

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 20 MAY 2016**

**Statement from: Councillor R A Shore, Executive Councillor for Waste & Recycling**

### **PRESENT SITUATION**

#### **Service Changes**

Decisions have recently been finalised for changes to take place in the waste and recycling service in order to help the Council to fill the shortfalls in the budget. These included:

- Our Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) policy is to make sure that 95% of residents are within a 12 mile radius of a recycling facility and the closure of the Centre at Whisby and Leadenham, won't affect that. Additionally, these sites are not owned by the Council and would require additional costs to the Council and staff resource to make required improvements. Residents who previously took their recycling to the HWRC at Leadenham are encouraged to visit the newly built HWRC at Sleaford instead; those who used Whisby are encouraged to visit the site at Great Northern Terrace in Lincoln.

We understand this may mean slightly longer journeys for some people and there is a concern that this will result in increase in fly-tipping. As most fly-tip waste is trade in origin, it is considered that the vast majority of Lincolnshire residents are law abiding and the potential for an increase in fly-tipping is minimal.

- We have stopped offering recycling credits to voluntary and charity groups. Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints, we can no longer afford to do this. This was a difficult decision, but it is necessary to ensure the Council continues to provide the core waste disposal service which is essential for our residents. This will not affect the ability for charities to generate their own income by collecting recycling.
- Payment to North Lincolnshire Council for residents to use the HWRC facilities at Kirton Lindsey and Barnetby Top has stopped as we have two new HWRCs at Market Rasen and Gainsborough to improve services in those areas.
- In consideration of South Holland District Council undertaking a garden waste collection trial and the County Council continuing to provide 7 day opening at the Spalding Household Waste Recycling Centre for another year, due to the volumes of presented green waste, the supplementary service has been stopped.

- After careful consideration of the needs of the local extensive population and by taking on board comments from the Environmental Scrutiny Committee there will be a reduced Saturday supplementary service at Mablethorpe and Stamford, being residual waste collection only. There are no longer green waste collections and the recycling provision at the Mablethorpe site has been stopped.

Members will be aware that these changes were discussed at a number of stages in the process including three Environmental Scrutiny Committee meetings, a Full Council Meeting, and at Executive. Any comments made were fed back to the Executive for consideration.

## **District Heating**

### **Background Information**

Element Energy (EE) were appointed in 2015 to carry out a feasibility study to establish whether it is feasible to progress with a District Heating (DH) project and if so, how best to achieve it. The study would also look at cooling and private electricity wire possibilities.

The two stage study was programmed to look at the following:

- Stage 1 – Energy Mapping Study.
- Stage 2 – Energy Master Planning Study.

Stage 1 is now complete. EE have collected data on energy demand in the Greater Lincoln area. A database of potential heat users has been developed, a Heat Map which shows the locations and density of energy zones. This has involved consultation with property owners.

Stage 2 began in October. This has focused on more detailed scenarios being produced. Seven distinct areas have been analysed with economic assessments carried out to establish the viability of DH for those potential end users. The southernmost area extends to Witham St Hughes and the northern most extends to the city centre incorporating the County Hospital and the Prison. These two properties represent the largest anchor loads. The third largest loads are the University and surrounding commercial developments.

EE will now analyse the different data and make further contacts with potential users to establish if it is economically viable for a potential switch to DH. One of the main economic restrictions around viability is the distance of the end user from the EfW plant. Up to 70% of the cost of DH is in providing the pipe network and therefore locations closer to EfW may be more realistic around the Teal Park and LN6 area. However all options are still being considered.

The issue around feasibility is that there must be a financial benefit to a customer of switching from being an existing gas user to DH. This is ordinarily achieved by buying the heat at a rate lower than the gas market price. The capital outlay of providing the pipe network, pump station and back up boiler by the authority along with the operating cost must be offset by the sale of heat to customers. Long term commitments can be difficult to obtain with small scale developments but properties such as hotels and leisure centers are ideal for this type of energy.

Once Phase 2 is substantially completed the findings will be presented to myself, the Executive Member for Economic Development and to the Environmental Scrutiny Committee for their consideration. I will then feed back to Council through this report.

At the end of phase two, Executive Councillors will determine a way forward based on evidence gleaned during the review stage.

### **Materials Reclamation Facility (MRF) / Kerbside Sorting**

As part of the present waste review, the Council was considering the option to develop the capacity to deal with our own recycling by building and managing our own facility, perhaps in partnership with other authorities both inside and outside Lincolnshire.

The initial business case for such a project was made and showed present viability. However, during the investigations of this changing scenario, through expected future commodity pricing and also present and projected government thinking, it may be that kerbside sorting of recycling may prove to be a better way forward, although there is a cost implication to this.

If it were to go ahead, the separated waste streams would be presented for collection at the kerbside thus helping to establish a much cleaner and less contaminated mix which would in turn hugely increase the value of the product. Certainly, if national policy were to move down this road, and there are indications that they may, then any spending on expensive facilities such as a MRF, would be wasted cash.

### **Contamination / Education**

Meanwhile, our education programme to 'clean up' our recycling, continues. This months County News featured information and advice on recycling, which was agreed by all the Authorities across our county. This content included all the recyclates which are common to each District with a little more advice about any differences which may remain - for example, East Lindsey District Council does not recycle glass in their kerbside collection; instead they collect this separately. Points such as these will be reiterated in future publications so that residents are as clear as they can be about what is and what is not acceptable in their recycling bin.

## **Deceased Animals**

Of course, what is utterly unacceptable is the dumping of deceased pets in the bin whether recycling or otherwise. Unfortunately, a recent spate of incidents where deceased animals have been seen on the picking lines of our recycling plants, have shocked both workers at the plant and the general public. The advice is always to seek out your local vet who will dispose of the animal in a dignified and safe manner. Meanwhile, we have insisted that digital microchip readers are available at the plant in order to identify ownership. Also, we have ensured that systems are in place to deal effectively with any future incident.

## **CHALLENGES**

### **Mixed Dry Recycables**

Contamination is presently averaging around 18% across the County. The national figure is 14%. As stated in Contamination/Education section above, we need to find ways to address this issue, as contamination costs us all as taxpayers. The vast majority of people are effective recyclers but it only takes a few thoughtless individuals to devalue a large batch - here the adage, 'it only takes one rotten apple to spoil the barrel', is very apt.

## **SUCSESSES**

### **Bourne**

The brand new, purpose built facility in Bourne is now open for business and will increase LCC owned, Gold Service centres to nine, with at least two more to come in the near future.

This was officially opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> May, although residents have been enjoying the facilities for somewhat longer and I am proud to include this HWRC in our portfolio.

### **Boston**

Boston will be our next project and will become number ten of our recycling sites. Presently plans for developing this site to open in April 2017 are underway and will again be a purpose build facility, second to none.

## **FUTURE AMBITIONS/CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Kirkby on Bain**

A new HWRC in the Kirkby on Bain area is now being discussed to replace the one not owned by the Council in that part of the County. This would be the County Councils' eleventh HWRC, providing over 95% coverage of the population within the 12 mile radius policy.

### **Future HWRC provision**

To investigate the possibility for HWRC cost savings, the haulage, staffing, income and operation of all LCC owned HWRC is being considered for a longer term of 7+ years and to be within one overarching contract. It is fortunate that all the present contracts co-terminate on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, so this is the ideal opportunity to look into significant potential savings.

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