

Report to the Cabinet



Report reference: C-025-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Environment

Subject: Review of Recycling Bring Schemes (Recycling Banks)

Responsible Officer: Qasim Durrani (01992 564055)

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That in view of the success of the kerbside recycling scheme and the costs of bank maintenance, collection and processing, all bring schemes relating to the collection of cans, aerosols, and plastics be discontinued; and

(2) That, subject to recommendation (1) above, tenders be sought for the provision of bring schemes for the collection of paper, textile, glass and tetrapacks (cartons) with only those sites which generate a surplus for the Council being retained and with the responsibility for the acquisition and maintenance of bring banks resting with the bring bank provider.

Executive Summary:

The Council has a total of 23 recycling bring schemes (also called bring banks) across the District. These schemes have been introduced over a number of years when only a limited kerbside recycling collection service was offered to residents.

The Council now provides a comprehensive kerbside recycling collection service. All of the materials accepted at the recycling bring schemes are now collected directly from residents' properties. Residents can also dispose of all normal recyclables and heavy or bulky objects such as metal or large electrical items via the Council's chargeable bulky waste collection service or at County Council Household Waste Recycling Centres. Many retailers will also recycle old electrical equipment when new goods are purchased.

It is therefore not surprising that the usage of some of the bring schemes is in decline. The need to upgrade and modernise the recycling bring schemes offers an opportunity to review the viability of these sites. This report therefore reviews all the sites and suggests that only those which generate net income for the council, either directly or through recycling credit, should be retained. Furthermore, given the investment that would be required to re-provide the containers at some of these sites, it is suggested that the Council transfers responsibility for the containers to the recycling processors through a tendering exercise.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure that only recycling bring schemes which generate income for the Council are retained and that responsibility for acquisition and future maintenance are transferred to the recycling processor(s).

Other Options for Action:

The alternatives are:

- continue as present incurring expenditure of between £30,000 and £50,000 for the upgrading of facilities;
- cease all bring schemes irrespective of viability on the basis that they contribute only minimally to the Council's overall recycling performance. This would also result in some well used sites becoming unavailable for residents as well as foregoing some income (c.£38,000 per annum)

Report:

1. Since the last change to the Council's kerbside recycling arrangements, the range of materials collected directly from residents' homes now includes paper, card, glass, plastic bottles, food containers, tins and aerosol cans and (on appointment) textiles. This is of course in addition to garden and kitchen waste collection. This has resulted in the use of the Council's bring schemes (recycling banks) diminishing.

2. The amount of recycling material collected varies considerably depending on the location of the scheme. Given that the overall amount of recyclable materials collected within the district remains around the same, it could be argued that residents are preferring to use the more convenient kerbside collections than make journeys to the Council's bring schemes, even as part of other visits e.g. to supermarkets. Details of the Council's sites and materials collected are set out as an appendix to this report.

3. The Council is not charged for collection at the eighteen textile and twelve paper locations where they are collected as these materials have a relatively high resale value. Instead, the collection costs are absorbed by the contractor who then pays the Council an amount per tonne. The level of income received is dependent on the market value of the recyclables. The contractor provides the containers for all of the textile and paper collection schemes and carries out all the statutory safety checks and inspections.

4. The situation with the other materials is different in that collection costs exceed the value of the materials collected. With the exception of glass, other materials currently generate a net cost to the Council even after taking recycling credit into account. Whilst glass does cost the Council money to collect, because of its weight the recycling credit received from the County Council results in a net benefit to the Council. The table in the resources section of this report sets out the relevant detail.

5. Bring schemes make only a modest contribution to the Council's overall recycling performance. Glass, cans and plastics make up around 0.7% of the total, and paper and textiles around 0.44% to make a total of around 1.44% of the Council's recycling performance for 2010/11 of just over 59%. However, they do generate an overall surplus to the Council of around £38,000 per annum, although this very much depends upon usage and the value of the material collected at any given point in time, and commodity prices do vary considerably over time.

6. The majority of the recycling banks owned by the Council are now very old and are at the end of their useful lives. If they are to continue to be used then they must be either replaced or completely refurbished at significant expenditure. As an owner of recycling banks, the Council is responsible for their safe operation including their lifting equipment. In addition there are statutory inspections and checks that the Council has to carry out. This is an onerous responsibility which must be taken seriously due to the harm that could be caused if a recycling bank were to fall whilst being lifted and emptied. As the paper and textile banks are provided by the contractor these responsibilities are covered by them as part of the service provision.

7. Given the above usage and the need for expenditure on the Council owned banks, the following course of action is suggested:

- (a) in view of the success of the kerbside recycling scheme and the costs of collection and processing, all bring schemes relating to the collection of cans, aerosols, and plastics be discontinued (**Recommendation 1**);
- (b) tenders be sought for the provision of bring schemes for the collection of paper, textiles, and glass only (**Recommendation 2**); and
- (c) the responsibility for the acquisition and maintenance of bring banks be transferred to the bring bank provider(s) through the tender process (**Recommendation 2**).

8. Once tenders are received an analysis will be undertaken to determine which sites remain financially viable for the Council and only those which generate income either direct or through the receipt of recycling credit will be recommended for retention.

Resource Implications:

At the present time only paper and textiles generate surplus income for the Council direct (i.e. without factoring in recycling credit). All other materials generate a loss although at some sites the tonnages of glass are such that when recycling credit is factored in, a surplus is generated. Tetrapacks banks are collected free of charge generate very low tonnages from which the Council receives a very slight gain through recycling credit payments. . The table below, which excludes tetrapacks, sets out the data for 2010/11:

Material	Tonnage collected	Cost of collection	Income from resale	Recycling credit income	Total surplus or deficit
Aluminium	2.88	£1,008		£155	-£853
Steel	12.85	£4,498		£693	-£3,805
Glass	327.36	£3,261		£17,648	£14,387
Plastic	10.21	£4,596		£550	-£4,046
Paper	154.46		£695	£8,327	£9,022
Textiles	65.39		£19,618	£3,525	£23,143
Net income					£37,848.00

If the suggestion of only collecting those materials which provide a surplus is accepted, total income to the Council, based upon 2010/11 collection costs and recycling credit levels, would be £46,552, an increase of around £8,700 per annum.

The recommendation is that all banks should be provided and maintained by contractors. The costs of this are reflected in the amounts per tonne received by the Council. If the Council wishes to retain any of its current banks then, due to their condition, a significant capital investment (c. £30,000) will be required or they will need to be rented or leased. Both these options will impact upon the revenue budget.

Legal and Governance Implications:

A tendering exercise for the management of the bring schemes was undertaken during 2010, but due to the need for wider consideration of the schemes and a rapidly changing market place, the tender outcomes were not taken before Cabinet and the outcomes are no longer valid. A new tender exercise is recommended.

The Council is not obliged to provide bring schemes as part of its overall waste management responsibilities.

Any changes in the bring schemes will require a modification to the service plan which forms part of the Essex Waste Inter Authority Agreement. This will trigger an individual review so as to ensure that any action by this Council does not adversely impact upon the County (as the waste disposal authority) and other districts/boroughs (as waste collection authorities).

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Although only making a modest contribution to the Council's overall recycling performance, the bring schemes do provide a useful service in enabling residents to recycle materials when, for example, they have gathered a lot of material but the next collection is some time away. That said, there are additionally a number of recycling centres operated directly by supermarket chains and materials can also be recycled at the County's Household Waste Recycling Centres.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

Essex Waste Inter Authority Agreement.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There are no fundamental risks associated with the recommendations. Removing the responsibility for the maintenance and checking of bring banks will reduce the current risks to the Council of an incident involving an old and/or poorly maintained bank.

Equality and Diversity

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? Yes

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A.

Appendix 1 – Details of sites and materials collected

C = Banks provided & maintained by contractor

EF = Banks provided & maintained by EFDC

	Town	Location	Material collected					
			Glass	Cans & Aerosols	News & Pamphlets	Textiles	Plastics	Cartons
1.	Buckhurst Hill	Roding Valley Station	C			C		
2.	Buckhurst Hill	Queens Road (station) car park	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
3.	Chigwell	Limes Avenue shops	EF	EF		C	EF	
4.	Chigwell	Roding Lane (opp. David Lloyd)	C			C		
5.	Daws Hill	Gilwell Park	EF	EF				
6.	Debden	Service Road adj. to College	C	EF		C	EF	
7.	Epping	Cottis Lane car park	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
8.	Loughton	Oakwood Hill	C			C		
9.	Loughton	Plume of Feathers PH	C	EF		C	EF	
10.	Loughton	Sainsbury's supermarket	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
11.	Loughton	Traps Hill car park	C	EF	C	C	EF	
12.	Loughton	Loughton Way shops	C			C		
13.	Nazeing	LV car park, Dobbs Weir Road	EF	EF				
14.	North Weald	Hurricane Way	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
15.	Ongar	Short stay car park	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
16.	Roydon	Beaumont Drive car park	EF	EF	C	C		
17.	Theydon bois	Station Approach	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
18.	Thornwood	Village Hall	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
19.	Waltham Abbey	Hill House shops, Ninefields	C					
20.	Waltham Abbey	Quaker Lane car park	EF	EF	C	C		
21.	Waltham Abbey	Waltham Abbey swimming pool	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
22.	Waltham Abbey	Tesco supermarket	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
23.	Willingale	Village Hall	C			C		