



Report to Cabinet

Subject Summer Service (weekly domestic refuse collection)

Report of Senior Management Team

Date May 2007

1. Purpose of the Report

The Leader of the Council has asked that a report be submitted on the introduction of a summer service for the weekly collection of non recyclable domestic refuse and to seek Members' instructions on the findings outlined in this report.

2. Background

With the exception of a small number of properties in communal areas, which are currently being addressed, all the other properties in the Borough are on an alternate weekly collection of refuse and recycle material. This scheme commenced in early 2004 following trials in Ravenshead and Burton Joyce.

During last summer period, the Council did receive some complaints from residents regarding this alternating collection system. In particular, during hot spells, there are some complaints of maggots in the bins and although this can be prevented by securely wrapping up waste food, there is a desire for the Council to take steps to deal with the issue.

A recent Government funded report on health effects concluded that there is no serious risk to health from alternate weekly collections, but to allay the fears and concerns of the residents, the Senior Management Team has been asked to consider the introduction of weekly collections of non-recyclable waste (the "black bin" collection) during the summer for a period of 12 weeks.

The main issues are:-

- Achieving our current statutory recycling target
- Achieving our new statutory recycling target for 2009/10
- Reducing the amount of waste going to landfill
- Maintaining a financially viable chargeable garden waste collection service
- Reducing any perceived health risks relating to domestic refuse caused by periods of hot weather.
- Operational issues
- Funding requirements
- Equalities Impact

3. Our Statutory Recycling Target

Our mandatory recycling target for 2005/06 was 21% but the Council agreed to a “stretched” target of 24% as part of the Public Service Agreement with the government. This target was achieved before the deadline of 2005/06 and our current performance on recycling and composting (for the year ending March 2007) is **35.69%**. This is a national best value performance indicator and our direction of travel has been upward since 1997.

The calculator for this indicator is made up from the amount of waste disposed of at landfill and incineration and the amount of waste sent for recycling or composting. The table below shows our performance over the past two years and our estimates for 2007/08.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Estimates
Landfill and incineration	32,716 t	27,872 t	27,370 t
Waste recycled	10,767 t	13,623 t	13,550 t
Composted	1,209 t	1,846 t	1,580 t (a)
Total collected	44,692 t	43,341 t	42,500 t
Recycling % age	24.09%	31.43%	32%
Composting % age	2.71%	4.26%	3.7%

(a) = estimate based on number of customers renewing contract for garden waste as at 31st March 2007.

t = tonnes per annum

Experience would suggest that if the black bin is emptied on a weekly basis, then the non-recyclable tonnage collected is likely to increase. If an extra 5400 tonnes of non-recyclable waste were to be collected over the 12 week period and if residents otherwise continue to recycle at current levels and do not stop using the green bin (dry recyclables) and brown bin (garden waste) services, this extra waste would result in our recycling rate reducing to around 28%. Provided our composting rate remained at around 3.8%, we would have a combined recycling performance of **31.8%**. This is still above our statutory and pooled targets but may have a small adverse impact on Nottinghamshire County Council’s Waste PFI contract targets for 2007/08.

The waste PFI agreement requires a recycling and composting rate of 52% by 2019 and we understand that the current combined performance by all the districts and the County Council is around 40%.

4. New recycling target for 2009/10

DEFRA is due to release its new waste strategy and recycling targets this month and it is expected that our new target will be in excess of **40%** by 2010. The Direct Services departmental tasks for 2007/08 includes producing a new waste strategy to meet any new targets. It is very clear that further materials will need to be removed from the waste stream and this will need careful consideration. A full report on this issue is likely to be presented to Cabinet later this year.

5. Reducing the amount of waste going to landfill

The table above shows a reduction in waste of almost 5,000 tonnes from 2005/06 to 2006/07 following the completion of the roll out of the twin bin scheme. Our waste disposal arrangements are currently split 40% to Dorket Head landfill site and 60% to the Eastcroft incineration plant.

The Nottinghamshire County Council already has reduced targets for municipal waste being sent to landfill (this includes domestic refuse) and can be penalised for excess waste through the landfill allowance trading scheme. However, current levels of municipal waste through Nottinghamshire's landfills is well below the target set and if we were to collect an additional 5,400 tonnes of non-recyclable waste for the twelve week period, the County Council would not be penalised through this landfill allowance scheme.

It could be argued that the County Council will incur additional costs of disposal by the landfill contractor but it will be difficult to quantify as we can only assume that this waste is currently either taken to household waste centres, fly tipped, or disposed of by some other means and the County Council already pay either gate fees for composting garden waste or disposal fees on the waste deposited at household waste centres and on fly tipped waste.

6. Our chargeable garden waste service

Residents will be able to dispose of general waste and garden waste in the domestic bin, should the summer service be offered. The Council currently operates a chargeable garden waste collection service with 5,500 properties currently using this service. Annual payments are non-refundable and no significant impact on this service is likely in 2007/08, but in future years, if any proposed scheme is extended, our customer base for the garden waste scheme could be reduced.

7. Reducing perceived health risks.

During the 3 year roll out period of the twin bin scheme, some residents voiced their concerns about reducing the refuse collection service and in particular, during the summer months when issues including health, excess garden waste and during residents annual holidays, bins might not be collected for a full month (unless they managed to get neighbours to put their bin out). The Council has always prided itself on meeting residents' needs with a high quality service. Over the past few years, the garden waste scheme, flying skips, kerbside glass collections and banks at recycling centres for tetrapaks (foiled lined juice and milk cartons), have all been introduced to reduce waste being placed in the domestic bin. These services contribute to the recycling target and help to keep down the amount of fly tipping in the Borough.

8. Operational Issues

Currently, the service is operated using 10 freighters and with the twin bin roll out completed last year, on any one day in a fortnight no more than five vehicles are used on either green or black bin collections (with the exception of Arnold which was altered to accommodate Christmas bin emptying arrangements last December. This can be changed).

If the summer service is intended to apply every year then it could make financial sense to purchase additional refuse freighters and employ additional loaders and

drivers. If this were a possibility, a full review of the whole waste collection service would be necessary. However, for this summer, the service could be operated using agency workers and hiring five refuse freighters.

With so many agency workers, we will need the full support and commitment of our existing workforce. This could include overtime working, supervisory support and cover in the customer services section. Over the next few weeks I will make the appropriate arrangements with the trade unions and workforce representatives to ensure the service operates smoothly. Additional supervisory and customer services staff can also be easily covered.

Our vehicle operating licence can accommodate the extra vehicles needed. Initial discussions with vehicle hire companies suggest that a supply of freighters will be available.

The flying skip service, a one off collection of excess waste operated annually in a couple of areas of the borough (determined annually) would not really be needed in addition to the summer service and I therefore propose that this service is suspended in 2007/08 and that the funds are used on the summer service scheme.

9. Commencement Date

It is feasible that this summer service could commence on Monday 25th June 2007 and operate weekly until Friday 14th September 2007, a period of 12 weeks in total.

10. Publicity

The summer service publicity leaflet distributed to every household would need to clearly highlight the need to continue using the green bin for dry recyclates. We need to persuade and encourage residents to continue with the good waste management practices of reducing waste, re-using materials whenever possible and recycling.

11. Financial Implications

The estimated operating cost of the summer service is: -

Hire of freighters	£52,000
Hire of agency workers	£64,000
Fuel, operating costs and protective clothing	£18,000
Publicity and distribution	£7,500
Other costs (incl training, overtime, supervisory and administration)	£10,000
Contingency (damage to hire vehicles incl tyres and landfill damage)	<u>£5,000</u>
Sub Total	<u>£156,500</u>
Less reduction for flying skips	(£5,000)
Total Cost of Scheme	<u>£151,500</u>

No specific budget exists that this expenditure could be made from so either a supplementary estimate or funding via a virement would be required. If a

supplementary estimate were to be agreed this would then reduce the Council's general fund balance. However, having reviewed the Council's current expenditure plans the following budgets have been identified from which virement could be considered.

Environmental initiatives fund	£100,000
Additional unallocated LABGI grant	£ 45,000
Savings from insurance premiums	£ 40,000

Although it should be noted that these funds are generally one-off items and that if such a scheme was to be introduced on an annual basis then additional funding would need to be provided as part of the 2008/09 budget process.

12. Equalities Impact Assessment

The summer service would be available to all residents and employment opportunities through the agency organisation will also be available, particularly as they like to employ local people in the area.

13. Recommendation

Members' instructions as to how to proceed are requested.