

POLICY REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Type of Report: Review	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: 31 August 2016

Subject: Norfolk Waste Partnership Work Streams

Summary

This report provides an update on waste related issues and provides a particular focus on the current work of the Norfolk Waste Partnership, Waste and Recycling Behaviour Change Programme and waste related updates.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report and make comments.

1. Norfolk Waste Partnership

The Council together with all the Norfolk districts and the County Council form the Norfolk Waste Partnership. The NWP was formed to help tackle and reduce the amount of household waste produced in the County. It has standardised the approach to waste across the County and via its officer groups is looking at continuing improvements to the County's waste issues to help reduce the costs of dealing with waste across Norfolk as a whole. A number of research projects are about to start looking at options covering:

- Communications and behavioural change where Officers are looking at the recycling messages Councils are giving out and exploring ways to persuade residents to manage their waste in a more sustainable manner.
- Sharing facilities and assets. This links into the work being undertaken as part of the Norfolk One Estate programme where Councils could perhaps share facilities such as depots rather than operate them side by side as in some instances.
- Reviewing materials that could be added to the list of recyclables. This is constantly under review and is dependent on the collection method, the ability of the MRF to be able to separate waste streams and the presence of a market willing to buy the secondary material. This is influenced by global trading conditions.
- Reviewing waste infrastructure and collection regimes. This project will examine collection methods and possible improvements to the current twin bin arrangements together with potential savings that could be made around a review of the collection regimes currently in place.

It is proposed to provide updated reports on the project work as it progresses through

this year. Although part of the research streams, the Council is not committed to the adoption of any of the outcomes of the research. Any proposals will be brought back to the Council.

2. Work Stream Details

Communications and Behavioural Change

The work on behavioural change was commenced by this authority and following a successful bid to DCLG and the award of £ ¼ million a scheme has been implemented by Local Green Points on behalf of the council. This work has been extended by agreement to additionally provide a smaller scale project in each collection authorities in year 2.

This has been undertaken to embed the learning from the project across Norfolk.

Additionally the authorities are combining some resources, within existing budgets, to create a communications officer role to assist the councils with improved information for residents to assist in the best use of the services provided.

One Public Estate (OPE)

A Stage 1 grant award to the Norfolk OPE programme has been made by the Cabinet Office and the element which the Norfolk Waste Partnership has been asked to lead on is the examination of assets which are used for waste and similar operations. The potential for savings by the release of assets and the co-location of operations, to reduce costs, is to be examined by officers.

The funding is for feasibility work which is designed to be able to deliver both capital receipts and revenue savings some of which are reinvested in the provision of facilities for waste operations. The outcomes may be significant and in terms of West Norfolk are only deliverable over the medium term.

The current contract for the disposal of residual waste, made by Norfolk County Council, have a detrimental effect on both efficiency and cost for waste collections in West Norfolk. This arrangement runs until 2020. Waste is currently being taken directly to Wisbech and the majority is being tipped at the Hamlin Way Depot. It is then being loaded in to large HGV trailers for haulage to Wisbech at the expense of this Council. The use of the existing depot for the additional processing of waste in to baled refuse derived fuel, similar to that which is undertaken currently at Wisbech, would save over £250,000 per annum and create a number of jobs in King's Lynn.

The Hamlin Way Depot would need some construction and reorganisation works and fleet operations for cleansing and grounds maintenance activities would need to be relocated.

In joint and collaborative working these operations can result in further savings with these operations being on a combined existing site at Saddlebow Industrial Estate shared with Norfolk County Council. Opportunities exist particularly around fuel and

vehicle maintenance and reductions in unit cost operations compared to running two separate depot operations.

Review of materials acceptable for recycling

The formation of a company controlled jointly by all of the District, Borough and City Councils in Norfolk along with Norfolk County Council and Norse Commercial Services to provide the recycling operations for the green bin collections allows flexibility in the provision of services and the Liaison Board, formed by Norse and the Councils can review the provision of additional materials which can be sustainably added to the range of materials already collected.

Current market conditions are less than favourable with some processing companies showing financial strain and others closing. However, the councils are committed to examining opportunities where the public purse in Norfolk benefits from the diversion of materials from disposal to recycling.

Changes in the price of crude oil and the value of Sterling against the US Dollar may create more positive sentiment and provide an improvement in the price gained for secondary plastic materials sorted from dry recyclables. This may create greater opportunities to recover value and a range of plastics from the waste stream. There can be very little certainty at this time and change is only likely over the medium term.

Review of infrastructure and collection regimes

This Council has the lowest collection costs of authorities in Norfolk and has benefitted from the changes introduced in 2013 in terms of cost and recycling rates. The potential to create further benefits from both the existing contract and any new potential arrangements must be kept under review to ensure the financial stability and sustainability of services. A successful funding bid to the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) was been submitted. Eunomia has been appointed through a tender exercise to provide assistance in a review across Norfolk and this council will actively participate in the review and shaping the outcomes. The aim is to pursue options in detail which would result in savings to the public purse in Norfolk.

The review includes the following:

- Introducing separate food waste collections across Norfolk
- Maintaining services as currently provided or changing frequency
- Separate collection of nappies across Norfolk

The following issues must be addressed within the outcomes:

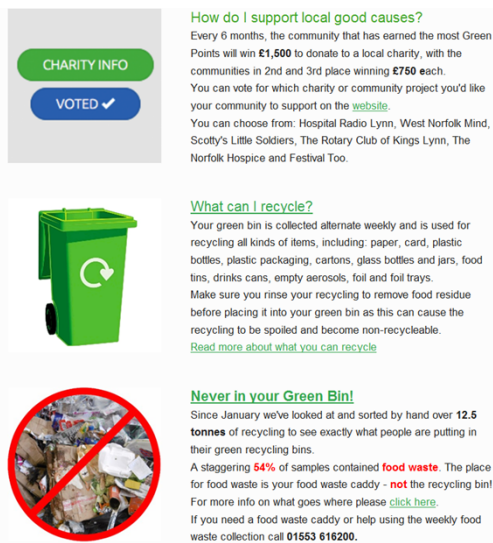
- Struggling communities
- Flats and bagged area collections
- Rurality and efficiency in collections
- Coastal Communities
- Urban and Suburban Collections

The outcome of the review will be a range of options for consideration by each authority and these will be considered by this council before being implemented.

3. Waste and Recycling Behavioural Change Programme

The Waste and Recycling Behavioural Change Programme is being provided by Local Green Points on our behalf. The funding of the scheme is being provided by a grant from DCLG of £256,000. Local Green Points was awarded a contract following a full procurement exercise. The scheme was launched in May with both press and media coverage and each household was sent an information pack inviting them to join the scheme by mid June 3,000 households had activated their accounts.

The scheme design is to provide community rewards through gaining undertaking positive behaviours in terms of recycling well, avoiding and reducing contamination and reporting upon the activities predominantly through online activities. Those who participate through online accounts receive monthly e-shots promoting activities and providing news on the scheme. Officers help to shape the content of the e-shot and a segment is reproduced below.



CHARITY INFO
VOTED ✓

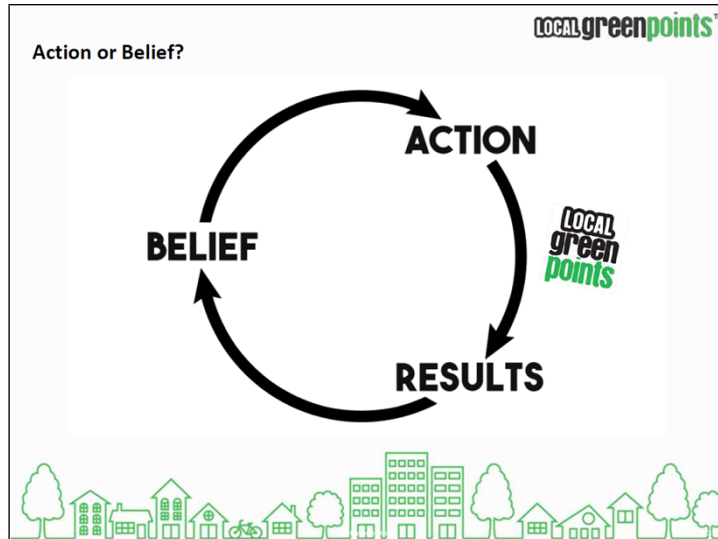
How do I support local good causes?
Every 6 months, the community that has earned the most Green Points will win **£1,500** to donate to a local charity, with the communities in 2nd and 3rd place winning **£750** each. You can vote for which charity or community project you'd like your community to support on the [website](#). You can choose from: Hospital Radio Lynn, West Norfolk Mind, Scotty's Little Soldiers, The Rotary Club of Kings Lynn, The Norfolk Hospice and Festival Too.

What can I recycle?
Your green bin is collected alternate weekly and is used for recycling all kinds of items, including: paper, card, plastic bottles, plastic packaging, cartons, glass bottles and jars, food tins, drinks cans, empty aerosols, foil and foil trays. Make sure you rinse your recycling to remove food residue before placing it into your green bin as this can cause the recycling to be spoiled and become non-recyclable. [Read more about what you can recycle](#)

Never in your Green Bin!
Since January we've looked at and sorted by hand over **12.5 tonnes** of recycling to see exactly what people are putting in their green recycling bins. A staggering **54%** of samples contained **food waste**. The place for food waste is your food waste caddy - **not** the recycling bin! For more info on what goes where please [click here](#). If you need a food waste caddy or help using the weekly food waste collection call **01553 616200**.

Householders can sign up for the scheme at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/recyclingrewards. Each participant has the opportunity to vote for charities which may benefit from donations from the scheme as part of the rewards system and individual residents have the chance to gain personal rewards if they are the highest points earners within their area. The scheme gains support through recognition of high achievers, the desire to compete and the ability to influence the destination of community donations.

Online activities, as shown below, are supported by press and media to show that engagement has positive outcomes and spreads the scheme wider. Engagement in the scheme is designed to get householders to recycle and do it well and by doing so they see results through Green Point Rewards and that any barriers to recycling well can be overcome and gain belief that they can recycle effectively without support. Simply put is that we learn through doing and the more we do the more we learn and we can do the task without thinking about it.



Those who have off line accounts receive information delivered through the post to keep them informed and involved.

The use of online presence can be used to maximise the potential for introductions and activations. The most effective form of gaining sign ups for the scheme is through personal visits by staff to homes, as this is where the recycling is done. However, this is the most expensive form of initial engagement. To be most effective there is a need to maximise sign up for the scheme. Work is being undertaken to promote the scheme through the following mechanisms:

- Electronic and Static Adverts at council and Alive Leisure sites
- In bus adverts
- Agripa panels on refuse collection vehicles
- Parish magazine adverts

Additionally officers are distributing information leaflets as they undertake their work particularly where they are undertaking work dedicated to tackling recycling contamination.

The screen shot of the tweet shows how strongly people feel about doing well in the scheme and there is a need for strong personal and online support for the scheme including by Councillors and Parish Councils

It is possible to use the platform for the scheme to provide support for other activities including food waste recycling and this will form part of the work over the two year period of the contract. The arrangements include performance related payments and robust monitoring of progress including an advisory panel of senior officers and the Leader of the Council.

The scheme delivered over two years has a number of performance related payment targets to incentivise the delivery of the scheme including:

- Number of householders signed up to participate
- Additional recycling tonnage

- Reduction in contamination of recycling bins

The use of the scheme is to have a long term positive impact on waste behaviours with an increase in over 1,000 tonnes per annum of dry recycling compared to before the scheme. This provides financial benefits to this Council and Norfolk County Council.

3. Collections and processing of waste

Kier continue to provide services broadly within the expectations of the contract with the number of missed collections for domestic bins being 17 per 100,000 on average with the trend number falling. The number of assisted collections missed was 6 per month against a target of zero; the trend is currently showing a reduction in these missed collections.

The implications of the change in tipping point with the end of the contract between Norfolk County Council with Blackborough End Landfill site are still being negotiated with Kier. The implications are both financial and logistical. It is expected that significant restructuring of rounds will have to be made within the next few months to provide a settled round structure going forward. The additional costs associated with the change of delivery point is subject to ongoing negotiations.

Recycling tonnages collected show an increase on the previous year with significant additional materials collected in the Green Bin but a modest decrease in food waste collected. Easter holidays would not have made a significant effect on these figures and the weather and increased customer numbers would have impacted on the amount of garden waste collected in the Brown Bin.

	Q1 2015	Q1 2016
Green Bin	3402	3572
Brown Bin	2859	3090
Food Waste	815	809
Clothing Bank	52	69
Total	7128	7540

4. Reject Materials in Green Bins

The most significant aspect of the service which is creating pressure is the presence of significantly greater levels on reject materials in the Green Bin than had been contracted for based upon professional advice.

Since the commencement of the contract awarded to the joint venture company owned by the District, Borough and City councils along with Norfolk County Council it has been apparent that the levels of non recyclable materials placed in the Green Bin have substantially exceeded the levels anticipated during the commissioning of the service. The level of reject material, as measured by weight on incoming loads is currently about 14%. The expected level was 5% or less. This has created pressure

on the contract, which has not been aided by the fall in value of some of the key commodity prices since the contract was awarded. Norse Commercial Services Ltd has accepted that it is liable for the losses associated with commodity prices of the secondary materials created through recycling.

Norse have sought to recover the costs that they have had to incur for the delivery, transport, processing and ultimate disposal of items that it was never intended should be put in the recycling bin. Very detailed negotiations have been undertaken to resolve the dispute between the parties. To measure the levels of non recyclable waste delivered in the Materials Reclamation Facility (MRF) samples have been taken from each vehicle and analysed by sorting by hand.

The main contaminant types are:

- Textiles
- Food Waste
- General Residual Waste in opaque sacks, bags and loose
- Recyclable Materials placed in opaque sacks and carrier bags
- Nappies

Trials undertaken at the MRF have shown that more than 2/3rd of the material contained within bags is non recyclable and seeking to recover any recyclable materials will retrieve about 200 tonnes each year but at substantial cost far exceeding its value.

Council issued clear recycling sacks are accepted and sorted fully. The MRF operation is designed to accept and deal with council issued clear sacks for recycling.

The cost of reject material in the MRF is up to £200,000 based upon the amount of material delivered by this council under the contract. The impact of the reject material is twofold.

Firstly, the cost of transporting and removing materials which should have not been placed in the recycling bin and their disposal has to be met by the council and the value of this is up to £200,000 per annum. The amount of material is the equivalent of 100 refuse collection vehicles full of the wrong material being collected each quarter at the current rate.

Secondly, the presence of some contaminants has serious levels of financial risk to the contract. To maximise the value of paper separated from the other materials collected in the recycling bin all paper is baled and shipped to China for reprocessing. The material has a value of £700,000 per annum. The Chinese market requires that all material is subject to inspection. The inspection requires that a single bale of material is opened and inspected. It must meet the following requirements as part of the inspection.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|
| • Total Contamination by weight | : | <1.5% |
| • Food Waste | : | Absent |
| • Nappies | : | Absent |

Recent survey work by officers from across Norfolk indicates that approximately 400,000 nappies are present on the mixed paper line each year. These are removed by hand where possible in the final clean up process before the paper is baled.

Where a nappy is found in the inspection which is undertaken at least every 28 days the ability to export the paper to the destinations providing greatest value is blocked and an alternative destination is required. However, if the inspection required for subsequent potential destinations also finds the presence of food waste or nappies the ability to export material becomes extremely more difficult.

The risk is that the material which has the greatest value may be incapable of being marketed to the best available markets leading to financial loss to the joint venture.

Export of material is also governed by the Environment Agency and a failed inspection at the port of exit may prevent the export of a specific shipment.

It is therefore incumbent on the council, along with others in Norfolk, to ensure that the number of nappies and other non recyclable materials placed in to the recycling bins are minimised. To facilitate this the Recycling and Waste Management Team, as part of its specific work to minimise contamination of recycling, will:

- Promote the West Norfolk Green Points Scheme
- Provide additional residual waste capacity to families with children in nappies who need more or larger bins
- Promote good quality recycling to householders
- Inspect bins routinely and where householders are found to contaminate bins we will remove the green bin collection and place them on a clear sack collection as this minimises opportunities to hide contaminants within the bin.
- With Kier operate the Red Tag scheme saying that we will not empty contaminated bins and the householder needs to resolve the issues of contamination or bagging of material within the bin before it is collected.
- Devise further schemes to reduce contamination in communal collections.
- Cease collections of recycling where bins are continuously and grossly abused by residents, without, necessarily, any compensating residual capacity.

Residents who have been approached and subject to intervention by officers have generally responded positively, in some circumstances but being told that your bin will not be collected due to gross contamination has not always been well received.

The approach is consistent with our policies on collection of recyclable waste.

Additionally, the Norfolk Waste Partnership are seeking to recruit a Communications Officer role with specific responsibilities of communicating key messages on recycling across Norfolk.

Further work is being done on mapping levels of contamination, along with contaminant types against communities. This information will then also be used to map levels of social media presence and interaction to see if an effective 'on line' presence can be established and who is engaging in waste and recycling themed discussions. The information is used to establish the type of discussion, the location

of the participants and their potential preferences and messages that are appropriate. This enables targeted messaging and discussions to be held making them most relevant to the particular audience. The intention is to make connections with those who may have influence and be seen as trusted within the online community.

This form of engagement can be both cost effective and impactful if delivered well.

5. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. Policy Implications

None

7. Statutory Implications

None

8. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

None

9. Personnel Implications

None

10. Background Paper

None