

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Improving Places Select Commission
2.	Date:	Wednesday 5th September 2012
3.	Title:	Cardboard Collection – Update Report
4.	Programme Area:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

In March 2012, new collection arrangements were introduced to remove cardboard from the green bin and collect it with paper as part of the dry recyclables collection. This report provides an update on the service after approximately five months of operation

6. Recommendations

Members are requested to note the content of this report

7. Proposals and Details

Background and Context

For a number of years the Council collected cardboard, co-mingled with green garden waste in the green bin, with the result that approximately 3,600 tonnes of cardboard was sent for re-processing into compost. Since the introduction of garden waste and card collections the composting re-processors experienced difficulties in composting the cardboard, especially during the winter months when there was little or no green garden waste to act as a blending medium. This issue was further compounded by the increasing amounts of contamination placed in the green bin by residents, made up of plastic, parcel tape, polystyrene and general residual waste.

The Environment Agency (EA) as part of their duties, inspect waste facilities to which they have issued an Environmental Permit. As a consequence of visits to the Yorkshire Horticultural Supplies Limited (YHS) site at Finningley the EA expressed major concerns over the amount of contamination being delivered into the site from Rotherham's green waste collections and stated that the removal of the card from the green bin was the only sustainable way to prevent YHS breaching its permit conditions.

Guidance and Enforcement

Following a meeting with officers from the EA at which they informed the Council they were quite prepared to issue a prohibition notice on the Finningley site, it became evident that we had to find a way of removing contamination from the green bin or change to a "green only" collection service.

This situation was further reinforced by the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and the Association for Organics Recycling issuing guidance that stricter standards were being introduced on compost quality through:

- Publicly Available Standard 100 Compost (BSI PAS100)
- Compost Quality Protocol (CPQ 2012)

These standards in effect halved the amount of non compostable material allowed in recycled organic waste (contaminants) from 0.25% to 0.12%.

This guidance and the targets basically meant it would have made it much more difficult to achieve the required reduction in contamination levels in our green bin collections and was driving us to change to a "green only" service to ensure our re-processing outlet would continue to operate within the terms of the Environmental Permit.

Following research it was noted that some Councils, for example Bath and North East Somerset dealt with the issue in a similar manner to the system adopted in Rotherham, whilst others, such as in Shropshire determined to offer no future kerbside collection of cardboard. If this latter approach had been adopted it would have incurred significant additional disposal costs (£27/tonne through Household

Waste Recycling Centres or £90 /tonne through landfill) equating to £200,000 per annum.

Changes to the Collection Service

From Monday 19th March 2012 new collection arrangements were introduced as follows:

- Blue Bag – Paper and Card
- Blue Box – Glass, Cans and Textiles
- Green Bin – Garden Waste

Prior to this scheme starting all householders were notified by leaflet about the change to the collection service and the need to place only garden waste in the green bin and cardboard in their blue bag. Householders were also given the opportunity to request a further blue bag if they were experiencing capacity issues with the containment of cardboard.

During the first two collections following implementation of the scheme any bins found to have contamination in were tagged to notify the householder of the problem and requested removal of the offending waste / card from the bin and provided an information advice contact number. In many cases enquiries were received by the Waste Management Team following the placement of the tag on the bin and arrangements were made to get the bin emptied on these occasions.

After the first two collections the “amnesty” ceased and householders are now expected to remove any contamination from a tagged bin prior to the next collection.

Service Statistics

The service has now been in operation for 5 months and following an initial surge in enquiries they have now diminished to the level of general enquiry experienced across other areas of waste collection.

Enquiries

In terms of enquiries the service has received approximately 500 complaints as follows:

- Dissatisfaction with not having a wheeled bin for Paper / Card – **41%**
- Failure to receive notification of Service Change – **44%**
- Other (Contamination – Bin Left, Clarification on what goes in each receptacle, Why change implemented) – **15%**

To put this in context, during this period recycling collections were made to approximately 56,000 premises per week for a 20 week period. In terms of the ratio of enquires to collections made this is 1:2,240 or 0.04%.

Issue of Bags

The service change generated a significant number of requests for extra bags for the storage of cardboard.

February 2012 to August 2012 – 11,463 bags delivered.

February 2011 – August 2011 – 2,419 bags delivered (Comparison)

Biodegradable Waste

The impact of the service change upon the green waste, paper and card collection services has been assessed over comparable periods and the results are shown in the table below

2011/12 (April – July)		2012/13 (April – July)		Percentage Increase
Service	Tonnes	Service	Tonnes	
Kerbside Paper Only	1,683	Kerbside Green and Cardboard	2,257	34%
Kerbside Green and Cardboard	9,374	Kerbside Green Only	9,963	6%
TOTAL BIODEGRADABLE	11,057		12,190	10%

The Government Review of Waste Policy 2011 has re-affirmed the requirement that 50% of biodegradable waste must be diverted away from landfill by 2020.

Local Recycling Centres

The Council currently has 48 Bring Site locations within the Borough. The existing contractor for paper banks Palm Recycling have recently been replaced as our partner by Veolia Environmental Services. In developing this new partnership arrangement the new banks on site now accept mixed cardboard / paper.

Local Position on Cardboard Collection

Neighbouring Councils within South Yorkshire make the following arrangements for the collection of cardboard:

Barnsley – Have just commenced a trial to take card out of the green bin following intervention by the Environment Agency, using a caddy that fits in the top of the green bin.

Doncaster – Provide a green box for glass, cans, textiles, plastics and cardboard.

City of Sheffield – Provides a blue box / blue bin for card and paper.

8. Finance

Following negotiations with our partner Newport paper to accept mixed paper and cardboard we have secured a guaranteed minimum price per tonne for mixed paper (paper and card) for a 5 year period to March 2017, however it must be noted the last three years are an optional annual contract extension by agreement of both parties.

In addition we are currently in discussion with our organic waste partner Yorkshire Horticulture / Freeland (operators of the composting facility) to secure a reduced “clean” green gate fee for the green waste being delivered to Maltby Transfer Station, before onward bulking to the processing site in Finningley, Doncaster.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

It is considered that the publicity campaign prior to the change in the method of collecting cardboard was, on the whole, successful and that the change was managed without any significant disruption to the service. Although it was anticipated that some of the cardboard may end up being disposed of within the grey residual bin, data shows that the actual residual waste collected to date is in line with the estimated profile used for budget purposes.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The recycling of cardboard contributes to the following performance indicators:

NI 191 – Residual household waste per household.

NI 192 – Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting.

NI 193 – Percentage of Municipal Solid Waste sent to landfill

11. Background Paper and Consultation

- Waste Resource Action Programme - Publicly Available Standard 100 (BSI PAS100)
- Association for Organics Recycling – Compost Quality Protocol (CPQ 2012)
- Government Review of Waste Policy 2011

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