

Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety
Date of meeting:	07 November 2018
Subject:	Ratification and update of waste management policy and rollout of wheeled bins for refuse to retain the weekly refuse collection
Report by:	Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	Yes
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To update the cabinet member on the outcomes of the previously approved weekly wheeled bins and weekly bin bag trials to include feedback from all trials
- 1.2. To ratify the strategy for retaining weekly refuse collection whilst increasing recycling rates
- 1.3. To update members on the progress of the changes being implemented to retain weekly refuse collections

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety:
 - 1) Notes the outcomes of the weekly wheeled bins and weekly bin bag trials and approves the strategy for retaining weekly refuse collections whilst increasing recycling rates
 - 2) Notes the progress of the rollout and approves changes to the waste management policy

3. Background

- 3.1. Under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, Portsmouth City Council (the 'Council') is classed as a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority, and as such, under section 45 (1), has a statutory duty to collect household waste from all domestic properties in the city. Under Section 46(4) of the Act, the Council has specific powers to stipulate:

- The size and type of the collection receptacle(s);
 - Where the receptacle(s) must be placed for the purpose of collecting and emptying;
 - The materials or items which may or may not be placed within the receptacle(s).
- 3.2. PCC operate a weekly refuse sack collection (which is not limited) and a fortnightly wheeled bin or container recycling collection. PCC also provide a network of recycling 'bring banks' for glass and textiles.
- 3.3. In addition to this, residents can take household waste to the Household Waste and Recycling Centre at Port Solent.
- 3.4. PCC has a waste collection contract with Biffa Municipal (which runs until Sep 2021). PCC are in a tri-partite partnership with Hampshire County Council and Southampton City Council for waste disposal (ends Dec 2030). The overall costs for waste management to PCC are in the region of £9million per annum.
- 3.5. PCC have one of the lowest recycling rates in the Country and are currently 340/350 local authorities with a recycling rate of just 24.7% (2015/16). (Appendix 1)
- 3.6. PCC also have the highest kg waste per household in the County at 654.83kg per household per annum. (2016/17) (Appendix 1)
- 3.7. An additional 15,000 homes are proposed for Portsmouth over the next 15 years

4. The waste reduction trials

- 4.1. The purpose of the waste trials was to see if we could achieve a reduction in waste tonnages in order to be able to retain weekly waste collections. It was hoped that we would also be able to get an improvement in recycling rates if we moved to a 140l wheeled bin or 3 standard bin bag system for general household waste. The change to how waste should be presented was designed to encourage behaviour change. A reduction to waste disposal charges would mean that PCC could retain the weekly collection frequency.
- 4.2. The waste management team completed 8 waste trials across the city. 6 of these have been wheeled bin trials. We also carried out 1 reusable sack trial and 1 restricted sack trial. 11693 households took part in the trials.
- 4.3. **Impact** The wheeled bins trials were carried out across the city in Cosham, Paulsgrove, Hilsea, North End, Southsea and Milton. Households in these areas were issued with a 140litre wheeled bin and the weekly collection frequency was retained. Residents had to contain



all of their waste within the bin - side waste and open lids were not permitted. NB. All surrounding local authorities operate a fortnightly refuse collection with households issued with a standard 240litre wheeled bin. They also operate a similar 'no side waste' policy.

- 4.4. Waste in these trial areas has reduced significantly with reductions ranging from 11% to 21% (see appendix 2)
- 4.5. The trend for recycling has mainly increased in these areas. Increases ranging from 2% to 7%. One area has seen no change in recycling tonnages (see appendix 2)
- 4.6. Before and during the trials, the Highways PFI team monitored the street cleansing. They have reported back that in the wheelie bin trials there has been a small improvement in street cleanliness. In the wheeled bin trial areas it was noticeable that the amount of litter caused by split bags decreased. The increased experience of the collection crews as the trials progressed was a likely contributing factor.
- 4.7. Compliance with the scheme was initially high and improved quickly to less than 1% non-compliance
- 4.8. The reusable sack trial was carried out in Fratton for a 10 week period and households were issued with a reusable sack for their rubbish - This had a capacity of 140litres and residents had to contain their waste within the sack
- 4.9. A separate but parallel trial limiting the number of refuse sacks a household could place out was also carried out in Fratton - again for a 10 week period. Residents were issued with 3 PCC bin bags per week - this equated to 140litres of capacity. Excess waste was not collected.
- 4.10. In these trials we also saw a significant reduction in rubbish collected and an improvement in recycling rates. (appendix 2)
- 4.11. Before and during the trials, the Highways PFI team monitored the street cleansing in both the reusable sack and 3 bin bag trial areas. In both trial areas there was a reduction in the waste left on the street post-collection. However this improvement was negated by fly-tipped bags which were attacked by foxes and seagulls etc. and reusable sacks being left out almost permanently in some areas attracting other people's bags and subject to the attentions of vermin. Increased fly tipping/domestic dumping was an issue although this was dealt with via an education and enforcement approach.
- 4.12. Compliance in these trials was less than in the wheeled bin trials with 4% (68 out of 1700) of residents continuing to put out excess waste despite notices reminding them of the correct procedure and limitations.
- 4.13. Following the completion of the 10 week trials in Fratton, all side waste was collected although it is worth noting that waste levels did not go back up to the pre-trial levels (see appendix 2). Waste levels are trending up in this area though as the team have not carried out any enforcement post

trial, reinforcing the need for a fundamental change to the waste collection service.

- 4.14. When reusable sacks were used correctly, these did improve the street scene and street cleanliness but there were issues with sacks being left out after collection, and they were blown about in high winds.
- 4.15. In all of the trial areas, residents could apply for additional capacity. Residents were visited by a waste management officer who carried out an assessment. This was done on a case by case basis and took into account how much waste was being produced by the household. More capacity was given to larger families, those with a medical need, families with young children in nappies, etc.(appendix 5)
- 4.16. An additional 419 recycling containers were also issued in the trial areas. Since the rollout has started containers requests have gone from an average of 9 per day to 30 per day. This will include recycling containers and approved larger containers.
- 4.17. An additional 58 households joined the green waste club in the trial areas during the trial period.
- 4.18. Residents were surveyed about the trials. (appendix 6)
- 4.19. The trials demonstrated that residents can reduce the amount of waste that they put out for collection if there are appropriate boundaries and controls in place. Whilst residents appear to have been restricted in terms of capacity, larger bins are available to residents who produce more waste and can demonstrate that they are fully recycling. Allowances are made where people are unable to use the on street bring banks due to age or disability.
- 4.20. The increase in tonnage for recycling also demonstrates that by placing limits on rubbish capacity residents are encouraged to participate more fully in the recycling scheme.
- 4.21. During the trials the waste management team found that many residents did not understand what they could recycle in their wheelie bin and that face to face interactions helped to improve understanding of what could be recycled and why.

5. Changes required to retain weekly waste collections

- 5.1. The council operate a weekly rubbish sack collection and a fortnightly recycling collection. This is supported by a network of bring banks across the City, and the provision of a Household Waste and Recycling Centre. This is stated on the council website.
- 5.2. In light of the learning from these trials, it is proposed that the council make changes to the waste management policy. The changes would aim to ensure that refuse and recycling services operate effectively and efficiently to maximise recycling and reduce the amount of waste sent for disposal. (appendix 4)

- 5.3. The changes to the policy are designed to support the existing fortnightly recycling collection and to retain weekly refuse collection frequency, and set out a clearly defined process to ensure that residents, members, and officers are clear about their responsibilities.
- 5.4. Under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, Portsmouth City Council is classed as a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority, and as such, under section 45 (1), has a statutory duty to collect household waste from all domestic properties in the county. Under Section 46(4) of the Act, the Council has specific powers to stipulate:
- The size and type of the collection receptacle(s);
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- 5.5. Wheeled bins - The waste management team surveyed the city and determined that approximately 55,000 homes have the capacity to house a wheeled bin for rubbish. These properties mainly have forecourts, or front gardens where a bin could be stored. There are a further 11,000 homes where it was determined that storage could be a barrier to having a wheeled bin. In addition, there are approximately 25,000 homes within blocks of flats and whose rubbish and recycling is placed within communal bins.
- 5.6. Where suitable, households will be issued with a 140 litre wheeled bin for their rubbish.
- 5.7. In areas not suitable for wheeled bins, households can place out up to a maximum of 3 standard bin bags per week - this equates approximately to 140 litres (which is the same size as the wheeled bin). Where residents are unable to transport a full standard bin bag to the designated collection point, officers will agree the number and size of bags to be used with the resident.
- 5.8. Where households share a communal collection, it is recommended that bin capacity is reviewed and a further report submitted regarding communal collections. This may exclude some Houses in Multiple Occupation (landlords of such properties will be advised which scheme they are in).
- 5.9. The existing waste collection fleet is due for replacement in 2021 and at that time vehicles will be procured that can more easily combine wheeled bins and bag collections on the same round.
- 5.10. Households who regularly exceed the standard capacity of a 140l per week for refuse can apply for additional capacity (larger bin or additional bag allowance), but to secure this, they need to demonstrate that they are

recycling fully within the recycling scheme offered by Portsmouth City Council. Exceptions will be made where residents who are elderly or disabled are unable to access the on street bring banks.

- 5.11. Households may also purchase a limited amount of additional capacity for occasional additional waste.
- 5.13. Households who need additional recycling capacity can contact the council for a larger or additional container.
- 5.14. The policy will be subject to legislative changes and government policy and will be reviewed as required.
- 5.15. The policy covers:
 - Presentation, recycling scheme and frequency of collections
 - Side waste
 - Additional rubbish/recycling bins for households
 - Assisted collections
 - Enforcement Procedures
 - Bin repair/replacement
 - Bring banks for glass and textiles
 - Services to charities and community organisations
 - Garden Waste Club
 - Planning considerations
 - Bulky Waste
 - Household Waste and Recycling Centre

6.0. Update on implementing the changes to the waste management policy

- 6.1. All residents have been notified of which scheme they are in ahead of the implementation. Residents in the 3 x standard bin bag areas may opt in and have a wheeled bin if they are able to store it off the highway. The letter/information pack for wheeled bins explains what they need to do with their refuse and recycling. It also details how to apply for a larger rubbish bin or additional bag capacity or opt in for a wheeled bin.
- 6.2. Only 1 block of flats has had a change to collection days
- 6.3. The website has been updated to help residents understand their responsibilities and how to contact PCC for support or advice. This includes 'frequently asked questions'.
 - Wheeled bins and 3 x standard bin bag limit roll out to households on schedule to be completed by 1 December 2018
 - An education approach regarding excess waste will precede any potential enforcement action (i.e. fines)

- Review of capacity in blocks of flats begins 01 February 2019 with a report to follow

7. Costs of implementation and future cost reductions

- 7.1. The cost of rolling out wheeled bins was the subject of an approved capital bid. Funds were allocated for 55,000 wheeled bins, additional lifters for the open back fleet and an additional vehicle and crew to accommodate changes to rounds. There was also funding for additional project resource and communications to support the roll out. The project is on schedule to be delivered on budget.
- 7.2. If all areas with wheeled bins deliver similar reductions in waste as has been achieved in the trials, rubbish tonnage could be significantly reduced. A 10% reduction would deliver an ongoing estimated saving on waste disposal of £270,000 per annum.

8. Reasons for recommendations

- 8.1. Portsmouth City Council's recycling rate is one of the lowest in the country at 24.7% (340/350 Local authorities). This comes at significant financial cost, and the proposed change will support and encourage the behavioural changes required to reduce the amount of waste produced and improve recycling rates. The government have recently supported the adoption of higher recycling targets (50% by 2020, 55% by 2025, 60% by 2030 and 65% by 2035) as part of the EU's Circular Economy Package that was adopted by the European Parliament on 18th April 2018.
- 8.2. The majority of other local authorities have adopted wheeled bins or bag number restrictions along with changes to frequency of collection in order to encourage waste reduction and improve recycling participation. This change retains the weekly collection but still provides an opportunity to secure reductions in waste.
- 8.3. The budgets for collection and disposal are significant and with market fluctuations for materials along with financial pressures on all services, this change will deliver significant reductions in cost (up to £270,000 per annum), improvements in recycling and ensure that Portsmouth has a more sustainable service going forward.
- 8.4. The waste collection contractor Biffa has supported the Council to make these changes to the waste collection system and a contract variation has been secured. Biffa have supported the trials and are continuing to support the transition to the changes.
- 8.5. The Government is due to publish its waste and resources strategy later this year. The changes to refuse collections are likely to be required in order to move towards meeting recycling targets and to deliver a more

sustainable service. The policy will be reviewed following the publication of the strategy.

- 8.6. The council continues to work with its disposal partners HCC, and SCC on projects to reduce waste and look for opportunities to increase the range of items that residents can recycle.
- 8.7. The council has previously used media campaigns as the main method of engagement with residents to encourage good quality recycling. This will still be an important factor in ensuring behaviour change but with the addition of a redefined collection service, and an education led face to face approach with residents.

9. Equality impact assessment

- 9.1. There are some impacts identified in the EIA (appendix 5) but there are processes in place to ensure that these are mitigated.

10. Legal implications

10.1. As stated in 3.1. 'Under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, Portsmouth City Council (the 'Council') is classed as a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority, and as such, under section 45 (1), has a statutory duty to collect household waste from all domestic properties in the city. Under Section 46(4) of the Act, the Council has specific powers to stipulate:

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10.2. In addition the policy does outline the basis upon which enforcement of the PCC imposed obligations can be dealt with. The obligations set out above are reasonable and unlikely to be challengeable or reviewable in a legal sense.

10.3. The policy outlines what steps can be taken to assist those who have a protected characteristic (principally disability, age or medical need) to comply by way of seeking to register with PCC for assisted collection.

11. Director of Finance's comments

11.1 The Council approved capital expenditure of £1.12m for the rollout of wheeled bins across the City as part of the budget report in February 2018. This was to meet the cost of the provision of new wheeled bins and for lifters to the Waste Contractors vehicles. The recommendations of this report will be financed from this approved capital budget.

11.2 An estimate of the ongoing revenue impact of this initiative has been made using the results of the pilot scheme. There will be an ongoing cost of employing a new Waste Collection crew and this will be funded by savings made in the waste disposal contract. The current estimate based on the pilot show that the Council could achieve savings based on the increase in recycled waste and therefore a reduction in the cost of disposing of waste less the additional cost of Collection.

11.3 An estimate of the financial impact on the revenue budget suggests that a saving of around £193,000 per annum could be made once the scheme was fully rolled out. Initially the cost of employing an additional crew and vehicle paid for under the existing Waste Collection contract with Biffa would be in the region of £122,000 per annum.

11.4 As a result of this initiative it has been estimated that the Council will see an overall 16% reduction in the amount of waste tonnage that it sends to the Energy Recycling Facility (ERF). This would result in a saving of £141,000 per annum.

11.5 Additionally the Council, through the waste disposal contract, are able to sell this additional capacity which would generate £174,000 in income. The net overall revenue impact could therefore be a saving of £193,000 per annum.

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Signed by:
Director of Property & Housing

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Recycling rates and KGs per household per annum comparison
- Appendix 2 - Refuse and recycling tonnage table (wheeled bin and sack trials)
- Appendix 3 - Breakdown of capacity assessments
- Appendix 4 - Waste Management Policy
- Appendix 5 - Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 6 - Trial survey feedback

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Environmental Protection Act 1990	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/

rejected by on

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Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety