

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**CABINET  
10<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor John Powell  
Portfolio Holder for Waste and Recycling**

**SUBJECT: Provision of Saturday Bulky Waste Service in  
Machynlleth**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 Following the closure of the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Machynlleth in January 2015, a bulky waste and recycling service was implemented on a Saturday as a mitigation measure resolved by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to be reviewed within 6 months.
- 1.2 The cost of this service was estimated at £51,480 per year, but due to the amount of residual waste collected and the attendant vehicle and labour requirements, the cost is approximately £78k, including landfill costs. With the savings required within the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the Highways, Transport and Recycling Service, the current mitigation arrangements are no longer sustainable.
- 1.3 With the introduction of the three weekly residual collection service, there has been an increase in the amount of 'black bag' residual waste brought to the Saturday Service which undermines the effectiveness of the three weekly collections.
- 1.4 There are several options going forward ranging from reducing the frequency of the service, restricting black bags, and removing the service altogether which will have various effects on the HTR budget.
- 1.5 The Community Recycling Site has already been improved with additional banks and there is scope for further improvement such as the provision of a container for the collection of small electrical items.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 A decision was made by Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2014 to close the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Machynlleth with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 on the basis of affordability. The decision was further considered by Full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> October resulting in a further report on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014.
- 2.2 The decision to close the HWRC was upheld by Cabinet with a further recommendation approved to implement mitigation measures in the form of a Saturday Service running from 9:00am to 12:00 noon on a pilot basis to establish the requirement and review within 6 months. Improvements were also made to the

Community Recycling Site to allow for an increase in use and the provision of additional materials.

- 2.3 This service has now operated for over twelve months and hence there is a complete picture of the use over a full year.
- 2.4 The service was originally provided to allow residents in the Machynlleth area who were less able to travel to drop off bulky waste for recycling and disposal. Over the period 17<sup>th</sup> January 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016, 311 tonnes of material has been collected by the service, with only 63 tonnes recycled, equating to just over 20%. For comparison, the new HWRC contracts are achieving recycling rates in excess of 80%.
- 2.5 A recent survey of the service has shown that a disproportionate amount of general waste in black bags is being delivered by residents which would suggest that the kerbside collection service is not being used to its full potential. At the HWRCs, any member of the public bringing in a black bag will be asked to sort it for recycling. Due to this service taking place in a public car park, it is not practical to replicate this requirement here. If continued in its current format the service will have a negative effect on the Council's ability to achieve the Welsh Government's Statutory Recycling Rate.
- 2.6 With the introduction of the three weekly residual collection arrangements, the amount of black sacks has increased as might be expected. However this is not an option in other parts of the County where residents are expected to increase their recycling in order to remain within their provided residual capacity.
- 2.6 The cost of this service is circa £78k per annum against an original estimated amount of £51k. As part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the Highways, Transport and Recycling Service is required to make savings of £1.7 million in 2016/17. The current service is not budgeted for and is therefore a pressure which has contributed to the overspend within the waste and recycling budget for 2015/16. This is currently forecasted at period 11 to be £384k.

### **3.0 Proposal**

- 3.1 To cease the service which would achieve the maximum savings to the Waste and Recycling budget. Prior to ceasing the service there would be a period of three months where the service would be reduced to a fortnightly basis with a restriction in place for unsorted domestic 'black bag' waste.
- 3.2 To undertake a comprehensive communications and awareness campaign in the Machynlleth area to ensure residents are fully aware of the alternative provisions and their options for recycling from the kerbside.
- 3.2 To further improve the provision at the Community Recycling Site to maximise opportunities for residents to recycle.

### **4.0 One Powys Plan**

- 4.1 One of the key priorities of the One Powys Plan is remodelling council services to respond to reduced funding.

## **5.0 Options Considered/Available**

### **5.1 Option 1 – Continue existing weekly Saturday service**

This option would not realise any savings as required under the MTFs and furthermore would have a negative impact on achieving the Welsh Government Statutory Recycling Rate (SRT). It would also continue to provide inequity of service provision across the County.

### **5.2 Option 2 – Maintain weekly service but delay start time to 10:00am and restrict residual ‘black bag’ waste**

This option would have the effect of reducing the labour requirement for three operatives for one hour each week and reducing the residual waste collected. The estimated cost of providing this service would be £63k, a saving of £15k on the existing service.

### **5.3 Option 3 – Reduce service to fortnightly and restrict residual ‘black bag’ waste**

The estimated cost of providing this service is £51k, a saving of £27k on the existing weekly arrangement taking into account the diversion of some of the waste through alternative routes. Restricting the black bag waste would assist with achieving the SRT and reducing costs. It should be noted that it is very difficult to predict what may happen to waste following a change to the service, notably the increased pressure that may result from a reduced frequency.

### **5.4 Option 4 – Reduce service to monthly and restrict residual ‘black bag’ waste**

The estimated cost for this option is £38k, a saving of £40k on current arrangements. However, if as expected this option resulted in more waste being brought to the Service on the one day as opposed to being collected over four, there may be a requirement for an additional vehicle and the attendant costs. Again, restricting black bag waste would assist with the SRT.

### **5.5 Option 5 – Remove the service**

Taking into account waste being diverted through alternative routes and hence still incurring a cost, this option would achieve a saving of £64k. Residents would be required to make alternative arrangements including maximising recycling at the kerbside.

## **6.0 Preferred Choice and Reasons**

6.1 Option 5 is the only long term option that will make the significant savings required in the MTFs and provide for a consistent approach across the County.

6.2 Whilst this would mean that residents will have to travel further to use a HWRC, there are still local options available to them for day to day waste types, primarily the kerbside recycling service and the Community Recycling Site in Machynlleth, as well as the bulky waste collection service.

- 6.3 There is an opportunity to make improvements to the Community Recycling Site in Machynlleth with additional materials such as small electrical items. This site would be retained following the review of these sites currently underway following the Cabinet decision on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016. This site is currently looked after by Sylfaen Day Services who receive a management fee in the region of £1000 per annum dependant on tonnage received.
- 6.4 There are several other communities within Powys who are required to travel similar distances to their nearest HWRC and do not receive a weekend service.
- 6.5 Due to the nature of the service it is difficult to maximise recycling and hence there is a risk of sending out the wrong message when all residents need to fully play their part in reaching the SRTs.
- 6.6 In order to achieve the demanding MTFs targets for the HTR Service, every opportunity needs to be taken to realise savings. The current costs of providing this service are contributing to budget overspends and need to be addressed.
- 6.7 Whilst the budget pressure needs to be addressed as soon as possible, sufficient time needs to be allowed to ensure that the removal of the service is effectively communicated. It is therefore proposed that the service is removed no less than one month after the decision has been made by Cabinet.
- 6.8 It is appreciated that residents will need some time to adjust to the removal of the service and hence implementing Option 3 for a period of three months from 1<sup>st</sup> June prior to removal is proposed.

**7.0 Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc**

- 7.1 Removing or reducing the service will reduce the amount of material sent for landfill and encourage more sustainable options to be utilised for household waste.
- 7.2 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out prior to the decision made at Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> September to close the HWRC, which showed that there may be some impact on older/disabled people with regard to travel times. The nearest HWRC within Powys is approximately 28 miles in Newtown. Residents in other towns in Powys are already required to travel similar distances, for example the nearest facility to Llanwrtyd Wells is Brecon which is 25 miles. A Saturday service is not provided at any other location in Powys.
- 7.3 The proposal does not impact on Crime and Disorder, Welsh Language and other policies.

**8.0 Children and Young People’s Impact Statement – Safeguarding and Wellbeing**

- 8.1 The proposal does not impact on securing the safety and protection of children and young people and supporting the promotion of their wellbeing.

**9.0 Local Members**

9.1 The Member for Machynlleth is aware that the service is to be reviewed and has expressed concern regarding the removal of the service which has proved popular with residents.

## **10.0 Other Front Line Services**

10.1 The reduction or removal of the service is likely to result in more material going through alternative routes, i.e. the kerbside service or the Community Recycling Site, although this should be easily absorbed within the current provision and is taken into account when calculating the potential savings.

## **11.0 Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

11.1 The Finance Business Partner comments that the proposals will assist the service in reducing the current overspend and will assist to bring spend back in line with the budget. It is noted that it is difficult to predict what will happen to waste following a change to the service, and this may impact on the cashable savings expected from each of the proposals.

11.2 Legal – The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view.

11.3 Procurement – Nothing further to add.

11.4 Comments from HR, ICT and BPU are not required.

## **12.0 Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders, etc**

12.1 There would be no direct impact on the Council's partners and stakeholders.

## **13.0 Communications**

13.1 Extensive communications will be carried out prior to removing the service ensuring that all residents are aware of their alternative options. There will be an Awareness campaign in the area which will include a presence on the site for the three months where the service is reduced to provide face to face advice to the public.

13.2 The view of the Senior Communications Manager is that the report is of public interest and requires proactive news releases and use of social media to publicise the decision.

## **14.0 Statutory Officers**

14.1 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report."

14.2 The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments made by Finance.

## 15.0 Members Interests

15.1 The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>1) Option 3 – Reduce service to fortnightly and restrict residual ‘black bag’ waste. To be implemented from June 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 for a period of three months followed by Option 5 – Remove the service – from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.</b>	<b>To reduce overspend and help to bring the service back in line with the existing budget and contribute to achieving the Welsh Government’s Statutory Recycling Target.</b>
<b>2) To undertake a communications and awareness campaign in the Machynlleth area.</b>	<b>To ensure residents are fully aware of the alternative provisions and their options for recycling from the kerbside</b>
<b>3) To further improve provision at the Community Recycling Site.</b>	<b>To maximise opportunities for residents to recycle through the kerbside and Community Recycling Site.</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	One Powys Plan		
<b>Within Policy:</b>	Yes	<b>Within Budget:</b>	Yes

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	Cllr Michael Williams
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	Nigel Brinn
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Fully Implemented:</b>	September 2016

### Contact Officer

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