

## **Safe & Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.**

### **Business (Trade) Waste Review – for discussion.**

**The Panel are asked at their meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> November to:**

- **Note the report and agree the proposal for the Panel to trial a single day inquiry investigation**
- **Nominate 2 Councillors from the Panel to act as key contacts for the co-ordination of the single day inquiry**
- **Make any initial suggestions for invitations to the inquiry day**

#### **Summary:**

The Council currently has limited powers to influence the recycling of trade waste as traders are free to use whichever service provider they choose and are not obliged to recycle their waste. However, there could shortly be additional requirements, to increase the amount of trade waste that is recycled.

The Safe & Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel proposes to carry out a trial single day enquiry in order to find out more about the current situation, and what could be done to improve it, and then to make appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery (Councillor Charles Gerrish).

Further details about Single Day Enquiries can be found at the end of this report.

#### **Objectives:**

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- To discover what current services are available to traders, and which additional services they would prefer and be willing to use
- to consider any information that may inform the review of the viability of the Council's current service
- To propose options with the aim of increasing recycling and reducing environmental and aesthetic impacts

#### **Scope of the Enquiry**

The enquiry day will focus only on the collection of commercial waste, and will not include the residential waste collection.

#### **Resources/Budget impact**

The enquiry day will be conducted within the resources available to the Panel.

Outcomes will form part of a larger review of waste services, where they will be considered alongside other information and value-for-money data in order to establish the future direction of the service.

#### **Timescales**

The enquiry day will take place before the end of March 2011, in order to feed into the current review of waste services.

**Background:**

The Council has a duty to arrange for commercial waste to be collected upon request. Traders are however free to use any licensed provider to collect and dispose or recycle their waste. The Council is one body offering a collection service and only has detailed information on the services it provides itself. Waste Services are currently reviewing this operation to ensure it remains profitable, as the business cannot be subsidised by Council Tax funds.

The government is currently reviewing its Waste Strategy and will produce a new paper in April 2011. They have already stated that they would like to see commercial waste subject to some of the same targets as domestic waste and that local government could have more of a role in this.

Trade waste collection services are extremely price sensitive and there is much competition, particularly in the city of Bath. Over recent years the Council has lost market share and is considering whether it is still viable to offer any trade collection service. Neighbouring authorities do not offer these services themselves, but rely upon the market to deliver.

**Services offered by Bath & North East Somerset:**

- Collection:
  - collection service for landfill disposal
  - Paper and card recycling collection service
- Transfer station:
  - Landfill disposal at commercial rates
  - Lower prices for loads segregated for recycling e.g. Green, timber, rubble, metal, cardboard
  - Manual picking service to separate obvious recyclables in the reception hall

A list of prices for these services are shown in Appendix 1.

**Issues:**

The current state of the market gives rise to a number of issues which are far from ideal. These are as follows:

- Behaviour of the traders is largely cost driven so a cost effective collection alternative which encourages recycling needs to be considered / developed.
- Storage space for receptacles is at a premium in most trade premises, particularly in the city centre.

- There is currently an adverse environmental and traffic congestion impact because the current position is de-regulated and there are significant numbers of refuse collection lorries collecting in the same areas.
- The Council's in house service mitigates against taking a role as service broker (i.e. we cannot be commissioner and provider) and the Council must have landfill allowance permits to cover the amount of waste it landfills. If the annual allowance is not enough then the Council must purchase more and recharge the customer accordingly. The private sector are not regulated in this way. This puts us in a less competitive position.
- The types of service available should be improved for the sake of the streetscape. Storage space for containers is limited and bagged waste is not always collected at the right times by contractors and is left out on the street for too long. We experience flytipping of commercial waste and bagged waste is subject to scavenging and vandalism.

### **Options:**

- There is an opportunity to influence commercial waste recycling collections via the Business Improvement District.
- Legislation in due course may discourage landfilling of commercial waste and provide for a bigger Council influence here.
- The national waste strategy may provide for an increased role for local authorities in managing commercial waste.
- Landfill tax is continuing to rise at £8 per tonne per year and will make the cost of recycling more attractive in due course (providing markets for materials are sustained).
- Allocated spaces for storage containers on the highway could be considered to give further options for traders to bulk up their materials and gain more cost effective collection services. Other cities have put bulk bins on the highway with success (eg. Edinburgh, Brighton)
- There may be an opportunity to trial commercial collections of specific waste streams eg. Food waste, utilising existing Council contracts for the treatment of this. Demand for this type of service needs assessing.