

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

29 NOVEMBER 2016

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

RESIDUAL WASTE COLLECTION PUBLIC AWARENESS, INFORMATION & ENFORCEMENT PROPOSALS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To bring to the attention of Cabinet details of the proposed public awareness and information plans attached to the mobilisation of the Council's new waste services contract, commencing on the 1st April 2017, and proposals to engage additional resources in the short term to supplement existing staff numbers who provide contact centre services.
- 1.2 To set out for consideration by Cabinet proposals to promote compliance with the Council's new residual waste collection policy, alongside measures to improve the recycling performance at the Council's community recycling centres (CRC), and proposals to engage additional resources in the short term to supplement existing staff numbers who provide educational and enforcement support.
- 1.3 To seek Cabinet approval for the procurement and appointment of an education and enforcement partner to supplement the resources of the Council going forward.
- 1.4 To grant to the Corporate Director Communities authorisation to develop appropriate procedures and practices related to the management and administration of any agreed education and enforcement proposals.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report is prepared and takes into consideration the following Corporate Improvement Objectives as outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan:
 - Helping people to become more self-reliant. Individuals and families that will be more independent and less reliant on traditional Council services.
 - Smarter use of resources. A Council that has lean, robust processes.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Waste Collections and Household Waste Amenity Sites contract will come into operation from 1st April 2017 and will run for seven years up to the 31st March 2024.
- 3.2 As with the introduction of any large scale change in service provision, the introduction of the Council's new waste collections policy and the changes to the provision of the service introduced as a consequence of the new contract will need

to be conveyed to the public both in advance of the changes being introduced and during the period of contract mobilisation, to ensure that the public is kept informed of collection details and importantly the reasons for the changes being made.

- 3.3 The detailed information and advice provided to the public will be central to securing the efficient roll out of the new service and the success of the Council's policy to restrict residual waste presented at the kerbside to two bags per household per fortnight.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 While much of the detailed information can and will be developed by the Council, the Contractor will also have a significant role to play in supplying details of the service to be provided i.e. residual waste and recycling collection days and methodology. Procedures attached to service provision, such as the Council's policy on dispensations, will also need to be developed with the contractor, to ensure as seamless an introduction as possible of the service.

- 4.2 The following represents the main areas where the Council will seek to engage with the public:

- The Council's policy on the presentation of residual waste at the kerb side (two bag limit per fortnight) and in what circumstance dispensation from the two bag restriction may apply,
- the introduction of changes at the household waste recycling centres to focus their use on recycling,
- changes to collection days,
- changes to recycling collection containers and what should be placed in each receptacle,
- in what circumstances the public will be able to apply for assisted collections,
- how the new absorbent hygiene products collection service (nappy collection service) will operate (as set out in the Waste Services 15 March 2016 and the 1st November Waste Management Services Contract Award public reports to Cabinet)

- 4.3 To ensure that every householder across the County Borough receives information on the waste services contract, information will be developed and distributed via the following channels:

- The Council's web site, Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- Press releases and adverts using The Gazette, The Glamorgan Gem, Seaside News and Around Town
- Radio infomercials using Bridge FM
- Leaflets / Posters
- Road shows
- Internal promotion to staff through 'Bridgenders' e-mail
- Vehicle livery
- Engagement with schools and community groups
- Signage at CRCs

- 4.4 Based on the experience gained during the launch and mobilisation of the current Waste Services Contract in 2010, it is expected that the Council's contact centre will receive high levels of calls and requests for information from the public during the first six months of the new contract. To manage the public's expectation and to secure as far as is possible the smooth transition from existing, to the new collection arrangements, up to seven additional contact centre staff will be employed by the contact centre on a temporary basis to deal with this pressure. The resource required will be reviewed on an ongoing basis depending on the actual requirements that emerge.
- 4.5 Regrettably, alongside the Council's plans to engage with the public to improve recycling and to reduce the amount of waste which is sent to landfill, there will be some in our communities who will seek to continue with the outdated practice of disposing of all of their waste materials through the residual black bag waste stream. In such circumstances, the Council will look to engage with the householder to seek compliance with the Council's waste collection policy. This engagement may include but may not be limited to the following actions:
- Bags over and above the permitted quantity may be stickered and left by the contractor for householder to take back in.
 - The household may be visited by the Council's education and enforcement officers.
 - Bags may be opened by the Council's education and enforcement officers to establish where possible ownership of the refuse.
 - Enforcement action may be taken with a fine of £75 as permitted by legislation for infringement of these restrictions.
- 4.6 Reverting to the Council's enforcement powers will be viewed as a last resort but it will nevertheless be an important cornerstone of the Council's drive to improve its recycling performance, in order to meet stringent Welsh Government targets and avoid potentially significant fines, and to reduce the amounts of waste sent to landfill.
- 4.7 As a consequence of budget cuts over recent years, the Council does not currently have sufficient resources to effectively police the new waste restriction policy to ensure that those who are able to comply with it do so. In responding to this pressure the Council could:
- 4.7.1 Directly employ a small team of up to half a dozen staff on a fixed short term basis of up to twelve months to undertake the work involved with education and enforcement on an in-house basis.
- 4.7.2 Engage the services of an external enforcement company who can undertake the enforcement action and follow up any legal proceedings for non-payment of fixed penalty notices. Soft market testing in this area has indicated that companies are able to offer end-to-end management of enforcement activities within a framework set by the partner Authority. The range of services provided include uniformed enforcement officers with fully networked hand held electronic ticket machines capable of issuing and recording all of the details of the fixed penalty on the spot. The companies are also able to follow up on those ticketed and will where appropriate use their own internal legal support to prosecute offenders who do not pay their

finer. This removes a significant burden to the Council. The costs of such services are fully covered by the fines recovered by the enforcement officers, though unlike previous companies who operated in Wales the business model attached to the current companies are not predicated wholly on profit and maximising the generation of income from fines. Companies now operating in this area are generally seeking to be more forward looking and customer friendly in their approach, putting education and information high on their operational agenda

- 4.8 At this time a number of the Councils across Wales and several of Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) immediate neighbours including the Vale of Glamorgan, Swansea and RCT have sought to engage with the private sector to support their education and enforcement needs. Unlike previous operating models, which gave rise to some public concern about the practices deployed by the companies operating in this area, evidence suggests that the latest generation of companies providing this service have significantly improved and tailored their business models to better reflect the needs of the various Councils they are working with.
- 4.9 It is therefore recommended that Cabinet approve a procurement exercise to identify a suitable education and enforcement services partner, who will assist and work alongside the Council's existing teams and its new waste services contractor to help educate and where necessary enforce the Council's policy on limiting the number of bags presented at the kerb to two bags per household, per fortnight.
- 4.10 In addition to providing support in the waste services area, the proposed education and enforcement partner would also bring to bear additional resource to enforce incidents of fly tipping, littering and dog fouling. With significantly reduced staffing capacity within the Directorate such additional targeted support will be necessary to ensure effective compliance with the Council's waste policies.
- 4.11 Initially the procurement exercise would seek to identify a partner on a one-year trial basis followed by a 2 year contract with an option to extend this for up to a further two years on a year by year basis.
- 4.12 The principal attached to the information, awareness and enforcement proposals have been outlined for Cabinet to consider in the body of this report, there will inevitably be operational decisions and procedures, which will need to be developed to secure the effective roll out and implementation of these proposals. Cabinet are asked to delegate responsibility for developing these procedures to the Corporate Director - Communities. The types of decisions are limited to operational decisions and procedures, attached to providing education, information and enforcement.
- 4.13 On the basis that Cabinet delegates to the Corporate Director – Communities the tendering of a contract for an education and enforcement partner and to award a contract to the successful tenderer, as outlined in the report, the contractual terms of the contract are to be approved by the Corporate Director Communities in consultation with the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 The procurement of an external contract service provider for the provision of education and enforcement service will improve the Council's environmental performance protecting future generations. It will assist the Council in meeting the Welsh Government (WG) waste targets and avoid the imposition of fines which are currently set £200 per tonne for every tonne over and above the Welsh Government recycling target.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and no groups with protected characteristics identified by the Equalities legislation 2010 are considered to be adversely affected by the contents of this report. The Council offers an opportunity for an assisted collection for those residents less able to bring their waste to kerbside.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The appointment of an external education and enforcement partner will be self-funding. While the exact costs have not been finalised, the section 151 officer has in principle agreed additional funding related to public awareness, education officers and increased call centre capacity, which can be met from available corporate underspend in 2016-17. This will serve to mitigate against the risk of non-achievement of stringent WG targets for recycling and diversion from landfill of residual waste, with fines of £200 per tonne.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- (a) Note the contents of this report specifically, proposals to employ, education and engagement staff and additional call centre staff as presented in the body of the report.
 - (b) To approve the procurement and subsequent appointment of an education and enforcement partner on the basis set out in the report and delegate to the Corporate Director – Communities the tendering of the contract for an education and enforcement partner and the award of the contract to the successful tenderer, the contractual terms of the contract to be approved by the Corporate Director Communities in consultation with the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services.
 - (c) Delegated responsibility for developing information, education and enforcement procedures to the Corporate Director - Communities. The area of delegation is limited to operational matters and decisions.

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Background papers:

Cabinet Report Waste Services 15 March 2016
Public Cabinet Report Waste Management Services Contract Award 01 November 2016