the model and the background papers identified in the report carry further detail.

Appendix A - This is a commercially confidential appendix that outlines Recycle More costs, collection depot costs etc.

Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment. This EIA is the version considered by SWB in October and it will be further updated by the final Board meeting in December.

Appendix C – Options for nappies and absorbent hygiene products.

15. Although SSDC has taken regular savings from the waste budget the council has never set a target for savings from waste as the expectations of our residents and the fundamental importance of providing an excellent waste collection service complexity make it difficult to establish a realistic reduction. Over recent years savings have been taken from the client group by reducing its size and seconding or sharing staff.

16. Significant savings have been realised in SSDC by working to increase the income from garden waste. This work has taken several years. The price increase for 2017-18 will achieve cost neutrality on the collection costs (but not admin costs). NB. There are no proposed changes to the Green Waste collection service under Recycle More and any price changes will continue to be managed through the Fees and Charges process.
17. Work that has been undertaken to achieve a much higher level of saving has evidenced that the adoption of Recycle More is the only viable opportunity that:
 - achieves significant savings,
 - sets us up for renegotiations when the current contract has a break clause in 2021
 - and enhances the principles of “Sort It Plus”.
18. There are other collection models that might be cheaper, but overall would cost significantly more. This is because the value of the materials collected would reduce impacting on the overall package of costs and therefore not deliver the level of savings we have on offer.
19. In summary the following materials would be collected weekly and recycled (* new material):
 - Plastic pots tubs and trays*
 - Small electrical appliances*
 - Domestic batteries*
 - Current box 1 materials: Glass bottles and jars, paper and foil
 - Current box 2 materials: Cans, aerosols, cardboard and plastic bottles
 - Textiles and shoes
 - Food waste
20. Allowing residents to put more materials out weekly means that the volume in the residual waste is reduced meaning that three weekly collections are now viable. A number of other councils have moved to comparable collection models and our neighbour, East Devon, will start a similar model in 2017.

Savings

21. Moving to this model of collections and with the assumptions made on waste diversion from landfill to recycling presents an opportunity for savings. The savings identified by Somerset Waste Partnership for SSDC can be seen in Appendix Two. This appendix also details the set up costs but it should be noted that these cover all five district areas in Somerset and are shared between partners.
22. Should members agree, the proposed implementation start date for Recycle More is October 2017 taking in the region of 12 months to fully roll-out. Taking the figures in Appendix Two it is required that the upfront costs will be the first draw on savings, with the addition of vehicle sales income this will mean that Districts will see an 85% saving from October 2019/20 and a full year saving from 2020/21 onwards.
23. The Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus) has led the Recycle More project in South Somerset and has engaged in the SWP task and finish group over the past two years. It is believed that this is a positive proposal that meets the aspirations of our residents, provides the best savings possible and puts the authority in the best place for renegotiating the contract in 2021 while still delivering on our statutory requirements.

Points to note

- a) Members will recall that in November 2015 a workshop on the Recycle More proposals were held in Brympton Way. A large number of councillors attended that workshop and no one expressed adverse views on the collection model and welcomed the additional recycling. Some comments were made on the collection containers which have been fed into an extensive review of the best collection container for the service.
- b) It will be noted in the appendices to this report that West Somerset and Taunton Deane Borough Councils have a higher % saving through Recycle More than SSDC. This is because they still provide some weekly collections and SSDC took the saving from removing weekly services in 2007 and has enjoyed the ongoing benefit of doing so since that time.
- c) The proposals require all collection authorities to sign up to Recycle More in order to generate the savings shown, however it might be possible for other configurations to work but these are unlikely to generate similar savings.
- d) The Inter-Authority Agreement does not allow one partner to make changes that impact on another partner without appropriate compensation.
- e) The proposals are positive for the environment with more materials collected weekly and recycled rather than going to landfill. They are also positive for the council tax payer in South Somerset as the County Council will have reduced landfill costs. There is a possibility that fly tipping will increase but this does not appear to have been a problem in other areas rolling out similar services.
- f) Members should note that extensive trials were undertaken in 2014. This established:
 - a. Good customer satisfaction
 - b. That the reduced frequency of waste collection was managed well by residents
 - c. That recycling levels rose significantly. This was both from the new materials but also from existing materials which increased the environmental and cost benefits.
- g) Nappies and Adult Hygiene products have been considered as part of the business case and there may be options available which members can consider. It is important to note that existing policies on these products will still apply which will allow additional bins for those who need them.
- h) The roll out of Recycle More is likely to begin in South Somerset in late 2017. While the majority of the capacity required for the project will be in the SWP Client Group there will undoubtedly be an impact on the current Customer Services. The officer leading Waste Collection issues for SSDC will need to liaise closely with the Transformation teams, SSDC Customer Services and SWP client to ensure that this is a smooth process. Additional customer service capacity is allowed within the set up costs .
- i) While the business case details a two super- depot option there are no plans to stop using Lufton depot as a small additional waste collection depot.

Financial Implications

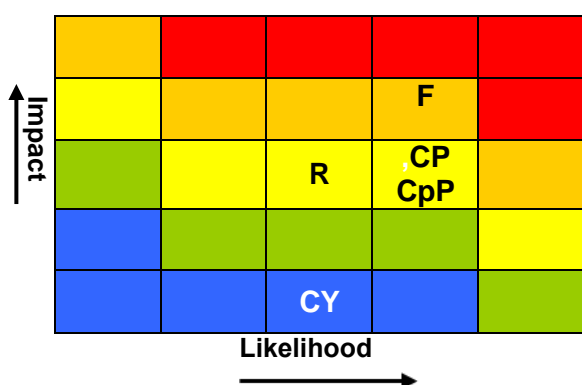
24. Members should note the financial risks laid out in Appendix One and Two. Members should also note that there are no immediate plans to stop using Lufton Depot for waste

collection for part of South Somerset and hence our income of £29,304.40/pa is unaffected

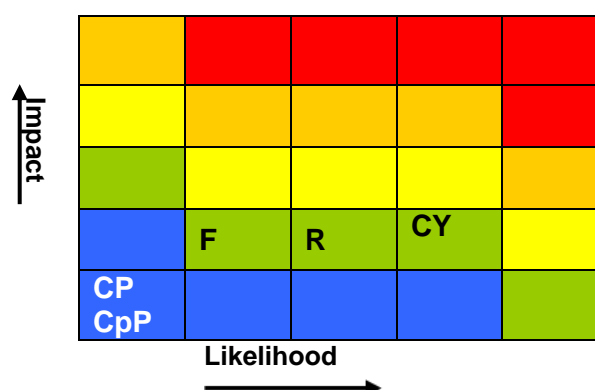
Risk Matrix

25. This risk matrix has been developed with South Somerset District Council issues (SSDC Council Plan, SSDC Capacity, SSDC reputation, South Somerset resident priorities, SSDC finance) in mind. Please see the risk sections in both Appendix One and Appendix Two for the risks applying to the project as a whole.

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

Recycle more supports two priorities for SSDC

1. High quality cost effective services. In order to protect front line services we will: Work with partners to achieve economies, resilience and influence

2. Environment. To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive we will: Increase recycling.

For the 2016-17 Council Plan Action Plan the following action (C3.01) is delivered:

H Agree a new waste and recycling collection model to enhance recycling and reduce costs.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

The report identifies a key area for improvement, this being more things collected weekly.

The additional waste streams set out below will no longer go to landfill and will be less of a burden on the environment as a result.

- Plastic pots tubs and trays
- Small electrical items
- Batteries

The trial of Recycle More undertaken in 2014 provided evidence of the reduction in material in the residual waste bin, this reduction means that with more materials collected on a weekly basis the few remaining non recyclables can be collected on a 3 weekly collection schedule.

Through the trial it was also identified that other already recyclable materials also increased in volume, this additional benefit further improves the environmental impact of waste disposal.

Equality and Diversity Implications

As there are no equality and diversity issues that apply uniquely to South Somerset the equalities impact assessment that has been undertaken by SWP is appropriate evidence to support members in making this decision and is attached the business case.

Privacy Impact Assessment

None arising from this report.

Background Papers

See list in Appendix One