

Warwickshire Waste Partnership

4 December 2012

Household Waste Recycling Centre Annual Update

Recommendation

That the Waste Partnership notes the annual update.

1.0 Background

In early 2010 Warwickshire County Council's Waste Management Group undertook an internal review of the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) service. The review highlighted areas for potential savings, improvements in service, public attitudes, as well as compiling lessons learnt from the HWRC contract, in-house provision and best practice.

Following a subsequent Cabinet report and a HWRC Task and Finish Group being established, the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy made a key decision regarding HWRC provision on 11th November 2010.

2.0 Decisions taken

- To bring the management and operation of Cherry Orchard, Grendon (New Lower House Farm facility to replace the Grendon site 2012), Princes Drive, Shipston, Stockton and Wellesbourne Household Waste Recycling Centres in-house when the contracts for these sites expire in November 2011.
- To reduce the opening hours of all the Household Waste Recycling Centres when the above sites are brought in-house.
- To close each Household Waste Recycling Centre for 2 to 3 days per week (no days to include weekends) once the sites are brought in-house, while ensuring sites in the same area are not closed at the same time.¹
- To introduce an 'open bag policy' at all Household Waste Recycling Centres once the above sites are brought in-house.
- To liaise with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council in relation to the future options for the Judkins Household Waste Recycling Centre.

3.0 In-house Provision

Following the decision to bring the HWRCs in-house, a project board was set up to monitor the project. This was important to ensure the project was completed on time, within budget and delivered the allocated savings.

¹ Following further work, it was agreed to pursue a partnership arrangement with the third sector, this allowed the sites to stay open 7 days a week

3.1 Implementation

In-house operation went live from 1st December 2011. The initial implementation of the project included:

- i. Reorganisation of the waste management group
- ii. TUPE of staff from external contractor
- iii. Revised contract arrangements for all staff
- iv. Procurement of new heavy plant machinery
- v. Initial staff training for plant, compactors and health and safety
- vi. New haulage contract let and implemented
- vii. Purchase of two haulage vehicles and recruitment of drivers
- viii. Managing existing contracts for recycling of materials
- ix. New site signage installation

The immediate implementation went well.

3.2 Flexibility

One of the key reasons for bringing the HWRCs in-house was to give Warwickshire County Council (WCC) a greater level of flexibility and control over the quality of the services, recycling rates, wastes accepted on site, the introduction of new and innovative services, ability to make future cost savings and to work in partnership with other local authorities. Since bringing the sites in-house, the waste management group has been working on a number of projects to take advantage of the new flexibility including:

- Introducing hard plastics recycling at 3 sites (Hunters Lane, Burton Farm, Princes Drive) – with suitability for remaining sites to be investigated
- Reviewing and implementing new trade waste prices at the two HWRCs offering trade waste services (Princes Drive and Hunters Lane) and offering reduced rates for source-separated materials – further work on a more in-depth trade waste review is on-going
- Moving waste up the hierarchy by increasing the amount of reuse at the sites via 4 new community-run reuse shops (Cherry Orchard, Shipston, Stockton and Wellesbourne) and the reuse of inert waste from all HWRCs
- Development of a new framework contract for the sale of HWRC recyclables including use of e-auction where appropriate
- Development and implementation of enhanced communications for the HWRCs to ensure the public make the best use of existing facilities
- Development of a new digital waste data system – reducing admin time for office staff
- Closer partnership working with the provider of the new Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment contract (DHL) regarding proactive communications and schemes

- A pilot Community RePaint programme for 2 HWRCs is being developed

3.3 Public consultations

WCC's waste management group has carried out two public consultations: one to find out the views of the public before making changes to the service in August 2011 (218 responses received), and one 6 months after the changes to the service had been implemented in August 2012 (135 responses received).

3.3.1 Comparable questions

The following questions were asked during both consultations in order to compare the results.

Consultation	Question	Answers	Results
2011	How much do you believe these changes will affect you or your household?	The proposed changes will not affect me	50.2%
		The proposed changes will have some impact on me	25.6%
		The proposed changes will have a significant impact on me	22.3%
		I don't know	1.9%
2012	How much have the changes to the HWRC service affected you or your household?	The changes have not affected me	30.2%
		The changes have had some impact on me	45.7%
		The changes have had a significant impact on me	15.5%
		I don't know	8.5%

Consultation	Question	Answers	Results
2011	Do you think the open bag policy;	Should be strictly introduced to keep the sites open	72.9%
		Should not be introduced and opening hours further reduced	7.9%
		Don't know	19.2%
2012	Do you think the open bag policy;	Should be introduced	53.9%
		Should not be introduced at this stage	35.9%
		Don't know	10.2%

3.3.2 August 2012

Another key question from the August consultation was:

How do you feel about the service provided at the HWRCs over the last 6 months?

- Improved – 15.3%
- Stayed the same – 38.1%
- Worse service – 34.7%
- Don't know – 11.9%

4.0 Reduced Opening Hours

On 9 January 2012, the site opening times changed over to 9.30am to 3.15pm during the week and 8.30am to 4.15pm on weekends (except Shipston). The new opening hours were promoted in a number of different ways including banners on site, new site signs, posters, leaflets, business cards and press releases.

During the August 2012 consultation, residents were asked to rate the communication methods used by WCC to promote the changes. The results are provided in the table below:

Medium	Used it or saw it	Did not see it or unhelpful	Don't know
Local newspapers	35.8%	60.8%	3.3%
WCC website	60.5%	37.0%	2.5%
Social media e.g. Twitter	3.5%	77.9%	18.6%
Advertising at HWRCs	38.1%	47.5%	14.4%
Information provided through community forums	6.8%	71.8%	21.4%
Leaflets/ Posters in libraries	15.3%	71.2%	13.6%
Direct email	16.2%	67.5%	16.2%
Radio/ broadcast media	8.5%	75.4%	16.1%

The implementation of the new opening hours went well and only six official complaints regarding reduced opening hours across all sites were received in the initial period.

The effect of the changes on tonnages of waste and recyclables entering the HWRCs (total inputs) over the first nine months compared to the previous year are summarised in the table below and show a reduction of just over 3,000 tonnes. As a comparison, the overall tonnage of waste/recyclables (excluding green waste) arising during the first two quarters of the 2012/13 year can be seen within the Waste Data Overview for Q2 report. This shows that waste and recycling across the county is also down by around 1,200 tonnes.

	2011 tonnage inputs	2012 tonnage inputs	Year Change (tonnes)
Jan	4649	4401	-248
Feb	4204	3606	-598
Mar	5662	4817	-845
Apr	6198	4803	-1395
May	5719	5376	-343
Jun	5278	5028	-250
July	5191	5282	91
August	5438	5864	426
September	4949	4725	-224
Totals	47288	43902	-3386

5.0 Reduced Opening Days

The initial decision made in November 2010 was to close each HWRC for 2 to 3 days per week (not including weekends) once the sites are brought in-house, while ensuring sites in the same area are not closed at the same time to support the saving targets.

As part of the process to bring the HWRC service in-house, discussions were held with a third-sector organisation to secure and develop a network of Reuse Shops, previously run by the contractor operating the HWRCs, for the long-term benefit of the community. The brief was expanded further and investigations began on the potential for extending this benefit by engaging the third-sector organisation in the running of the entire HWRC. If successful, the partnership arrangement would ensure the sites did not have to close for 2 to 3 days a week as planned.

Approval was given by the Portfolio Holder and Strategic Director for Communities in January 2012 for Warwickshire Community Recycling (a joint charitable enterprise set up by Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA) and the Heart of England Community Foundation) to operate **two** whole HWRC sites at Wellesbourne and Stockton, (including the shops on those two sites), and three further shops at the Shipston and Cherry Orchard sites and the new Lower House Farm site when it opens around January/February 2013. As a result of the approval, all sites retained open 7 days per week (except for Stockton) which is only open 3 days a week.

The reuse shops at Cherry Orchard, Stockton, Shipston and Wellesbourne were taken over by Warwickshire Community Recycling in April 2012. A full takeover of operations at the Wellesbourne and Stockton HWRCs by Warwickshire Community Recycling was complete by June 2012.

Nominated by WCC, Warwickshire Community Recycling won the 'Community Champion of the Year' title at the CIWM Awards for Environmental Excellence. WCC and Warwickshire Community Recycling also won 'Best Partnership' for the project at the LARAC Celebration Awards 2012.

6.0 New HWRC Facilities

Nuneaton and Bedworth HWRC

A 15-year contract for the design, build and operation of a HWRC was awarded to FCC Environmental (WRG) in April 2012. As part of the rebuild, the site will have a purpose-built reuse shop on-site operated by a third-sector organisation. The Contractor has 2 years to build the site. In the interim period, the current HWRC will continue to be used.

Lower House Farm HWRC and Transfer Site

Lower House Farm has been developed as a joint venture with Staffordshire County Council for transferring residual waste from North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth and Tamworth to the Energy from Waste Facility (W2R) opening at Four Ashes in Staffordshire in December 2013 and as a new HWRC. The HWRC will serve residents of both Warwickshire and Tamworth. The Authority will share the running costs with Staffordshire County Council.

WCC has also been working with North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC) and has granted a license for NWBC to use the site for storing its waste collection vehicles.

Background Papers

1. Household Waste Recycling Centre Direct Service Project, Warwickshire waste Partnership 26th June 2012

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