

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No. 9

meeting date: 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2017  
title: PREPARATION FOR REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICES  
FROM 2018 (REPORT 4)  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members of the implications for the current refuse and recycling collection services following the withdrawal by Lancashire County Council of Cost Sharing payments from April 2018,
- 1.2 To present Members with options focussing on the implications of mothballing the Waste Transfer Station, and;
- 1.3 To seek Members views on the value of including a "statement of intent" when discussing our plans for the future with Lancashire County Council.
- 1.3 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
  - Community Objectives – To increase the recycling of waste material.
  - Corporate Priorities – To be a well managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs.
  - Other Considerations – To protect and enhance the environmental quality of our area.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report is the fourth of a number of preliminary reports that are being presented to this Committee up until August 2017. Each report focusses on one of a range of options available to this authority that may in part, help mitigate the budget shortfall of £430,340 per annum,(based on current service provision), as a result of the withdrawal of the Cost Sharing agreement by Lancashire County Council from April 2018.
- 2.2 Officers are constantly reviewing the options with the amended list of proposed preliminary reports to be presented to this Committee as indicated below:
  - Charging for garden waste collections (Report 1 – 23 August 2016)
  - Options for dealing with mixed paper and cardboard (Report 2 – 11 October 2016)
  - Changes to refuse collection frequency and/or changes to recycling collection frequencies (Report 3 – 10 January 2017)
  - Mothballing of the Waste Transfer Station (Report 4 – 14 March 2017)
  - Alternative arrangements for the recycling of all our recyclable / compostable waste streams (This includes possible mixing of waste streams and cessation of collection of one or more waste streams)

- 2.3 The first report (23 August 2016) presented to Members considered the impact of the introduction of a charge for the collection of garden waste. It outlined the issues around the collection of garden waste including a survey of other authorities of a similar rural nature who had already introduced a subscription based garden waste collection service for residents. Although it was demonstrated that the introduction of charges for garden waste would be unlikely to address fully the financial shortfall arising with the withdrawal of Cost sharing payments in 2018, it did indicate that this was one measure that could help bridge the funding gap if required. The report concluded that it was most likely that a package of measures would be required to address the financial problem that would enable a reasonable level of service to be retained for residents.
- 2.4 The second report (11 October 2016) provided a brief outline of a number of options for dealing with mixed paper and cardboard that may offer savings or generate income for this authority. Members were also advised that even at these preliminary stages there are risks and uncertainties which may affect the decisions to be made by Committee in due course. The report also explained the background behind the current arrangements for dealing with mixed paper and cardboard under the Cost Sharing agreement and the claim of exclusivity by the County Council for this material. The report covered the Council's regulatory responsibilities for the segregation and recycling of all dry recyclable materials which includes paper and cardboard. The report concluded that even if Committee were minded to abandon this separate service, the savings would not independently address the deficit created by the withdrawal of Cost Sharing payments in 2018. but it did demonstrate that it might contribute to the savings required.
- 2.5 The third report (10 January 2017) outlined options available for changes to refuse collection frequency and /or changes to recycling collection frequencies. The report did not examine in detail the model of each change in frequency option that could be applied to the refuse and recycling collection service but gave an overview of the most likely operational implications such changes would present. It also highlighted that adopting many of the models for change in frequency of collection may require significant capital investment to replace the collection vehicle fleet and/or to provide householders with larger wheeled bins and/or additional containers. The report concluded that the implications of changing the frequency of collection are complex as many would require significant capital investment, overall financial benefits would not be immediately evident; however the report did seek to demonstrate that a contribution to the savings might be found from this area.
- 2.6 Members were also informed that officers had submitted a joint expression of interest with other Lancashire districts for funded consultancy support through the WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme) Framework for Greater Consistency in Household Recycling in England. This was considered potentially a timely opportunity, in that this would support the current review being undertaken by your officers in exploring options on how this authority could meet the financial shortfall due to the withdrawal of Cost Sharing payments. However Members are advised that whilst the application reached the final funding appraisal stage it was suggested that the consultancy review would not be completed until March 2018 by which time it is anticipated that decisions will have been made and measures put into place and therefore officers have withdrawn from the process.

- 2.7 The construction of a waste transfer station within the Ribble Valley was part of the objectives of the Lancashire Municipal Waste Management Strategy for a network of waste transfer facilities to be provided across Lancashire. A suitable site could not be found within the Ribble Valley by the County Council and their only option was to build the facility within Ribble Valley Borough Council's depot in Clitheroe. The closure of the Henthorn landfill site, Clitheroe in 2005 increased the urgency to build this facility which opened in June 2006.
- 2.8 Members are advised that whilst it is advantageous to this Council's operational requirements to have a Waste Transfer Station in the depot, it is ultimately the disposal authority (Lancashire County Council) responsibility to provide and operate such facilities. Several "Heads of Terms" were drafted, setting out the main terms and conditions for the construction arrangements and the co-ordination of the services to be operated by Ribble Valley Borough Council at the Depot Waste Transfer Station and the services offered within the Lancashire Waste PFI contract. It was intended that a binding legal agreement which would encompass these "Heads of Terms" would be produced. Whilst the final draft of the "Heads of Terms" was signed in 2005, no legal agreement was ever produced nor entered into.
- 2.9 It was also only ever envisaged that this Council would be responsible for operating the Waste Transfer Station and the transportation of all waste streams to the relevant destinations until the completion of the Waste PFI facilities (Farington, Thornton and Huncoat Waste Technology Parks). During this period the additional costs of operating the facility was as predicted offset by the recycling income (including, sale of the material and recycling credit payments).

### **3 Implications of mothballing the Waste Transfer Station**

- 3.1 Currently there are many unanswered questions to which the answers are critical to the decision making process which will help determine the future of our refuse and recycling collection service following the withdrawal of Cost Sharing payment from April 2018. District officers tabled a list of questions to the County Council in October seeking information on their future plans for the mothballed Waste Technology facilities and whether any incentives will be offered to districts in continuing with current arrangements. Those and other relevant questions remain unanswered due to the Director of Community Services for Lancashire County Council suggesting that there was little to be gained from providing a county wide response but writing to all district Chief Executives offering to meet with individual district Service Directors to discuss the future arrangements for the transfer and transport of waste at a strategic level. In order to consider a bespoke list of questions for this meeting we needed to consider whether the Heads of Terms for the Waste Transfer Station are still valid as a result of the decisions by the County council to terminate their PFI waste contract and the mothballing of the of the PFI waste facilities.
- 3.2 It is difficult to provide Members with sufficient guidance at this stage as to whether the mothballing of the waste transfer would generate sufficient savings. The potential savings cover only lighting, maintenance of the loader shovel, the Environment Agency operating licence and the associated building maintenance costs. Whilst the staff member may be redeployed other overhead costs associated with the Transfer Station would still have to be absorbed by other services.
- 3.3 The mothballing of the facility will certainly require the separated material waste streams to be delivered to locations outside the borough boundary. It is anticipated that the proposed meeting with the Director of Community Services for Lancashire

County Council will conclude future responsibilities and arrangement for dealing with our collected waste streams although it is also a likelihood that the County Council may object to this proposal. Officers are seeking Members views on the value of a "statement of intent" for the Director of Community Services to issue in his meeting with the Director from Lancashire County Council. Other consequences of delivering material outside the borough may increase the number collection rounds and thereby increase service costs however this may be offset by additional income that may be claimed as a result of the changes.

- 3.4 Officers at all levels are pressing the County Council for information on their waste treatment and disposal plans post 2018 and any possible incentive payments to continue with current segregated waste arrangements.
- 3.5 As mentioned in paragraph 2.8, the County Council is ultimately responsible for waste transfer and disposal and further consideration could be given to allowing the County Council to take over the operating of the Waste Transfer Station.
- 3.6 Whilst overall this option may not offer much in the way of savings it may provide a lever to improve the outcome of the discussions with the County Council.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – None at this stage although the driver for this review is the loss of £430,340 annual income from 2018. It is currently difficult to evaluate the full resource implications until all the information has been acquired.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Legal opinion is required to establish whether this authority is able to mothball the Waste Transfer Station. Additionally we cannot anticipate the response or changes that may be introduced by the County Council.
- Political – None at this stage.
- Reputation – None at this stage although any negative impacts as a result would not be welcomed or popular and may generate negative reaction from residents.
- Equality & Diversity – eg No implications identified.

#### 5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Without all the information it is difficult to establish whether or not this option may contribute to the savings required, however allowing such an option to be considered within discussions with the County Council may have a positive influence on the outcome.

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JOHN HEAP  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Preparation for Refuse and Recycling Collection Services from 2018 (Report Number 3) – 10 January 2017

Preparation for Refuse and Recycling Collection Services from 2018 (Report Number 2) – 11 October 2016

Preparation for Refuse and Recycling Collection Services from 2018 – 23 August 2016

Options following the withdrawal of recycling credits – 13 January 2016

Minute 495

WRAP - A framework for Greater Consistency in Household Recycling in England

Waste Management Files

Waste Transfer Station (WTS) Salthill Depot, Clitheroe – 12 July 2005

Waste Transfer Station (WTS) Salthill Depot, Clitheroe – 11 January 2005

For further information please ask for Peter McGeorge, extension 4467.