

Scrutiny Review: Waste Management

Review from the Improving Places Select
Commission Task & Finish Group

December 2015

Scrutiny Review Group:-

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CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary.....	3
2. Why Members wanted to undertake this review	5
3. Methodology	5
4. Legal and Policy Drivers.....	6
5. Background	8
6. Findings.....	12
7. Recommendations	18
8. Thanks.....	20
9. Glossary	20
10. Appendices	21
Appendix 1. Definition of Household Waste / Non Household Waste	21
Appendix 2. Estimated Costs for Recyclables Collection in 2015/16 -RMBC.....	22
Appendix 3. Location map showing HWRCs site in Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham....	23
Appendix 4. Minimum levels of HWRC provision	24
Appendix 5. Bulky Item Collection Service	26
Appendix 6. Customer Satisfaction Survey undertaken by FCC Environmental at the BDR HWRC Sites	27

1. Executive Summary

This review was one of a number of service areas within Environment and Development Services, identified by the Commissioner Sir Derek Myers as a potential scrutiny review to take place during 2015/2016. The findings from the review are to be presented to Improving Places Select Commission on 20th January 2016 and then to the Commissioners and Advisory Cabinet.

A Task and Finish Group (referred to in the report as 'Group') was established involving the following Members:-

- Councillor Maggie Godfrey (Lab) as the Chairperson of the group.
- Councillor Kath Reeder (UKIP),
- Councillor Emma Wallis (Lab)
- Councillor Ken Wyatt (Lab) and
- Mr Pat Cahill – Co-optee Member

The Group was supported by Dianne Thomas, Advisor, Local Government Association and the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

The group looked at options in relation to Household Waste Recycling Centres; re-use facilities, the collection of bulky items, green waste collections, kerbside collections textiles and small electricals and the collection of commercial waste.

The Group recognises that waste management is one of the most important front line services that the Council delivers to the people of Rotherham and is both a Waste Collection and Waste Disposal Authority

The review involved obtaining information from a number of sources including officers from within the Council, other local authorities, private contractors, charitable organisations to learn from their experiences in managing waste.

The main findings of the review are as follows:

- There is no current waste strategy in operation in the Council which can result in a lack of direction for service provision. Work however is ongoing with Barnsley and Doncaster as part of the BDR Partnership to rectify this matter.
- There are 4 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC's) in the borough, which are open 6 days a week. The option to close the sites an additional day per week has been deferred for the present. The sites are managed by FCC Environmental, the contract being part of a wider contract with Barnsley and Doncaster, which ends in 2018.
- The Group considered there was scope for charging of non-household waste to raise income/reduce costs rather than reducing the hours of opening at these centres. Members would also encourage HWRC provision being considered as a whole across the whole BDR partnership to expand the services offered (such as re-use) and to take advantage of economies of scale.
- Kerbside collection is currently available for textiles, however the tonnage gathered from this service is minimal, indicating that residents may not know about this service. Opportunities have been explored with a charitable organisation to change the kerbside collection service to include textiles and small electrical items.
- The Council has the option whether or not to charge for the collection of green waste. The Group considered that introducing a charge for this service would be viewed by

the residents as a further erosion of services and could lead to increased fly tipping and reduced recycling.

- The collection of bulky items from residents is a price sensitive service, charge too much and residents will not use the service and are likely to find other ways of disposing of the items. The Group looked at other ways of delivering this service by working with a charitable organisation to encourage re-use.
- RMBC currently provides a commercial waste collection service, capturing only 12% of the market. There is capacity at the Treatment Plant at Manvers to accommodate an increase in this service at favourable rates. Information learnt from Nottingham City Council on how they provide this service led the Group to recommend a significant expansion of the commercial waste collection service which has the capacity to raise significant income for the Council.
- The work was undertaken as a short focussed review which will feed recommendations into the medium term financial strategy setting process. In addition the work was conducted in parallel with the on-going discussions for budget reductions in 2016/17 and beyond. It has not been able to fully consider the impact of any budget reductions as these decisions have yet to be taken.

2. Why Members wanted to undertake this review

This review was one of a number of service areas within Environment and Development Services, identified by the Commissioner Sir Derek Myers as potential scrutiny reviews during 2015/16. Findings from this review are to be presented to the Improving Places Select Commission on 20th January 2016 and then to the Commissioners and the Advisory Cabinet.

3. Methodology

The Chair of Improving Places Select Commission decided to establish a Task & Finish Group in July 2015, to conduct a short, focused review which would feed recommendations into the medium term financial strategy setting process; the following members were nominated to undertake this review:

- Cllr Maggie Godfrey (Lab) as the Chairperson of the group, assisted by
- Cllr Kath Reeder (UKIP)
- Cllr Emma Wallis (Lab)
- Cllr Ken Wyatt (Lab) and
- Mr Pat Cahill – Co-optee Member.

The Group was supported by Dianne Thomas – Advisor Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny and Christine Majer, Scrutiny Officer.

The scope of the review was agreed by the Group:-

- **to explore the current provision of household waste recycling centres (HWRC's);**
- **special household waste collections (green waste and bulky collections);**
- **examine options for future provision identifying potential areas for savings (and / or income generation); and**
- **explore options for increasing recycling rates and introducing re-use into the waste collection service.**

The scope of the review was deliberately kept tight given the limited timeframe involved. It did not therefore deal with broader issues relating to the kerbside collection and disposal service which is subject to a full service review as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan. In addition the review was conducted in parallel with the on-going discussions on managing the budget reductions for 2016/17 and beyond. It has therefore not been able to fully consider the impact of any budget reductions as these decisions have yet to be taken.

The Group received evidence from the following officers and organisations:-

Streetpride – RMBC

- David Burton, Director
- Adrian Gabriel, Principal Officer.
- David Hill, Principal Officer.
- Bob Morrison, Waste Collection Manager.

Public Health – RMBC

- Alison Iliff , Manager Public Health Principal (Health Improvement)

FCC Environmental Ltd

- Andrew Baxter, Contracts Manager.

British Heart Foundation

- Karen O' Donoghue, National Stock Generation Manager

A site visit to Selby's Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in North Yorkshire was undertaken by some members of the Group on 18th November 2015 to observe and learn how the HWRC's are managed in the area and in particular the system for charging for accepting various waste streams.

Representatives from **North Yorkshire County Council** included:-

- Cllr Chris Metcalf, Executive Member for Waste
- Tony Norris, Waste Services Manager.
- Joanne Kearney, Waste Contracts Manager
- Mark Kirk, Kier Contracts Manager
- David Garnham, Kier, Area Supervisor

All of whom provided us with an open and honest discussion on the service provision.

Members of the Group met with

Paul Vanston from Kent Resource Partnership and Andy Vaughan from Nottingham City Council both of whom were invited by the Commissioners to Rotherham to undertake a "health check" on the current waste service in Streetpride.

An outcome of this meeting was for some Group members to visit Nottingham County Council to see how they manage and administer the collection of commercial waste.

Andrew Beighton Commercial Development Manager and Daniel Ayrton Commercial Operations Manager provided the group with a wealth of information as a contribution to this review.

Joanna Chauhan, Senior Environmental Services Officer at Elmbridge Borough Council. Joanna took part in a Group meeting via a telephone call, to outline how the collection of textiles and small electrical good service, operated by the British Heart Foundation is run in Elmbridge.

Abigail Cox Community Education Liaison Officer at Shanks Treatment Plant kindly gave a tour of the plant to explain the final process in the treatment of waste collected from the residents of Rotherham.

Initial research from the internet was undertaken to explore experiences of other councils across England in relation to green waste.

4. Legal and Policy Drivers

4.1 RMBC is both a waste collection authority (WCA) and a waste disposal authority (WDA): As a WCA, the Council statutorily must arrange a regular collection of domestic waste for which it cannot make a charge as the cost is covered by the Council Tax. In Rotherham this is achieved through alternate week collections of residual waste in wheeled bins and recycling materials in blue boxes and bags.

4.2 The Council as a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority has a statutory obligation under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (s.45) and Environmental Protection Act 1990 (s.51) a duty to:

- Arrange for the collection of household waste
- Arrange for the collection of at least four types of recyclable waste together or individually separate from the rest of the household waste.
- Make arrangement for collection of non-household waste, if requested to do so by the occupier of a premise, however a reasonable charge may be made.
- Arrange for the treatment or disposal of controlled waste it collects in its area.
- Arrange for places to be provided at which residents in the area may deposit their household waste and for the disposal of waste so deposited. (Household Waste Recycling Centres)

4.3 The definition of household waste encompasses a range of waste streams, one of which is garden waste; therefore the Council is obligated to collect garden waste. However under this Act; The Controlled Waste Regulations (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 also states that the collection of garden waste is a service for which the Council may make a reasonable charge.

Therefore it is in the determination of the Council to:

- Retain a free collection service for garden waste.
- Implement a charging scheme for the collection of garden waste.
- Collect garden waste placed in the black residual bin.

4.4 In addition as a WDA, the Council is statutorily required¹ to arrange for places to be provided at which residents in its area may deposit their household waste and arrange for the disposal of that waste. The Act further stipulates that HWRCs should be:

- Situated within the local authority area or reasonably accessible to residents;
- Open at all reasonable times (including at least one period on the Saturday or following day of each week except a week in which the Saturday is 25th December or 1st January);
- Free of charge to residents in the area, to dispose of their own household waste;
- It is up to the Council how it fulfils this duty in respect of how many HWRC's are provided.

4.5 Legally, charges cannot be made at HWRCs for household waste including:

- Small recyclables: cardboard, paper, cans, glass; plastic bottles, drinks cartons, textiles and shoes, books
- Green (garden) waste;
- Large and small domestic appliances;
- Carpet; mattresses; furniture;
- Black bin waste.

However, charges may be made for building materials and other wastes:

- DIY waste: doors and windows; fitted kitchens; fitted wardrobes; inert material such as rubble and concrete; bricks and roof tiles; plasterboard; soil from landscaping

¹ Section 51(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990

activities;

Any other building materials; (Not accepted at Rotherham sites);

- Tyres.

RMBC may also charge users who live outside the borough and trade and commercial customers.

- 4.6 Although RMBC is required to make some HWRC provision and must provide this free of charge for Rotherham residents' to bring their household waste;² the Group have examined whether the provision could be reduced to release savings or whether charges could be made for certain types of waste to generate income.
- 4.7 Rotherham MBC does not currently have a Waste Management Strategy although this is now being developed with its partners Barnsley MBC, Doncaster MBC and the City of Sheffield to provide a regional perspective on waste management.
- 4.8 The Council is currently undertaking an All Service Review across all services as part of the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan. As part of this review officers have to put forward savings proposals to achieve savings over the next three years.

In terms of Waste Collection including Management and overheads the saving target is £1.272m.

5. Background

The different strands of Rotherham's waste service are as follows:

- Household waste kerbside collection of recyclables and residual waste.
- Household waste recycling centres.
- Kerbside green waste collection.
- Bulky goods collection.
- Bring sites.
- Commercial waste collection.
- Clinical waste collection.

The current provision in respect of each of these is considered in turn.

5.1 Kerbside Collection Service

5.1.1 The current cycle of collections is on a fortnightly basis with alternate black bin, green bins and blue boxes and bags. Kerbside recycling collects in the blue box – glass, cans and textiles, the blue bag, paper and cardboard. The green bin is for green waste. At this moment there is no provision for the collection of plastics. Textiles are collected but only a small tonnage is presented indicating that residents are often not aware of this service, use the black bin or take such items to charity shops, HWRC's or Bring Sites.

5.1.2 RMBC together with its waste partners, Doncaster MBC and Barnsley MBC (BDR Waste Partnership) has recently entered into 25 year PFI contract (total contract value of £750m) with 3SE, (a private consortium of Shanks and SSE) for the treatment and disposal of residual waste through a newly constructed waste treatment plant at Manvers. All black

² Appendix 1 provides a definition of household waste.

bin waste from all three council areas began being delivered to the plant at the end of February 2015 at the rate of around 1,000 tonnes a day.

- 5.1.3 The Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facility seeks to maximise recycling by extracting any overlooked plastic, steel, aluminium, glass and aggregate remaining from residents' black bins. The rest of the household waste is either processed through the plant to create a Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) which is shipped on to the power station at Ferrybridge where it is used to generate electricity for the national grid. The organic fraction of the waste is treated on site in the Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility to produce electricity and a form of compost which can be used for restoring former industrial land.
- 5.1.4 This means that very little of Rotherham's waste is landfilled (only about 5%) and the electricity generated from the RDF is estimated to save the equivalent of 114,000 tonnes of CO² every year.
- 5.1.5 RMBC have guaranteed to deliver a minimum 54,000 tonnes of waste to this site per annum.

The current disposal costs to the Council for the site are

Band 1 = £108.93 per tonne up to 54,000 tonnes per annum.

Band 2 = £13.68 per tonne between 54,001 tonnes and 79,500 tonnes per annum.

Band 3 = £117.36 per tonne over 79,500 tonnes per annum.

Dry recyclables go to Beatson Clarke's – glass and cans, paper and card to Newport Paper PLC via KCM Recycling, both local companies.

- 5.1.6 In the past kerbside recycling targets were based on weight. In renewing the contract for kerbside recycling collections, very few contractors included a price for collecting plastics. The difficulty is that plastic is a light but bulky item to collect and prices for recycling vary enormously. At present there is no processing capacity to deal with recycling of plastic in Rotherham. The Council does have a number of plastic banks placed at the large supermarkets to support plastic recycling. There is currently a reduction in the amount of paper being recycled due to the increase in the cost of paper and an increase in on line technology to access daily news'
- 5.1.7 Based on the financial figures from the 2015/16 budget, it is estimated that the cost of collecting recyclables for the Council will be £1,554,484³. The estimated income is £529,500. The cost to process green waste totals £340,000.
- 5.1.8 At present, recyclables comprise about 40% of waste collected at kerbside. If recycling rates increase, RMBC could reduce its costs as there would be no real increase in the cost of collection. The Group recognised the potential to introduce a textile and small electricals kerbside collection service has been explored as a result of discussions with the British Heart Foundation.

5.2 Household Waste Recycling Centres

- 5.2.1 RMBC currently provides four Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) located throughout the borough.⁴ The Council owns the property rights at Lidget Lane, Bramley, Warren Vale, Rawmarsh and Magilla North Anston. However, the HWRC at Carr Hill, Rotherham is leased from Wentworth Estates (until 2024). The HWRC service is a part of

³ Appendix 2 shows the cost of collecting recyclables to the Council

⁴ Appendix 3 shows locations of HWRCs in Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster.

the RMBC's Street Pride function within the Environment and Development Directorate. All of the sites have limited capacity with little or no room for expansion.

5.2.2 As part of agreed Council savings, a decision was taken to close each of the HWRCs on one day each week (each site closing on a different day to maintain a more acceptable level of service to residents). This provided a saving of £16k to RMBC. There appears to have been minimal impact on either level of customer satisfaction or on the amount of fly tipping as a consequence. However, congestion on sites has increased, especially on the day immediately following a closure. In 2013, the Council again reviewed the HWRC budget and decided to close the sites on a second day each week to reduce spending by a further £26k. However this additional cut to the service has not been implemented.

5.3 **Green Waste Service**

5.3.1 The Council currently provides for a free collection of garden waste using a 240 litre green bin. The service currently operates throughout the period April to October Inclusive (Summer Only Service for a 7 month period). Crews comprising of a Driver and 2 Loaders, to each of the 8 vehicles are deployed on to the service which usually covers the period. The current cost for treating green waste is £17.12 per tonne with the annual cost for treatment being £340k. The overall cost of the green waste service is around £1m.

5.3.2 The contract has recently been the subject of a joint procurement with Council partners in Barnsley and Doncaster. The contract has been awarded to two companies Freelands and SJB Recycling (part of Yorwaste), with Rotherham opting to use the latter partner. The contract is initially for 5 years, with the option to extend for a further 2 years on 2 occasions when the initial contract term runs out.

5.3.3 It is possible for LA's to make a charge for collection of green waste and a number of authorities, including Sheffield now do so, as pressure on budgets has increased. RMBC have looked at this as an option for a number of years but it has been discounted to date, as it may be perceived as an erosion of service among residents. It also has the potential to increase the problem of fly tipping. It also is likely to lead to householders adding garden waste to the black bin waste, thus changing the composition of the household waste stream which may lead to higher disposal costs, if the council deviates from the agreed composition of residual waste as part of the PFI contract.

5.3.4 It is also recognised that the reduction in the service to summer only has been unpopular with pressure from some Area Assemblies to continue the service for an additional month until the end of November. This has therefore also been considered by the Group.

5.4 **Bulky Item Collection**

5.4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to collect household waste if requested by the occupier of a premise to do so but may make a reasonable charge for the collection of bulky items of waste. Demand for the Bulky Items Collection Service is price sensitive with too high a charge potentially leading to some individuals finding alternative means of disposing of items which, at worst, may include fly tipping.

5.4.2 The current charge for the service has been held since 2011 and allows for 3 items to be collected for £21 with the option for a further 3 items for an additional £15. There is a discount for Rothercard holders of 50%. There is a higher rate for non-domestic items such as DIY materials.

The full scale of charges for Rotherham and nearby districts is included at Appendix 4⁵

- 5.4.3 All goods collected are initially taken to one of the HWRCs for recycling or a Waste Transfer Station at Tinsley for disposal. White goods and other electrical items that are delivered to HWRC's are recycled. The service currently operates approximately 4 days a week. Whilst the collection service operates at a surplus of approximately £10k; this is outweighed by the disposal costs of £30k. This leads to a net deficit of £20k to the Council.
- 5.4.4 The Group noted that all electrical goods delivered to a HWRC are recycled at no cost to the Council through the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) contract. There are opportunities for working with the third sector to increase the re-use of goods that are currently deposited at our HWRC's. This will require the cooperation of our appointed HWRC partner and our WEEE contractors for electrical items. This could lead to the creation of job opportunities and an income stream for charities.
- 5.4.5 The Group did not consider if there was potential to increase the current charging levels for the bulky goods service due to the price sensitivity. However, the potential for working with the third sector was investigated as part of this review with the British Heart Foundation as a partner in Rotherham Heart Town status.

5.5 **Bring Sites**

- 5.5.1 Currently RMBC runs 36 recycling points across the Borough, varying in size and location. The sites are unstaffed but inspected by Waste Management staff to ensure cleanliness, accessibility, available bin capacity and general status. The sites are on a mixture of authority land, private land and supermarket car parks. Open agreements are in place with individual waste management companies to collect and process our waste materials. Generally, Bring Sites are cost neutral to the authority but there are proposals to close a number of sites with low usage to allow more efficient use of labour and staffing, focusing on the higher performing sites. It is considered this may also encourage higher use of our kerbside recycling collection service.
- 5.5.2 The Group did not consider there were any advantages to looking at Bring sites any further at this stage due to the potential for any costs savings being minimal

5.6 **Commercial Waste Collection Service**

- 5.6.1 The Council has a legal obligation to make arrangements for the collection of commercial waste if requested to do so and may recover a reasonable charge for such.
- 5.6.2 RMBC currently holds 921 contracts to collect commercial waste comprising of external businesses (shops, offices etc), charitable organisations and schools. The current charges imposed by Rotherham Council are significantly higher than those charged by neighbouring authorities.
- 5.6.3 The relatively high charges makes our service uncompetitive compared to private waste management companies operating in our area. There are around 7,500 registered business properties operating in Rotherham which means we serve only about 12% of the market. The cost of the service is currently around £510k with income generation of £700k which means we only generate a budget contribution of around £190k.
- 5.6.4 In view of this, the Group gave further consideration to this significant opportunity to raise

⁵ Appendix 4 Charges by Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham for the Collection of Bulky Items.

income for the waste service and visited Nottingham City Council which runs a profitable waste collection and recycling service as part of an extensive facilities management service for businesses.

6. Findings

The Group recognises that waste management is one of the most important front line services that it delivers to the residents of the borough, and that a failure to deliver a consistent, high quality service will be detrimental to its reputation. The key outcome for the service is to deliver a safe, well managed and efficient service for the collection, recycling, treatment and disposal of waste, and to achieve at least a 50% recycling rate. The Group felt that not having a current Waste Strategy for Rotherham was could potentially result in fragmented services and jeopardising the level of service provision

6.1 HWRCs

- 6.1.1 The review considered whether further cost savings should be sought at HWRC's through further reductions in opening hours or reduction in the number of centres. It concluded that the savings from additional closures is small relative to the overall cost of the HWRC's of just over £1.5m
- 6.1.2 The sites are managed and operated through a contract with FCC Environmental, who receives a fixed Management Fee per site per day. Additionally, a Recycling Premium is also paid, which increases as recycling performance improves. In this way the Contractor is incentivised to segregate materials for recycling. Ownership of waste passes to FCC Environmental once deposited on site. This contract is part of a wider partnership with Barnsley MBC and Doncaster MBC through the joint waste partnership arrangements that runs until autumn 2018.
- 6.1.3 HWRCs provide a facility for residents to bring any additional household waste and separate it out for either recycling or disposal. Local authorities have been set an EU target to increase the proportion of waste that is recycled to 50% of all household waste by 2020. Approximately 20% of our household waste is deposited at HWRC's with the average recycling rate achieved being 53% (including rubble and other inert materials the figure rises to 77%)
- 6.1.4 At present there is no provision at any of the HWRC's to separate out items that could be suitable for re-use rather than recycling or disposal.
- 6.1.5 Currently the Council makes no routine checks to determine whether users of the HWRCs are its own residents or charge for residents from out of the borough to use the site, and reciprocally both Barnsley and Doncaster do not charge Rotherham residents. Trade and commercial waste organisations are expressly forbidden from using HWRCs as they are solely provided for domestic waste.
- 6.1.6 There are three references to HWRCs in the Government's National Waste Strategy, indicating that:
- Free access to HWRCs should continue;
 - The use of HWRCs by small businesses should be encouraged "at an affordable cost to the business user." This would help smaller businesses to recycle by using existing infrastructure more effectively and may also be of benefit to local authorities

and household residents as revenues generated from accepting business waste could help provide the funds needed to keep the sites open;

- The development of opportunities for re-use collection facilities at HWRCs should be encouraged.

The basic statutory provision is for at least one HWRC, as long as that is deemed “reasonably accessible to persons resident in the area”. Beyond that, there is no statutory guidance on what the level of HWRC provision should be. However, some organisations have done some work to assess this and provide guidance.

6.1.7 Within the BDR waste partnership, Rotherham has comparatively fewer HWRCs per head of population (although a greater number than in Sheffield) but it has the lowest catchment radius at three miles, which means that residents in Rotherham have shorter distances to drive to their nearest HWRC than in either Barnsley or Doncaster.

6.1.8 Given the pressure on Council budgets and the deferred decision to close the HWRCs for an additional day per week the Group considered whether this further reduction to the service will need to be implemented after 2016/17, or if there is a need to make further proposals for savings. An alternative/additional consideration has also been given to the opportunity to provide for small businesses to use the HWRC’s for the disposal of trade waste as recommended by the National Waste Strategy and whether the Council should charge for those types of waste which the law allows. The Group also looked at the opportunity for the introduction of a re-use service at the HWRCs.

6.2 Findings from FCC

6.2.1 Evidence was taken from FCC on the impacts of reduced opening hours to date and their expectations should additional reductions of service be introduced. The closure of the centres on one day per week has not made a material difference in tonnage received. There has been an impact in terms of sites becoming busier on opening days with queuing traffic especially at Carr Hill. The increased daily traffic does however reduce the ability of staff to direct, advise and educate the public to maximise recycling at the centres. There has been some impact on increased fly tipping at the sites entrances but it is less of a problem than anticipated.

6.2.2 There has recently been a resident’s satisfaction survey carried out at the HWRC’s. The results are attached in Appendix 6⁶. It should be noted that only two of the 4 sites took part in the survey. It should also be noted that the satisfaction rate at the Rotherham sites was lower than at Doncaster or Barnsley.

6.2.3 FCC are understandably not keen to see a further reduction of service at HWRC’s as it is anticipated that this would affect the customer satisfaction rate. As an alternative, they suggested that options to generate income are explored for example charging for the disposal of non-domestic waste (i.e. inert waste, difficult/hazardous waste, building waste).

6.2.4 FCC was asked about the potential to provide a service for disposal of commercial waste for small businesses as advocated by the National Waste Strategy. Although similar initiatives have been trialed in other areas, these have proved expensive to operate because of disposal charges. To be able offer this service at HWRCs Rotherham it would require capital investment along with a suitably sized site to accommodate the additional waste. None of the current sites in Rotherham are large enough to support this option.

⁶ Appendix 6 Customer Satisfaction Survey undertaken by FCC Environmental at the BDR HWRC sites

- 6.2.5 It would appear that if serious provision is to be made for reception of commercial waste then this should be looked at on a sub-regional basis with our PFI partners as part of the BDR contract renewal in 2018.
- 6.2.6 Evidence was also sought from FCC on the potential to introduce a re-use service on the HWRC's. FCC employs a full time Development Manager to explore re-use options in the area. The scheme would operate through a partnership with a local charity with a facility on each HWRC for donations by the public for items to be resold. The goods would then be moved to this single centre and sold by auction at that site or through the shops. FCC already operate such a scheme in Buckinghamshire, Staffordshire, Wrexham and Hull accepting furniture, bric a brac, records, electrical items, books and bikes. Income is split between FCC and the charity.
- 6.2.7 FCC indicated that they cannot roll out such a re-use service in Rotherham under the current contract and would want a 7-10 year contract in the future due to the capital investment required.
- 6.2.8 It would appear that RMBC is currently unable to operate a re-use service from its HWRCs until the new contract is renegotiated in 2018, unless FCC is prepared to co-operate in this regard. This is a disappointment given that there are charities within Rotherham such as BHF which would like to offer such a service in the shorter term.
- 6.2.9 Given the limitations of size and capacity of the four HWRCs there would be merit in considering provision of say two larger centres in the longer term which could provide for receipt of more recyclables, provide a service for small businesses and allow for introduction of a re-use service including the potential for re-use shops on site. This issue should be considered as part of any future waste strategy in Rotherham

6.3 Findings from North Yorkshire CC

- 6.3.1 A visit was made to Selby HWRC was to explore the option of charging for waste (e.g. hardcore, rubble, plasterboard and soils). Much of this will be from Household DIY projects but, in North Yorkshire unlike Rotherham, this service is also available to small businesses.
- 6.3.2 Charging was introduced in 2014 and with this the restrictions on the quantity of waste to be deposited was removed. North Yorkshire CC pays a management fee to Kier to run 18 HWRCs. The income received from the charging of commercial waste offsets the cost of accepting those materials. This was introduced to give businesses a legal option to dispose of their waste. North Yorkshire CC was able to make savings on this aspect of waste disposal through these arrangements.
- 6.3.3 Since the introduction of the charging policy the amount of waste deposited on site has decreased, a 73% reduction has been noted in chargeable waste streams. An anecdotal aside to this statistic is an increase in skip hire as this may be seen as a more cost effective option.
- 6.3.4 Whilst there has been a significant reduction in usage of HWRC's since introduction of the charges, there has not been a recordable increase in fly tipping (this being closely monitored by the District Councils). Furthermore, there is the advantage of creating the capacity to accept limited amounts of such waste from small businesses, a service not previously provided. Acceptance of paper and card as part of that service free of charge is also allowed for small business customers.
- 6.3.5 The introduction of the charging arrangements was undertaken following public

consultation. There was some resistance from the public when the charge was first introduced however, satisfaction ratings in surveys carried out through the Citizen's Panel remain high.

- 6.3.6 North Yorkshire CC is now looking at the potential to charge for tyres which are currently accepted free of charge. Rotherham MBC does not currently accept tyres at HWRC's, instead directing any enquiries to a local tyre processor.
- 6.3.7 The outcome of these discussions is that the Group considered there is a benefit in RMBC looking carefully at introducing charges for agreed types of waste and that this is preferable to further closures at the HWRC's
- 6.3.8 Re-use is a service provided at the Selby HWRC, with recovered items sold-on. The Group would like to see such a service provided at its HWRC's but, as stated above, there is limited scope for such until the new contract is negotiated in 2018

6.4 **Green Waste Collection RMBC**

- 6.4.1 This service is provided on a seasonal basis and requires temporary staff to deliver the service. The vehicles used for collection of green waste have come to the end of their lease period.
- 6.4.2 The Group looked at extending the collection period for green waste but estimating the correct length of time is difficult as it as the growing conditions are governed by a number of seasonal factors that can affect the amount of waste presented for collection during the year.
- 6.4.3 It was the view of the Group that the introduction of a charge for green waste (at say £35 per year) would be unpopular with residents and likely to result in a substantial reduction in the use of the service. Nationally, the take up for areas where such a charge has been introduced has been around 25%. Using a neighbouring authority Sheffield as an example, it originally had a free green waste collection service to 45,000 households, (applying to designated areas). Following the introduction of a subscribed service to all households (241,000) at £49.35 for 15 fortnightly collections from May to November, initial take up was 7,000 has now increased to 9,000, which is approx. 3% take up of the service.
- 6.4.4 Should charging be introduced, the Group anticipates a similar level of take up in Rotherham given the comparative patterns of deprivation and lower disposable incomes per household.
- 6.4.5 Further potential impact of charging is that green waste is likely to be placed in the black bin, taken to HWRC's, composted at home or, at worst, fly tipped. The Council's recycling rate would be expected to fall and this may have an impact on the PFI credits awarded by Defra for the new waste facility. There could also be contract implications in terms of the impact of the service change on the operation of the waste treatment facility, in that the recycling rates would be expected to fall below the 50% target.
- 6.4.6 The view of the Group was that the opportunity for home composting should be made available.
- 6.4.7 Within North Yorkshire, three authorities are now charging for green waste collection. Whilst take up there has been high, at least one authority has seen an increase in fly tipping as a result (Ryedale DC).

- 6.4.8 The view of the Group is that charging for green waste collection should be avoided if at all possible. However, it also recognised that the best option for green waste is for it to be composted so residents should be encouraged in this regard. Options for increased home and community composting should be explored.
- 6.4.9 The Group also looked at the possibility of extending the current service to the end of November due to resident pressure through some Area Assemblies. The additional cost would however amount to around £90,000. Given that only about 10% of the total annual collection was in the winter months November to April, the Group do not consider this option should proceed given the substantial pressures on budgets.

6.5 **Bulky Goods Collection**

- 6.5.1 Evidence was taken from BHF on the potential for a partnership arrangement with the Council to increase re-use of unwanted bulky goods and provide an income for the charity as well as potential local job opportunities. As an organisation BHF has over 740 shops including 173 designated furniture and equipment stores, providing an end of line solution to many items which would otherwise go to HWRC's / landfill, along with promoting the ethos of "re-use"

The BHF currently collect from over 12,000 households per week with over 2000 of these collections booked on line.

During the discussions, two potential options for bulky waste collections were identified.

1. Joint service by RMBC and BHF. –

RMBC's contact centre receives the call for the bulky goods to be collected. If an item is suitable for re-use then it is collected by BHF free of charge. If not, then the item is collected by the Council who make the normal charge.

2. Outsource the whole system to BHF

This option would pass the whole bulky goods collection service to BHF who would operate on behalf of the Council taking re-useable items to their shops and disposing of the rest. Under this option BHF would require unlimited free tipping rights to dispose of unwanted items

Further discussions to identify the details of both schemes are required.

It should also be noted that other charitable organisations would be able to provide this service and should be considered as part of the procurement process.

6.6 **Kerbside Textile and small electricals service**

- 6.6.1 BHF run a kerbside textile and small electrical collection service in conjunction with a number of authorities including Elmbridge Borough Council.

A pilot project was introduced in Elmbridge in January 2012; 6 months after the initial discussions had taken place. The pilot covered 20,000 homes and in 2013 the project was extended to include all 50,000 homes in Elmbridge. The resources required to run this operation was one collection crew for 4 weeks making collections three times a year. There is no cost to the council to set up this scheme.

6.6.2 **Current service provided in Elmbridge B.C.**

- The waste contractor deliver bin 'hook-ons' to each property, advertising the date of the next collection in 2 weeks.
- Householders are asked to put their items in their own bags and attach the hook-on to a bag so it is easily identifiable by the collection team.
- Bags are left by the recycling bin on the residents recycling collection week.
- The waste contractor provides a transit van and use an existing driver to ensure a reliable service while BHF provide a volunteer collector to work alongside the contractor.
- All materials collected are delivered directly to a local BHF shop for sorting and distribution for sale.

6.6.3 **Long term benefits**

- The service encourages environmental behavioural change by promoting and establishing reuse as the 'norm'.
- The model can be copied by other local authorities.
- The scheme at Elmbridge generates over 50 tonnes of additional recycling each year, at no cost to the Council.
- The partnership provides a new revenue stream for local charities (Elmbridge donate their recycling credits).

It was reported that Elmbridge BC are happy with the service provided and there have been no real difficulties in its operation. They would recommend introducing on a pilot basis in the first instance before extending to all households across the Borough.

6.6.4 The Group consider that the introduction of a third sector organisation into our waste collection service (e.g. bulky items and textiles/small electrical items) should be actively considered. This service would provide local job opportunities and introduce a valuable re-use element into our waste collection service which does not currently exist. Given BHF has existing charitable links with Rotherham and experience in this field, the group thought that an obvious synergy existed that should be explored further.

6.7 **Commercial Waste Collection Service**

6.7.1 The purpose of the visit to Nottingham City Council was to explore their current arrangements for commercial waste collection. The Group noted that there is a difference in the collection of domestic waste and commercial waste. Both are statutory functions but having different requirements on collections and they consider that the operation of both services should be kept separate.

6.7.2 In 2010/11 the commercial waste collection service in Nottingham was redesigned, with a starting customer base of approx. 3,000 customers. In 2015 the customer base has increased to approx. 4,500 customers which equates to 60% of Nottingham Centre businesses and 47% of the overall customer base.

The single biggest contract is for £125k. All bids submitted include an element for growth costs. Each service provision is covered by a business plan showing income and expenditure targets. There is a tendering process in place and all contracts are examined for their workability. NCC currently works for Biffa and Veolia on collections that are unwanted by them.

- 6.7.3 As to the service provision the advice given was for commercial collections, not to use the telematics system, commonly used by local authorities, as this has a domestic focus. Introducing a new commercial system requires the correct software for the service being provided. The two preferred options for software to manage commercial collections, which have ID chips in the bins, are ISYS and AMCS. Both are capable systems to cater for commercial collections and the estimated cost for installation is £150k over 4 years. These systems will provide the required information to manage collections and provide for future business planning.
- 6.7.4 The commercial waste service generates a surplus of £1.8m a year. The charging rates are slightly below that of the private sector but rates still have to be increased year on year. The added value of using the commercial approach for the citizens of the City of Nottingham is that any surplus funds are reinvested back into the Council.
- 6.7.5 The commercial waste service also offers a recycling option although this does not generate a surplus. Nottingham also operates a skip hire service with a £1m turnover which concentrates on contract builders rather than householders. A service for disposal of confidential waste including on site shredding is now being rolled out as well.
- 6.7.6 The main findings from Nottingham are that it is that there is significant scope to generate significant surpluses from a commercial waste service as well as other facilities management services but it requires significant investment and a proactive approach to selling and delivering a top class service which is truly competitive with that offered by the private sector.
- 6.7.7 The PFI contract arrangements at Manvers offer a business opportunity to grow our commercial waste service taking advantage of the available headroom in the favourable Band 2 price category within the contract. Based upon our current level of waste arising we still have around 9,270 tonnes of available capacity in the band 2 range (at £13.68 per tonne). As we currently only deposit 2,950 tonnes of commercial waste, there is capacity to more than triple our current level of collection at a favourable disposal rate by competitively pricing our service at slightly below market price.
- 6.7.8 It is worth noting that the job for managing commercial waste in Rotherham is just one element of one Supervisors' role in the Waste Management Team. It was the Group's view that this limited the manager's capacity to explore commercial opportunities.

7. Recommendations

Short Term (within the 2015/16 financial year)

- 7.1 Consider the ways in which home composting may be promoted in Rotherham, including the cost/benefit of offering free/subsidised compost bins to residents.
- 7.2 Continue the discussions with the British Heart Foundation with a view to commissioning:
- A joint approach to the provision of **bulky waste collection service** to all householders in RMBC which enables greater reuse of unwanted furniture.
 - The establishment of a **textile/ bric-a-brac/ small electrical goods household collection service**.
- 7.3 Negotiate with FCC and a third sector/not for profit organisation **to introduce a small-scale re-use facility** on one or more of the HWRCs as a means of encouraging re-use and raising awareness of the opportunities for reuse of household bric a brac and other small items.

- 7.4 Explore with FCC the scope for **introducing a charge for non-household waste at HWRCs** during 2016/17 for the remainder of the contract period at all RMBC HWRCs for all items of non-household waste that the Council may legitimately make a charge for. Evaluate the benefits to the Council as well as the likely impact on user satisfaction and any perverse consequences such as increases in fly tipping.
- 7.5 That a progress report on the Task & Finish Group's recommendations be submitted to the Improving Places Select Commission in January 2017, particularly in respect of commercialisation of the Service

Medium Term (From 2016/17 onwards)

- 7.6 Given that RMBC works collaboratively across a range of waste services with Barnsley and Doncaster and there is an effective governance arrangement already in place through the Joint Waste Partnership Board.
- 7.6.1 Members would like to see the HWRC provision being considered as a whole across the partnership. This opens up potentially greater economies of scale and the ability to sustain acceptable levels of provision at lower cost. The joint contract is due for renewal in October 2018. In order that proper consideration can be given to transforming the way the service is provided. It is recommended that work begins early in 2016/17 with BDR partners to jointly review the most cost-effective way of commissioning HWRC services across the three boroughs and scope a service specification that will ensure income is maximised and costs are minimised, while maintaining a service level that will be acceptable to residents.
- 7.6.2 Careful consideration should be given to the establishment of re-use facilities at HWRCs either as part of a new joint contract through the BDR arrangements, or as a RMBC sole commissioned service.
- 7.6.3 Members also recommend that BDR examines the opportunities and benefits of a combined contract for the collection of green waste across the three boroughs during the growing season, thus maintaining a valued service to residents, increasing recycling rates and potentially saving money. Members do not exclude the possibility that a charge may need to be made for this service.
- 7.6.4 Produce a fully costed business plan for a substantial expansion of the commercial waste collection service throughout the borough and potentially beyond the borough boundaries. Include in the appraisal the option of a combined service through the BDR waste partnership to maximise scale and profitability.

8. Thanks

- David Burton Director, Streetpride, RMBC
- Adrian Gabriel Principle Officer, Streetpride, RMBC
- David Hill Principle Officer, Streetpride, RMBC
- Bob Morrison - Waste Collection Manager, Streetpride, RMBC
- Alison Iliff - Public Health Principal, Health Improvement, RMBC
- Andy Baxter, Contracts Manager - FCC Environmental Ltd
- Cllr Chris Metcalf, Executive Member for Waste, North Yorkshire County Council
- Tony Norris, Waste Services Manage, North Yorkshire County Council
- Mark Kirk Contracts Manager, Keir
- David Garnham Area Supervisor Kier Joanne Kearney, Contracts Manager North Yorkshire County Council
- Karen O' Donoghue, National Stock Generation Manager, British Heart Foundation
- Paul Vanston, Kent Resource Partnership Manager
- Andy Vaughan, Corporate Director, Nottingham City Council
- Andrew Beighton, Nottingham City Council
- Daniel Ayrton, Nottingham City Council
- Joanna Chauhan, Elmbridge Borough Council
- Abigail Cox Community Education Liaison Officer, Shanks Treatment Plant
- Dianne Thomas Consultant, Centre for Public Scrutiny and Local Government Association

9. Glossary

HWRC Household Waste Recycling Centre

WEEE – Waste Electrical, Electronic Equipment.

WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) WRAP is a [registered charity](#). It works with businesses, individuals and communities to achieve a [circular economy](#) through helping them reduce waste, develop sustainable products and use resources in an efficient way.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1. Definition of Household Waste / Non Household Waste

Household Waste and Non-Household Waste are defined in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012.

As a guide, if the waste is an item usually found in a residential house and it is not fixed to the house or if outside it is not fixed to the ground, it will generally be household waste. If the waste item is not usually found within a residential house, it is fixed to a residential house, or if outside it is fixed to the ground, it will generally not be household waste.

The table below shows examples from around a house and garden to illustrate the distinction between household and non-household wastes.

	Household Waste (free of charge)	Non-Household Waste (a charge may be made)
Electrical & Gas Appliances	Kettle, toaster, free standing cooker, microwave, fridge, vacuum cleaner	Gas fire, boiler
Bulky Household Items	Free standing furniture including table, chair, sofa, bed & mattress, carpet	Fitted cupboards, fitted wardrobes
Plumbing	None	Bath, shower, sink, toilet
Garden	Grass cuttings, hedge clippings, lawn mower.	Fence posts & panels, garage door, soil, bricks, rubble, whole or sectional trees
Building Materials	None	Slabs, soil, bricks, rubble, tiles, plasterboard, asbestos, guttering, fallpipe, window frame, door, sectional buildings
General	Packaging (e.g. tins, boxes, bottles), Textiles (e.g. curtains, towels, clothes), Food	

Appendix 2. Estimated Costs for Recyclables Collection in 2015/16 -RMBC

Cost of Recycling

The Council provides the following services at a cost to support the recycling agenda.

The services costs incurred are:

Provision of Kerbside Multi Material Collection	- £973,967
Provision of Kerbside Green Waste Collection	- £573,017
Servicing of Plastic Banks	- £ 7,500
Total	- £1,554,484

Potential Income

Multi Material - £205,000

Paper Banks - £ 8,000

Paper/Card - £315,000

Plastic - £ 1,500

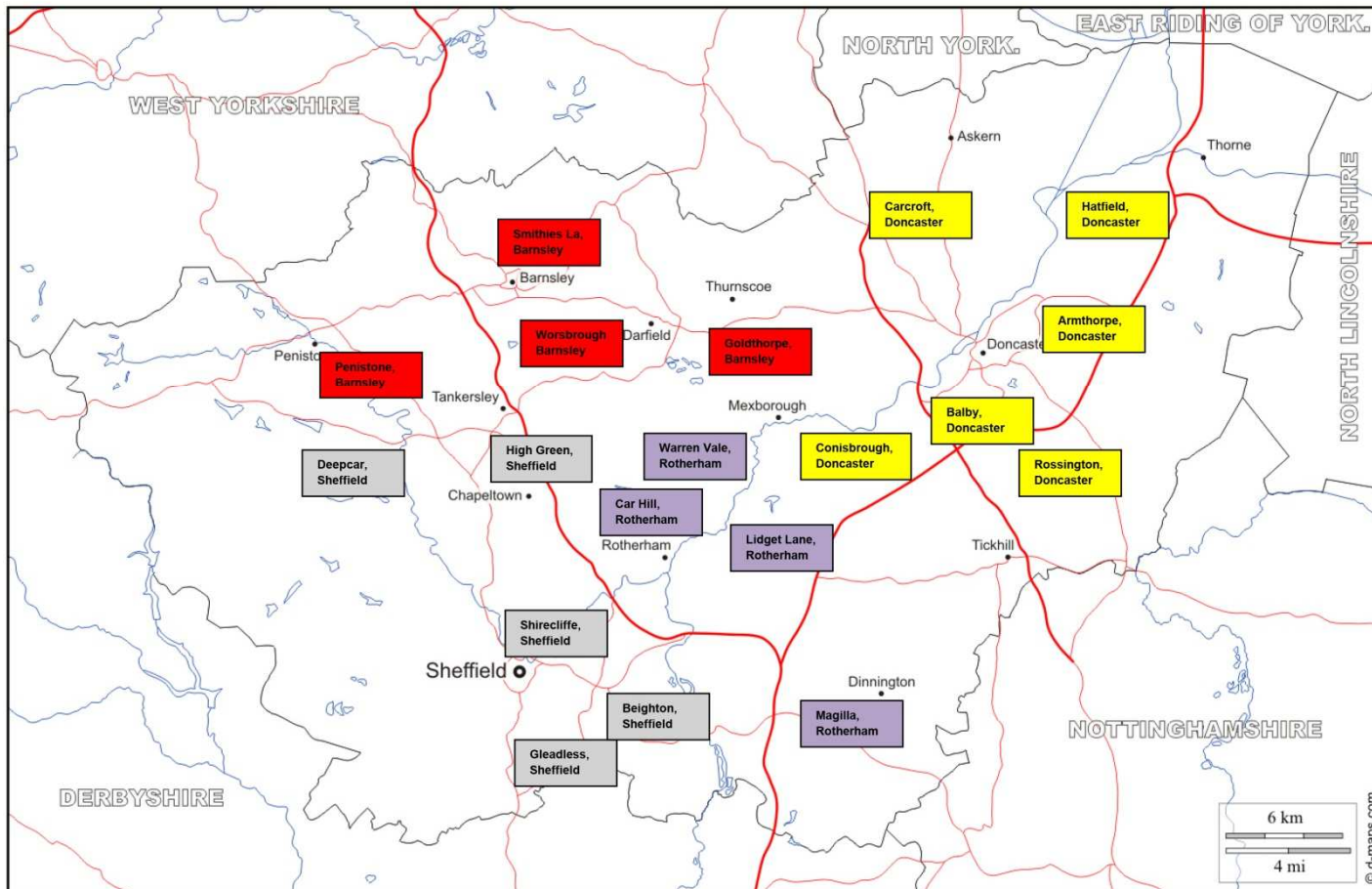
Total = £529,500

Cost to process Green Waste = £340,000

Source – 2015/16 Budget

Appendix 3. Location map showing HWRCs site in Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES – SOUTH YORKSHIRE



Appendix 4. Minimum levels of HWRC provision

In 2004 the National Assessment of Civic Amenity Sites (NACAS) published a study that drew on national evidence to assess suitable levels of provision. The resulting recommendations for minimum levels of HWRC provision were:

- Maximum catchment radii of three miles in urban areas and seven miles in rural areas covering the great majority of residents;
- Maximum driving times to a site for the great majority of residents of 20 minutes in urban areas, and 30 minutes in rural areas; though preferably less than this by the order of 10 minutes in each case;
- At least one site per 143,750 residents, with a maximum throughput for any site of 17,250 tonnes per annum.

WRAP considered the issue and emphasised that local authorities should come to their own conclusions on the correct level of provision. They cited some examples of current standards used by local authorities for HWRC provision:

- Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority uses five mile radii to determine minimum acceptable levels of HWRC provision;
- Suffolk County Council sets a maximum of 20 minutes' drive time for 90% of residents;
- Leeds City Council also uses 20 minutes' drive time for the great majority of residents as a minimum standard.
- WRAP tentatively suggest that the following are reasonable minimum levels of HWRC provision, with some exceptions for very rural or very urban areas:
- Maximum catchment radii for a large proportion of the population: three to five miles (very rural areas: seven miles);
- Maximum driving times for the great majority of residents in good traffic conditions: 20 minutes (very rural areas: 30 minutes);
- Maximum number of inhabitants per HWRC (in all but the most urbanised areas): 120,000;
- Maximum number of households per HWRC (in all but the most urbanised areas): 50,000.

The Table below shows the comparative data for authorities in South Yorkshire

		No. HWRCs 2013/14	No. HWRCs per 100,000 population	Land area per HWRC, sq. miles	Average site catchment radius, miles	Total HWRC Tonnage 2013/14
Barnsley MBC		4	1.7	32	3.2	17,960
Doncaster MBC		6	2.0	37	3.4	28,115
Rotherham MBC		4	1.5	28	3.0	21,971
Sheffield City Council		5	0.9	28	3.0	23,686
ENGLAND TOTAL / AVERAGE			1.3	72	4.8	4,588,147

Source: National HWRC Directory 2013 (WRAP)

Appendix 5. Bulky Item Collection Service
BENCHMARKING JANUARY 2015

Authority	Charges	Service	Comments
Rotherham	YES	£21 up to 3 items Next 3 items + £15 Further 3 items +£15 Maximum 9 items	NO reduction on DIY 50% reduction for Rother Card
Doncaster	YES	£25.00 Up to 8 items on one order Fridges & Freezers free	
Barnsley	YES	£5 per item £10.00 up to 4 items £15.00 for 5 items £20 for 6 to 8 items £25 for 9 items £30 for 10 to 12 items	
Amber Valley	YES	£17 up to 3 items £27 up to 6 items Fridge / Freezers £16 per item Electrical Items £16 per item	½ price for means tested benefit
Ashfield	YES	£12.00 – 1 x item £6 for subsequent items	
Derby City	YES	£11.45 – 1 x item £17.70 – 2 to 5 items £24.95 – 6 to 15 items 15 items or more min. £35	
Chesterfield	YES	£13.80 – 1 x item £21.00 – 2 to 5 items £27.80 – 6 to 10 items Fridge freezers £13.80 per unit – collected separate	50% concession for residents in receipt of benefits
West Lindsey	YES	£21.00 up to 6 points £3.80 per point £21.00 Fridge / Freezers first collection Minimum charge for quotations £95.18	Works on points system for items Up to 6 points minimum charge More than 6 points additional charges apply
Bassetlaw	YES	£10.50 Per item Maximum 9 items	Restrictions on items collected and items not covered

Appendix 6. Customer Satisfaction Survey undertaken by FCC Environmental at the BDR HWRC Sites

FCC undertook a customer satisfaction survey earlier on in 2015. The 4 questions asked were:-

Q1 - How often do you use the site?

Q2 - Are the opening days and hours suitable for your needs?

Q3 - What improvements would you like to see at this site?

Q4 - Do you find the staff helpful and knowledgeable?

A summary of the results are shown below:-

- Overall sites across the contract have performed well in the customer service/satisfaction scores.
- On average the Barnsley sites performed better achieving an average score of 9.8 out of 10. Doncaster next with an average of 9.58. Followed by Rotherham with an average score of 8.68.
- In general the customer responses for all sites were very happy with the services that the staff provides on the sites.
- 95% of the total responses commented on how friendly, helpful and knowledgeable the staff are and how they are an asset to the company.
- The main customers issues are to do with opening times and days that certain sites are closed.
- In Doncaster area customers would like the sites to be open 7 days, whereas in Barnsley the customers like to see longer opening times in the winter.
- The main customer concern in Rotherham is the lack of parking spaces and the amount of time customer spend in queues.
- In summary the customer to FCC sites across the BDR contract are generally happy with the service they receive, with the average score across the contract being 9.46/10.

Some individual sites are performing below this average and I suggest that a customer survey is performed again in a few months, once the results have been digested by the sites and that the survey could be part of the admin process to monitor sites and that the survey could be part of the admin process to monitor site customer service performance on a monthly basis.

Town	Site	Average Score
Doncaster	Armthorpe	9.88
Doncaster	Rossington	9.61
Doncaster	Carcroft	9.79
Doncaster	Bootham	9.36
Doncaster	Springwell	9.77
Doncaster	Conisbrough	9.06
Rotherham	Carrhill	8.30
Rotherham	Warren Vale	8.93
Barnsley	Smithies	9.83
Barnsley	West Street	9.71
Barnsley	Goldthorpe	9.85

Doncaster score
Rotherham score
Barnsley Average score
Contract average across BDR

