

From: Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment
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To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 19 January 2023

Subject: Projects and initiatives at the Household Waste Recycling Centres – an update paper

Key decision: No

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: N/A

Electoral Division: All divisions

Summary: The Kent County Council (KCC) Waste Management Service is undertaking several pilot projects and initiatives at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), to realise an array of benefits including potential savings, increasing income, as well as environmental and social value outcomes. An Officer Decision has also been taken regarding the use of the KCC HWRCs by non-Kent residents.

This paper summarises these projects, with further details included within supplementary appendices.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note and make comment on the content of this paper and its appendices.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) operates as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and, in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990, provides Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). KCC currently operates a network of 19 HWRCs providing facilities for re-use, recycling, and safe disposal for a range of materials delivered by Kent residents.
- 1.2 KCC's current financial pressures, has required the Waste Management service to consider further options to realise savings and in some instances increase the potential for income as part of the HWRC operations. Whilst the projects described in this paper will elicit varying degrees of financial benefit, it is important to note that they all realise other important benefits too, including environmental gains, and positive social value outcomes through partnership working which serves local communities.

1.1 Given the breadth of detail relating to the projects and initiatives being delivered, they are all subject to their own appendices attached to this report. All papers are for information only.

2. Summary of each Appendix report

2.1 Appendix 1: Cross-border customer use of Kent County Council Household Waste Recycling Centres

2.2 The appendix is a copy of the Record of Officer Decision relating to a cross-border policy at the HWRCs. In accordance with the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990, KCC as the Waste Disposal Authority, provides HWRCs for Kent residents. However, the Act also states that waste can be accepted from non-residents and that charges can be levied for the disposal of this waste i.e., KCC can either prohibit use entirely or charge residents who do not live in the KCC administrative area for using the Authority's HWRCs.

2.3 Financial pressures on the Waste Management service means that it must be considered whether a cross-border customer policy for use of the Authority's HWRCs is necessary. Taking into account the approach by other Local Authorities, public feedback, and financial modelling, in order to continue to provide choice to residents, the policy decision is to continue to allow cross border access for non-Kent residents, albeit for a charge.

2.4 The policy is an extension of the cross-border policy which has been operating at Dartford HWRC for 25 years. It will be administered via the HWRC booking system.

2.5 Appendix 2: Reuse Activities at the Household Waste Recycling Centres

2.6 The report describes the various reuse opportunities and aspirations to be delivered at the HWRCs. Reuse sits higher in the waste hierarchy than recycling. It is where items are reused in their current state or undergo minor repair or refurbishment in order to be reused, rather than undergoing treatment or reprocessing into new items.

2.7 In addition to meeting legislative drivers, there are a number of benefits of increasing reuse, including reduced disposal costs, diversion from recovery, environmental and carbon benefits, maximising value and use of resources, and social value benefits including possible employment, training, reskilling, and support to / partnering with third sector and charity organisations.

2.8 Appendix 3: Small Business Recycling at the Household Waste Recycling Centres

2.9 The report outlines an initiative which will introduce a recycling service for small businesses at HWRCs across Kent which are permitted to carry out the activity.

2.10 The scope of the project is to target small business owners who require an affordable outlet for their business recycling, with the objective that KCC's recycling rates increase, and materials are received that have a commodity value.

2.11 An initial trial will be held at the Canterbury and New Romney sites which already have in place permits allowing the acceptance of trade waste; this will be used to inform a further roll out of the initiative at other HWRC's.

2.12 Appendix 4: Bag splitting at Household Waste Recycling Centres

2.13 The report outlines a bag splitting initiative which has been introduced at selected HWRCs, with the intention of a full roll-out of the scheme across Kent in the coming months.

2.14 The scope of the project is to target residents who deposit black bags into the residual / general waste container which may contain recyclate materials of value, where they have historically been assigned for incineration at the Energy from Waste facility.

2.15 The pilot commenced on the 29th November 2022 at North Farm and Tovil HWRCs under Commercial Services management. The findings across the first week were extremely successful in terms of positive staff and customer attitude to the initiative, and the recovery rate of recyclate.

2.16 To accompany the bag splitting trial, a communications campaign is being run alongside this, to encourage customers to 'pre-sort' their waste before attending the HWRCs. Customers are informed via videos, site signage and postcards that up to 50% of waste in bags destined for the residual / general waste containers could have been recycled and to ensure recyclable materials are separated.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Please refer to each appendix for specific financial implications.

4. Legal implications

4.1 Please refer to each appendix for specific legal implications.

5. Equalities implications

5.1 Please refer to each appendix for specific equalities implications.

6. Other corporate implications

6.1 Please refer to each appendix for specific corporate implications.

7. Governance

7.1 This paper is an update paper only.

8. Conclusions

8.1 The appendices to this report explain in detail the background to each of the initiatives and pilots that the Waste Management Service is undertaking. The

trials and pilots provide vital insight into the best way to roll these out to further HWRCs. Further developments and implementation will form the work programme for next year, with Members of the committee being kept updated.

9. Recommendation(s):

9.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to note and make comment on the content of this paper and its appendices.

10. Appendices:

Appendix 1 Record of Officer Decision Cross border customer use of the KCC HWRCs

Appendix 2 Reuse Activities at the KCC Household Waste Recycling Centres

Appendix 3 Small Business Recycling at the Household Waste Recycling Centres

Appendix 4 Bag splitting at the Household Waste Recycling Centres

11. Contact details

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