

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF CABINET ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020

PART A: REPORT

SUBJECT: Food Waste & Absorbent Hygiene Products Collection Service Trial

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DATE: November 2020

EXTN: 37914/37955

PORTFOLIO AREA: Neighbourhood Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report sets out proposals to work in partnership with West Sussex County Council (WSSC) to deliver a twelve-month Food Waste & Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) collection service trial across approximately 1,150 properties in Arun.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that;

- a) Cabinet agrees to proceed with a Food Waste & AHP collections trial using a 123 service as outlined in this report for a period of 12 months, commencing in March 2021;
- b) Cabinet notes and supports the governance arrangements which are designed to allow the respective project teams to take all necessary decisions to successfully deliver the trial within the framework outlined in this report; and
- c) Cabinet approves the necessary drawing down of funding from WSSC and expenditure associated with Arun's delivery of the trial as outlined in this report

1. BACKGROUND:

1.1 On the 7 November 2019, Arun's Environment & Leisure Working Group recommended to Cabinet that;

- Arun District Council declares a Climate Emergency
- The impact and mitigation of climate change is considered and incorporated into all policy and key decision making.

1.2 It was also agreed that the whole of our Council needs to take a lead in ensuring that each service is part of the solution, through working across all elements of the Council and with the community, partners, contractors and businesses.

1.3 The Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2011 requires all local authorities to meet recycling targets of 50% by 2020, 55% by 2025 and 65% by 2035.

1.4 In December 2018 the Government published its Resources & Waste Strategy for England. Among the key themes within this strategy is a commitment to eliminating all food waste to landfill by 2030. The Strategy also proposes introducing new statutory requirements for councils to have weekly separate food waste collections in place for all households by 2023.

1.5 Arun's current recycling performance is 42.84%. This consists of 26.56% of dry mixed kerbside recycling and 16.28% of kerbside garden waste.

1.6 A residual waste composition analysis carried out for Arun in 2018 showed that food waste is by far the biggest single element in the residual waste bin, accounting for an average of 42.6% of the contents by weight at 12, 123 tonnes. Of this food waste, 29% (8,244 tonnes) was identified to be edible food and 13.6% (3,865 tonnes) inedible such as peelings/bones etc. It was identified that 21.47% (6,110 tonnes) of the food waste disposed of, could have been composted.

1.7 The costs of residual waste treatment are increasing and there are growing concerns about the impact of food waste on climate change. Food waste will be collected and processed separately instead of treating it as residual waste.

1.8 When food waste in the trial area is collected separately, it will be treated more effectively and efficiently via anaerobic digestion. Anaerobic digestion breaks the food down into soil fertiliser and biogas which can be used for generating energy. When collected separately food waste will be classified as recyclate under legislation and supports an increase in the council's recycling rate and a reduction in residual waste tonnages.

1.9 A Food Waste & AHP trial would consist of a '1-2-3' collection system comprising

- Weekly food waste & opt-in Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP)
- Fortnightly (comingled) dry recycling and small electrical items (WEEE) and opt-in subscription garden waste
- Three-weekly residual

1.10 From a 2018 modelling exercise this collection system is considered the optimal collection model in terms of maximising recycling rates. This exercise suggested that Arun's recycling rate would increase to around 50-55% if the system was applied to the whole of the district together with an overall cost saving compared to current collection and disposal costs.

1.11 Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) research¹ (see background papers) shows that through the introduction of food waste collections residents become more aware of wastage and subsequently choose to waste less food, this will have the most positive financial benefit to those residents. It will deliver environmental benefits and overall reduction in carbon footprint. This supports the principles of the waste hierarchy which is ‘**reduce, reuse, recycle**’.

1.12 In the next twelve months Arun will commence the procedures to procure a new Combined Cleansing Services Contract (CCSC). It is anticipated that a trial will provide valuable information to aid decision making for the procurement of this contract, notwithstanding any government mandate to introduce separate food waste collections by 2023.

2.0 Headline principles of the trial

2.1 Potential areas are currently being reviewed with our collections contractor Biffa to ensure a good representation of the district. This will be confirmed, but is likely to include;

- Approximately 1,150 properties;
- A representative cross-section of housing types; and
- A representative sample of demographics

This is important to ensure the trials deliver a truly representative set of findings, which can be used, with confidence, to inform a wider roll-out.

2.2 The trial will realise an overall increase in the annual collections provided to households from 78 currently (52 residual & 26 recycling) to 93 collections (52 food waste, 26 recycling and 17 Residual).

	Residual	Recycling	Food	Overall
Current	52	26		78
Trial	17	26	52	93

2.3 The 2018 food waste collection service options modelling indicates that a ‘123’ service would deliver the greatest carbon reduction for West Sussex as a whole solution vs the existing service baseline. The modelling estimated that introducing a ‘123’ service across West Sussex could save just under 15,000 tonnes CO₂e per annum vs baseline.

2.4 Almost all ‘putrid & smelly’ waste will be collected every week, the only potential exception being animal waste/pet bedding which could be double bagged to prevent smell. Alongside fortnightly dry mixed recycling and small WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) collections, a popular green waste subscription service, and weekly collection of food waste and AHP, the residual waste stream would generally be expected to consist of inert non-recyclable waste such as rigid plastics, plastic film and polystyrene. Therefore three-weekly residual collections and the provision of a 240l residual bin is considered

sufficient to allow residents to manage their waste effectively.

2.5 All residents involved in the trial will be provided with a 240-litre wheeled bin, if they do not already use one, for their 3-weekly residual collection. Households who have 5 or more residents will also be able to request a larger 360-litre wheeled bin for their residual waste. This will ensure there is no reason for black bag waste to be left out on the kerbside, which is often considered a barrier to less frequent residual waste collections.

2.6 All residents will continue to be offered compost bins at a subsidised price (see link in background papers)

2.7 The trial will be funded through WSCC funding which is available to District & Borough Councils to deliver projects that aim to improve recycling performance. There is no direct cost to Arun.

3.0 Operational delivery

3.1 As Arun currently collects residual waste weekly from kerbside black sacks, the provision of residual waste bins is regarded as essential for the purposes of the trial. It is proposed that 240 litre residual waste bins are provided to all properties in the trial area that do not already use one. Through direct communications to all kerbside properties, those households which currently use a wheeled bin will have an opportunity to 'opt out' of being supplied a new 240 litre residual waste bin.

3.2 A 'Starter Pack' consisting of an internal 5-litre & external 23-litre food waste caddy with approx. 3-months supply of liners and an information booklet will be provided to all properties within the trial area.

3.3 Residents opting in to the free AHP collection service will be provided with yellow and black sacks for this waste stream.

3.4 Special measures and consideration has been given to collections from flats within the trial area. Residents will receive a 5-litre internal food waste caddy with approx. 3-months' supply of liners and an information booklet. A 140-litre communal wheeled bin will be provided in the bin store for food waste.

3.5 A vehicle operated by 2 x staff will be required for the purposes of collection of food waste.

3.6 AHP collections will be undertaken by Medisort, Arun's existing clinical waste collection contractor. Medisort are a pioneering Littlehampton based business who undertake the collection and disposal of clinical waste. This will be an extension of the current framework agreement.

3.7 A '123' service introduces a moderate level of additional complexity, both in terms of the operational requirements, and how the collection regime is communicated and managed for residents. In light of this, West Sussex officers recently visited Daventry District Council, who successfully introduced a '123 +' service in June 2018 and were recently shortlisted for a national award for the related communications campaign. Daventry District Council's recycling rate increased following the service change and their

recycling rate for 2019/20 is 53.4% (Waste data flow/Defra unaudited results).

3.8 Arun is developing a Covid-19 risk mitigation plan with its collections contractor Biffa to ensure that trial collections would continue as a priority in the face of Covid-19 related restrictions and any local impact on Biffa's workforce.

4.0 Project governance

4.1 Project Board – consisting of senior managers and directors from Arun & WSCC. The Project Board will consider the monthly report from the project team and ensure the project continues to operate within the agreed framework. The Project Board will communicate progress to their respective Corporate Management Teams and Elected Members.

4.2 Project Team – consisting of Waste Services Officers and Environmental Managers from Arun & WSCC. The Project Team will lead on the operational planning and delivery of the trial. The team will produce a monthly report in the following format that will be reported to the Project Board for sign off;

- Operational/project plan update
- Financial/procurement update
- Communications update
- Performance/targets update
- Summary of data capture
- Summary of resident enquiries/feedback

4.3 Communications Team – consisting of Communications representatives and Waste Officers from both Arun & WSCC. The team will lead on delivery and implementation of an agreed communications strategy & plan.

4.4 Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Ward Members – The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services will champion the trial service and will receive a monthly project update report, which will also be provided to Ward Members for the chosen trial area. The Environment and Neighbourhood Services Committee will receive a 6 monthly trial update/information report.

5.0 Project Timetable

Nov 20	ADC Cabinet report to seek approval for trial (16/11/20) Upon approval; Procure food waste treatment Procure food waste containers and residual bins Confirm full waste composition analysis Agree AHP Call off Contract with Medisort Begin producing pre-launch and launch communications
Jan/Feb 21	Commence pre-launch communications and engagement activities Commission collection vehicle(s) & crew(s) Set up transfer station logistics Begin AHP subscription process

	Public communications and engagement activities Launch resident communications
Feb 21	Caddies and bins delivered to households
March 21	Trial collections begin Data collection – participation, load tonnages
May/June 21	waste composition analysis Reminder communications
Sept 21	1st Resident Survey
Oct 21	waste composition analysis 6-month progress report to Environment and Neighbourhood Services Committee Trial evaluation begins
Nov 21 – Feb 22	Final Resident Survey and ‘Thank you’ Final waste composition analysis
Mar 22	Trial ends Decision on continuation of collection model linked to success of objectives Evaluate trial and report results

6.0 Disposal & Processing

For the purposes of the trial, due to the relatively small tonnages of material collected, food waste will be processed via Anaerobic Digestion. The treatment solution will be subject to WSCC procurement, which will give consideration to carbon emissions and distance travelled.

As the Waste Disposal Authority, WSCC are currently investigating options for the processing of Food Waste/AHP beyond any trial period. The working assumption is that food waste collections will become mandatory and/or one or more authorities will commit fully to roll out food waste collections. This would significantly increase the tonnages of material collected and processed, necessitating procurement of a more permanent solution.

7.0 Outcomes/targets

- To trial Food Waste & AHP collections using a 123 service across an estimated 1,150 properties with varying demographics, in an area considered representative of the wider district
- Identify best practise operations and communications for future decision making
- Evaluate customer satisfaction with food waste and AHP collections using a 123 service at 6 and 11-month period
- Reduce the amount of food waste within the residual waste
- Reduce amount of residual waste in trial area
- Improve total recycling rate
- Improve dry recycling input contamination level
- Improve quantity of dry recycling
- Achieve average 80% participation rate from AHP subscribed households over trial period

8.0 Funding

8.1 The trial will be funded by WSCC. WSCC set aside a performance improvement fund for Districts & Boroughs within the West Sussex Waste Partnership to bid for in respect of projects which will deliver improvements in recycling performance. The proposal for a Food Waste & AHP collection trial in Arun is supported by WSCC and a funding arrangement has been agreed in principle.

8.2 The costs cover a variation from Arun's existing contract requiring a dedicated vehicle and crew and the procurement of new bins for the trial area amongst other costs outlined below

8.3 At the end of the twelve-month trial there will be an eleven-month period prior to the start of Arun's new Combined Cleansing Services Contract. A decision will have to be taken in respect of whether to continue the same collection model within the trial area. The Cabinet Member with delegated authority for waste collection policy will be consulted on this decision at an appropriate point towards the end of the trial. An additional allowance has been made in the funding arrangement between Arun & WSCC for these potential costs.

Estimated 12-month trial project costs forming part of funding arrangement to Arun, as follows;

Collection costs	Cost £
Food waste collection vehicle (Inc. Fuel and Crew)	49,334
AHP collection costs	3,918
Communications	
Various communications	3,947
Containers & Liners	
All bins/caddies/liners for houses & flats	38,708
Sampling	
Sampling of waste & recycling	39,378
Operating Total	
Operations	131,367
Contingency	
5%	6,568
Total	137,936

NB – The costs above are high end estimations and are likely to be reduced through pre-trial procurement and negotiation. As referenced in paragraph. 1.10, modelling has suggested a reduction in collection and disposal costs based on a procured district wide contract. However, this cannot be achieved through a small bolt on trial service at this stage.

9.0 Communications

9.1 Introducing a food waste & AHP collection trial can create a level of complexity, both in terms of operational requirements and how the collection regime is communicated and managed for residents. A well-considered communications plan and clear messaging is therefore essential to ensure resident engagement and understanding. A detailed Communications Strategy is being developed using best practise communications (Daventry) and agreed between Arun & WSCC to ensure the greatest effectiveness and consistency for both resident and member communications for this trial.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

To agree to proceed with the trial collection service as outlined in this report for a period of 12 months commencing in March 2021

3. OPTIONS:

To agree the recommendations as outlined in this report

Not to agree the recommendations as outlined in this report

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:

YES

NO

Relevant Town/Parish Council

✓

This will occur once the trial area is confirmed

Relevant District Ward Councillors

✓

This will occur once the trial area is confirmed

Other groups/persons (please specify)

✓

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services

Leader & Deputy Leader of the Council

Group Leaders

Shadow Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)

YES

NO

Financial

✓

Legal

✓

Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment

✓

Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act

✓

Sustainability

✓

Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		

6. IMPLICATIONS:

Financial – involves the drawing down of funding provided through WSCC to deliver the trial

Sustainability – aligns with the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle) and the Council’s corporate commitment to climate change & sustainability

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To provide agreement for the roll out of a Food Waste & AHP ‘123’ collection services trial to commence in March 2021 for approximately 1,150 properties

8. EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION: 25 November 2020

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Remember to list background papers and insert required links

<https://wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Food%20waste%20collections%202020%20report.pdf>

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/land-waste-and-housing/waste-and-recycling/recycling-and-waste-prevention-in-west-sussex/reduce-your-waste-and-recycling/#compost-it>