

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No.

meeting date: TUESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010  
title: CLOSURE OF PETRE ARMS HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE  
submitted by: JOHN C HEAP - DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: GRAHAM M JAGGER – STREET SCENE MANAGER

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To bring members up to date about the decision of the County Council to close the household waste recycling centre at Petre Arms, Langho, and
- 1.2 To be made aware as to what possible effect this may have on services and the area as a whole.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the last meeting of this Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010 having considered my report it was resolved that a letter be sent to Lancashire County Council objecting to the closure of the Petre Arms Household Waste Recycling Centre and raising concerns over the closure of a similar site in Padiham.

### 3. ISSUES

- 3.1 Lancashire County Council's Sustainable Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2010 endorsed its Task Groups recommendations as regards the closure of 4 of their existing Household Waste Recycling Centres of which Petre Arms and Padiham were included. This would have effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.
- 3.2 In the resolution it was also mentioned that complimentary measures be implemented to accompany these closures, namely: -
  - a) The County Council works with District Councils and the third sector in relation to bulky item collection with the purpose of introducing a better service to residents.
  - b) In particular, the County Council works to improve kerbside, bulky item and bring site provision in the areas affected by closures.
  - c) The County Council, working with its partners, develops a strong and effective communications strategy to make residents aware of changes and the improved services available to them.
- 3.3 The recommendation referred to was endorsed by the Deputy Leader of the County Council, County Councillor Albert Atkinson on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010. The Petre Arms Household Waste Recycling Centre at Langho will close on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 as will the site in Padiham.

- 3.4 In the report to this Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010 an early initial indication of what might be the effect of the closures was given. There has now been a short while to review matters but by and large what was suggested previously still seems likely and there will be pressure on the services provided by this Council as a result of the decision taken by the County Council.
- 3.5 The waste materials that were being handled at the Petre Arms site and at Padiham will have to go somewhere and the likelihood of it all going to other Household Waste Recycling Centres is unrealistic. A significant proportion will find its way into the services we provide particularly the weekly/fortnightly residual waste and recycling collection that is provided to households in the affected areas. Similarly it is anticipated that there will be an increased demand for our free bulky household waste collection service. There has already been an early indication that there will be an increase in enquiries about having larger bins for green garden waste, something which is contrary to this Committees approved policy on the provision of such containers. Requests for rechargeable special collections is also likely to increase.
- 3.6 The precise effect that all of this may have on our current level and type of services and available resources is difficult to predict accurately but some effect it definitely will have. This may necessitate some changes to collection rounds and days of collection in order to best use any limited spare capacity that we might have at present. In terms of bulky household waste collections the number of requests received from the Langho, Billington, Whalley, Read and Simonstone areas are likely to increase. At present we deal with just short of 5000 bulky household waste collections per annum i.e. around 20 per working day. This could increase by as much as 25% and is likely to mean that this would then outstretch currently available resources.
- 3.7 The disposal of green waste could be the most difficult issue here with a substantial proportion of those properties in the affected areas having gardens. In 2008/9 603tonnes of waste going to Petre Arms was composted. If this amount of green waste alone subsequently found its way into our collection service then it would lead to there being insufficient capacity in the service to deal with it at present. The pressure on our green garden waste collection service could be too much to be able to cope with.
- 3.8 It should always be remembered that when the 3 stream waste collection service was designed and implemented it was done so on the basis of the range of facilities that existed at the time in the Borough. Now a part of what existed is to be removed and hence the burden of provision will shift to the Council as the collection authority from the County Council as the disposal authority. Their costs will reduce and our costs are likely to increase as demand and expectations shift from one authority to another.
- 3.9 At this stage it is too early to predict accurately what eventual impact the closures will have on our services but commonsense and rational thinking says it will have an effect. The real issue is how will we be able to respond when the time arrives and the impact is felt and what will be the publics expectation? Bearing in mind the financial pressures that are likely to affect the Council in the not too distant future this is a statutory service that is a major part of the functions we undertake, is highly regarded by residents and so appears likely to come under close scrutiny during next year.

#### 4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Consideration of this report is likely to have the following implication: -

##### Resources

- The report is a reminder that the closure of the Petre Arms and Padiham Household Waste Recycling Centres is very likely to have an effect on the refuse collection and recycling services the Council currently provides and as such will need some plan putting in place in due course to respond to this.

##### Technical, Environmental & Legal

- The Council's recycling and waste minimisation performance is likely to be affected by the proposed closures. If other Household Waste Recycling Centres are used by residents then this will probably lead to more/and or longer car journeys being made to get to them.

##### Political

- The decision taken by the County Council is clearly an unpopular one and could have a knock on effect on this Council by association.

##### Reputation

- The Council will be expected to manage the consequences that the closures have on our services and our ability to do that will have an effect on our reputation.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The closure of the two Household Waste Recycling Centres is something that will impact on the services that this Council provides to its residents. As part of any future plans there might be for how services are to be provided and resources allocated this should be taken into consideration so the Council is seen to be prepared as well as it possible can be under the circumstances to deal with the effect the closures will have.

JOHN C HEAP  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

##### Background Papers

- Report to Community Services Committee 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Min 830

For further information please contact Peter McGeorge 01200 414467.