

8. Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) Scrutiny Committee – Waste Review Board

Comments to Cabinet on the Waste Disposal Service savings and the public consultation on proposed changes to the Service

Background

8.1 The ETE Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 June 2017 established a Scrutiny Review Board to examine in detail the opportunities for savings and efficiencies in the Waste Contract as part of the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process. The Waste contract net budget is currently £25.927 million per annum, with an original savings target of £800,000 in 2018/19 for the Waste Disposal Service in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

8.2 The Review Board has considered evidence on the work that is underway to review the current Waste contract, and the opportunities for savings that this may produce. The Board supports the approach that has been adopted, and understands the need to examine other aspects of the Waste Disposal Service in order to achieve savings in the shorter term.

Summary Findings and Recommendations

Household Waste Recycling Site (HWRS) Service – Proposed introduction of charging for non-domestic waste

8.3 A third of local authorities currently charge for non-domestic waste. The Review Board found from the experience of other local authorities that the introduction of charging:

- a) Has not led to an overall increase in fly-tipping compared with national trends.
- b) Will lead to a drop in the volume of non-domestic waste delivered to the HWRS sites, which could be up to 75% depending on the level of charging. This will produce savings in the form of avoided costs for disposing of waste, in addition to an income from charges.

8.4 The Review Board examined the possible impact of a number of different levels of charge on waste volumes and levels of savings.

8.5 The Board recommends that:

- Based on the evidence, the charging level which is likely to achieve the savings target is considered for inclusion in the savings proposals, which it understands is likely to be in the region of £4.00 per bag of waste.
- If charging is introduced for non-domestic waste, the waste contractor should be approached to explore whether it would be feasible to introduce a chargeable service for commercial waste at HWRS sites for small to medium sized businesses.

8.6 The Review Board found that there was some uncertainty around the level of savings it will be possible to achieve from charging. Consequently, it may be necessary to consult on

other changes to the Waste Disposal Service in order to deliver the savings required by the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

HWRS Opening Hours

- The evidence suggests that further reductions in HWRS site opening hours would not achieve the level of savings necessary, and that limited HWRS site closures may need to be considered.

HWRS Site Closures

8.7 The Review Board examined evidence on the impact of limited site closures on the accessibility of the HWRS Service for residents.

- The Review Board has some concerns about the proposals for limited HWRS site closures but understands that, in the context of the need to make savings, they may be necessary.

Public Consultation

8.8 The Reviewed Board examined the options for public consultation on the potential changes to the Waste Disposal Service.

8.9 The Board recommends that:

- Both charging and limited site closure measures are included in the forthcoming consultation, rather than having to consult again separately on site closures should they be necessary.
- The Council consults on detailed proposals regarding charge levels and specific sites, if closures together with charging, are the only way to achieve the necessary levels of savings.

Conclusion

8.10 The Review Board has undertaken a considerable amount of work, which underpins the summary findings and recommendations. The Board will examine the proposals for the Waste Disposal Service in more detail once the public consultation has been completed, and will submit further comments to Cabinet in due course.

Councillor Richard Stogdon
Chair

Review Board Members:
Councillor Richard Stogdon (Chair)
Councillor Godfrey Daniel
Councillor Darren Grover
Councillor Barry Taylor

Review Board meeting dates:
12 October 2017
17 October 2017
2 November 2017
17 January 2018