

Briefing note for SH Overview & Scrutiny Panel

New Waste Service Update

The improved recycling service was due to start on 28th September 2020. The service change includes a weekly recycling collection which accepts food, glass, and mixed rigid plastics along with existing materials. The service requires new containers to be delivered to all households, the procurement of a new recycling fleet and the construction of a stockpiling depot at Ivybridge.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has created in significant issues within the international supply chains providing some of these goods and services.

Any delay to the introduction of the new service has a cost attached, mainly derived from continuing with the old service, such as on-going provision of single-use recycling sacks, and also from the deterioration of global commodity markets for the sale of recycle.

Officers have therefore sought to mitigate the effects as far as possible by exploring options with our Waste Disposal Authority and contractor and by persistent direct communication/negotiation with suppliers.

Unless a second wave of the virus causes further issues, we are as confident as we can be of the final dates for the delivery of the fleet and containers and completion of the depot. Whilst these are not in time for the original planned start of the service, the new launch date in March has been carefully chosen to take full advantage of the opportunity to maximise communication activity and therefore to reduce the risk to the Council's reputation.

In addition, a round review is planned to take place in September which is intended to get the majority of the collection day changes out of the way before March therefore reducing customer contact at this time.

The revenue monitoring report has stated a worse-case scenario cost of £325,000 for a five month delay. However, this figure has been reviewed to a more likely figure of just over £200,000 with further work being undertaken to reduce this if possible.

In order to underpin the success of the new service, key policies have been formulated around household container storage and recycling collections from schools. These have been reviewed by the Waste Working Group and will be presented to the Waste Partnership Board. The presentation highlights the main points of these and the existing Private Lanes Policy which has been already approved by full Council in March 2018.

The communications strategy has been revised in line with the new start date with a main campaign launch in September and individual household communications to take place early in the New Year. Members will receive full information packs closer to the time.

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