

## SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Report of:** Portfolio Holder for Place and/or Executive Director - Place

**To:** Cabinet 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019

**(Author:** Charlotte Paine Environmental Services Manager)

**Subject** Recycling Review

**Purpose:** To review the recycling materials collection in a trial area of South Holland

### **Recommendation(s):**

- 1) That agreement be given to commence a one year trial of a two stream collection of recycling in the areas listed.
- 2) That agreement be given to issue section 46 notice of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to those in the trial area to define what can be placed in the waste receptacles.

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 South Holland District Council currently collect recycling in a green sack every week. The recycling is collected co-mingled with paper, card, plastic, metals and glass in the same green sack. For residents, this is a simple and effective collection method, their waste is collected each week and they don't have to sort any of their items.
- 1.2 Co-mingled collections are considered to provide a poor quality of material. In particular paper and card are often contaminated by being compacted with glass and with containers that still have food waste in them (tins and yogurt pots for example). The consequence of this is that the paper and card are no longer suitable for recycling. Paper and card that remains of a good quality have a value and can therefore generate a saving for our tax payers.
- 1.3 As part of the WRAP (leaders in helping organisations achieve greater resource efficiency) project undertaken on behalf of the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership (LWP), it has been suggested that a two-stream recycling collection would be the most effective and efficient way to address these issues and ensure the materials that are collected remain of a good quality and can therefore be recycled.
- 1.4 In response to the WRAP project, and in order to improve the recycling in Lincolnshire, the LWP has created a sub group to consider how a two stream collection could work in Lincolnshire and the possible benefits that can be achieved from changing recycling away from co-mingled.
- 1.5 Using benchmarking information, including the WRAP findings, the two stream method proposed means removing paper and card from the rest of the recycling materials to ensure the contamination opportunities are reduced and ensure good quality paper and card is available for recycling.

- 1.6 It is proposed that a trial of this two stream approach, across a selection of districts in Lincolnshire, would help to establish evidence and key learnings about whether this change in recycling collections will increase the quality of the paper and card collected and prove whether this approach should be rolled out across the County to improve recycling and reduce costs to the Lincolnshire tax payers. The trial is proposed to last for 1 year and is anticipated to start from September 2019 and SHDC are proposed to be one of the districts in the trial.
- 1.7 As part of the trial, SHDC collections would continue in a receptacle as close to our current method as possible, a blue plastic sack has been suggested. This allows for recycling to continue to be collected each week however, differing material will be collected alternate weeks (see table below). This would be a change for residents who would have to keep some material for a week due to the alternate collections of paper one week and the rest of the recycling the following week. As this material is required to be clean, there should be no issues with vermin or smell. There may be issues in some areas where storage of material is difficult, this will be considered as part of the initial project set up, through the communications and engagement strategy and throughout the trial.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Residual – Black Sack</b>	<b>Recycling – Green Sack (Plastic, Glass, Metal)</b>	<b>Paper &amp; Card – Blue Sack</b>
1	x	x	
2	x		x
3	x	x	
4	x		x

- 1.8 Collection of the paper and card in plastic sacks does provide some benefits and consequences. The plastic bags help to keep the material dry, which is important for the quality and recyclability of the paper and card. However, the proposed paper mill are unable to receive the material in the plastic sacks. It has been agreed that this receptacle can be trialled, but that the paper will need to be split from the bags prior to delivery to the mill. Therefore, during the trial the sacks will be tipped and split by hand. The trial will be an opportunity to consider this methodology and the viability of scaling this up to the whole district. Benchmarking shows that there are a number of councils that offer separate paper collections in sacks (often re-usable sacks), including Chelmsford, Blackpool, Cornwall and North Devon.
- 1.9 The proposed number of residents in the SHDC trial will be around 4,500. This is across 2 Monday routes, these include Donington and Pinchbeck. The routes have been chosen to provide a selection of rural and town collections in order to assess impacts across a range of residents. The postcode data will be utilised to find the most appropriate methods of contact for residents to increase engagement in the trial. A list of the postcodes for the areas that will be part of the trial are detailed in Appendix A.

## 2.0 **OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Commence a trial of two stream recycling collections across a small area in South Holland, working with other Lincolnshire Districts and the LWP, to establish the benefits and learnings of such a collection method including how to best consider a roll out for all of SHDC.

2.2 Do nothing, do not be part of the trial and do not test our methodology for collections prior to possible full County roll out.

### 3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 It is recommended that SHDC take the opportunity to be a part of the trial for two stream collections of recycling material. The trial enables SHDC to work closely with our partners in the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership to consider and establish an evidenced way forward for the recycling material in Lincolnshire.

3.2 By being part of the trial throughout its inception and delivery, and understanding the learnings of the trial, SHDC can help to shape it and ensure that the most appropriate methods are proposed going forward for our residents, based on the evidence gathered throughout the trial and through best practice.

3.3 The trial is a partnership of the Waste Collection (districts) and Waste Disposal (county) Authorities. It is an opportunity to ensure that we are all working together to establish the most practical, environmentally sustainable and economical way of delivering a two stream service that suits the needs of our residents. The trial is currently looking to be funded by the County Council as the waste disposal authority and therefore, SHDC are recommended to be part of the trial to establish how the findings can support our future delivery to residents.

### 4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 There are a number of reasons behind the proposal of this trial, as detailed earlier, it is established that co-mingled collections do not provide good quality paper and card for recycling. Therefore there is an environmental benefit from being part of the trial at a time where public opinion is pushing for everyone to do more to help the environment.

4.2 There are financial benefits to being part of the trial, for SHDC the trial will be funded by LCC as the financial benefits of clean, good quality paper and card are seen by the disposal authority. However, ultimately the financial benefits are to the Lincolnshire tax payer and therefore our residents.

4.3 The trial is looking to establish a clear communication, education and enforcement strategy for two stream collections, which is being created as part of a bigger picture to tackle the high levels of contamination seen in the recycling collections throughout Lincolnshire. Being part of the trial allows SHDC to help shape this and to be one of the districts leading the way on tackling the problem of contamination which is resulting in poor recycling materials being presented for processing at the Materials Recycling Facilities (MRF).

4.4 As part of the trial, there will be a rigorous sampling routine established which will create a baseline for current materials in all streams (paper and card, recycling and residual). This will enable the trial to be fully scrutinised to evidence whether it has been a success. It is anticipated that there will be positive impacts as a by-product of this trial. For example, it is hoped that some of the paper and card material that is currently placed in the residual (back sack) will now be placed in the blue sack to be recycled and that, as previously mentioned, recycling contamination is reduced to improve the quality of all recycling

material.

4.5 The anticipated outcomes of the trial include:

- Separate, clean fibre collected (paper and card) which has a better value
- Improvement in the quality of the remaining recycling materials
- Reduction in contamination in all waste streams
- Reduction in the amount of residual and non-target materials collected in recycling
- Identify the most appropriate methods of collection
- Validate the WRAP analysis
- Demonstrate new ways of working for new recycling contract (March 2020)

4.6 The above outcomes will be measured in a number of ways through engagement with residents but also in sampling of material before, during and after the trial to identify what impacts have been seen in volumes of material collected (as detailed above).

## 5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

### 5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 Paper and card that is separated at source (by the resident) is evidenced to be of a better quality than co-mingled, in terms of recycling potential. Therefore the trial is looking to collect better quality material and also looking to collect higher volumes of material. This can have a positive environmental impact where paper and card can be more effectively recycled.

5.1.2 The SHDC trial implements two stream collection without the need for an additional collection or vehicle, therefore we are not increasing the carbon footprint through collection vehicles.

### 5.2 **Constitutional & Legal**

5.2.1 There will be a requirement to issue a notice under section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to those residents in the trial area. This notice will require *'the occupier to place waste for collection in receptacles of a kind and nature specified'*. By issuing this, it is made clear to residents which colour sack to use for which waste and recycling material.

### 5.3 **Corporate Priorities**

5.3.1 This recommended option helps us to deliver our corporate plan objective to *'Work together with partners, businesses and local communities to re-establish the Pride in South Holland programme to improve the quality of public spaces to be cleaner, greener and safer'* and

*'Continue to ensure that our regulatory and statutory services remain fully compliant with all current and emerging legislation'* as we look to ensure a better quality of recycling material in line with the national government Waste and Resources Strategy.

#### **5.4 Financial**

5.4.1 The costs of the trial are currently being established, for SHDC the cost of the trial includes £4,000 for blue sacks, £2,500 for delivery of the sacks and £400 per fortnight to split the sacks. The project group are collating the prices for the communications and education support. It is proposed that the trial is funded by the County Council and will see no impact to SHDC other than officer time on the project team.

#### **5.5 Reputation**

5.5.1 It is expected that there would be a positive reputational impact for SHDC as we look to address quality and recyclability of materials and therefore support the environmental agenda.

#### **5.6 Risk Management**

5.6.1 The main risk that has been identified relates to the possible poor uptake and engagement and from residents in the trial area. This is mitigated with a clear understanding that a communications and engagement strategy will run alongside the project and will commence prior to the proposed start date of September and throughout the trial.

#### **5.7 Staffing**

5.7.1 There may be additional staffing requirements, likely to be agency filled, especially in regards to the delivery and splitting of sacks, however these are scoped in the plan and part of the proposed costings to be funded by LCC.

#### **5.8 Stakeholders / Constitution / Timescales**

5.8.1 A detailed and clear communication strategy will be created for the trial. This is being led by LCC and the project group who are working with other authorities who have implemented similar collection trials to establish the best communication messages based on experience and lessons learnt elsewhere. Communications are planned to commence in August and continue throughout the trial period. Alongside communication there will be education support and this is being worked on as part of the project group.

#### **6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 There are a limited number of areas directly affected by the trial, the full list of these areas is identified in appendix A.

#### **7.0 ACRONYMS**

7.1 SHDC – South Holland District Council

7.2 WRAP - Waste and Resources Action Programme

7.3 LWP – Lincolnshire Waste Partnership

7.4 LCC – Lincolnshire County Council

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Background papers:- None

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**Lead Contact Officer**

Name and Post: Charlotte Paine Environmental Services Manager  
Telephone Number  
Email: cpaine@sholland.gov.uk

**Key Decision:** Y

**Exempt Decision:** N

**This report refers to a Mandatory Service**

**Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix A Postcodes in Trial Area