

APPENDIX G

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 25 JANUARY 2011

Title:

FOOD WASTE COLLECTION IN WAVERLEY

**[Portfolio Holder: Councillor Bryn Morgan]
[Wards Affected: All]**

Summary and purpose:

To report back to Members on progress relating to the food waste collection service and the extension of this service to an additional 2,400 properties, and to provide a summary of collection tonnages, participation rates, operational issues and lessons learned.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The report addresses the Council's 'Environment' priority, specifically, the plan to contribute to tackling climate change by "working with partners to increase the recycling rate to 45% by April 2010 and to 55% by 2015".

Equality and Diversity Implications

This first phase of the food-waste collection service has been provided equally to all sectors of the community. Bespoke arrangements have been developed to serve houses in multiple occupation, and assisted collection arrangements made for the disabled and infirm as provided for in the core service.

Resource Value for Money Implications

Discussed within the initial proposal.

Legal Implications

The Council has no statutory duty to collect household food-waste separately and has no power to make a compulsory charge for such a service.

Background

1. At its meeting of 2 March 2010 the Executive considered a report presenting a proposal for the introduction of one food waste round, with priority to be focussed on properties where access for home composting and food waste digestion would be limited.

2. The collection of food waste from approximately 6,000 properties across Waverley commenced on Monday 14 June 2010, and due to available capacity on the round an additional 2,500 properties were added onto the scheme from Monday 15 November 2010.

Performance of the food waste service

3. The 2008 national WRAP trials reported an average participation rate for authorities that introduced food waste collections alongside Alternate Weekly Collection of 66%, and figures within Waverley seem to be closely reflecting this at present.
4. The participation in this scheme has increased week on week from an initial 54% participation to current levels that are consistently around 65% participation. Since the extension of the round, participation rates have remained around 65%.
5. Through the first 6,000 properties around 6.5 tonnes per week were being diverted from landfill. This is an increase of around 1 tonne per week from when the scheme commenced in June. The extension of the service saw these diversion rates rise to just over 8 tonnes per week. For a full breakdown of participation and yield please see Annexe 1.

Customer Feedback

6. Customer contacts have been monitored closely since the start of the scheme and it is apparent from this information that the level of enquiries has decreased significantly week on week, indicating that the scheme is becoming fully understood and embedded, and that few operational issues are arising.
7. The level of contact in the week before the start of the scheme in June was 84 customer enquiries, primarily from residents asking questions about how to line their caddies or asking when caddies would be delivered. During the week prior to the start of the round extension there were only 34 customer contacts in total, the majority of which were asking when the caddies would be delivered.
8. In the weeks after the scheme started in June 2010 the level of contact decreased to around 9 customer enquiries per week, primarily regarding issues such as missing containers, or missed collections; and in the weeks since the scheme started in November there has been an average of 10 calls per week in total. For full breakdown of call levels see Annexe 2.
9. In order to actively monitor the satisfaction of residents on the scheme, it is proposed that feedback forms will be sent to all those included on the initial round at the start of February 2011. This exercise is intended to identify how satisfied residents are with the service, and also to understand, if people are not participating in the scheme, why this is. It is proposed that the information gathered from this exercise will be used to help the team target communications with the aim of increasing participation.

Home Composting of Food Waste

10. At its meeting on 1 December 2009, the Executive made it clear that the provision of a food-waste collection service should be just one of a number of initiatives to remove food waste from the residual waste stream, and that to complement this initiative, further work was required to assist residents with minimisation and home-composting.
11. On 24 May 2010 a scheme was introduced to subsidise food waste digesters. There are currently two types of digester on offer; the Green Cone, which is solely used for food waste, and the Green Johanna, which is used for both food waste and garden waste. The units are currently being sold at a subsidised price of £20 and £30 respectively, including delivery, following a double-subsidy on the part of both Waverley and Surrey County Council. Waverley currently subsidises the Green Cones by £9.50 per unit, and the Green Johannas by £18.50 per unit.
12. Since the start of the promotion of food waste digesters in June 2010, 29 Green Cones (average of 5 per month) and 61 Green Johannas (average of 10 per month) have been sold, in comparison to an average of 2 Cones per month and 5 Johannas per month prior to the promotion. The peak of these sales was in the first 3 months after the publicity was carried out, and sales have now tailed off to a level similar to that seen before the promotion. Annexe 3 shows these statistics in graphic form. Within the current budget allocation of £7,500 there has so far been a total spend of £1,400. This means that there is sufficient budget remaining for approximately a further 400 more units to be subsidised. It is proposed that a further concerted promotion is undertaken in the early part of 2011 with the aim of increasing take-up once more.

Lessons learned from the implementation

13. After the implementation of the service was completed the Project Team met to discuss what lessons have been learned and what would be done differently if a future phase were to take place. It was felt that generally the project had been implemented smoothly. However, things to remember for the future are that there needs to be adequate time built into the Project Plan to carry out all property inspections prior to any publicity material being sent out, to ensure that Management Companies are clear about how the scheme would be implemented for their particular development.
14. Another point to consider if a wider implementation were to be agreed is that publicity is the aspect of the project that takes the majority of the time, and there needs to be enough allowance in the Project Plan for this to take place, and to allow a contingency if there are any delays.

Conclusion

15. The first phase of the food waste service commenced over 6 months ago with an extension to this service commencing in November. This scheme has become an integrated aspect of the waste collection service we provide to our residents. This has been shown by the increase in participation and yield of recycling through this scheme, and also by the reduction in customer contacts since the introduction of the scheme.
16. In the six-month period between June and November 2010, the scheme has diverted over 160 tonnes of food waste that would otherwise have been sent to landfill. In addition, 90 households have taken advantage of the council's offer of subsidised food waste digesters- and in so doing, are playing their part in reducing the volume of food waste being disposed of through traditional means.
17. The scheme has been a great success and the above figures suggest that, if an integrated borough-wide food waste collection service were to be implemented as part of a future waste and recycling service, the potential annual yield is likely to be over 2,500 tonnes, which is equivalent to a 7-10% increase in the Council's recycling rate.

Recommendation

It is recommended that

1. the team be congratulated on their excellent work so far; and
2. the Executive agree to extend the food waste round in the future, as and when resources become available.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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ANNEXE 1

Participation and Tonnages

Participation rate- percentage:

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Week 1	55%	62%	66%	63%	68%	62%
Week 2	56%	64%	66%	68%	68%	62%
Week 3	62%	65%	66%	65%	62%	62%
Week 4		65%	65%	66%	62%	66%
Week 5				58%		
Average	58%	64%	66%	64%	65%	63%

Yield- tonnes:

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Week 1	6.28	6.24	6.56	6.48	7.12	6.92
Week 2	5.5	6.68	6.38	7.08	6.26	5.5
Week 3	6.1	6.76	6.5	6.9	6.9	8.48
Week 4		6.62	6.9	7.06	6.9	8.16
Week 5				6.66		
Total	17.88	26.3	26.34	34.18	27.18	29.06

ANNEXE 2

Phone call log

	11-Jun	18-Jun	25-Jun		5-Nov	12-Nov	19-Nov	26-Nov	3-Dec
Have not received my caddies	19	11	2		2	18	4	3	1
Collection day enquiry	5	2	1		0	2	0	0	0
What goes into food waste caddies	3	4	0		0	1	1	0	0
My caddy has gone missing, what should I do?	0	0	0		0	1	0	1	3
Missed food waste collection	0	25	15		0	0	2	6	1
Why am I not on the food waste service yet?	4	2	1		0	1	0	0	0
Other	53	31	18		1	11	4	6	0
Week Total	84	75	37		3	34	11	16	5
Others (are included in above 'Others' total)									
Do not want service	4	2	0		0	3	0	0	0
Are we providing sacks?	0	0	0		0	0	0	3	0
How to line container?	17	10	5		0	4	2	0	0
Misreading letter	12	1	0		0	0	0	0	0
Container delivery queries	0	0	0		0	0	0	1	0
Not received any information, just boxes so far	0	0	0		0	1	0	2	0
Damage to caddy	0	0	0		0	3	0	0	0
Who'll clean the communal bins	8	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Positive comments	0	0	1		0	0	0	0	0
Have put containers out	4	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Where to dispose of food waste	1	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Which container to put out	1	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Exemptions	3	2	0		0	0	0	0	0
Flats query	0	6	2		0	0	2	0	0
Maggots	0	2	0		0	0	0	0	0
Progress chasing	0	6	2		0	0	0	0	0
What happens to it?	0	0	2		0	0	0	0	0
Sacks falling in	0	0	1		0	0	0	0	0
contamination	0	0	3		0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	3	1	2		1	0	0	0	0

ANNEXE 3

Graph showing month-by-month sales of food waste digesters

