

Division(s): All

CABINET – 19 APRIL 2011

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE STRATEGY

Report by Deputy Director for Growth and Infrastructure

Introduction

1. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) currently has eight Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) which all accept a full range of recyclables as well as residual waste.
2. The City and District councils have made excellent progress in recycling household waste through the expansion of kerbside collection services. Every house in Oxfordshire now has a comprehensive kerbside collection scheme for a full range of waste and recyclables including food waste.
3. Residents are increasingly embracing these new systems and recycling rates are increasing across the County. With the expansion of kerbside collection services the need for people to visit one of our HWRCs has reduced. The role and service that the HWRCs provide is changing.
4. OCC as the Waste Disposal Authority has a statutory obligation to provide places for members of the public to deposit their household waste. Improved kerbside services provide an opportunity to reform and reshape the current service provision. The aim is to build upon this success story. The current network of sites needs to be refined in order to maintain an efficient and effective solution as part of the wider joint municipal waste management strategy.
5. The current network of sites requires significant investment to bring them up to date as the current infrastructure is deteriorating. In addition in a number of locations the expiration of temporary planning permission requires action to be taken in order to provide an acceptable level of service.
6. This strategy will ensure that Oxfordshire has facilities fit for the future that are well located to the main centres of population.

HWRC Strategy

7. The aim of the proposed strategy is to:
 - provide modern facilities that are well located for the main centres of population
 - provide facilities that complement/support the expanded kerbside collection services provided by the City and District councils
 - provide facilities that are fit for purpose and cost effective
 - prevent non-separated waste going to Landfill
 - provide reuse facilities at all sites for bulky waste and expanded recycling containers
 - minimise fly-tipping
8. The County Council is committed to invest in a new modern recycling facility at Kidlington. This will have a dedicated re-use store where people can donate or purchase goods of reasonable quality.
9. The infrastructure at Redbridge is deteriorating and the site needs to be refurbished and modernised. Construction of the new facility at Kidlington will enable the Redbridge site to be closed for redevelopment. Work at the Redbridge site will require private sector funding to be secured.
10. Upon re-opening Redbridge would operate as an additional commercial waste facility during the week and a facility for household waste at weekends and bank holidays.
11. As part of the strategy the County Council will provide a new facility near to Banbury; the exact site is yet to be located.
12. Sites at Dean Pit, Ardley and Stanford in the Vale would be closed as their temporary planning permissions expire and investment in new facilities comes on stream. The final site closures would not take place until December 2014.
13. Data observatory information indicates the areas of population density in Oxfordshire and we know of areas planned for development. Factoring this growth in over a 15-year period enables a strategy to be set out that links the proposed facilities to the major areas of population:

Proposed Facility	Areas
New Kidlington Facility	Oxford City / Bicester
Relocated Alkerton Facility (Banbury Area)	Banbury / Chipping Norton
Existing Drayton Facility	Didcot / Abingdon / Wantage
Existing Dix Pit Facility	Witney / Carterton / Chipping Norton
Existing Oakley Wood Facility	Wallingford / Henley
Existing Redbridge Facility (trade Monday – Friday, householders weekends including Bank Holidays)	Oxford / Abingdon

14. All HWRCs would accept non-recyclable (residual) waste, although visitors will be expected to make full use of the recycling, composting and reuse facilities by pre-sorting waste before using the landfill skips. The strategy for HWRCs will support further behavioural change by encouraging residents to pre-sort their waste before going to the HWRC.
15. The County Council is continuing to explore opportunities to extend the range of items that can be recycled, such as mattresses and carpets. More recycling means even less waste going to landfill.
16. It is proposed that all of the sites will have a re-use area enabling furniture, bric-a-brac and other reusable items to be collected at each HWRC.
17. New trade waste facilities at Kidlington and an improved trade facility at Redbridge would greatly improve on current trade waste provision and provide greater capacity to accommodate trade thereby discouraging fly-tipping.

Timeline

18. The timeline for implementing the strategy is linked to the expiration dates for temporary planning permissions:

2011

- Dean Pit closing – September 2011

2012

- Kidlington Provisional Opening – April 2012
- Redbridge closure for refurbishment – 1 month after Kidlington Opens

2013

- Redbridge opening (weekends & bank holidays only) – January/February 2013
- Ardley closing – September 2013

2014

- Banbury opening – November 2014
- Alkerton closing – December 2014
- Stanford in the Vale closing – December 2014

Site Provision Summary by District:

District	Current Provision	Future Provision
Cherwell	Alkerton & Ardley	Kidlington & New Banbury
City	Redbridge	Redbridge (weekends / bank holidays) & Kidlington
South	Oakley Wood	Oakley Wood
Vale	Drayton & Stanford in the Vale	Drayton
West	Dix Pit & Dean Pit	Dix Pit

19. The proposed network of facilities fully supports the wider ambition of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership as set out in the joint municipal waste management strategy.

Consultation

20. Consultation on the proposed strategy was undertaken with the support and involvement of the consultation team between 7 March and 4 April 2011.
21. The consultation was advertised on the County Council website and at all the HWRCs. All County and District Council Councillors were emailed, and the consultation was discussed at the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership meeting. Emails, letters and posters were sent to all the Parish, Town and District Councils for distribution; posters were also distributed to key public buildings such as libraries, schools, children's centres, community centres, garden centres, GP's surgery, Dentists, Police Stations, DIY shops, supermarkets and other OCC buildings. Through the customer contact centre we ensured that people could ask for and receive paper copies of the consultation.
22. Responses could be made either on-line (through the e-portal), by emailing the waste management inbox or writing to the waste management team.
23. A copy of the consultation document is attached in Annex 1.

Summary of Consultation Responses

24. A total of 337 responses were received and are summarised below by type, HWRC and WCA. A number of responses included more than one comment meaning that a total of 610 comments were received.

Responded As:	Number	%
Resident	256	76%
Councillor	54	16%
Organisation or Group	22	7%
Unknown	5	1%

Household Waste Recycling Centre Used?	Number	%
Alkerton HWRC	11	3%
Ardley HWRC	13	4%
Dean Pit HWRC	76	23%
Dix Pit HWRC	12	4%
Drayton HWRC	28	8%
Oakley Wood HWRC	12	4%
Redbridge HWRC	62	18%
Stanford in the Vale HWRC	115	34%
I don't use a HWRC	2	1%
Not applicable	6	2%

Which District do you live in?	Number	%
Cherwell	33	10%
Oxford City	24	7%
South Oxfordshire	29	9%
Vale of White Horse	163	48%
West Oxfordshire	84	25%
I don't live in Oxfordshire	1	0%
Unknown	3	1%

25. The main themes raised through the consultation centred on fly-tipping, environmental impact and the provision of services in the local area.

Key Themes	Count	% of the total number of comments received (610)
Lack of provision in the local area	170	28%
Fly-Tipping will increase	160	26%
Impact on the local environment/increased traffic	128	21%
Support the proposals in principle	40	7%
Opening times at Redbridge	39	6%
Support the opening of a re-use shop at Kidlington	21	3%

26. The number of responses by HWRC for each of the six main themes is shown in Annex 2.

Lack of provision in local area

27. The main concern was that the journey time to their nearest facility would increase for some residents in rural locations. Comments were raised that despite the fact that kerbside recycling had improved (and this was welcomed) not all materials could be accepted and therefore trips to HWRC would still be required for items such as electrical goods and batteries. There was also concern that the amount of waste going into the residual bins at the kerbside would increase as the kerbside recycling containers provided (especially green waste) are not large enough.
28. All WCAs now collect an increased number of recyclables from the kerbside and this was acknowledge in responses to the consultation. Monitoring shows that the numbers of visits to HWRCs is reducing and the County Council will work with the district/city councils through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership to ensure that pressures on kerbside collections are managed. There are increasing opportunities to recycle some items at locations more convenient than a HWRC: for example recycling of batteries in supermarkets and DIY stores.

Fly-tipping

29. There was concern that the reduction in the provision of sites serving West Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse could lead to an increase in fly-tipping. Some commented that the costs of clearing up any increases in fly-tipping would far outweigh the cost savings proposed by site closures.
30. Security measures will be introduced at all HWRCs to control fly-tipping and to prevent illegal dumping at sites set to close. The County Council has been working through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership to support enforcement officers: this would continue to be a priority as part of the wider strategy on waste management.

Impact on local environment / traffic increase

31. Some felt that the proposals did not take proper account of pressures resulting from growth in Oxfordshire, especially in the southern part of the County. Concerns were raised that there could be a negative impact on the environment as a result of increased journey distances. In addition it was felt that there would be more pollution at the remaining sites because of the increase volume of traffic and queuing times.
32. The improved kerbside collection services have reduced the number of visits to the sites (a fact acknowledged by many in their responses). Generally there was support for the strategy if bulky waste collections remained at a reasonable cost and garden waste is collected at the kerbside. By ensuring that facilities are well located to the main centres of population overall levels of accessibility will be improved.

Opening times at Redbridge

33. Concerns were raised over traffic queues at the weekends due to the reduced opening hours for household waste. Some concern was also expressed that the restricted hours of opening would be confusing. However, there was support for the proposal as long as traders were not allowed on site over the weekend as this would reduce congestion.
34. At Redbridge 35% of visits are undertaken at weekends with 65% of visits occurring during the week. The need to redevelop Redbridge provides the opportunity to redesign the internal site layout to enable greater throughput and reduce congestion. The new Kidlington site will provide a well located facility for residents in North Oxford: this will reduce pressure on the Redbridge site. In addition, the Drayton facility has the capacity to increase its use, again helping to reduce pressure on Redbridge site. The remaining sites in the network all offer scope for redevelopment and increased capacity should the need arise.

Support for the reuse shop

35. There is general support for the reuse shop at Kidlington as it is seen as a positive step forward for the county. Respondents also requested the expansion of reuse to other sites.

HWRC usage

36. A summary of the usage of current sites is set out below:

Site	population served by site	% of population served by site	% of total household visits	% of total tonnage throughput
Alkerton	58,431	9.2%	7.9%	10.9%
Ardley	73,979	11.6%	10.4%	11.5%
Dean Pit	28,097	4.4%	5.1%	5.3%
Dix Pit	78,236	12.3%	9.2%	10.6%
Drayton	97,659	15.3%	16.6%	16.5%
Oakley Wood	80,500	12.6%	10.8%	8.6%
Redbridge	180,194	28.3%	26.3%	28.0%
Stanford in the Vale	39,967	6.3%	13.6%	8.5%
Grand Total	637,064			

37. It is estimated that visits to the site from residents living outside of Oxfordshire is approximately 20% at Alkerton and Ardley and 15% at Stanford in the Vale.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

38. An equalities impact assessment has been carried out and the proposed strategy does not impact upon this. WCAs now have comprehensive kerbside services and residents are encouraged to use these.

Sustainability

39. The proposed strategy aims to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and increase reuse, recycling and composting. It forms part of Oxfordshire's joint municipal waste management strategy and should therefore be considered in the wider context of waste management across Oxfordshire. The expansion of kerbside collections means that fewer trips to the HWRCs are now needed thereby reducing the environmental impact.

Risks

40. Although there are concerns over the potential for an increase in fly-tipping, the increase in provision to deal with trade waste should make it easier for businesses to dispose of their waste legally.

41. The County Council works through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership to support WCA enforcement officers. Monitoring shows that fly-tipping has reduced over recent years in response to this co-ordinated effort. The County Council will continue to support this work as part of the overall waste management strategy. It will also be important for the current bulky waste collection service to be maintained.

Legal Implications

42. Redbridge is currently operated by W&S Recycling. The closure of Redbridge would be a fundamental change to the existing contract. A procurement exercise would have to be undertaken in order to allow the site to operate as a trade waste facility during the week and for householder use at the weekends and Bank Holidays.
43. The closure of Dean Pit is accounted for within the existing W&S contract. Alkerton and Stanford in the Vale would both close after the expiry of the W&S contract and therefore there are no further legal issues. Ardley will close when the existing Contract with Viridor Waste Management ceases at the end of September 2013.
44. It is envisaged that the management of Kidlington HWRC and the re-use shop will require its own procurement.

Financial and Staff Implications

45. This strategy will achieve significant net revenue savings as a result of reduced management fees and disposal charges.
46. The retention of residual waste treatment at all sites and maintaining a weekend household waste facility at Redbridge will result in additional costs being incurred compared with the Directorate's original Business Strategy. Additional management costs, staffing costs and haulage costs incurred as a result of these changes are estimated to lead to a pressure of £300,000 (see below). It is possible that the additional costs could be absorbed if overall waste arisings continue to fall.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
MTFP net savings / pressures	-£33,000	£165,000	-£40,000	-£547,000	-£747,000	-£747,000
Proposed strategy	£37,000	£150,000	-£120,00	-£327,000	-£253,000	-£453,000
Difference	£70,000	-£15,000	-£80,000	£240,000	£494,000	£294,000

47. There is a pressure arising from the de-commissioning of sites in 2012/13 and 2015/16. In the absence of additional funding, the pressures shown from 2014/15 onwards will need to be addressed as part of the next round of service resource planning this autumn.

48. This strategy will deliver substantial savings in management fees once it is fully in place. However, if Redbridge and Stanford in the Vale were to remain open 7 days a week there would be a further additional pressure of approximately £300,000 pa for management fees alone (£170,000 pa for Redbridge and £130,000 for Stanford in the Vale). Also if these sites were kept open there may not be the reduction in landfill tonnage anticipated (giving rise to additional costs) and additional revenue pressures for maintenance and infrastructure repairs.
49. If Redbridge and Stanford in the Vale were to remain open there would also be capital expenditure pressures of approximately £1.5m for Redbridge and £750k for Stanford in the Vale. To undertake this work the £1.8m of capital savings currently shown in the savings plan would need to be released, plus a further pressure of £450k. It is anticipated that some of this could be made from revenue savings if landfill reductions can be made.
50. Keeping the site at Stanford in the Vale would require a new planning permission: this could not be guaranteed as the location does not fit well with current planning policy.
51. Capital budget has been secured for the proposed Kidlington facility (£3m) and the new facility near to Banbury (£1.75m). The revenue implications of operating these sites have been budgeted for.

RECOMMENDATION

52. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - i) **Approve the Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy as detailed in this report;**
 - ii) **Authorise detailed implementation plans, including minor changes to the strategy, to be approved by the Director for Environment and Economy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure.**

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Background papers:
Household Waste Recycling Centre Consultation Document

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HWRC Consultation Document