

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>7 February 2011</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Review of the Clinical Waste Collection Service</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

### 5. Summary

This report details the current arrangements for the collection of Clinical Waste in Rotherham, highlights our statutory duty and provides an option for consideration, with respect to the future provision of clinical waste services to domestic households.

### 6. Recommendations

**The Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods**

**6.1 Approves the collection and disposal of Municipal Waste (SANPRO) through the domestic refuse collection service.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

### Current Service

The Clinical Waste service operates four specialist vehicles with drivers, working 5 days a week; collections are made from three types of premises:

**NHS Rotherham premises** - The service currently undertakes collection from 22 premises, these being NHS Clinics, Local Surgeries, Dental Practices and Pharmacies that provide a needle exchange scheme. The NHS pays for Clinical Waste collections through a funding/service level agreement.

**Domestic Households** - The Council currently provides a free of charge collection to 2,100 households throughout the Borough with a range of collection frequencies from weekly, fortnightly to an on request collection.

**Other Council Premises** - A collection is also provided to 22 Council premises currently in the ownership of the local authority. A charge is made for this service.

### Types of Waste

The waste collected on this service is classified into one of the following categories.

**a) Infectious Waste**

**b) Syringes, Needles or Other Sharp Instruments**

**c) Offensive Waste**

The above types of waste are generally reported to the Waste Management Unit for collection on pre-determined frequencies by NHS Rotherham.

**d) Municipal Waste (Sanpro)**

Household waste can be classed as waste which is the same as, or similar to, waste from accommodation purely used for living purposes. Waste from domestic first aid and self care is assumed to be non infectious unless a healthcare practitioner indicates otherwise.

Non-infectious soiled nappies, sanitary products (incontinence pads) and plasters may be disposed of in the black bin however, it is the current policy of this Council to collect it separately as Offensive Clinical Waste.

This type of waste makes up approximately 50 % of the collections that are carried out on this service. Currently there are approximately 2100 customers of which 1000 have been identified as producing small amounts of SANPRO only waste. Because it is collected along with infectious waste, sharps and offensive waste, it attracts a higher gate fee for disposal than general municipal waste.

SANPRO waste (non infectious incontinence pads and waste from self care) can be placed within the black residual waste bin and picked up as part of the domestic refuse collection service; many other authorities already adopt this practice. Collecting the waste in this way would mean that disposal would be done through Council's Waste Treatment and Disposal contract for general waste at lower cost. In addition, the proposal would release 2 vehicles and members of staff who would then be redeployed into other (waste management) work thereby realising savings on vehicle hire and agency staff.

The Council has strict administration procedures in place to manage requests for the clinical waste service. A review undertaken with NHS Rotherham was carried out 3 years ago to determine what was being collected from each premise and to develop a procedure whereby all requests for collection of offensive, infectious and sharps waste would be channelled through NHS professionals. This ensures that we know what category of waste is collected from each property and the expected period for which the service is required. By adopting this procedure we have minimised the risk to the Council of SANPRO and offensive/infectious waste being mixed.

In order to achieve efficiency savings for the service it is proposed that the collection and disposal of Municipal (SANPRO) Waste should in future be undertaken as part of the domestic refuse collection service.

## **8. Finance**

A change in the present service delivery of clinical waste collections will potentially result in a cost saving, to the Council of £79,000. This is due to reduced disposal costs as a consequence of SANPRO waste being disposed of to landfill and a reduction in the resources required for separate collections.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The non hazardous waste from first aid and self care in the home (SANPRO) is classed as Municipal Waste and can therefore be disposed of to landfill without any special conditions being attached to its disposal.

A change to requiring residents to use their black bin for the collection and disposal in the future, may cause distress to some customers who have received what they deem a "personal" service over a number of years.

There are also concerns that the alternate week collection service may lead to some residents considering they have a waste storage capacity issue, provision may have to be made for an additional bin in some cases.

The discussions with NHS Rotherham regarding the future funding of Clinical Waste Collection services across the Borough may have further implications for the service. While the NHS does have a duty to arrange for the collection and disposal of clinical waste from its own activities, there is no requirement for them to use the Council's service.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The proposal to revert to collecting and disposing of Municipal Waste (SANPRO) through the black residual bin is allowed through current legislation and will provide for efficiency savings.

This needs to be considered against the potential customer impact which could lead to a reduction in customer satisfaction with the waste service.

This may also impact upon some of the more vulnerable members of the community who are reliant on seeing staff as a “point of contact” during the week.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

NHS Rotherham

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