

**Forest Heath District Council
St Edmundsbury Borough Council**

**THE WEST SUFFOLK
WASTE AND STREET
SCENE SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

15 JANUARY 2010

REPORT NO

A433

**Report of the Strategic Director (Services) (FHDC)
and the Corporate Director (Economy & Environment)
(SEBC)**

IMPROVED EFFICIENCY IN BULK REFUSE COLLECTIONS - UPDATE

Synopsis:

This report is to provide an update to Members on the recent trial aimed at improving efficiency across the Partnership in respect of bulk refuse collections. It also recommends changing to a more consistent arrangement of charges administered by each Council for the collection of bulk refuse and hazardous household waste.

Commentary:

Bulk Refuse Collections

1. Members will recall that at the meeting of 23 October 2009 Officers advised that a Project Team had been established to review potential areas of further joint working to demonstrate and deliver quick wins, resolve specific operational problems/constraints and improve service efficiency.
2. Members were further advised that bulk refuse collections had been identified as a potential efficiency opportunity and a three month trial had been started with the aim of reducing personnel and vehicles used for bulk waste collection and bin deliveries. In addition, a consistent approach to collections over the Christmas period to free up capacity for other duties would be adopted.
3. It was also advised that on completion of the trial the opportunity for a joint policy covering collection standards and a revised pricing strategy would be pursued.

4. The trial outlined at the previous Joint Committee meeting on the 23 October 2009 involved reducing the total number of vehicles utilised by the 2 Councils for bulky collections from 4 to 2 (1 at each Council). It also involved reducing the number of personnel engaged on this task from 6 to 4 (2 at each Council).
5. Over the 3 month period the trial has proved successful proving that Forest Heath can use one vehicle with two operatives (reduced to one where only bin deliveries are taking place) and St Edmundsbury can use just one vehicle and two operatives.
6. Bulk collections were also stopped between 22 December 2009 and 5 January 2010 without detriment to the service.
7. Whilst we are not yet in a position to develop a joint policy on bulk refuse collections currently it is considered an appropriate time to adopt a revised pricing policy across the two authorities.
8. At present the two authorities have slightly different pricing policies as shown in the table below:-

Service	FHDC	SEBC
Bulky Refuse Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £20.84 for up to 5 items; • Free collections for those residents in receipt of benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £23.00 for up to 5 items; • £3.00 for each additional item up to a maximum of 10 items; • 50% discount for those residents in receipt of benefit.

9. Demand for the bulky refuse collection service in 2008/2009 was as follows:-

Service	FHDC	SEBC
Bulky Refuse Collection	1,437 jobs of which 888 (62%) are discounted 100% for benefits claimants	1,757 jobs of which 469 (27%) are discounted 50% for benefits claimants

10. It is proposed that each authority adopts the following pricing policy for 2010/2011 which will ensure a consistent approach and a more realistic cost recovery. The increase in charges may also encourage those producing the waste to consider and pursue alternative opportunities such as reuse, resale or to take advantage of the collection services of retailers if replacement white goods are being purchased.

Service	FHDC/SEBC
Bulky Refuse Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £25.00 for up to 5 items; • £3.00 for each additional item up to a maximum of 10 items; • 50% discount for those residents in receipt of benefits.

Hazardous Household Waste Collections

11. Clearly there is a need for all charges for services to be reviewed through the Partnership, but at this stage there are a number of variations which will require some review by the Project Team before presentation to Members.
12. However, Suffolk County Council have recently advised that following a new hazardous waste contract Suffolk authorities will now be charged £32 (previously £30) for each hazardous waste collection from individual residents. There will continue to be an option for each authority to carry out its own collections and store within a secure licensed store whilst awaiting collection from the contractor for which Suffolk County Council will make a charge.
13. At present Forest Heath does not recharge residents for arranging collections through the Suffolk County Council contractor and have not had the facility to store any household hazardous waste collected. St Edmundsbury currently operate a hazardous waste collection service for which a charge is made dependant on quantities collected and this varies from £15 - £30.
14. It is proposed that the option of Forest Heath collecting directly from residents be explored with a view to the waste being stored at the St Edmundsbury licensed store pending collection by the contractor. Should this option be viable Forest Heath would make a collection charge in line with the St Edmundsbury current charging policy for hazardous waste. Should this not be viable then it is proposed that where collections are arranged through Suffolk County Council the full costs be recharged to the resident.
15. The proposed pricing policy for household hazardous waste is outlined in the table below:

Service	FHDC/SEBC
Household Hazardous Waste	Where collected directly by FHDC/SEBC – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £15 – 1 - 10 items• £25 - 11 – 25 items• £30 – 26 – 40 items Where collected by Suffolk County Council Contractor - £32 per collection

Finance/Budget/Resource Implications

16. Whilst increasing the price for chargeable waste collection services should increase income there is a risk of reduced take up, so any potential increased income may not occur. However current income is unlikely to cover the cost of the service and therefore a balance has to be struck between the provision of a valuable service to residents and the need to operate services within existing financial restraints.

Environmental Impact and Sustainability

17. The removal of free bulky refuse and hazardous waste collections supports the principle of 'polluter pays' and ensures that individuals take responsibility for the management of their waste.

Policy Compliance/Power

18. The removal of free bulky collections within Forest Heath would require a change of Council policy, but this is within the authority of the Council. The revised policy is consistent with the National Waste Strategy and the Suffolk Waste Partnership Policy Statement on Bulky Waste, which supports the delivery of Suffolk's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2003 – 2020.

Performance Management Implications

19. There are no performance management issues.

Legal Implications

20. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, local authorities have a duty to collect household waste presented to them. This includes certain 'hazardous' wastes, which due to their nature, are unable to be placed in a wheeled bin, such as paints, pesticides etc. and similarly bulky items. For these wastes, alternative collection arrangements are required but Councils can charge residents directly for the service.

Human Rights Act and Diversity Implications

21. There are no human rights and diversity implications as all residents will be offered the same service, albeit with some reduction in charge for areas directly within the Councils' control.

Crosscutting Implications

22. It is the duty of Suffolk County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority, to arrange for the disposal of household waste. They currently contract the collection and disposal of household hazardous waste on behalf of the Suffolk Waste Partnership.

Risk Assessment

23. There is a balance to be struck between setting reasonable charges to encourage responsible disposal of household waste against perceived unreasonable charges that may increase the risk of fly tipping or misuse of the wheeled bin service. Based on information from other local authorities the proposals within this report are unlikely to lead to increased fly tipping or misuse of the wheeled bin service.

Council Priorities

24. There will be contributions as follows:-

Forest Heath

- (i) Community engagement and communication; and
- (ii) Street scene and environment.

St Edmundsbury

- (i) Raise standards and corporate efficiency; and
- (ii) Secure a sustainable and attractive environment.

Recommendation:

25. **Members are requested to:-**

- (1) note progress on the bulky refuse collection trial, and**
- (2) recommend approval of the revised pricing policy for bulky refuse and household hazardous waste collections**

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Nigel McCurdy / Sandra Pell
Strategic Director (Services) / Corporate Director (Environment)
15 January 2010

CONTACT OFFICERS

Keith Marley