
REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 11 JULY 2012**PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT****REPORT FROM HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES****SUBJECT: WEEKLY COLLECTION SUPPORT SCHEME****1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That a bid be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government for funding for a weekly collection of residual waste from the low-rise residential properties in the District.

2 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The reason for the recommendation is that there is a problem with accumulations of refuse that occurs in the communal bin stores. The reasons cited are that there is insufficient space for the storage of residual waste, the high rate of change in the occupancy of the accommodation and lack of motivation from the residents as a number of these properties are rented. This is causing, in some cases, a potential problem by allowing an accumulation of rubbish. At a number of these properties the Council's waste collection contractor, SITA, are having to carry out a clearing exercise on a weekly basis.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government announced in February 2012 details of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme which will support Councils and also encourage weekly collections of waste and recycling across the country.
- 3.2 The scheme is worth up to £250 million over the Spending Review period (£50 million in 2012/13, £100 million in 2013/14 and £100 million in 2014/15). The scheme will begin paying money to authorities from the 2012/13 financial year. Local Authorities that successfully bid for funding will be offered a Section 31 grant payment that they can use for either revenue or capital expenditure or both. The scheme will award funding to local authorities for a minimum of three years from 2012/13 with the Council having to find the money for the final two years. Unless there is a decision to end after the final two years, the Local Authority's commitment will be ongoing.
- 3.3 The Department for Communities and Local Government invited interested local authorities to contact and submit a non-binding expression of interest by 16 March 2012 and an outline bid by 11 May 2012. The Council submitted bids at each stage after which the Department has intimated that there is merit in the Council's application and that a final application for a grant should be submitted. The date for final submission is 17 August 2012. The intention is

that Central Government will announce the final decisions on which bids will receive funding by October 2012.

3.4 The aim of the scheme is to support local authorities to:-

- Introduce, retain or reinstate a weekly collection of residual household waste. In addition, these collections must be supplemented by a separate recyclables collection at least once a fortnight; or
- Propose improvements to an existing waste service which is already centred around a weekly residual collection, for example by improving environmental performance, increasing the affordability or sustainability of that service; or add a weekly food waste (or organic waste) service to an existing fortnightly collection of residual household waste, whereby an authority can credibly demonstrate that this represents the preference of local people.

3.5 The existing scheme in Rochford of three wheeled bins is working extremely well throughout the district and has enabled the Council to be the leading recycling authority in England. It is considered that if this authority reverted to a weekly collection of residual material it would be a retrograde step. There is one problem with the existing scheme with regard to the low rise residential properties (flats). In a number of cases, due to lack of space for the storage of the wheeled bins and the reluctance of some residents to recycle, there is a problem of accumulations of rubbish. In some instances there is the potential to provide harbourage for vermin. In these cases the material is not recycled and is lost to landfill. At present they are collected fortnightly but in a number of cases the contractor has been clearing it regularly on request from the Council.

3.6 It is proposed that a bid is made under this scheme to bring back weekly collections of residual waste for flats only. The aim is to bid for two smaller vehicles as a capital grant and for the associated revenue costs. The Council would need to guarantee that it can maintain the additional collections of residual waste for five years which will mean that the final two years costs will have to be incorporated into the next refuse and recycling contract. Central Government will pay the first three years and the local authority will have to fund the remaining two years. The current contract with SITA ends in 2015.

3.7 The next stage of the process is to submit a final bid no later than 17 August 2012

3.8 It should be noted that any bid will be speculative as it will not fully meet the aims of the scheme to provide comprehensive weekly collection of residual waste.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 To reintroduce the weekly collection of refuse from low rise residential properties and fund the service through the contract as an additional charge

on the contract. The reintroduction programme will not be as extensive as that proposed in the bid to the Department for Communities and Local Government. It would only relate to those properties that cannot recycle as extensively as other areas due to lack of space.

- 4.2 The other option is to continue to offer fortnightly collection of refuse to these properties and to reinforce the education and enforcement programme.

5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 If a weekly collection is re-introduced to the low rise residential properties there will be less inclination for people to scatter the litter, it will reduce fly-tipping and reduce the perception of crime due to an accumulation of rubbish

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The introduction of weekly collection to the low rise residential properties will reduce the amount of litter and fly-tipping on the estates.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The bid will comprise of £140, 000 of capital and £160,000 of revenue in 2012/2013 (year 1), £150,000 revenue in 2013/2014 (year 2) and, £150,000 revenue in 2014/2015 (year 3). This money will be paid from the grant. The local authority has to give a commitment that it will fund the scheme for a further two years in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.
- 7.2 The present contract with SITA ends in 2015.
- 7.3 The £150,000 revenue costs for the last two years of the bid and ongoing will have to be met either as a payment to the contractor or included in the new contract which could mean there will be an increase in the final tender price.
- 7.4 During the first three years the vehicles and labour will be managed by SITA with all costs for vehicle maintenance, management and labour funded by the bid.
- 7.5 The vehicles purchased would remain the Council's property but operated by SITA on our behalf until March 2015. They would then be included in the new contract with the value of the vehicles offsetting some of the one-off charges that may be involved in providing a new contract.

8 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The key risk is the commitment to provide ongoing funding at the end of the 3 years. This will need to be managed through the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the renewal or retender of the current contract.

8.2 Although this is not addressed in the CLG's guidance, there is a risk if the Council does not continue the service after the 3 years that the money has to be paid back to Central Government unless there is a good reason. The reason that the grant is structured in this manner is that when a weekly scheme is in place there is likely to be a public reaction against withdrawing the service.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

SMT Lead Officer Signature: _____

Head of Environmental Services

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Barry Saunders (Street Scene Manager) on:-

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.