

Portfolio Holders

Title of Report:	Single Council Implementation – Cessation of batteries collection scheme	
Report No:	EXC/SA/19/011	
Report to / date of decision:	Portfolio Holders' Decision	12 February 2019
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Purpose of report:	As part of single council preparations and the harmonisation of services in Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury, a West Suffolk approach to the kerbside collection of post consumer batteries is required. At present the kerbside collection of batteries is only available to residents of St Edmundsbury.	
Recommendations:	<p>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that:</p> <p>(1) The FHDC and SEBC Portfolio Holders for Operations approve the proposal to cease the collection of batteries in the predecessor St Edmundsbury area, as set out in paragraph 2.1.4 of Report No: EXC/SA/19/011; and</p> <p>(2) run a communications campaign to improve the use of other battery recycling facilities in West Suffolk, as set out in paragraph 3.2 of Report No: EXC/SA/19/011.</p>	

Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>		<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed.</i>			
Consultation:		•	
Alternative option(s):		•	
Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Residents are unhappy about the cessation of the service.	Low	There is limited use of the current service. Availability of alternative retailer take-back points is in place.	Low
Increase in cost if the current scheme is expanded.	High	None	High
Change in government policy	Medium	The waste and resources strategy for England suggests a government consultation will take place by the end of 2020	Medium
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards in St Edmundsbury	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		N/A	
Documents attached:		None	

1. Background to current collection scheme

1.1 Background to implementation

- 1.1.1 Prior to the introduction of the producer responsibility scheme for waste batteries, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) worked as part of a European project to improve battery recycling rates. In 2007, funding was allocated to St Edmundsbury Borough Council to establish the first and only European kerbside collection of batteries on a trial basis.
- 1.1.2 The scheme was rolled out to all households within the borough in the form of two kerbside collection trials. The majority of households received an information leaflet, collection bags and a hook to attach the bags to the handle of the blue bin. The second trial area delivered the same information and collection bags, however residents were asked to put bagged batteries on the top of the recycling bin lid i.e. no hook was supplied.

1.2 Current collection scheme

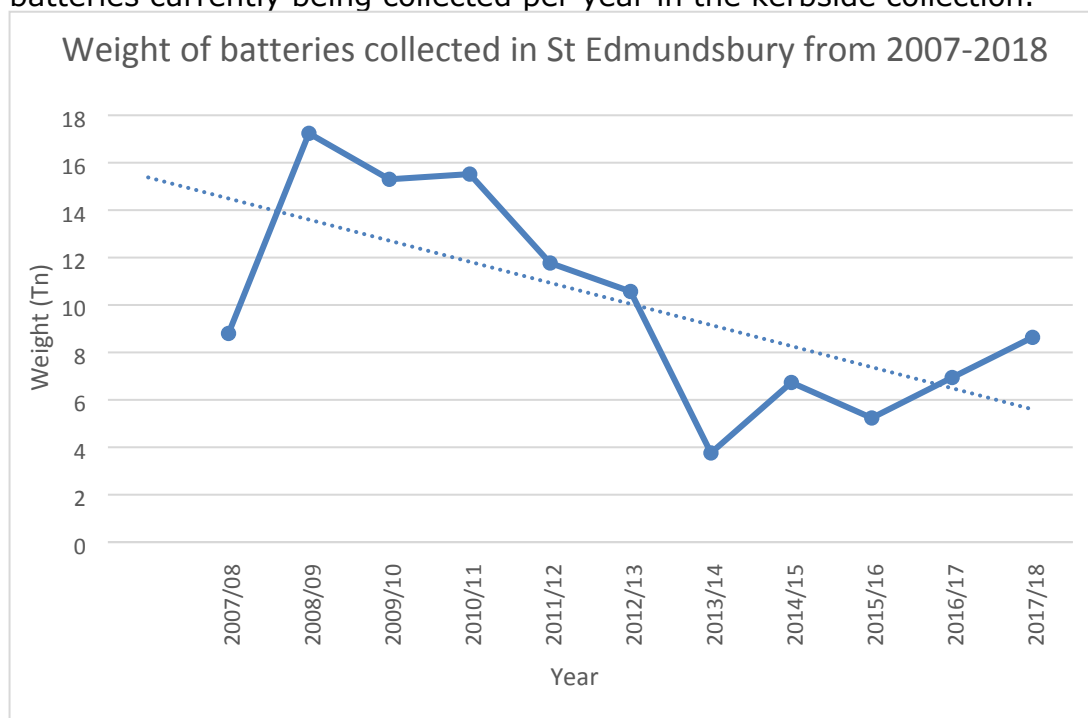
- 1.2.1 Batteries continue to be collected in St Edmundsbury and hooks are attached to recycling bins delivered to new houses within the borough. Batteries collected are initially placed into canisters attached to the side of the refuse freighters before being brought back to the respective depots where they were stored in sealed containers. They are then removed by contractors for onward sorting and recycling. There is no cost for this collection service as it is provided by the same contractor who removes electrical goods through the Waste Electrical Electronic Equipment (WEEE) compliance scheme.
- 1.2.2 Since the scheme was introduced, data from the European trial areas was used to inform the introduction of the producer responsibility regulations which were brought into law in 2009. These regulations place responsibility on all retailers selling more than 32kg of batteries per year to promote and provide in store recycling facilities. 32kg per year is approximately equivalent to selling one packet of 4AA batteries per day.
- 1.2.3 In real terms this has resulted in all supermarkets (Asda, Aldi, Sainsbury's, Tesco including express stores, Waitrose) and many other stores (e.g. Boots, Superdrug, Rymans, Hughes, Homebase, B&Q etc.) providing instore take-back.
- 1.2.4 Since the collection scheme's inception, the amount of batteries collected has reduced. This is to be expected, due to the introduction of the retailer take-back scheme and limited funding for further communications. However, the scheme has been continued in St Edmundsbury as all initial set up costs were funded as part of the trial and subsequent costs for processing batteries are covered by the producer compliance schemes. The scheme has not however been rolled-out in Forest Heath.

- 1.2.5 The latest compositional analysis of kerbside residual waste showed Forest Heath to have the largest amount of batteries within the residual waste stream in Suffolk, so clearly there is room to improve communications and performance here.

Annual tonnes of batteries per district estimated in residual waste, as indicated in the 2016 residual waste compositional analysis.

	Babergh	Mid Suffolk	Forest Heath	Ipswich	St. Eds	Suffolk Coastal	Waveney
Tonnes	13.3	12.9	23.5	5.7	20.6	7.2	21.2

- 1.2.6 Performance in St Edmundsbury is not dissimilar, with only 8 tonnes of batteries currently being collected per year in the kerbside collection.



- 1.2.7 Initial data provided by collection crews using the in cab reporting system, Bartec, shows that there are approximately 500 households per week currently using the scheme.

2. Options for consideration

- 2.1.1 Three options have been considered in order to harmonise the policy prior to the introduction of Single Council.
- 2.1.2 Do nothing: continue to provide the service in the St Edmundsbury area only. There would be no cost to this option, however residents would not

receive a consistent service across West Suffolk. Without the boundary between St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath in place, residents and front line staff would not have a clear method of identifying if an area was included on the scheme or not.

- 2.1.3 Introduce the scheme to the Forest Heath area: there would be considerable staff and cost implications to this approach. Estimates based on agency staff delivering and attaching the hooks to each eligible household, including an information pack, are in the region of £45,000.
- 2.1.4 Cease the scheme in St Edmundsbury and promote the producer take-back schemes: There would be minimal financial implications of this approach, and due to the current low take-up of this service, this would not be a difficult message to communicate in a targeted fashion. The number of accessible battery drop-off points available makes this the most sensible option.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The recommendation is that the kerbside collection service is stopped in St Edmundsbury and further work is undertaken to promote battery recycling through the network of drop-off points established as part of the producer compliance schemes.

Communications Plan

- 3.2 Given the low numbers of households using the service, a targeted approach to communicating the cessation of the scheme would be most effective. This would be carried out by leaving an information leaflet about alternative drop-off points with the households using the scheme following their final collection. This will follow the same format as the discontinuation of the textile recycling scheme.

Collections

- 3.3 Promotion of battery recycling points will be undertaken as part of wider recycling messaging undertaken by the Suffolk Waste Partnership and through seasonal communications such as the Easter and Christmas collection calendars. More information signposting residents to local battery drop-off points will be developed for the new West Suffolk website.

NOTE:

In December 2018, DEFRA published a waste and resources strategy for England, setting out the goal of maximising the value of the resources we use, minimising the waste we create, cutting emissions and helping create a cleaner, greener, healthier planet.

The strategy recognises that further work is required to reduce the disposal of portable batteries in residual waste and the government intend to review the current system to target higher recycling rates for non-lead-acid portable batteries. They intend to consult by the end of 2020 on changes to the batteries regulations and this may involve an

expansion of collection points and greater consumer awareness of how to recycle their batteries. This may, for example, include using Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) fees to cover the costs of local and national communications campaigns, or new mandatory labelling requirements. They will also look to ensure that the financial responsibilities placed on battery producers properly reflect treatment costs.