

Report of: Interim City Works Business Manager

To: Executive Board

Date: 3rd. April 2006

Item No:

Title of Report : New Recycling for Oxford

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To report back to the Executive Board on the options for implementing the Council's new recycling scheme following Consultation Period.

Key decision: Yes

Portfolio Holder: Councillor John Tanner

Scrutiny Responsibility: Environment Scrutiny Committee

Ward(s) affected: All

Report Approved by:

Councillor John Tanner, Portfolio Holder

Sharon Cosgrove, Strategic Director

Samy Thomas, Legal Services

Andy Collett, Financial Services

Policy Framework: None

Recommendation(s): That the Executive Board agrees:

1. To note the outcomes of the consultation exercise
2. That the Executive Board's preferred option (option 1 - Appendix B) is to proceed with the new recycling scheme with modifications (as outlined in the report).
3. To delay a final decision on the shape of the new recycling scheme until the OWP has made clear its preferred option.
4. To request a further report to the June Executive Board for a final decision on the shape of the new recycling scheme.
5. To grant Major Project approval for vehicle purchase and running costs in accordance with Section 2.11 of Financial Regulations as detailed in Appendix B of the report.

Introduction

1. The Executive Board will recall that it considered a report on options for a new recycling scheme for Oxford at its meeting of 16th January 2006. The Executive Board approved the adoption of Option 1 set out in the report as its preferred method of collection; this included alternate weekly collections, providing wheelie-bins for residual waste, blue boxes for mixed recyclables including plastic bottles, and extending the collection of cardboard and garden waste.
2. The Executive Board also approved that the Council consult about this option and report back to its April meeting on the outcome of the consultation and determine what modifications to make to the scheme. This report outlines the consultation and communication activities that have been carried out on the proposed changes to the refuse and recycling collections in the City and makes recommendations on next steps.
3. The Executive Board will be aware that there is an obligation on the City Council to work with neighbouring local district authorities and the County Council to actively support initiatives for waste minimisation, collection and disposal. The Oxfordshire Waste Partnership is currently overseeing the development of a new Joint Waste Strategy for Oxfordshire. Interest by the Audit Commission in the previous slow progress in the development of joint strategy has galvanised the OWP to assess its short and long-term waste minimisation options. The OWP has set itself the objective of identifying the optimum Countywide integrated collection and disposal scheme that would encourage low waste growth coupled with higher recycling and composting rates whilst offering the best value for money to the Oxfordshire population. The OWP are still considering a number of options for the collection method of dry recyclables, therefore the exact details of a scheme that would be compatible with their proposals are not yet known. However whichever option is ultimately selected will require the purchase of new vehicles and the lead times are such that orders need to be placed now for implementation by October. The OWP proposes to identify the optimum collection and disposal options by June 2006.
4. It is therefore important that any City Council Waste Strategy integrates fully into the emerging Oxfordshire Joint Waste Strategy.

Consultation and communication activities

5. In order to gain as much information from residents as possible on the proposal officers, as advised by the Executive Board, employed a wide range of methods of communication that are outlined below.
6. Initial work was with staff of the Council, many of whom are residents of Oxford, both those at City Works and those across other Business Units. A series of internal meetings with City Works staff, including supervisors, area managers, collection crews, Union representatives and the crews recycling champions discussed how the proposed changes would affect them. Information was placed also on the Council intranet and in the February team brief so that staff could be fully engaged in the debate.

7. The main thrust of the consultation was to engage with the residents of Oxford in a variety of different ways to ensure that we had as wide a consultation as possible. This work took two principal approaches; firstly to engage individuals in debate and then to engage interest and areas groups and committees.
8. In order to capture resident's responses to the proposals and to gather the widest set of views we:
 - Placed an article in the spring edition of Your Oxford provided residents with a brief outline of the proposal and asked them to come forward with their thoughts and comments on the proposal;
 - Placed an advert in the Oxford Mail on 2nd March and The Oxford Times on 3rd March outlining the proposal and asking residents to tell us their views;
 - Posted information on the proposed changes to the refuse and recycling collections in Oxford on our website from 7th February with an online survey;
 - Widely distributed leaflets to the city's libraries, the payments and parking cash office, St Aldate's local services shop and via the area committees (Appendix A);
 - Set up a dedicated phone line and email address to capture people's comments. Both were advertised on our web site and in the Your Oxford article.

The questions in this survey were aimed at helping us identify what residents want with regards to refuse and recycling collections and also how they currently deal with their refuse.

9. We recognised that many people would be unlikely to respond to this type of approach and may need a more accessible forum whilst others might want to have the proposal explained in further detail or have specific queries answered. To ensure that we received an appropriate cross-section of responses from this segment of our residents we:
 - Debated the details of the option at the Council's six Area Committees;
 - Attended seven local committees and residents associations to discuss the proposals - Barton Community Association, Oxford's Tenants Panel, Horspath Road tenants and residents association, HART tenants and residents association, Osney Island tenants and residents association, Bradley and Gladstone tenants and residents association and Blackbird Leys parish council.
 - Ran five open days in a range of popular locations across the City, including the Westgate and Templar Sq shopping centres, Somerfield supermarket in Headington, Sainsbury's supermarket at Heyford Hill and at the Town Hall.

At all these open days and committee meetings we distributed leaflets that outlined the proposal in further detail and provided people with the opportunity to feedback through a comments box and a freepost address. A number of people at each event had seen the advert and came to ask us their specific questions.

10. In addition, we needed a more structured forum to identify the issues that were raised by introducing a new service and any problems that residents foresaw plus their ideas for possible solutions. In order to facilitate this type of discussion, we

ran two focus groups at Oxford Town Hall on 1 March 2006. Eleven people attended the first focus group and eight attended the second. These groups were used to inform people of the proposed changes but more importantly and to gather their views of problems, possible solutions and the best ways of communicating these issues to the public.

Consultation Results

11. To date we have engaged with a broad group of Oxford's residents on the proposals for a new collection and recycling scheme for the city. We have received two hundred and ninety seven completed surveys, one hundred and eighteen emails, including those forwarded by Councillors and forty telephone messages, five letters from residents commenting on the proposals and 10 completed comments forms. In addition around 90 residents attended the Area Committee meetings, 320 people attended the open days across the city and 19 people attended the focus groups.

12. The headline results were that people support recycling and the need to reduce the waste being sent to landfill. People's reaction to the specific proposal were broadly positive with 95% of the group voicing a positive view with the following detailed responses:

- 95% of responses either agreed or strongly agreed that Oxford City Council should help increase the amount of household waste residents can recycle;
- 72.5% of people completing the survey either supported or strongly supported the introduction of the proposed new recycling scheme to Oxford City;
- 20.8% either opposed or strongly opposed to the introduction of the scheme.

13. The five most frequent responses to the proposal were:

- Concern over the introduction of wheeled containers. This encompasses for example the provision of wheeled bins to properties with no or small front gardens, people who do not want a wheeled container for refuse and concerns over how they will effect the street scene;
- Concern over the collection frequency. This includes issues concerning the smell of refuse not collected for two weeks and consideration that this is a reduction in service;
- General support for recycling. A number of respondents were sympathetic to the need to increase recycling and were positive about the proposed facilities but had concerns about these particular proposals;
- Support for the scheme and recognised it as a positive way forward to improving refuse and recycling in the city;

- Concern over the size of the bin. This includes residents who feel that they do not produce enough rubbish to warrant a large wheeled bin, those who feel a wheeled bin will not give them enough capacity if only collected fortnightly and those with small bin cupboards not able to fit a wheeled bin;

In addition a minority expressed concern that wheelie bins may block pavements and be an eyesore on the street scene.

14. The questions raised helped us identify areas we should perhaps be focussing on in the communication of the proposal and the future developments.

15. We propose amending the scheme in the following ways to address the specific concerns raised during consultation:

a) Where properties have small or no front gardens, these properties will be supplied with a fixed number of branded sacks for their refuse collection service.

b) The concern about the smell of refuse not collected for two weeks has not been realised in other authorities that have introduced such schemes. Experience shows that by wrapping and tying cooked food waste and nappies and ensuring that bin lids are closed, deals with most issues. We will offer guidance to residents.

c) We note the concern of residents around bin size and we will offer some flexibility over the size of wheelie bins.

d) We will investigate our enforcement powers to prevent wheelie bins being left on pavements except on their prescribed collection day.

The County Council, as lead partner in the OWP expressed concerns that the City Council should not rush ahead to determine its preferred collection model ahead of the work being undertaken by the OWP. It is understood that Oxford City's Council preferred option is one that is likely to be in the top three options identified by the OWP but that the final option will not be identified until early June.

16. We will continue attending further local residents meetings and analyse online survey, telephone and email responses until 17th March 2006. Oxford City Council will continue to consult with our partners in support our obligation to work with neighbouring local authorities and the County Council to identify and support a long-term strategy as agreed in the OWP's Memorandum of Understanding. This strategy will form the basis of a project plan to achieve Oxford City Council's objective of a 40 - 45% recycling rate.

Financial Implications

We are seeking approval to place orders for the vehicles (as laid out in Appendix B) in April 2006 as there is a six month lead time for delivery and this will allow us to implement the new scheme in October 2006 according to schedule.

In the consideration of the funding for the bid, both leasing and the use of Prudential Code for borrowing were considered. It was determined that Prudential borrowing was considered the most cost-effective route, the cost of which has been provided for in the budget bid and is included in Appendix B.

Recommendations

18. Note the outcomes of the consultation exercise.
19. The Executive Board's preferred option (option 1 - Appendix B) is to proceed with the new recycling scheme with modifications (as outlined in the report).
20. To delay a final decision on the shape of the new recycling scheme until the OWP has made clear its preferred option.
21. To request a further report to the June Executive Board for a final decision on the shape of the new recycling scheme.
22. Agrees to grant Major Project approval for vehicle purchase and running costs in accordance with Section 2.11 of Financial Regulations, as detailed in Appendix B.

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Background papers: None



BUILDING PRIDE IN OUR CITY

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL
www.oxford.gov.uk

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL
www.oxford.gov.uk

Contact us:
E: recycling@oxford.gov.uk
Visit the website: www.oxford.gov.uk
T: 01865 252949

Or write to us at:

Proposed Recycling Changes For Oxford
Oxford City Council
City Works, Marsh Road, Cowley
FREEPOST OF650
OXFORD OX4 2HH

Proposed Recycling Changes for Oxford

Cardboard & garden waste collection
OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Sacks should not be
excessively heavy so carry
them to your recycling bin, neither
can they be collected from
reduce reuse ♻️ recycle now

there's no time to waste: reduce reuse ♻️ recycle now

Your comments



We are interested in your views, so please complete this comments form and return it to the FREEPOST ADDRESS overleaf by Friday 17 March 2006.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Your comments:

Oxford City Council currently collects household refuse and recyclables from all households on a weekly basis. Paper, tins, glass and textiles are collected via the green box recycling scheme, garden waste and cardboard are also collected from 13,200 households on alternate weeks.

There are also 25 bring banks in the City which collect paper, glass, tins and at some sites textiles and plastics.


Oxford residents have recycled 17 per cent (current figure to date) of their rubbish with the City Council but neighbouring Cherwell District Council manage 45 per cent. However, Oxford residents throw away one of the lowest amounts of waste in the country - on target to reach an average 336 kilos per person this year.

Translations available

अनुवादित आवश्या आहे
提供有翻譯本
तरजमे उपलब्ध हैं
उत्तममि मिल सकदे चन
ترجمہ دستیاب ہے

Tel: 01865 252938



there's no time to waste: reduce reuse  recycle now

Have your say

We are interested in your views about the proposed recycling changes for Oxford.

You can contact us in the following ways:

visit the website www.oxford.gov.uk and complete our online survey.

Email: recycling@oxford.gov.uk

Or complete the attached comments form and return it to our FREEPOST ADDRESS

or write to us at:

Proposed Recycling Changes for Oxford

Oxford City Council
City Works, Marsh Road, Cowley
FREEPOST OF650
OXFORD OX4 2HH

We are also running roadshows at the following venues from 10am - 4pm to speak to residents about the proposal, so come along to:


3 March Oxford Town Hall

6 March Westgate Centre

7 March Templars Square

8 March Somerfield, Headington

10 March Sainsbury's, Heyford Hill

there's no time to waste: reduce reuse  recycle now

Business Reply
Licence No. OF650

Proposed Recycling Changes for Oxford
Oxford City Council
City Works, Marsh Road, Cowley
FREEPOST OF650
OXFORD OX4 2HH

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Why do we need to change the current collection service?

Oxford residents have told us that they want to recycle more. We are looking at the way we collect waste and materials for recycling from your doorstep.

We want to more than double the amount of recycling from Oxford homes and make it easier for everyone to reduce, reuse and recycle their rubbish.

We are proposing a new recycling collection service that could see us recycling 40-45% of your rubbish by 2008.

We also have to reach government set recycling targets and reduce the amount of rubbish we create. If we don't we will incur heavy financial penalties.

We already have a green box recycling scheme in place and it is proposed to extend this service.

Each household would be issued with a range of containers for their recycling and refuse. These will include:

- a blue box for plastic bottles, tins and cans,
- a green box for glass and paper,
- a reusable sack for garden waste and cardboard
- a wheeled bin for refuse

All containers including your wheeled bin would be collected on alternate weeks.

To encourage residents to recycle their rubbish and to use their recycling boxes and wheeled bin, we would only collect rubbish that is inside the wheeled bin and recycling boxes.

Adapting to the new service

We know that there are properties across the City that might not be suitable for a wheeled bin. We would be looking at alternative arrangements ie: you would be provided with Oxford City Council branded sacks for your rubbish.

We would continue to run an assisted collection service for those residents unable to move wheeled bins or carry boxes to the kerbside for collection.

Large families will be assessed on an individual basis and where appropriate issued with larger wheeled bins for their rubbish.

Wrapping food waste before bagging it will reduce problems with smells and vermin being attracted to your rubbish.

Financial Requirement

Vehicle acquisition:

Capital expenditure for 6 Refuse Collection Vehicles and retrofit of 4 split bin lifts = £860,000 in 2006/07.

Ongoing revenue costs for extra vehicles = £192,000 for part year 2006/07 and £395,520 for full year in 2007/08.

TOTALS			
CAPITAL	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
EXTRA CAPITAL	£2,175,000.00	£0.00	£0.00
START UP COSTS			
TOTAL	£228,586.14	£0.00	£0.00
ADDITIONAL REVENUE £	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
EXTRA REVENUE	£432,978.25	£891,935.20	£918,095.33
EXTRA INCOME	-£25,409.91	-£182,249.91	-£182,249.91
FINANCE	£85,000.00	£85,000.00	£85,000.00
START UP COSTS	£228,586.14	£0.00	£0.00
TOTAL	£721,154.48	£794,685.29	£820,845.42
TOTAL REVENUE	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
EXISTING REVENUE	£2,606,273.00	£2,606,273.00	£2,606,273.00
EXTRA REVENUE	£721,154.48	£794,685.29	£820,845.42
TOTAL REVENUE	£3,327,427.48	£3,400,958.29	£3,427,118.42