

# **BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **REPORT TO CABINET**

**29 NOVEMBER 2016**

### **REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

#### **RESIDUAL WASTE COLLECTION DISPENSATIONS OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROPOSALS**

##### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To set out for consideration by Cabinet the findings of the recent public consultation on proposed dispensation from the Council's two bag residual waste restriction policy from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and approve the recommended dispensation for households with six or more inhabitants and also for households where a coal fire is the main heating source, for the collection of ash.
- 1.2 To grant to the Corporate Director Communities authorisation to develop appropriate procedures for the proper management and administration of any dispensation so approved.

##### **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 Councils 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. Council that has lean, robust processes.

##### **3.0 Background to Consultation**

- 3.1 Cabinet will recall at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016 approving proposals to enter into public consultation on possible dispensations to the two bag per fortnight restriction on the collection of residual household waste, from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.
- 3.2 The Waste Collections and Household Waste Amenity Sites contract is currently in the process of being re-procured and will operate from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.
- 3.3 At present all residual waste presented by householders is collected by the waste contractor. Cabinet will recall from the report dated 15 March 2016 that in order to meet the very stringent Welsh Government recycling targets changes to the collection arrangements will be required. Accordingly Cabinet approved the introduction of a two-bag restriction on residual waste presented at the kerbside for collection by householders.
- 3.4 During the previous public consultation undertaken over an eight-week period from the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 to the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016, the public questioned the

proposed two-bag per fortnight restriction on the presentation of residual waste at the kerbside. The questions specifically focused on areas the public felt dispensation from the restriction should be considered. To address these matters, Cabinet were asked to approve a further round of public consultation, the outcome of which would be reported to Cabinet for further consideration. This took place over an 8 week period from 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2016 to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016. The Refuse Collection: Additional allowance scheme 2017: Consultation Report results are attached for information as **Appendix 1**.

- 3.5 The survey was available to be completed online through a link on the consultation page of the Council's website or by visiting [www.bridgend.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/consultation). Paper copies of the consultation were also made available at local libraries and the Civic Offices, or alternatively, they could be sent directly to the residents upon request in either English or Welsh.
- 3.6 Details of the consultation were sent as part of a press release, emailed to relevant stakeholders including; Councillors, Town and Community Councils, members of the Local Service Board (LSB), neighbourhood networks, the Youth Service Cabinet (YSC), Bridgend Equality Forum (BEF), Bridgend Business Forum (BBF) and business directory, Bridgend First, Bridgend Employer Liaison Partnership database, Communities First database and local media outlets. Citizens' Panel members interested in receiving additional consultations from Bridgend County Borough Council were invited to complete the survey using a link provided.
- 3.7 The Council's corporate Facebook and Twitter accounts were used to promote the consultation throughout the live campaign period.
- 3.8 In total there were 588 responses received to the survey, the results can be considered robust and confidence in the outcome can be drawn from this number of respondents.

Response format	Total Survey Responses	
	No	%
Online survey responses	540	96.8
Emails	6	1.1
Paper survey responses	7	1.2
Telephone	5	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- 3.9 The survey included: -
- 540 responses to the consultation surveys received online – of the responses received there were 540 English online submissions and 0 Welsh versions completed.
  - During the consultation period the Council tweeted its 7,868 @BridgendCBC followers and posted to its 5,898 Facebook followers about the consultation on several occasions during the consultation period to help raise awareness.

- There were 6 responses received by email, 7 responses by post and 5 responses via telephone call.

3.10 The survey sought feedback from the public on two areas where dispensation from the waste restriction policy might be considered appropriate by Cabinet: -

**Proposal 1.** Households with a high number of occupants.

**Proposal 2.** Households disposing of ash from coal fires.

3.10.1 During the public consultation, undertaken between 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016, a number of householders raised questions on the disposal of pet waste. This matter had previously been highlighted in the Residual Waste Collection Dispensations Public Consultation Proposals report to Cabinet dated 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016, and in the report to Scrutiny Committee on the Waste Services Provision dated the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The reports noted that giving an extra bag to households with pets would result in 60% of the households in Bridgend not having to comply with the two-bag limit which in effect would render the restriction policy inoperable.

3.10.2 Allowing dispensation for pet owners to receive additional bags for the disposal of pet waste would add significant additional cost at a time when budgets are under increasing pressures and negatively impact on the achievability of the Welsh Government statutory recycling targets. For this reason it is not recommended to offer a dispensation on the waste restriction policy, to provide pet owners with additional bags to dispose of pet waste.

3.11 **Proposal 1:** - Households with a high number of occupants, this was divided into two questions: -

- Question one asked if residents supported the concept of allowing one additional bag per fortnight for households with six or seven residents.
- Question two asked if households with eight or more residents should be allowed an additional two bags of refuse per fortnight

Introducing an additional allowance for households with six to eight residents was rejected by 47.6 per cent of respondents and supported by 39.3 per cent. In all household sizes, disagreement was higher than agreement, the highest level of disagreement being three in five (61.3%) for households with five residents.

Those with a household size between six and seven were over twice as likely to support the proposal with 80.0 per cent supporting increasing the allowance.

The proposal for a further allowance for households with eight or more residents was rejected by 47.1 per cent of respondents and supported by 38.0 per cent.

Those who would benefit from the scheme supported the proposal with 70.0 per cent agreeing and 10.0 per cent disagreeing.

A summary of the information provided above is presented in the attached Refuse Collection: Additional allowance scheme 2017: Consultation Report (**Appendix 1**): Table 6: Survey respondents: proposal one.

### 3.12 **Proposal 2:** - Households disposing of ash from coal fires

This proposal would provide an additional bag for households using coal fires as a main source of heating

The proposal to introduce an additional one bag residual waste collection for households using coal fires, as a main source of heating was rated disagreeable by 48.8 per cent of respondents and supported by 40.4 per cent.

Further analysis found that residents were more likely to agree if they lived in a household alone, 38.8 per cent of sole residents supported the proposal and this slowly declined up to households with five residents where only 21.3% supported the introduction of the proposal.

A summary of the information provided above is presented in the attached Refuse Collection: Additional allowance scheme 2017: Consultation Report (**Appendix 1**): Table 7: Survey respondents: proposal two

- 3.13 During the public consultation exercise a number of consultees raised comments that were mirrored in previous consultations and included identifying a perceived risk of increased fly tipping to suggestions that consideration should be given to penalising non-recyclers.
- 3.14 The most referenced theme stated by respondents in the qualitative section was in respect of their concerns surrounding an increase in fly-tipping (14.7%). The majority of respondents referencing the hygiene waste collection service were also unaware of its introduction despite being included in the questionnaire. The third most referenced area was regarding the perceived difficulty for pet owners to meet the bag restriction without having a dispensation.
- 3.15 Examples of qualitative responses from respondents are presented below for information: -
- 3.15.1 Residents voting against the additional allowances referenced the council tax charges. *“So as a retired person are you suggesting that I should subsidise the cost of larger families’ rubbish. If we are paying the same council tax then we should all be eligible to put out the same number of rubbish black bags.”*
- 3.15.2 Other residents looked at the change in service holistically *“...as a household of 5 I currently recycle every item possible and use on average 4 bags per fortnight. Other household may have more than the 2 suggested bags, and this could result in an increase in fly tipping recycling needs to be easier and containers need to be bigger to help people reduce the amount of waste they are producing.”*

## **4.0 Current Situation/Proposal**

- 4.1 Whilst it is acknowledged that the overall majority of responses to Proposal One in the report were not in favour of the proposed dispensations, of the respondents that would qualify for the dispensations the vast majority (80%) supported the proposal.
- 4.2 However, members are asked to consider the primary purpose of the implementation of the residual waste restriction to a two sack system, namely to increase recycling.
- 4.3 It is envisaged that the proposed households if granted the dispensations being considered will still be subject to a restriction level that is proportional and encourages the increase in recycling that is needed.
- 4.4 In considering all of the options placed before Cabinet, it is therefore recommended that consideration is given by Cabinet to allowing dispensation from the Council's two bag residual waste restriction policy in the following circumstances: -
- 4.4.1 One additional bag per fortnight for properties with 6 or 7 residents.
  - 4.4.2 Two additional bags per fortnight for properties with 8 or more residents.
  - 4.4.3 One additional bag per fortnight for properties with coal fires as the primary source of heating for the collection of ash
- 4.5 The public will be able to register with the contractor to receive a dispensation and make use of the scheme. However it is vital to ensure that additional bags are only issued where there is a real need and are not used to dispose of recyclable material in the residual waste stream. Therefore, applications for dispensation will need to be vigorously and robustly checked. To support this approach it should be noted that recent independent research on an all Wales basis has revealed that approximately 50% of all 'black bag' waste presented at the kerbside could be recycled, made up of circa 25% food waste and 25% dry reyclate. This demonstrates that with more rigorous recycling the amount of residual waste can ordinarily be contained to the two bag per fortnight limit.
- 4.6 The final criteria applied to the dispensations policy will be established in conjunction with the new waste contractor, in advance of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 contract commencement date. However, the main points and principles would include, but not be limited to the following: -
- This service is for non-recyclable waste only
  - For those granted dispensation only non-recyclable waste is to be placed in any of the original 2 per week issued residual waste bags and the additional dispensation bag/s.
  - Eligible residents that are not recycling all readily recyclable material will be refused additional bags irrespective of household size / coal fires.
  - Those granted dispensation bags will have the facility withdrawn if found to be placing recyclable material into the residual waste bags.
  - Only one application per household will be accepted.

- An officer may contact the applicant for further information and recycling education.
- Residents applying for the dispensation will be expected to make full use of the recycling service to minimise the amount of residual waste they produce. Before being provided with additional bags, residents will be offered additional recycling containers.
- Additional bags are provided on a conditional basis, which will be reviewed periodically.
- Only the exact number of additional bags will be issued to cover the corresponding period.
- If circumstances have changed, the additional bags may be withdrawn.
- If the resident's circumstances change they are required to inform the council so that their needs can be reassessed.
- No replacement bags will be issued during the period covered by the application for damaged / lost bags.
- Re-application will have to be made after a 12-month period.
- Bags placed for collection may be subject to periodic splitting and sorting and checked for compliance.
- The Council reserves the right to amend or withdraw entitlement at any point. Changes will be notified in writing prior to coming into effect.
- Exemptions are granted at the sole and absolute discretion of the Council.

4.7 As part of the Council's on-going commitment to the two bag restriction the following on-going checks may be undertaken to ensure that the dispensations policy is being adhered to by the householder: -

- A waste audit to ensure that the household is recycling as much as possible.
- Checks to ensure that the information is still relevant.
- A check on the names listed permanently residing at the property based on information publicly available or which the Council is entitled to use for this purpose under the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

4.8 The following illustrate the type of checks that will be applied to householders applying for dispensation from the Council's two bag restriction, where their main source of heating or hot water is from burning coal: -

- An officer may contact the applicant to arrange a site visit for further information and to check on use of coal fire and to confirm as the only source of heating in the household.
- The Criteria set out above in 4.3 for household numbers may also apply.

4.9 Members will recall the 15th March 2016 Cabinet report Waste Services Provision Minute No 867 resolution No: 6:

"That Cabinet: approved the option of introducing an Absorbent Hygienic Products collection service to coincide with a restriction on the number of bags that are collected, this is intended to support families and residents who use Absorbent Hygiene Products". This is now included in the new waste contract.

4.10 Where a household requires and applies for the new Absorbent Hygiene Products service the information the householder will be expected to provide will be developed in conjunction with the Council's new waste services contractor.

4.10.1 The Criteria set out above in 4.3 for household numbers may also apply.

#### **5.0. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.**

5.1 There are no effects on the Policy Framework and Procedures Rules.

#### **6.0. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out in conjunction with consultation with the public and is attached

#### **7.0. Financial Implications**

7.1 As part of the procurement process, tenderers were asked to provide a provisional unit price for co-collecting additional Residual Waste from households with dispensation. An estimate of the number of households eligible and subsequently taking up the proposed dispensation policy for Cabinet will be included in the growth bid that will be submitted as part of the budget setting process for 2017/18 to secure additional resource to enable BCBC to provide the dispensation policy going forward.

7.2 The estimated annual cost of implementing the dispensation policy is £35,000.

#### **8.0. Recommendation**

8.1 Cabinet is asked to approve dispensation from the Council's policy for restricting household residual waste collections to two bags per fortnight from 1st April 2017 in the circumstances detailed below: -

8.1.1 One additional bag per fortnight for properties with 6 or 7 residents

8.1.2 Two additional bags per fortnight for properties with 8 or more residents

8.1.3 One additional bag per fortnight for properties where the main heating source is a coal fire, for the collection of ash

8.2 To delegate to the Corporate Director - Communities the authority to liaise with the new collection contractor and finalise the dispensation criteria policy as generally accords with the principles outlined in this report.

**Mark Shephard**  
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**November 2016**

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**Background Documents:**

Cabinet Report of the 15th March 2016 Waste Services Provision

Refuse collection – Additional allowance scheme 2017

Cabinet Report 26 July 2016 – Residual Waste Collection Dispensations Public Consultation  
Proposals