

Overview Board – 31st August 2010

Briefing Paper - Recycling queries raised at Climate Change Meeting 10th August 2010

The Scrutiny Board have asked for an update, from the Head of Environmental Services, on the recommendations made by the Refuse and Recycling Scrutiny Investigation. This information is provided below for the Overview Board following queries raised at the informal Climate Change meeting held on 10th August 2010.

1. The monitoring of on-street recycling trials being undertaken by other Councils to see if there is any evidence to suggest they provide value for money.

Officers have monitored trials of on street recycling in other authorities. Evidence shows that tonnage collected through on street recycling facilities is poor, especially when placed retrospectively in town centres and other similar open spaces; contamination is high with these facilities therefore resulting recycling tonnage is of low quality and low tonnage. However, there is a perceived benefit in educating and communicating the recycling message to the public. It is widely acknowledged that there is increased chance of success within controlled environments and for this reason we intend to run a trial at Sanders Park. We will also investigate the installation of on street recycling with the refurbishment of the town centre should the opportunity arise.

2. Officers monitor the progress Worcestershire County Council (WCC) is making in relation to building their own sorting plant by 2009, as this will enable a co-mingled recycling service to be launched (making it easier to recycle and likely to encourage more recycling) and therefore significantly improve this Council's recycling rates.

WCC have built their own sorting plant and Members have been advised about the facility and the starting date of the new service. See www.envirosort.co.uk . BDC started co-mingled collection in April 2010.

3. Officers be requested to continue to encourage WCC officers to investigate recycling more materials through the Waste Management Forum.

Officers advised that as part of Severn Waste Services (SWS) contract they undertake regular waste analysis surveys to identify materials recycled and not recycled, from this we can determine the possibility of collecting new waste streams for recycling. As part of this process we are now able to collect thick cardboard, all rigid plastic containers and waxed cartons.

Early indications are that the co-mingled collection service is picking up more tonnage than the now redundant kerbside sort service has ceased. During April-June 2010 higher than expected reject rates were experienced at Envirosort (around 20%). Alterations have now been undertaken at Envirosort, this has resulted in a reduction from 3 containers of rejects leaving the facility to 1. Although tonnage data will not be available until next month

to give actual reject rates, anecdotal evidence suggests that the amendments will have reduced reject levels to around 8%. Further work will be undertaken on the resulting rejects to investigate if any additional modifications can be made to the facility to reduce them further.

For the first quarter of 2010-11 the kerbside recycling tonnage collected is predicted to be a 15% increase on that of the same quarter for 2009-10.

4. Officers be requested to continually investigate ways in which BDC can expand the recycling service to reach the remaining 6% of the District.

Officers advise that there is potential to expand the service to an additional 3% of households with the current resources available and this is currently being looked at from an operational viewpoint. Subject to additional funding it would be possible to expand coverage to the full 100%, however as per the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003, Section 45a; A waste collection authority is not required to offer recycling to all households if “the cost of doing so is unreasonably high, or, comparable alternative arrangements are available.