

**PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 DECEMBER 2022**

WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE

Purpose:

To present the project progress and update report for the interim phase of the Waste Strategy 2021 and outline associated waste management policies ahead of the interim waste changes roll out in January 2023.

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:-

- 1. To note the progress and delivery of the Waste Strategy 2021**
- 2. To review and assess the information contained within the Waste and Recycling Policy and provide any recommendations, comments, or advice to the Cabinet Member.**

Reasons:

To provide an update on the Waste Strategy 2021-2025 and service roll-out in January 2023 that has a clear strategic objective of improving kerbside domestic waste collections and in turn increasing recycling rates in Carmarthenshire. Also summarise the current waste management policies that are required to improve operational and strategic performance.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. Edward Thomas

Directorate:

Department of Place and Infrastructure

Name of Head of Service:

Daniel John

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15TH DECEMBER 2022

WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE

Introduction

Carmarthenshire County Council currently provides waste services to approximately 91,000 households through the delivery of a fortnightly residual general waste collection and co-mingled kerbside recycling service as well as a weekly food collection. Kerbside bulky and garden waste are offered as chargeable services, in addition to a network of Bring-sites available for glass recycling in the main with provision for textiles and small electrical items at busier sites.

Whilst the current service model has previously enabled the authority to exceed the statutory 64% target, we did fail to meet this last financial year, evidencing further change is required to meet this and the 70% target from 2024/25.

The Carmarthenshire Waste Strategy 2021 – 2025 was approved by Cabinet in October 2021. This strategy outlines a comprehensive programme of works to deliver service transformational change to achieve 70% recycling by 2024/25, providing a base for further improvements to achieve zero waste by 2050 and working towards reducing the carbon impact of the service in line with our future carbon reduction ambitions.

The strategy provides a phased approach to service change with an interim solution to be delivered in 2022, with a longer-term service change to achieve the Blueprint collection methodology by 2024.

In February 2019 members unanimously resolved to declare a climate emergency and committed to become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030. The future waste service design presents a real opportunity for achieving this ambition. The Council's objective combined with current WG waste fleet aspirations mean that the Council has the opportunity to develop and maximise its ULEV fleet capacity to deliver the long-term strategy. As transport emissions make up a large part of the Council's overall emissions, this approach can deliver significant benefits to our overall carbon emissions. In addition, the development of the Eco- Park and potential for centralised depot at Nantycaws presents a real opportunity to develop new renewable energy production and charging infrastructure for the proposed Waste fleet and could unlock wider commercial charging potential.

Interim Position

The interim phase of the Waste Strategy will commence in November this year with the new collection methodology commencing for residents on the 23rd January 2023. This will comprise of:

- Dry recycling [blue bags] collected weekly
- Non-recyclable material [black bags] three black bags every three weeks, and the
- introduction of a glass collection service to 95% of properties in Carmarthenshire for glass bottles and jars to be collected from kerbside every three weeks.
- With food waste collection continuing to be collected weekly.

This change has required the procurement of an additional 23 vehicles in total, with the introduction of the first three electric refuse collection vehicles into the fleet to support our wider objectives. The current fleet from the 23rd of January 2023 will be utilised to collect the dry recycling material on a weekly basis until the blueprint methodology is implemented in 2024, whereby new vehicles are required.

Whilst the residual waste and glass recycling are collected by separate vehicles and crew, it was important to try and maintain a consistent waste collection day/week for the householder. Due to the operational placement of vehicles in the three principal depots, and geographical spread of the county we have been unable to ensure that all households are collected on the same day, however by undertaking some changes to the blue bag recycling round, we have managed to achieve around 44% of households on the same day for collection for their Blue, Black and Glass collection.

Waste collections currently are managed and operated from three different depots in the county based in Johnstown, Glanamman & Trostre. Due to the number of vehicles and the requirement for additional front-line employees [17 HGV drivers, 28 loaders] it has required a fourth depot to be introduced in Cross Hands for the interim measure, until an agreed option for location for the second phase of the strategy is agreed. The premises at Cross Hands has been leased for a period of two years following a successful planning application for the change of use for its intended use and the receipt of an operator's license for the site. The glass and residual fleet will operate from this new depot.

86,730 [95%] of properties in Carmarthenshire will be in receipt of glass collection from their home. Between Monday 21st November 2022 and Friday 20th January 2023, residents will be delivered a year's supply of blue bags and food waste liners for the brown kitchen caddy, and a black 44L box for their glass bottles and jars.

Residents will also receive an information pack through the post between the 14th November 2022 and January 20th 2023 which will provide guidance and further information in relation to the changes, including the days of the week their collections will be collected and a calendar to assist with the black and glass three weekly collections.

A robust engagement and communication plan has been developed to guide and assist residents in Carmarthenshire with the changes to their waste collections. Various communication strategies have been planned for pre and post roll out of the new service, to include social media campaigns, planned work to update the current website in relation to the changes, members seminars to ensure that members are fully informed of the changes to assist their constituents, posters to be installed at bus stop and FAQ's on the website.

As some residents will have their blue and black bags collected on different days of the week, we will be introducing a SMS and email notification service that residents will be able to sign up for. This service will send a reminder either via email or text message to the resident the evening before their collection day, to remind the resident of what commodity we will be collecting the following day.

There are unfortunately 2,954 properties which will be unable to be serviced by the kerbside glass collection but we will be working at getting these onto the service in the near future. The reasoning that these properties have not been able to join the glass recycling scheme at this time, is for reasons such as:

- the property is located in a long reach area and access via the 7.5t glass collection vehicle isn't feasible from both size and health and safety.
- The property is serviced by a private / non adopted road or
- Access to the property is via narrow lanes, which are unsuitable for a 7.5t glass collection vehicle.

As part of the service change we will be rationalising our network of Glass Bring Sites, we will continue to provide this service at strategic locations around the County during the interim period, to ensure residents who will not receive a kerbside collection will maintain access to glass recycling in their local community.

Integrated Impact Assessment

As of any service change, an Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed and measures have been put in place to ensure that these changes do not have a negative impact on Carmarthenshire residents. On the back of this assessment, we have developed a community engagement plan which is based on education and enforcement. Recycling advisors will be engaging with residents in person, targeting areas that we currently experience high contamination and low participation to recycling. Waste Wardens will be employed in time for the roll out in January 2023, to investigate noncompliance and enforce when needed if advice and guidance is not followed.

Finance

The Council, like many others, is under increasing financial pressure following a difficult period through COVID-19 response and due to the ongoing national economic position with further impact on services imminent from Welsh Government revenue support reductions compounded further by the decline in the Single Revenue Grant for Environmental Services, which has been a key source of core funding for the Council's Waste Services for many years. Given that we are at a low-cost base for collection under the current regime due to the operation of a single collection fleet, any switch to an alternative system to accommodate a weekly collection of Dry Recycling is going to be costly from a fleet and resource perspective. However, there is capital financial support from Welsh Government for Local Authorities in undertaking waste service change to Blueprint compliant collections.

We have been working with colleagues in Welsh Government to develop the opportunity for support funding, developing and submitting a business case for consideration.

As a result of this exercise and business case, the WG have recognised the considerable opportunities associated with the potential plans outlined for improving the collection of high-quality materials alongside support for their processing and use. Not just in waste and resource efficiency, but also in renewable energy, transport, and regional economic development. We have received notification of support funding approval for £14.3m from the WG and the Minister for Climate Change based upon our service change timelines. And the decarbonisation of our fleet resource and the benefit on wider WG objectives.

This capital support combined with increased material values and lower treatment costs inherent with Blueprint collections, will result in overall savings in 2024/25 compared to the increased cost of the interim position.

Circular Economy

Carmarthenshire has been successful in obtaining funding to develop our circular economy ambitions within the County. WE have recently implemented a series of projects delivering the re-use, repair, and re-manufacture of waste streams. The projects include:

- Repair workshop and re-use village at Nantycaws
- Re-use shop in Llanelli town centre
- Commercial recycling centre at Nantycaws
- Paint re-use facility

These projects add vital pieces of the jigsaw to Carmarthenshire's contribution to Wales becoming a leader in recycling. However, it is still required to develop our domestic waste collections to supplement these developments so that we can deliver against the objectives contained within the WG strategy.

Next Steps

Following the roll out of the interim service model in January the procurement of vehicles for the long-term solution needs to be undertaken in earnest, with routing and service design for the recycling collections commenced. This work delivers the necessary improvements in recycling quality and will dictate our capacity for the utilisation of ULEV vehicles in the longer term. We need to finalise the long-term depot configuration and service design proposals and commence design, planning and ultimately build of this centralised approach.

Waste Policy

With the impending waste changes roll out in January 2023, which have the strategic objective of improving kerbside domestic waste collections and increasing recycling capture in Carmarthenshire a change and formalisation of waste management policies is required.

The waste policies that underpin our services have previously been fragmented, whereby sections of our policy approach have been amended or added to within separate reports and papers passed through the democratic process, as and when change is necessary or required with no public document to consolidate them.

To provide clarity to officers, Members, and the public, we have created a singular waste management policy document. This has been achieved through collating, amending, and updating existing policies to ensure the service is working towards a cohesive strategic approach to enable residents to reuse or recycle as much of their domestic waste as they can. This document outlines how Carmarthenshire County Council is to deliver the refuse and recycling collection services, our network of HWRC's and Re-use facilities as well as the actions required for householders to participate fully in the service to recycle and dispose of their waste.

REPORT ATTACHED?

YES - Waste and Recycling Policy

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Daniel W John

Head of Waste & Environmental Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

1. Finance

To deliver the interim the net service cost increase from the baseline will be £1.63m per year. With the proposed timeline this would equate to a figure of £2.4m for an 18-month service programme. This will be funded through divisional reserves and budget growth allocation.

£14.6m capital funding has been obtained from WG and will support the capital costs required to effect the longer term change.

4. ICT

There is a comprehensive IT development programme for Waste and Environmental Services with resource currently identified. IT Development for information systems relating to our kerbside collection fleet will be required to deliver our long-term aspirations of service improvement.

5. Risk Management Issues

The current Welsh Government statutory target is 64% recycling, increasing to 70% recycling by 2025, and possibly 80% by 2030, with the aim for Wales to be a zero waste (100% recycling) nation by 2050. If the Authority fails to meet the statutory targets, it could face large financial penalties. This risk of recycling performance failure is identified as part of the corporate risk along with mitigating measures.

6. Physical Assets

Additional physical resources have been necessary to deliver the interim options set out. With the purchase and lease of additional vehicles to deliver the service configuration. The service has also entered into a lease agreement on a unit at cross hands to effect collections of the additional services.

Detailed modelling is being undertaken to fully understand the requirements going forward.

In addition, the development of infrastructure at Nantycaws and transfer stations will be progressed with WG and regional support.

7. Staffing Implications

Additional staffing resources have been necessary in the interim options set out. With 47 operatives required and currently being employed.

Robust workforce planning and training actions have been undertaken for in-house staff with 18 new drivers trained from within the current service.

Trade Unions have been actively engaged in the service change and monthly meetings are scheduled to continue with colleagues.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED	YES
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE