

**CABINET – 25 JUNE 2019****RECYCLING AND HOUSEHOLD WASTE SITES**  
**FUTURE SERVICE OFFER****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT****PART A****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet of proposals to achieve savings included within the 2019-23 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in relation to the Recycling and Household Waste Site (RHWS) Service and to seek agreement to commence a consultation exercise on proposed changes to RHWS summer opening hours.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that:-
  - a) The commencement of a consultation exercise on the proposed change to the County Council's Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS) summer opening hours, be approved;
  - b) The expansion of the existing permit scheme and the acceptance of additional waste streams at the County Council's RHWS on a trial basis, be noted;
  - c) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in November 2019 detailing the outcome of the consultation and presenting the final proposal for approval.

**Reason for Recommendations**

3. If approved by the Cabinet following the consultation, the recommended changes to the opening times of the RHWS will contribute to the required savings as set out in the 2019 MTFS, approved by the County Council on 20 February 2019.
4. Expanding the existing permit scheme will provide a conservative saving but will deter trade waste and satisfy regulatory requirements to enable free collection and treatment.

5. While there is no direct saving with the acceptance of the additional non-household waste types, this would be an enhancement to the existing service and can be introduced quickly and with minimal risk, increasing recycling options for the public.

### **Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)**

6. Reports will be considered by the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September and November 2019 and its comments will be reported to the Cabinet in November 2019.
7. A report will be submitted to the Cabinet in November 2019 regarding the outcome of the consultation and presenting a detailed proposal.
8. The timetable for introduction of any changes in the provision of the RHWS service will be subject to the outcome of public consultation. Should changes be agreed it is anticipated that they would be implemented from the start of the summer opening hours in April 2020 onwards.

### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

9. The Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy (LMWMS) sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (consisting of the County Council and the seven districts) intends to manage municipal waste up to 2020. The current LMWMS was adopted by the County Council on 23 May 2012.
10. There have been a number of changes to the operation of the RHWS service to achieve Medium Term Financial Strategy savings of over £2m in the period since 2013. At its meeting on 18 November 2015, the Cabinet approved:-
  - Reducing opening hours, introducing 5-day opening all year;
  - Charging for the majority of non-household material types; and,
  - Reviewing the permit scheme.
11. The most recent change was the insourcing of 13 RHWS sites previously externally operated by Environmental Waste Controls which was approved by the Cabinet on 17 June 2016 and was implemented in July 2017.

### **Resource Implications**

12. The 2019 MTFS includes savings of £260,000 from the RHWS service approach by 2022/23. The proposals considered in this report related to service operations are estimated to achieve savings of £134,000 from a change to operational hours, and £2,000 from the introduction of the additional waste streams, by the end of 2020/21. Other work strands (commissioning options for Whetstone RHWS and waste transfer station and the investigation of initiatives to increase the amount of reuse on the RHWS) will consider the balance of the savings target. It is anticipated that the project as a whole will achieve its savings target of £330,000 by 2025.
13. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on the content of this report.

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

14. A copy of this report has been circulated to all members of the County Council.

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**PART B****Background**

15. The County Council has a statutory duty under Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 to provide places at which persons resident in its area may deposit their household waste free of charge. The EPA requires that each place provided is open at all reasonable times including at least one period on a Saturday or Sunday. The County Council has discretion to determine the number of these facilities, the location of such facilities, the opening hours to be operated and what charges if any are applied for accepting non-household waste or waste from businesses or non-residents.
16. The Government's recently issued National Resources and Waste Strategy (2018) indicates a potential for a review of statutory provision and minimum service levels for RHWS' as well as the setting of reuse targets for local authorities. The timeframe for any decisions are unclear but are not expected before 2024. The proposals to be consulted on in this report and subsequent implementation would be considerably in advance of any outcome from this review.
17. The Council provides a total of fourteen RHWS across the county. A map showing the location of the RHWS is shown as Appendix A to this report.
18. Thirteen of the fourteen RHWS are operated by the Council. The remaining site at Whetstone, is operated under contract by SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd (SUEZ). This contract is due to end in September 2020 at which time the Council is proposing to directly run the operation of the site. It would therefore also be subject to the proposals as outlined in paragraphs 25-28.
19. The current RHWS opening times for all sites are as follows:-
  - 9.00am to 7.00pm, 5 days a week from April to September (summer hours) (Saturday to Wednesday or Thursday to Monday dependent on site);
  - 9.00am to 4.00pm, 5 days a week from October to March (winter hours); and,
  - All sites are closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.
20. The Council uses a permit regime for certain vehicles and some types of waste (e.g. paint and asbestos) deposited at the RHWS by the public, charities and parish councils. This aims to control the volume of waste deposited, the types of waste delivered and prevent unauthorised access by traders.
21. The Council accepts a wide range of household and non-household waste types at the RHWS. Charges are made for some types of non-household waste such as concrete, bricks, rubble, glass windows, slabs and plasterboard. The current charge is £3.00 per tub/item.

### Options Appraisal

22. In order to estimate the levels of savings that could be achieved from the RHWS service over the period of the 2019 MTFS, a considerable number of potential options were considered, including:-
- Reduced opening hours/days across all RHWS (closure of any RHWS was not within the scope of this project);
  - Reduced services available at RHWS – this could include expansion of the current permit scheme and/or reduction in the range of materials accepted;
  - Introduce an alternative service model – where site opening hours/days and service offer may vary by site accounting for usage, current and projected cost, future demand and other relevant evidence; and,
  - Extending the charging regime – this could include increasing existing charges or extending charges to cover a wider range of materials.
23. All options were assessed against the following criteria:-
- The level and scale of impact on service users;
  - Ease and practicality of implementation;
  - Impact on site staff;
  - Clarity of service offer/understanding by service users; and,
  - Level of savings that could be achieved.
24. All options were then modelled at various sensitivities in order to identify the preferred combination of options.

### Preferred Option

25. Following detailed analysis, the following option was identified as representing the best level of required savings balanced against the impact on customers, service provision and staff and will therefore form the proposed revised model for consultation
26. **Reduce the daily RHWS opening hours to 9am to 5pm in the summer (April to September), whilst leaving winter hours the same.** Sites would continue to be open five days per week (including Saturday, Sunday and Monday). The proposed reduction of two hours a day during the summer months from April 2020 onwards could realise a saving of £134,000 p.a. across the existing thirteen Council managed RHWS. The financial modelling indicated that further savings could potentially be made at Whetstone RHWS following insourcing when the site changes to summer opening hours in April 2021.
27. It is acknowledged that this change of operating hours would require changes to shift patterns and working hours. Initial indications suggest that this could be managed without the need for job losses.
28. This proposal represents the most manageable and appropriate balance of savings against the impact on customers, staff, service deliverability and other related service functions based on current information. RHWS usage data showing the number of cars visiting the RHWS per hour indicates that these proposed changes to summer hours would have no effect on 94% of visits (see

Appendix B). This is because visits to all sites drop significantly after 5pm and sites are generally at their quietest.

### **Timetable and Consultation**

29. Subject to the Cabinet's agreement, the next steps would be for an appropriate consultation process regarding the proposed reduction in summer opening hours to be commenced. A timetable of the proposed process is shown below:-

Date	Action
25 June 2019	Cabinet Report to approve consultation
1 July 2019 to 23 September 2019	Consultation process (public and stakeholders) (12 weeks)
5 September 2019	Report to Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee
October 2019	Analysis of results and development of detailed implementation options
7 November 2019	Report to Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee with outcome of consultation
22 November 2019	Report to the Cabinet with outcome of consultation and recommendations
April 2020 onwards	Implementation of proposals (subject to Cabinet approval)

30. The proposed consultation, which will last twelve weeks, will consist of an online questionnaire available via a link from the Council's website. Additionally, posters and flyers will be placed at the RHWS that will inform users of the consultation process and how they can take part. A telephone number will be provided to request alternative formats of the questionnaire.
31. Responses to the consultation will be reviewed and their impacts considered. Feedback from the public and stakeholders on the proposed operational hours will be assessed to understand if any mitigating adjustments might be needed.
32. The Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider a report on the 5 September 2019 as part of the consultation process and a further report detailing the consultation outcomes in November.
33. A further report detailing the outcome of the consultation and final recommendations will be presented to the Cabinet on 22 November.

### Additional RHWS Service Changes

34. In addition to the proposal which forms the basis of the consultation, the detailed analysis also identified two further changes which the Council will be introducing as soon as possible.
35. **Expand the existing permit scheme to include commercial-style fridges / freezers and ammonia fridges.** The requirement of a permit is relatively straight forward to introduce, will be free of charge and will allow the control of commercial style units being delivered to the RHWS. Modelling has indicated a conservative financial saving of £2,000 p.a. from the introduction of this permit scheme through deterring trade waste and satisfying regulatory requirements to enable free collection and treatment.
36. **Set up a chargeable service for non-household wastes that are currently not accepted at the RHWS e.g. car tyres and hazardous wood such as railway sleepers.** There is currently no data for the volumes of such waste that the Council could expect to receive at the RHWS. However, customer feedback and data on tyres collected by the districts shows that the general public finds the disposal of these materials difficult due to a lack of outlets. Subject to a successful trial the Council will look to implement this change on a permanent basis.
37. While there is no direct saving with this proposal, the acceptance of these additional non-household waste types would be an enhancement to the existing service, can be introduced quickly and with minimal risk and so increasing recycling options for the public.
38. Other work strands including commissioning options for Whetstone RHWS as outlined in paragraph 18 and the investigation of initiatives to increase the amount of reuse on the RHWS through a combination of measures including improved separation, site infrastructure changes and promotional activities will be considered in order to achieve the balance of the savings target. Further reports will be submitted to the Cabinet as required.

### Equality and Human Rights Implications

39. The County Council has responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force across the United Kingdom on 5 April 2011. This requires public bodies to consider protected groups when carrying out their day to day work; in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires that public bodies:-
- Have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination;
  - Advance equality of opportunity; and,
  - Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
40. An initial screening has been undertaken which did not indicate that a full assessment was required. However, in light of the county wide impact of changes to RHWS provision a full EHRIA assessment will be completed once the consultation has taken place, the results of which will be included in the November Cabinet report.

**Background Papers**

23 May 2012 – Report to County Council – Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy Update 2011’:

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=31065&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI31186>

18 November 2015 - Report to Cabinet – ‘Recycling and Household Waste Sites in Leicestershire - Proposed Changes and Third Sector Recycling Credits’:

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4232&Ver=4>

17 June 2016 - Report to Cabinet – ‘Recycling and Household Waste Sites - Commissioning Options’:

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4603&Ver=4>

20 February 2019 - Report to County Council – ‘Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 - 2022/23’:

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=5125&Ver=4>

**Appendices**

Appendix A – Location of Recycling and Household Waste Sites in Leicestershire.

Appendix B – Visits to Leicestershire Recycling and Household Waste Sites