

Appendix 1 - Call-in Request

The undersigned request a call-in of the decision by LM Claire Dowling to introduce an online booking system for ESCC's Household Waste and Recycling Centres, for the following reasons:

1. There has been no resolution of the digital divide EqlA, affecting 1 in 10 households, notably older residents and residents with additional learning and cognitive needs, with online booking planned to be 24/7, but telephone booking to only be 'office hours', Monday to Friday, excepting Bank Holidays. It is also likely that those requiring help to take items to the HWRC from carers, relatives and friends, due to lack of access to a private vehicle in their household – around 1 in 8 across the County -- may also struggle as friends or relatives would make the booking for the resident, but would find their postcodes and car registration will not reconcile. Both of these problems need addressing.
2. The business case for savings has not been adequately made. If savings of only £50K are expected after implementation of the scheme – but without having resolved the telephony EqlA, it seems likely savings will be lower than £50K. It is also not clear what the ongoing support for telephony might be after unification.
3. The in principle agreement between Districts, Boroughs and the County Council notes specifically: 'Decisions made by all sovereign bodies until vesting day will have the interests of future unitary council as an explicit consideration'. This consideration has not been made in this case and would appear to be an act of bad faith, given the likely impact of the proposed scheme on the collecting authorities both in the interim and at the point of unitarisation.
4. Evidence from Government shows that reported fly-tipping has increased nationally by approximately 6% overall:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fly-tipping-in-england/fly-tipping-statistics-for-england-2023-to-2024#total-number-of-fly-tipping-incidents-in-england>, and that while there has been a reduction in green waste tipping, there has been a significant increase in fly-tipping of small electrical goods and white goods, as well as construction materials.
5. Importantly, areas in Kent – cited in the LM meeting as an example of an area that has successfully implemented online booking for HWRCs – has reportedly seen an increase in organised crime involvement in fly-tipping, notably in areas of natural beauty, including SSSIs:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c75z09zxy09o>, with Kent County Council (not the collecting authority, of course) noting that fly-tipping has a serious negative impact on the county: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/rubbish-and-recycling/keep-kent-clean>.

6. West Sussex, which has also introduced online booking and was cited as a good example for East Sussex to follow appears to be fighting a rear-guard action, with an increase in fly-tipping requiring stronger collaborations with District and Borough Councils, the police and fire and rescue services, noting the costs of fly-tipping: <https://www.mrw.co.uk/news/west-sussex-backs-fly-tipping-action-to-cut-down-on-clear-up-costs-29-07-2024/>

Further investigation into the EqAI and future-partner impacts and follow-on costs of an online booking system for our HWRCs is needed before a decision is taken.

Cllr Julia Hilton

Cllr Stephen Shing

Cllr Brett Wright