

Subject: Review of the Collection of Domestic Solid Waste

Report to: Management Team 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017  
Environment Committee 18th July 2017

Report by: Glenn Buck Head of Environmental Services

**SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**This report seeks to bring members up to date with respect to the Borough's waste collection and recycling service and the work proposed by the Norfolk Waste Partnership.**

**The Committee are recommended to note the contents of the report**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The council collects some 38,000 tonnes of solid waste annually from 48,000 properties across the Borough. For most residents the collections involve an alternative fortnightly kerbside collection of mixed recyclables and residual waste. There are a very small number of properties that still use a bag system (mostly flats above shops) and slightly different arrangements apply for the collection of the large communal bins found at large flatted developments. Additionally the Council has over 8,000 customers for its opt in paid for fortnightly garden waste collection service. The Council does not operate a trade waste service.

**2. THE NORFOLK WASTE PARTNERSHIP**

The Borough Council together with all the other District Councils in the County and the County Council are members of the Norfolk Waste Partnership (NWP). The NWP seeks to encourage the reduction of waste and to promote best practise in its collection and processing, to standardise waste practises across the County and to seek to liaise with contractors and operational partners such as Norse Environmental Waste Services (NEWS) around the processing of recyclable materials at the Costessey materials recycling facility (MRF).

At its Board Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June, the NWP endorsed a strategy to concentrate efforts on reducing contamination within collected recycling across Norfolk. Contamination is material that is incorrectly placed in the recycling system and cannot be recycled at the MRF such as food waste,

nappies, textiles and electrical equipment. There is an additional cost in having to deal with this contamination. It is estimated that in excess of 500,000 used nappies are placed in the recycling bins across Norfolk annually. The fortnightly twin bin collection system is still recognised as the current best solution for Norfolk.

### 3. **REVIEW OF THE EXISTING BOROUGH WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING SYSTEM**

In Norfolk the districts are the Waste Collection Authority and collect the residual refuse and recyclables. The residual waste is disposed of by Norfolk County Council as the Waste Disposal Authority. All the Norfolk Districts are in a Joint Venture with Norse Environmental Waste Services (NEWS) for the processing of the recyclables at their materials recycling facility (MRF) at Costessey in Norwich.

In respect of recycling, one of the Borough's and indeed the NWP's key projects is around dealing with contamination of recyclables. Currently the Borough has a contamination rate of around 20% (Norfolk average approximately 13%). The amount of contamination affects the overall gate fee the Council has to pay to NEWS to handle the materials at the Costessey MRF as there is an extra cost involved in processing and removing the non-target materials. Borough Council Officer's, in conjunction with GYB Services currently are carrying out targeted work to address the issue of contamination. This work will increase in intensity as the NWPs Anti Contamination Recycling Campaign gets underway shortly. The Borough's Action Plan to tackle contamination is attached as Appendix 1.

Officers are continuing to review the current waste arrangements and to look at ways of continual improvement particularly in capturing additional material that can be recycled. It is planned that work this year will concentrate on increasing the tonnages of green waste in particular. It is proposed to work more closely with social landlords including the Council's Community Housing Service and other registered social landlords; to look to capture more recycling from 'recycling on the go' (street bins that separate waste) and expansion of the 'bring banks' possibly covering the areas of textiles and waste electrical equipment.

The Council's current recycling rate stands at approximately 32% of the

total domestic waste collected. The Norfolk average is around 40%.

#### 4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Providing a domestic solid waste collection service costs all local authorities a significant amount of money, both District and County Councils. For the Borough, the total cost for the provision of the whole waste service for 2016/17 was approximately £2M.

To reduce the cost of disposing of residual waste, the County Council incentivises District Councils to promote and encourage recycling and therefore reducing the final amount of waste that needs to be disposed of. The incentive is a financial payback (called a recycling credit). The Borough also receives income from the garden waste service and collecting bulky items from residents. In 2016/17 this totalled £1.1M income for the Council. Thus the net cost to the Council for 2016/17 for the whole waste service was about £900K.

Insofar as reducing contamination within the collected recycled materials is concerned, it is estimated that for every 1% reduction in contamination the Borough Council should directly benefit by around £4K. In addition there are indirect benefits linked to the onward sale of the collected secondary materials.

The secondary materials market which is where the recycled materials recovered from the MRF are sold is extremely volatile and is affected by global demand for the materials. For example, in respect of the mixed paper line which earns the Joint Venture a good price, any nappies in the system that escape manual picking ends up mixed with this material. If these are discovered during quality checks the paper can be rejected by the purchaser meaning it has to be resold as a poorer quality commodity at a much lower price. Thus it is in everybody's interest to avoid contamination of the green bin.

#### 5. **CONCLUSIONS**

The collection of domestic waste remains one of the principal services for the Borough and indeed all Norfolk Councils. In conjunction with the Norfolk Waste Partnership the Council continues to look at ways to improve its recycling performance. The NWP have agreed the reduction in contamination and the investigation of other materials that could be

recycled are priority areas to address. Member's attention is drawn to the forthcoming County wide action against contamination which it is hoped will receive wide public promotion.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to note the information in this report.

<b>Area for consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	No
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Yes
Existing Council Policies:	Yes
Financial Implications:	Yes
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No
Risk Implications:	Yes
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	No
Crime & Disorder:	No
Every Child Matters:	No