

# Economy and Environment Policy Committee

## Agenda

### Members of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee:

Cllr A Dearnley (Chairman)	Cllr D Elmer
Cllr J Knight (Vice Chairman)	Cllr G Francis
Cllr B Bernard	Cllr K Hurn
Cllr C Brown	Cllr R Savage
Cllr F Curson	

### Date & Time:

Friday 12 February 2021  
2.00pm

### Place:

To be hosted remotely at: South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2XE

### Contact:

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### PUBLIC ATTENDANCE:

**This meeting will be live streamed for public viewing via the following link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZciRgwo84-iPyRImsTCIng>

If a member of the public would like to attend to speak on an agenda item, please email your request to [democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk), no later than 5.00pm on Wednesday 10 February 2021.

### Large print version can be made available

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance.

# **AGENDA**

- 1. To report apologies for absence and to identify substitute members;**
- 2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, “by reason of special circumstances” (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency;**
- 3. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members;**  
(Please see guidance form and flow chart attached – page 3)
- 4. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee held 16 October 2020;**  
(attached – page 5)
- 5. Recycling Initiatives Update Report;**  
(report attached – page 11)

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

<p>Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.</p>
<p>Does the interest directly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position?</li> <li>2. relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner?</li> <li>3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council</li> <li>4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own</li> <li>5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in</li> </ol> <p>If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.</p>
<p>Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?</p> <p>If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but you should not partake in general discussion or vote.</p>
<p>Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.</p>
<p>Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.</p>

**FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF.  
PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST  
INSTANCE**

## DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



**Agenda Item: 4**

## **ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of a remote meeting of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council, held on Friday 16 October 2020 at 2.00pm.**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors: A Dearnley (Chairman), B Bernard, C Brown, F Curson, G Francis, K Hurn, J Knight (Vice Chairman) and R Savage

**Cabinet Member Present:** Councillor: M Edney

**Officers in Attendance:** Assistant Director Community Services (S Phelan), Recycling and Partnerships Officer (M Beaumont), Recycling and Partnerships Officer (L Fountain) Recycling and Partnerships Officer (N Noorani) Policy and Partnerships Officer (V Parsons) Contracts, Policy and Partnerships Manager (P Leggett) and Democratic Services Officer (L Artherton).

### **5 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Environment Policy Committee, held on Friday 7 August 2020, were agreed as a correct record.

### **6 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman advised the Committee that the adopted Environmental Strategy was now more prominently featured on the Council website. Links to the webpage were also to be sent to parish and town councils. He added that over the coming months 'bite size' chunks of the Strategy would be published to reinforce the Council's message on protecting and preserving the environment in South Norfolk.

The Chairman noted the ongoing environmental agenda, including the delayed Environment Bill, which recognised the essential role of local government, as well as the UN Climate Change Conference to be held in the UK next autumn.

He also confirmed that South Norfolk had a graduate apprentice starting next week, who would be drafting a Delivery Plan for the Environmental Strategy.

## **7 RECYCLING INITIATIVES SCOPING REPORT**

The Policy and Partnerships Officer (V Parsons) introduced the report, which presented high level options and project proposals for reaching a 60 percent recycling rate by 2025, which was an ambition set out in the Environmental Strategy that was adopted by the Council in July 2020.

The following aims were set out in the Strategy in relation to recycling:

- A 2% increase in the recycling rate by Q4 2020/21 across the District. With a further aspiration to achieve 60% within the five year life of the Strategy
- To explore the provision of food waste collections across the District.
- To minimise the use of single-use wet wipes

The aims were in line with national strategies, which had set a 65 percent recycling target by 2035, as well as household food waste collections from 2023 and non-chargeable garden waste collections.

In terms of resources, the Recycling Team for Broadland and South Norfolk currently consisted of 1.2 FTE Recycling and Partnership Officers, as well as one temporary FTE officer funded until the beginning of March 2021.

The Team covered approximately 120,000 properties across Broadland and South Norfolk with the potential for approximately 228,000 recycling collections to take place per fortnight.

Work within the Team was split between implementing projects to improve recycling rates and to reduce contamination, whilst 40 percent of officer time was the preparation of data and completing statutory returns for both Broadland and South Norfolk, which impacted on capacity to manage large recycling initiatives.

The waste collection services currently offered by South Norfolk Council were:

- Fortnightly co-mingled kerbside collection service for dry recyclables
- Fortnightly residual waste collection
- Fortnightly paid garden waste collection
- Textile banks
- Glass banks
- Paper banks
- Paid bulky waste collections
- Side waste collection

South Norfolk and Norwich were top in terms of dry recycling rates in Norfolk for both 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. Broadland District Council had the highest total recycling in Norfolk (49.6%) although this included a significant amount of green waste from brown bins.

Research into the top recycling authorities in England had been undertaken in order to better understand the drivers for success. The main trends identified included smaller residual waste bins (140L or 180L compared to the 240L used by the Council), widespread food and garden waste services and collection of additional materials at the kerbside. All of which could promote residents behaviour change to increase the recycling rate.

In order to achieve the 60 percent recycling target a number of options that had been found to have the greatest impact on reducing waste production and increasing recycling were proposed for consideration.

These were:

- weekly food waste collections
- three weekly collections for general waste
- smaller bins for general waste and improvements kerbside recycling.

However, Members were asked to note that the adoption of any of the proposals would have significant financial implications that would need careful consideration.

For example, providing a weekly food waste service to all households in the District would have a net cost of £453,437 and an initial capital cost of £1,165,959. Moreover, the current depot was not big enough to handle the predicted 42 percent increase in collection vehicles that the service would require.

Similarly a free garden waste service would increase use, but the cost would be £249,448 per year and result in a loss of £1,352,637 in revenue. The Government were potentially looking at a free service, but had confirmed that they would cover the cost of funding it.

A Member suggested that food waste collection was an area that should be looked at, although he expressed concern about an increase in carbon emissions from collection vehicles, if rolled out across the whole District.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that food waste collected in Broadland went to an anaerobic digester to generate fuel gas. It was also confirmed that all residual waste collected was incinerated to generate electricity and none went to landfill.

The Portfolio Holder for Clean and Safe Environment advised the meeting that he did not consider food waste collection to be financially, environmentally or

logistically viable, as it would cost £1.5m to set up, would increase vehicle carbon emissions and the current depot could not accommodate the 42 percent increase in collection vehicles.

Members were advised that a possible alternative would be to co-mingle food waste with garden waste. Food waste disposed of in this way would then not be able to go to an anaerobic digester but would be composted instead. It was noted that the garden waste service currently brought revenue to the Council of around £1m per annum.

The Committee was informed that the food waste collection service in Broadland cost around £400,000 per year and served about 30,000 households.

The Vice-Chairman agreed with the Portfolio Holder that a food waste collection service would not work in a rural District like South Norfolk. Instead, he suggested an emphasis should be placed on behavioural change to reduce food waste.

A point was also made about the importance of educating young people about recycling and it was confirmed that South Norfolk Youth Advisory Board could be consulted on some of the proposals as they were developed.

The report was proposing the option of the removal of side waste collection, as South Norfolk was one of the few local authorities to still collect side waste. It was noted that more side waste was left out in areas of denser population. A more detailed study of why this was would be carried out if the proposal was recommended for further development. The Portfolio Holder for Clean and Safe Environment suggested that side waste could be made to pay by only collecting it from residents in bags purchased from the Council.

The Chairman noted that the Recycling Team was under-resourced and needed more staff to address these issues. He also stated that he was against the collection of side waste, as it appeared to be self-defeating in relation to the overall objective of reducing total waste. But some concern was expressed by other members that not collecting side waste could lead to an increase in fly tipping.

Another initiative proposed was to reduce the size of residual bins from 240L to 180L, which would lower residual waste, as more would be recycled. However, replacing the bins would cost £1,012,500 along with £202,500 for their delivery. Consideration would also need to be given to how the old bins were disposed of.

A further proposal was to collect residual waste on a three-weekly basis, which had also been shown to produce cost savings, decreased residual



waste and increased recycling rates. However, as with smaller bins, residents had proved resistant to such proposals and a separate nappy collection service might be necessary. It was emphasised that it was not proposed to both reduce the size of bins and collect them on a three weekly basis.

Other proposals to reach 60 percent waste recycling were:

- A kerbside collection service for textiles, batteries and small electrical items. This would increase recycling and be convenient for residents.
- Consistent communications campaigns would keep recycling fresh in residents' minds, and could take advantage of the lessons learned during the behavioural change project by the Recycling Team. Texting residents was also an idea that had successfully been used elsewhere.

The Committee was requested to consider and identify any of the proposals that should be taken forward to include a full assessment of opportunities and risks, detailed costings and resource requirements, in addition to timescales for delivery.

Following further discussion of the proposals before the Committee it was:

## **RESOLVED**

That a report be drafted for Cabinet recommending an increase in resources for the Recycling Team to help the Council deliver a 60 percent recycling rate by 2025; and

To note the report and agree that the following proposals should be taken forward for further development, before being brought back to the Committee for consideration:

1. A food waste collection service in suitable areas of the District;
2. Explore rolling out smaller residual waste bins;
3. Investigate a three weekly collection of residual waste;
4. Consider the implications of no longer accepting side waste in line with UK best practice;
5. Encourage the expansion of the garden waste collection service.
6. Developing a behavior change campaign through clear and consistent communications;

## **8 RECYCLING**

The report presented the Council's response to the Government's Consultation on the Waste Management Plan for England, which was required to be reviewed every six years. The Committee was advised that the Plan being consulted upon did not include any new policies or

announcements.

The questions asked were:

1. If the Waste Management Plan for England met the requirements of Schedule 1 of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011?
2. If the Council's agrees with the conclusions of the Environmental Report (which supported the Waste Management Plan)?
3. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'There will be no additional burdens for businesses, consumers and local authorities arising directly from the adoption of the Plan'

The Council's had originally responded yes to all three question as set out in the paper attached to the Agenda, but following receipt of the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) response, which had raised additional concerns regarding possible additional burdens and responsibilities on local authorities, it had been decided to amend the response to question 3 to include these issues.

It was confirmed that the updated response would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting.

## **9 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was

### **RESOLVED**

To exclude the press and public from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item of business on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)

## **10 WASTE SERVICES REVIEW**

The Committee received the exempt Minutes from the 7 August 2020 and agreed them as a correct record.

(The meeting concluded at 4.53 pm)

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Chairman

## **RECYCLING INITIATIVES UPDATE REPORT**

**Report Author(s):** Michaela Beaumont  
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**Portfolio:** Clean and Safe Environment

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

### **Purpose of the Report:**

This report presents to the Economy and Environment Policy Committee a follow up to the report presented to panel on 16 October 2020 which outlined proposals the Council could explore further to achieve a 60% recycling rate by 2025. This report notes the recommendations made by the panel and provides further context around the current circumstances and national direction for achieving consistency in recycling collections. It

also details what would be needed to achieve a 60% recycling rate. Taking current circumstances into account, a short-term action plan has been prepared with proposed work streams being presented to committee.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Committee to support scoping of reducing residual waste work streams as per Section 4 that will contribute to increasing the Council's recycling rate and are outside of the Government proposals.
2. Committee to support development of a proposal to be taken forward to Cabinet; to reduce side waste through the introduction of a charging mechanism in collaboration with the Waste Service.
3. Committee to support commencement of behavioural change work streams as in section 4.2, that will contribute to increasing recycling rates, reducing residual tonnage and reduce contamination rates and are outside of the Government proposals.
4. Committee to note current situation and to support participation in the Government's consultations to inform the consistency requirements for food and garden waste collections in preparation for introduction in 2023.

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 South Norfolk Council has articulated an aspiration to achieve a 60% recycling rate by 2025, an uplift from the current rate of 42.5% (2019/20).
- 1.2 A short term plan has been developed which will lay the foundations for achieving the 60% aspiration and will prepare the councils for new government requirements as a result of consultations due to take place in spring 2021.
- 1.3 The proposed work plan will allow the councils to prepare for the implementation of the changes set out by government in 2023 regarding consistency in waste collections, the deposit return scheme, and extended producer responsibility.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 in October 2020, the Economy and Environment Policy Committee requested that officers explore further proposals in the following areas:
  - A food waste collection service in suitable areas of the District
  - Smaller residual waste bins
  - Three weekly collection of residual waste
  - No longer accepting side waste

- Expansion of the garden waste service
- Behaviour change campaigns with clear and consistent communications

2.2 From a national perspective, Central Government has given an indication of the intended direction which will impact on Waste Collection Authority activity, predominantly through the Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) 2018 and this was reaffirmed through the Waste Management Plan for England published on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The Environmental Bill, although carried over to the next session of Parliament will also set at least one long-term target around resource efficiency and waste reduction. The potential measures to be introduced are summarised below:

- A 65% recycling target to be achieved by 2035
- Introduction of household food waste collections from 2023
- Introduction of household garden waste collections to all properties with a garden
- Earlier separation of materials, for example separate kerbside collections for glass etc.
- A review of recycling credits and two tier working (the separation between Collection and Disposal authorities).
- Introduction of deposit return schemes, such as for glass bottles
- Extended producer responsibility for packaging

2.3 It is expected that Central Government will consult on these changes in 2021 with a view that this will inform subsequent statutory guidance for local authorities. From the Council's perspective, any new measures will be subject to the Technical, Environmental and Economic Practicability (TEEP) test, which may allow exemptions providing Councils can justify their reasoning based on TEEP criteria.

2.4 Through the Waste and Resources Strategy, the Government has committed to funding the net costs of new burdens on local authorities arising from any new statutory duties introduced to increase consistency in recycling. The Government will work with Local Government bodies to establish the formula for this funding. This funding will not be released until 2023 and it is not expected to be backdated.

2.5 The size of the Recycling and Partnerships team has recently been increased and now consists of 2.2fte members of staff, with the temporary 1fte Recycling and Partnerships Officer being made permanent. This increase in establishment will enable the team to move beyond the day to day priorities and statutory returns to

deliver proactive and long-term projects. In addition, the apprenticeship role will be revisited within the next 12 months, subject to a suitable and relevant qualification being available.

## **COVID-19 Impact**

- 2.1 The Recycling and Partnerships team has changed how it operates due to COVID-19. The usual public engagement activities have been put on hold, such as talks and events. Communal bin monitoring for contamination has also been impacted up until now. The team now has a complete risk assessment, which will enable monitoring work to recommence subject to government guidelines.
- 2.2 National and local waste behaviour trends have begun to emerge as a result of COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns. The Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) conducted research on waste behaviour changes including increases in dry recyclables, particularly card and glass. They also documented the public being more conscious of food waste through an increase in planning and shopping lists being used. At a district level the effects of the pandemic have been seen by an increase in garden waste (with gardening starting earlier in the season), and an increase in the amount of kerbside recyclables placed out for collection. Further data analysis will allow us to see if this trend is sustained and what material streams have been impacted the most and enable us to focus communications campaigns.

## **3. Current position/findings**

### **Waste Collection Arrangements**

- 3.1 Currently South Norfolk does not provide a food waste service so any changes to the types of waste that need to be collected in future will need to take into account the need for a larger depot than the existing Ketteringham site. Big Sky have been commissioned to undertake a land search for suitable sites along the A47 that could be used to accommodate the construction of a new depot as it will not be possible to upgrade the existing depot to meet the council's future needs.

### **Recycling Rates 2010-2020**

- 3.2 The overall recycling rate in South Norfolk has increased over the last 10 years since 2010/2011. The rate has fluctuated from 39.58% (2010/2011) to 42.5% (2019/2020) with a high of 44.9% in 2016/2017.

	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Overall recycling rate %	39.58%	44.9%	5.32% increase	
Composting rate % (food and garden waste)	12.26%	20.04%	7.78% increase	
Dry recycling rate %	27.3%	22.49%	4.81% decrease	

Kg residual waste per household	451.91kg	476.51kg	24.6kg increase	High of 501.27kg in 2014/2015.
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Table 1: Recycling Rates in South Norfolk 2010/11 to 2019/20

### Reaching a 60% recycling rate

- 3.3 Based on the 19/20 figures South Norfolk would need to increase the total recycling tonnage by 8967t to reach 60%, which was the aspiration discussed at the previous Economy and Environment Policy Committee, this figure presumes there is no decrease in residual waste tonnage. This would require a combination of garden and dry recycling waste tonnage increases with the possible inclusion of a food waste service. To reach 60% a 41% increase in the total recycling tonnage collected in 2019/2020 would be needed.
- 3.4 An increase of just over 8967t would generate an increase of £574,281.39 income to the council based on the 2019/2020 recycling credit rate of £64.04 per tonne. However, the cost of the large-scale service changes required to increase the recycling rate is significant as highlighted in the sections below.
- 3.5 Introducing a food waste collection service in South Norfolk would have an estimated capital requirement of £1,165,959, including the procurement of bins and suitable vehicles, and would cost £463,437 per year to operate after allowing for revenue income of approx. £385,439. This would also require consideration to be given to the expansion plans for the depot at Ketteringham. It is expected that as per the Consistency in Recycling Collections in England the new burdens funding would cover the capital and ongoing costs of a new food waste scheme from 2023 (see section 2.4).
- 3.6 The garden waste service currently costs £56.30 per year for residents. Introducing free collections for all households would result in the loss of £1,352,637 in foregone revenue. Although these changes require capital investment, they will have the biggest impact in increasing the recycling rate. To reach 60% through expanding the garden waste service alone a 22,500t increase in tonnage will be needed on the existing 10,272t collected in 2019/2020. This is a 211% increase and may be unobtainable even with all properties on the garden waste service. This can be scoped out further if needed to determine the participation rate of those currently on the scheme. The provision of free garden waste to all properties with a garden, as per the Consistency in Recycling Collection in England to be funded from 2023 through the new burdens funding (see section 2.4).
- 3.7 Behaviour change projects such as those outlined in Section 4, can produce a set of interventions to change the environment which influences people's behaviour. While projects are effective at issues such as reducing contamination and increasing recycling rates overall, it is highly unlikely they alone will result in a significant uplift in the recycling rate. However, they can result in an increase in recycling credits under the current arrangements, providing additional income to the Council.

## **Reducing Residual Waste**

- 3.8 To promote recycling, smaller residual waste bins of 180l capacity, equal to a reduction of 25% of current bin size, could be introduced. Reducing the amount of residual waste will in turn increase the recycling rate %. To implement wholesale across the district would incur costs of around £1.215m. However, it would be possible to trial a pilot project on new developments that would likely be cost neutral to the council as the developer or the new resident would bear the cost of the bins. The Council could also consider free garden waste collections for that development as an incentive.
- 3.9 Similarly, a pilot project for a three weekly residual waste collection could be implemented. For this to be effective and to allow economies in delivery, the pilot would need to take place across one collection round and may also require a commitment to weekly recycling collections in between. Costs would need to be considered in greater depth for this pilot as there could be a need for additional vehicle and staffing.
- 3.10 To encourage residents to manage their food waste at home, the provision of a food and home composting system could be considered. This could be through two trials in urban and rural rounds equating to approximately 2300 households with costs needing to be considered in greater depth. The project will allow us to see if residual waste tonnages decrease and could be implemented to support the pilots above or as a stand-alone project.
- 3.11 In terms of side waste, a trial for a chargeable side waste collection service is proposed, this would be similar to current bulky waste collections and would be booked and paid for in advance and collected with normal refuse. This will have the impact of potentially reducing residual waste, generating an income stream for the council and enabling the crews to accurately manage tonnages for the vehicles. Monitoring of the pilot would also need to involve working with the County Council to explore if it would result in waste being diverted to household waste recycling centres.

## **Recycling Credits**

- 3.12 The recycling rate for 2020/2021 is £64.04 per tonne, which is expected to increase to £65.96 for 2021/2022. The recycling credit system may be revised with the introduction of the new burdens. If this is proposed we would expect it to be included in the consultations taking place in 2021.
- 3.13 NEWs who operate the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) are proposing an increase above inflation in the amount paid per tonne - £35.45 per tonne, including contamination charge, for processing kerbside recyclables from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to take account the global reduction in values of recycled materials. This will impact on the cost to the council of processing dry recyclables collected at the kerbside. The MRF costs are still in discussion and the price given above may change.



#### **4. Proposed action**

4.1 In order to begin work on improving recycling rates a draft short term work plan has been developed which includes the following work streams. It should be noted that activities may flex dependent on the outcomes of the Government consultations, legislation change and new burdens funding including any changes to recycling credits. It is proposed that the medium and longer term activities be finalised when the Council has more information on these outcomes and when the economic impact of COVID-19 have been ascertained and further financial/ resources commitment can be agreed. The proposed work streams are:

#### **4.2 Behaviour change**

- Utilise learning from COVID-19 national trends to adapt communication campaigns for best results. It is evident that behaviour change has taken place during the first lockdown and continues to regarding managing waste at home. This includes food waste management at home, increases in residual waste tonnage and increases in certain waste streams such as cardboard through online deliveries. It is the team's vision to target these new behaviours whilst they are still new and evolving.
- Work with the Norfolk Waste Partnership (NWP) and the Communications team on developing simple terminology and iconography to achieve targeted waste behaviour changes (reduce contamination and residual waste, and increase recycling)
- Explore the development of an online survey across both districts to help identify barriers and opportunities on the services. The results from the survey will help to identify behaviour change as a result of the pandemic and inform campaigns such as reducing residual waste, using the correct bins and recycling right (increasing recycling and decreasing contamination).
- Develop a project focussed on reducing contamination and increasing recycling at communal bin sites. This will include targeted communication to problem areas.
- Target areas in the district linking to MRF data and feedback from the crew on reducing contamination. This will be developed around targeted communication until resources and the current climate allows individual bin monitoring on a wider scale.
- Promote national campaigns linked to behaviour change e.g. the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP).
- Investigate and implement a text messaging service and an email alert system for waste collections services.

#### **4.3 Engagement and developing partnerships**

- Hold workshops with Youth Advisory Boards (YABs) to highlight our proposals and seek feedback from a young person's perspective.
- Continue engagement with, and contribute to achieve ambitions set by the Norfolk Waste Partnership
- Engagement with other relevant external organisations such as WRAP
- Consult with high achieving authorities in relation to learning from best practice. To hold meetings between both officers and members where appropriate.

#### 4.4 Reduce residual waste

- Investigate opportunities for a compositional analysis at both district and county level. A compositional analysis will help determine what material streams our communications and projects need to focus on.
- To pilot areas (both rural and urban) to introduce 180L residual bins for new developments. The areas and completion of this will be agreed with the depot.
- Investigate 3 weekly collections on a pilot collection round

#### 4.5 Side waste, working in partnership with the SNC Waste Service

- Conduct a user survey to better understand the scale of the issue and reasons behind the use of side waste.
- Investigate and pilot a potential charging model for side waste

#### 4.6 Single use plastic

- Promote the reduction of single use plastic usage across the districts in line with the delivery of the Environmental Strategy and potential outcomes of Government consultations.
- To investigate the feasibility of a plan to work with local independent businesses and phase out single use plastics. It is expected that this will be partly covered through the extension of the producer responsibility system via the Environment Bill and consultations to take place in 2021 (see section 2.3).
- Further promotion of the water Refill scheme

#### 4.7 Investigate kerbside Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) collections.

- 4.8 Respond to national consultations, these will be undertaken as individual Council's but it is planned to use a Norfolk Waste Partnership template to indicate a collaborative approach across Norfolk. This template can then be adapted as needed.

## **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 Officers will finalise the action plan to include outcomes, resource requirements, timelines and linkages with other departments and as a priority, to develop the proposal for introducing a charging mechanism for side waste.
- 5.2 Work will commence on the short-term work plan in collaboration with partners, including the SNC Waste Service, the Norfolk Waste Partnership and WRAP, with an early activity planned to be engagement with the local Youth Advisory Boards.
- 5.3 It is further proposed that a report is presented to Committee in autumn 2021. This will include any outcomes and findings of the activities contained within the work plan and will aim to provide further insight in plans to deliver consistency in waste and recycling collections nationally.

## **6. Other options**

- 6.1 Committee may choose to continue with plans to achieve 60% recycling at the current proposed timescales. However, this will require significant initial capital and resource commitments with work to implement starting ahead of the govt. announcements on the direction of waste collections. If this approach is agreed any capital and ongoing costs that may have been secured through the new burdens funding in 2023 will not be provided retrospectively. The main funding expected is to provide food and garden waste to all properties, subject to TEEP.
- 6.2 Committee may decide against progression of any of these proposals. However, it would then be extremely unlikely that South Norfolk would be able to increase recycling rates and may even see a decrease. This would not be compatible with the ambitions set out in the Environmental Strategy.

## **7. Issues and risks**

### **7.1 Resource Implications**

- An increase in the establishment for the Recycling and Partnership Officers has been agreed as stated in section 2.5. It is anticipated that this may be reviewed as work is progressing to check resource levels are adequate.
- The proposed work streams will have a resource impact on other areas in the Council, specifically linked to the Communications team and IT. Those

teams will be involved in the development of any work streams to gauge ongoing resource need and for inclusion in their own workload planning.

- The new burdens funding will not be released until 2023 and this will not be backdated to cover the costs of any service changes that have already been implemented (see section 2.4). This fund is expected to cover the full costs for both implementation and ongoing. There is the risk that implementing service, such as food waste collections to all properties across Broadland prior to 2023, may incur costs that could have been included under the new burdens.
- The current Ketteringham waste depot for South Norfolk is limited and not big enough to accommodate additional vehicles etc. for significant service changes. This will include expansion to the garden waste service and the implementation of a food waste collection service.
- The current recycling credit scheme may be reviewed with the introduction of the new burdens funding (see section 3.12)

- 7.2 **Covid-19** – The economic impact of Covid-19 for local authorities in addition to the fluid situation regarding government guidance and staff deployment impacting on resource capacity will need to be closely monitored.
- 7.3 **Legal Implications** – The Government has given a clear indication on the ambitions for waste collection and recycling services in the future, however statutory guidance will not be available for local authorities until a period of consultation has been completed in 2021, subject to government adhering to their own timelines. If the Council chooses to proceed with these services too early, there is a risk they may not meet the statutory requirements once introduced.
- 7.4 **Equality Implications** – The activities contained within the work plan are designed to have a positive impact on the community including for those who may have one, or more, of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. As the work streams are developed in greater depth including changes to services as per new legislation, an Equalities and Communities Impact Assessment will be completed for each area.
- 7.5 **Environmental Impact** – In reducing waste and increasing recycling the council is following the waste hierarchy (Prevention, Preparing for Re-use/repair, Recycling, Other recovery, and then Disposal) and reducing the amount for incineration. Recycling enables us to conserve resources by reducing the need for energy intensive production of additional resources using new materials. We are committed to increasing recycling and reducing waste as per the Environmental Strategy and Government requirements. For food waste anaerobic digestion is considered environmentally better than composting and other recovery options.
- 7.6 **Crime and Disorder** – Consideration has been given as to whether measures to reduce residual waste such as smaller waste bins, three weekly collections and chargeable side-waste collections could lead to an increase in fly-tipping. This would need to be considered in more depth and as part of the monitoring of any

pilot schemes. However, evidence suggests that the measures Rochford council put in place did not result in a fly-tipping increase. Similarly, the local authorities that introduced 3 weekly collections did not see an increase.

## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 The aspiration to achieve a 60% recycling rate is a sound aspiration for the Council and aligns us with the policy direction that is being driven by Central Government. However, until we have a clearer picture of the exact statutory requirements and any associated new burdens funding, the Council risks an outlay of resources at a time of increased uncertainty in relation to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, demand on Council services and future spending reviews.
- 8.2 Instead the agreed increase in staff resource in addition to the short-term work streams outlined in Section 4 of this report will strike a middle ground in allowing the Council to be prepared to test and/or adopt new waste collection measures while also working to increase the recycling rate in the meantime through a comprehensive behaviour change programme and residual waste reduction proposals.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 Committee to support scoping of reducing residual waste work streams, as per Section 4 that will contribute to increasing the Council's recycling rate and are outside of the Government proposals.
- 9.2 Committee to support development of a proposal to be taken forward to Cabinet; to reduce side waste through the introduction of a charging mechanism in collaboration with the Waste Service.
- 9.3 Committee to support commencement of behavioural change work streams as in section 4.2, that will contribute to increasing recycling rates, reducing residual tonnage and reduce contamination rates and are outside of the Government proposals.
- 9.4 Committee to note current situation and to support participation in the Government's consultations to inform the consistency requirements for food and garden waste collections in preparation for introduction in 2023.