

REPORT TO:	Customers Overview and Scrutiny Committee
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr. Dave Cowans
DATE:	1 st November 2016
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SUBJECT:	Household Recycling Centres: Charges for Non-Household Waste Items
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	ALL

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To provide Members with information regarding the option to charge for certain materials received at the Household Recycling Centres (HRC's), providing residents with the option to dispose of Non-Household waste items in a safe, responsible and cost effective way to the council.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. CCBC has a statutory responsibility to the residents of Conwy to provide Household Recycling Centre's (HRC's) for the acceptance of **household waste** free of charge.
- 2.2. A number of different wastes are classed as **non-household**. The council has no obligation to accept these types of waste at the HRC's, accept them free of charge or pay for their treatment and disposal. It is legal for local authorities to charge residents for the disposal of these wastes.
- 2.3. The proposal is to introduce reasonable charges to residents to deal with certain non-household materials, which would be solely to cover the high

costs of transporting, treating and disposing these materials, including the administration of the charging system. This would still present an affordably priced solution for householders as opposed to the hire of a private skip.

- 2.4. A significant budgetary shortfall for the HRC Service is anticipated from April 2017. The introduction of reasonable charges for non-household waste would contribute an estimated £100,000 towards this budgetary pressure.
- 2.5. Continued acceptance of non-household waste (at a charge) will mean that residents still have a means to dispose of Non-Household waste items in a safe and responsible manner.
- 2.6. It is proposed that charges would be implemented from 1st April 2017.
- 2.7. Household waste will still be accepted **free of charge**.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1. That Members recommend to Cabinet to introduce a reasonable charge for non-household waste items received at Household Recycling Centres.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1. Background Information

- 4.1.1. CCBC has a statutory responsibility to the residents of Conwy to provide Household Recycling Centre's (HRC's) for the acceptance of household waste. Two HRC's are provided which are in Mochdre and Gofer (Abergele).
- 4.1.2. The sites are open every day (except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day) and receive more than 200,000 visitors annually, receiving over 11,500 tonnes of waste, 80% of which is composted or recycled, with the remainder sent for waste disposal.
- 4.1.3. Some types of waste accepted at the HRC's are classed as non-household waste for which a charge can be made. These items incur a significant cost for treatment and disposal.
- 4.1.4. The Council has historically contracted out operation and management of the HRC's. The current operator is Bryson Recycling Group on a 4 year contract which commenced 1st April 2013 and runs until 31st March 2017.

- 4.1.5. For various reasons, we are faced with a significant increase in costs for a new contract. As part of looking at different ways to maintain continued provision of the HRC service, a key area for further investigation is the introduction of discretionary charges for some types of waste which are classified as Non-Household Waste.

4.2. **DISCRETIONARY CHARGING AT HRC'S: MATERIALS AFFECTED**

- 4.2.1. The legal obligation of Conwy County Borough Council is to provide places where residents can dispose of their **household** waste free of charge.
- 4.2.2. A number of different wastes are classed as **non-household**. It is legal for local authorities to charge residents for the disposal of these wastes. The materials affected by the introduction of a reasonable charge for disposal are;
- Tyres
 - Asbestos
 - Plasterboard
 - Soil, Rubble and Construction waste (including 'DIY Waste' e.g. bathroom suites & kitchen units)
 - Gas canisters
- 4.2.3. The council has no obligation to accept these types of waste at the HRC's or to accept it free of charge and pay for its treatment and disposal.
- 4.2.4. Over the last three years, the amount of non-household waste entering the sites is as follows:

	Weight (tonnes)		
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Asbestos	10.36	31.04	16.88
Plasterboard	105.06	89.44	101.88
Soil & Rubble	3190.88	2990.15	2680.74
Gas Canisters	23.06	22.13	18.15
Tyres	49.22	50.91	53.82

- 4.2.5. Household Waste and Non Household Waste are defined in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012.

4.2.6. As a general guide if the waste is an item usually found in a residential house and it is not fixed to the house or if outside it is not fixed to the ground, it will generally be household waste. If the waste item is not usually found within a residential house, or it is fixed to (within) a residential house, or if outside it is fixed to the ground, it will generally not be household waste.

4.2.7. The below table is not exhaustive, but serves as a general guide;

	Household Waste (free of charge)	Non-household Waste (a charge may be made)
Electrical & Gas Appliances	Kettle, toaster, free standing cooker, microwave, fridge, vacuum cleaner	Gas/electric fire, boiler, fireplace mantel
Bulky household items	Free standing furniture, including tables, chairs, wardrobes, sofa bed and mattress, carpet	Fitted cupboards units, fitted wardrobes
Plumbing	None	Bath, shower, sink, toilet
Garden	Grass cuttings, hedge clippings, lawn mowers	Fence posts, gates and panels, soil, bricks, rubble, whole or sectional trees
Building materials	None	Slabs, soil, bricks, rubble, tiles, slates, plasterboard, asbestos, guttering, drainpipe, window frames, door frames, sectional buildings
General	packaging (e.g. tins, cardboard, bottles), textiles (e.g. curtains, towels, clothes), food etc.	Tyres, Gas cylinders

Table 4.1

4.3. CHARGES

4.3.1. The proposal is to introduce reasonable charges to residents to deal with certain non-household materials, which would be solely to cover the high costs of transporting, treating and disposing these materials, including the administration of the charging system. This would still present a more affordably priced solution for householders than the hire of a private skip.

4.3.2. As there is no weighbridge on site at the HRC's. It would not be possible for residents to pay for disposal of items on a charge per tonne basis. A more practical way of taking payment would be to charge per item (tyres &

gas canisters), per bag (soil, rubble, DIY waste) and per sheet (Asbestos & Plasterboard), although a charge for a trailer load (within certain size limitations) would also be available.

- 4.3.3. A practical way of taking payment would be on the basis of using machines on site to issue tokens/receipts that would be handed to staff managing skips and containers. This would involve little disruption to the current site layout. It would also allow residents to dispose of non-chargeable items at the same time without needing two separate entrances.
- 4.3.4. It is proposed that charges would be implemented from 1st April 2017. There is also an option to allow for small building and construction businesses to use the sites.
- 4.3.5. It is proposed that the current HRC Policy which includes a Domestic Van Permit Scheme and a quantity restriction on materials such as construction and demolition waste will be reviewed and amended to reflect the charging system. This would reduce administration and monitoring of permits and situations where visitors are turned away from the site with larger quantities of materials that are currently restricted.

4.4. PROPOSED CHARGES

Materials	Charge
Hardcore & Rubble DIY Construction Waste	£3.00 per bag* or item (£30 per trailer**) Includes DIY waste bricks, blocks, slates, tiles, rubble, paving slabs, concrete, hardcore, ceramic toilets, sinks, pedestals, baths, kitchen/bathroom units, fence panel/posts, insulation materials (lagging/roofing felt).
Soil	£3.00 per bag* (£30 per trailer**)
Asbestos	£12.50 per bag or sheet*** Asbestos panels – must be double wrapped in plastic. Residents advised not to break into smaller pieces or cut/saw it.
Plasterboard	£4.00 per bag or sheet***
Gas canisters	£6.00 each up to 10kg £11.00 each 10kg – 20kg £35.00 each larger than 20kg specialist gas canisters
Tyres (Motor Vehicles & Motorbikes)	£4.00 each Commercial and agricultural vehicle tyres

	will not be accepted. No charge for bicycle tyres.
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*a bag is equivalent to a small, plastic, sand/aggregate bag from standard DIY stores (or similar) that can be safely lifted by one person.

** per trailer – standard small single axle trailer estimated max load 750 kg.

*** a sheet is treated as equivalent of one bag

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. Consultation has been carried out with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Environment & Facilities whose observations are as follows:

I fully support the principle of charging a reasonable fee to allow for the disposal of non-household type waste at our household waste recycling centres. The council does not have a legal obligation to accept non-household waste.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. For various reasons, the Council is faced with a significant increase in costs for a new HRC contract as of 1st April 2017.
- 6.2. A significant budgetary shortfall for the HRC Service is anticipated from April 2017. The introduction of reasonable charges for non-household waste would contribute an estimated £100,000 towards this budgetary pressure.
- 6.3. The council is currently accepting (and paying for treatment and disposal of) non-household waste free of charge when in fact there is no legal obligation to do so. This is not financially sustainable long-term and the introduction of reasonable charges would allow for the council to maintain a safe and responsible facility for residents to dispose of non-household waste at a cost which would be less than hire of a private skip. Household waste would remain free of charge.

7. RISK

- 7.1. Historically where discretionary services have been provided free of charge, there may be high levels of public concern and opposition to the introduction of charges. Residents may consider that these services should be provided through their Council Tax and not subject to additional separate charges, however the council has no legal obligation to accept

non-household waste at the HRC's. Reasonable charging would provide a low cost solution for householders and be cheaper than hiring a private skip for DIY construction projects.

- 7.2. With any change to waste management services (such as reduced opening hours or introduction of charges) it is inevitable that concerns about 'Fly Tipping' will be raised. Fly tipping is an illegal, criminal activity punishable by fines of up to £50,000 or 5 years in prison. Most people will manage their waste in a responsible manner and it is only a small minority who decide to break the law. CCBC is not responsible for the illegal, criminal activity of others, however the council will pursue enforcement action and prosecution of anybody found to be breaking the law. It is acknowledged that this is a potential risk and the situation should be monitored if charging is approved and it should also be noted that there is an option to allow small building and construction enterprises to use the HRC's (at a charge) as an outlet to responsibly dispose of waste.

8. DRIVERS AND IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. **Links to the Corporate Plan and Risk Register;** reducing the amount of waste sent for disposal and increasing recycling forms **Outcome 6 - People in Conwy live in a sustainable environment** within the Corporate Plan.
- 8.2. **Impact on the Building Resilient Communities and Tackling Poverty agenda;** increasing public awareness of what can be recycled at HRC's will increase householder participation and awareness of waste minimisation within communities, including environmentally sustainable lifestyles. Local work, training and/or volunteering opportunities will be created as a direct result of the reuse centre. Access to low cost household items and materials will be available for purchase at the reuse centre.
- 8.3. **Equality Implications (Outline any key equality impact issues that have been identified within the Equality Impact Assessment);** there are no concerns that this policy could have a differential impact, following initial Equality Impact Assessment screening being reviewed and accepted by Human Resources as part of RRG process. The site is available and accessible to all residents. The introduction of a reasonable charge for non-household waste does not impact any protected group in an adverse manner. The payment mechanism will allow for cash as well as credit/debit card payments.
- 8.4. **Sustainability Implications;** the addition of closed-loop recycling principles and adherence with waste hierarchy model contributes to

promoting sustainable reuse of materials, recovery of waste and a reduced reliance on natural resources to make new products.

- 8.5. **Biodiversity Implications;** increasing the amount of material reused and recycled at the HRC's will directly impact upon the amount of waste currently sent to landfill in the local area and will reduce pollution in local atmosphere.
- 8.6. **Effect/Impact on existing policies and procedures;** the existing HRC Policy approved by Cabinet (March 2015) will need to be amended to effect service provision changes such as core opening hours, chargeable materials and commercial type vehicle permit conditions.

9. PUBLICATION

- 9.1. Before any charges are introduced, the new arrangements will be advertised on the website, on social media and via a press release to the local media and publication of the community newspaper.
- 9.2. In the weeks prior to the introduction of charges, signage will also be prominently displayed on site and all visitors will be issued a leaflet with further information about the charges.
- 9.3. If approved by Scrutiny, and Cabinet, then it is intended to introduce these changes on the 1st April 2017.
- 9.4. The Household Recycling Centre Policy document would need to be amended to reflect any changes.

10. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 10.1. It is not financially viable to continue acceptance of non-household waste at HRC's when there is no legal obligation to accept this type of waste and there are significant costs associated with treatment and disposal of such waste. The proposal within this report will help to meet the significant budgetary pressures the service is facing, while also maintaining provision of a facility for householders to safely and responsibly dispose of non-household waste.

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

12. REPORT REVIEW GROUP (RRG) COMMENTS

RRG supported the recommendation within the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	LOCATION	WEBSITE INFO.
EIA Initial Screening Form	HR Bodlondob	