

## **CARRY FORWARD FORM (2016/17 into 2017/18) – OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE FOR DEPOT EXTENSION AND ASSOCIATED IMPROVEMENTS TO LOCAL AREA**

### **Cowley Marsh Depot Extension**

Direct Services have currently submitted a planning application to extend the depot, the purpose of this note is to explain why this is needed.

The Marsh Road Depot is the operational hub for Recycling and Refuse, Streetscene, Highways and Engineering, and Motor Transport, as well as being the central fuelling point for all Oxford City Council vehicles. Direct Services needs further space for the services provided from Marsh Road, particularly regarding Recycling and the need to be “Emergency Response Ready”. The need for more space has been caused by the following:-

#### **Increased pressure from Recycling activities**

- Introduction of food waste collections to flats brings 2 new RCVs (overnight parking space) and additional bin storage need.
- The success of Commercial Waste operations has resulted in 2 additional RCV's to meet demand.
- Increased green recycling from the garden waste, brown bin service brings additional bin storage need.
- Increase in the number of households in Oxford means extra RCV (overnight parking space) and additional bin storage need.
- Introduction of kerbside WEEE collection which is bulked at the depot has resulted in additional skip space.
- Introduction of kerbside battery collection which is bulked at the depot this has also required additional space for a mini skips.
- The rising public expectations around the Recycling Service in general, have combined to put pressure on the existing depot space.
- Increased demand/usage on the existing Waste Transfer area to enhance green waste bulking and to introduce road sweeper arisings “dewatering and bulking”. This would have a positive effect on recycling rates and also lead to a reduction in carbon emissions as journeys to tip would be reduced. The current area is too small for efficient use.

#### **Increased pressure from needing to be Emergency Response Ready**

- The Council is now required to hold a greater quantity of salt by Central Government, in readiness to respond to the much more frequent adverse winter weather conditions.
- This has, therefore, led us to also store extra snow clearance and gritting plant and equipment.
- The lessons learnt from recent flooding events in Oxford has prompted Direct Services to hold and store additional flood defence equipment, such as extra high capacity pumps, readymade sandbags and flood barriers, as well as the necessary plant and vehicles to deploy this equipment and materials quickly.

#### **Why This Proposal?**

For some time now, the Council and Direct Services have been looking for a suitable site to form one depot, so that all of the front line services that we provide can be

brought together. We have considered a number of possibilities at locations such as Redbridge, the old Post Office site and at Sandy Lane West. For various reasons, some financial and some practical, no suitable new depot site has been found as yet.

We have also considered procuring additional storage space, however this obviously adds to our overheads and any new storage would need to be near to existing depots for reasons of efficiency and vehicle movements between sites. Both of these exercises have proved to be unsuccessful.

The proposal to temporarily adopt the under-utilised space next to the Marsh Depot for a period of 5 years whilst the Council continues to look for a one depot site has several advantages which are listed below:-

- The Marsh Depot is the “Hub” of many of our front line services and is the natural and specified delivery point for many of our suppliers.
- The Council already owns the area in question, so there is no capital outlay or on-going revenue commitment.
- The area would be easily accessed from the existing footprint.
- The area is left to its’ own devices (following previous seeding) and does attract insect life etc. However it is not a “natural” habitat as it was created by Parks Team.
- The “buffer zone” around the extension which we plan to create will provide an even more ecologically diverse area not only for insect life but for birds and other wildlife.
- The extra space would reduce vehicle movements between existing depots, as we are currently forced to move stock around to our other locations to accommodate incoming stock and materials. These vehicle movements would become less necessary and therefore our efficiency would increase while our carbon emissions would reduce.
- Currently we are also forced to move stock and vehicles around in the depot more than we would wish, as this creates additional noise. The extra space would obviously reduce this need.
- The area is easily returned to its original condition should the period of adoption end.
- Ecologically, the area would be returned in an enhanced state.

Therefore if the Planning Application is successful, then a budget of £300k will be required for the alterations.