

POLICY REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Type of Report: Development	Portfolio(s): Environment
Will be subject to a future Cabinet Report: YES/NO Will be need to be recommended to Council: YES/NO	
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OPEN / EXEMPT (delete as appropriate)	

Environment and Community Panel

Date: 24th May 2017

Subject: Food Waste Collections – Caddy Liners

Summary

This report provides information on changes which are proposed in the way in which residents can present food waste for collection due to technical changes in the processing of collected food waste.

Recommendations

Members are asked to provide comments which would be relevant to the Portfolio Holder in making the final decision.

1. Food waste collections and the provision of caddy liners

- 1.1. The council in 2012 decided to implement service changes which included the introduction of a separate weekly collection of food waste. Much of the work on the design of the service was undertaken by a Task and Finish Group which worked closely with officers and made a final recommendation to Cabinet.
- 1.2. One of the areas for discussion was the potential provision of caddy liners for householders to use to line the indoor food waste caddy. The provision of free liners was not adopted due to the high cost to the council of providing liners and distributing them. However, members were concerned about the commercial cost of liners and their availability throughout the borough. To address the concerns the council agreed to purchase and re-sell the liners at cost to members of the public through council owned facilities. This has been the case since 2013.
- 1.3. The reason that specialist liners were needed was due to the process the food went through after collection. This process is known as In Vessel Composting, where a soil conditioner is made and used by farmers for growing crops. One part of the regulation of the process is compliance with a standard requiring the absence of, amongst other things, plastic from the output of the facility.
- 1.4. The process which the collected food waste is now subject to is Anaerobic Digestion. The food waste is used to make bio gas through the action of bacteria in

the absence of air. Bio gas is burnt to make electricity and a soil conditioner and liquid fertiliser are also produced.

- 1.5. The change of processing facility was brought about by the closure of the In Vessel Composting plant initially used by Kier for the processing of food waste and the change was not within Kier's control. There are no cost implications in the delivery of this change to the council.

2. Compostable Caddy Liners are no longer required

- 2.1 Anaerobic Digestion is delivered at a commercial scale and includes de-packaging equipment and shredders to produce feed stock from household food waste collections and commercial food waste from manufacturing and distribution. The manner in which food is presented and processed is not dependant on the food waste being presented in a particular way.

- 2.2 The technical move now provides an opportunity to increase the accessibility of the service to residents by allowing food waste to be presented in a number of ways. These include:

- Corn Starch liners
- Plastic Bags
- Paper Bags
- Newspaper
- Loose in the outdoor caddy

- 2.3 The ability to present food in a plastic bag (supermarket carrier bags, plastic bread bags, pedal bin liners, cereal box bags) increases the accessibility of the service. The ready availability of inexpensive or no cost, options for food waste containment means that the initial reason for the supply of caddy liners, at cost, by the council is now redundant as a service need.

- 2.4 There is no direct cost saving provided by not supplying caddy liners across a number of re-sale points in the borough. The work involves a number of people all of whom have to contribute to the process. The removal of the activity involved in caddy liner sales provides increased opportunities to focus on more significant parts of each individual's role.

- 2.5 The council in its work with Local Green Points will be delivering an increased focus on food waste, including food waste reduction and recycling, which is timely given the recent EFRA Select Committee Report on Food Waste.

- 2.6 The focus on food waste by Local Green Points will include a food waste module on their dedicated King's Lynn and West Norfolk web platform which deals with:

- Menu Planning
- Best Before and Use By dates
- Food Storage
- Use of left overs
- Food Waste Recycling

- 2.7 Participants are taken through a specifically designed food waste reduction and diversion programme and gain reward points as they participate and report their progress on line. The programme links to a range of supporting sources of assistance including the major supermarkets, the government funded Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and blogs. Delivered in bite size chunks covering a four week period behaviours are introduced, practiced and embedded before the next theme is introduced.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The financial implications of the proposed change is that the council will not collect a contribution of £5,857 towards the costs of providing caddy liners to residents and will not have to purchase caddy liners in advance of their sale. In 2016/17 the council purchased caddy liners to the value of £25,000. The cost of administering the sale of caddy liners is estimated at £35,000. The sale, processing, cashiering, stock control and distribution of the caddy liners equates to 37 hours of work each week. Removal of the caddy liner sales will increase capacity within the CIC to focus on their core work, which is to respond to customer enquiries and requests for service.
- 3.2 Increasing the accessibility of the service, supported by appropriate promotion of the change, is expected to increase the use of the food waste service.
- 3.3 Research carried out by WRAP has shown that there is up to a 32% increase in food yields (kg/hh/yr) where an intervention package comprising caddy liners, communications and residual bin sticker is introduced. This level of increase is not anticipated within the proposed changes to improve accessibility but evidences the fact that improving accessibility increases the amount of food waste collected.
- 3.4 The council recycled nearly 3,200 tonnes of food waste collected from residents in 2016/17. For each tonne of food waste collected the council receives recycling credit of £56.89. This credit partially offsets the additional cost of collecting and processing food waste. Recycling credits are paid by Norfolk County Council. Norfolk County Council would make a similar saving on avoided disposal costs. The table below shows the performance of the scheme over the last 3 years.

Year	Tonnes Food Waste Collected
2014/15	3,624
2015/16	3,267
2016/17	3,192

By making the scheme easier to use it is intended to increase the amount of food waste collected.

4. Policy Implications

4.1 The final decision involves a single Portfolio and can therefore be made under delegated powers. The potential to increase recycling directly supports the Corporate Plan and the work of the Norfolk Waste Partnership.

5. Statutory Implications

5.1 The Council has a duty to make arrangements for the collection of household waste and nothing in this proposal impinges on that duty.

6. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

6.1 Screening of the proposed change does not show any negative outcomes and indicates that the service becomes easier to access and no person or group protected characteristics has their access to or ability to use the service reduced.

7. Personnel Implications

7.1 None

8. Background Paper

8.1 None