

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

FORWARD PLAN TO 2008

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set out how Rochford District Council intends to develop its recycling service over the next two years and in particular, how it will reach its statutory targets for the percentage of household waste that is recycled.

In producing this plan, consideration has been given to the current contracts that are in place in terms of type of provision and length of contract, and also to the Essex Waste Management Strategy and the emerging Essex Procurement Project, involving the potential partnership working with the other Thames Gateway Authorities and the County Council.

BACKGROUND

In 1999, Council implemented its first kerbside recycling service to one collection round of approx. 1500 properties in the Hawkwell / Ashingdon area of the District, on an initial trial basis. This was operated on a three-stream basis, encompassing an alternating fortnightly collection of residual waste and green waste and a weekly collection of co-mingled dry recyclables (paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, cans and initially textiles).

This trial round ran until August 2001, when four further collection rounds commenced in September, totalling approx. 6,500 properties (located in Rayleigh, Hockley and Hullbridge). This scheme was then in operation until the end of October 2004, when it was superseded by the current kerbside service that commenced in November 2004 and generated a sufficient level of recycling to reach the Council's Government Standard of 10% for 2003/4.

CURRENT SITUATION

Kerbside Recycling

The current kerbside recycling scheme was introduced following a tendering process that invited interested companies to provide prices for a scheme that could be rolled out across the District, and that utilised the four kerbsider recycling vehicles that the Council had been able to purchase with £351,800 of external funding, from the DEFRA Waste Minimisation Fund.

The Serviceteam scheme that was chosen involved a return to a weekly collection of residual waste (following extensive customer feedback) and a fortnightly collection of dry recyclables namely, glass, paper, magazines and cans. The initial launch was to approx. 28,000 properties spread across the District, which took the kerbside coverage from 19% on the previous scheme up to 83%, with a view to further expansions being implemented in the future, to the remainder of the District. Incorporated within the contract is a profit share agreement that is linked to a tonnage threshold, with the Council now having a policy of any monies generated from this source, being reinvested into waste management / recycling.

For 2004/5, this scheme consolidated the previous year's recycling performance with a figure of 10.5% but through the first two quarters for 2005/6, the recycling rate had risen to approx. 14%.

Bring Banks

In addition to the various kerbside schemes that have been in place, the Council also has 57 sites around the District where bring banks are located. These sites differ in the extent of materials that can be received but across various sites there is the facility for paper, glass, cans, textiles, and plastic bottles.

These sites are monitored closely to ensure they are kept tidy, that emptying frequencies are appropriate and that usage levels justify their positioning. Whilst the tonnage generated by the bring banks has reduced since the implementation of the District-wide kerbside scheme, they still prove to be popular means of recycling, producing worthwhile tonnage and act in a complementary way to the kerbside scheme, particularly by offering the facility for recycling different materials.

Green Waste

In order to offer residents a facility for recycling their green garden waste, a private scheme operated by Green Recycling of Maldon is in place, that is supported and subsidised by the Council. The scheme has been in operation since July 2005, with the number of participating households currently standing at 1,050. The annual charge of £39.90 is payable direct to Green Recycling, with the bulk of the Council's subsidy being funded by the monies generated from a profit share agreement within the kerbside recycling scheme.

Although this scheme has so far had only a minimal effect for the Council's overall recycling rate, with the expected growth in participation numbers in a full year of operation, its impact is expected to be significant in future years.

2005/2006 Recycling Rate

The Council's Government set target for 2005/6 is 18% and although the rate is increasing, the final figure for the whole of the year will not reach that level but is estimated at being approx. 15%, based on the estimated figures below:

Kerbside Scheme (28,000 households)	3,900 tons
Bring Banks	700 tons
Green Waste	200 tons
Round 6 Expansion / Fridges etc	150 tons
Total	4,950 tons
Estimated for total waste arisings	33,000 tons
Recycling rate	15%

CONTRACTS / ESSEX WASTE STRATEGY

In putting together plans and estimates for the future recycling service and performance, two highly influential elements are the nature / length of our own current contracts and also the Council's involvement within the Essex Waste Management Strategy and subsequent procurement process.

Rochford's contracts for refuse and recycling with Serviceteam and the contract for the green garden waste with Green Recycling, are all due to finish on 31 March 2008. The decision to coincide all of these contracts has been taken deliberately, to enable future procurement to be more efficient, streamlined and potentially attract greater industry interest in tendering. The

timescale also dovetails neatly into the projected timescales of the Essex-wide procurement process, although there is not a great deal of room for any delay in the latter process.

In looking for development to our current recycling service such as extra materials etc., with only just over two years left on the current recycling contract, these developments will probably be based around maximising the gain from the current scheme and in particular, maximising the capacity of the vehicles presently available. Unless externally funded, utilising further vehicles would prove expensive due to the short period of time over which their cost would have to be depreciated.

The Essex procurement process has been progressing steadily over the last 12-18 months, with the County being split into three areas – East, West and Thames Gateway. From an initial point of considering the potential of fully integrated contracts, encompassing collection, processing and disposal, following further detailed financial and environmental modelling and evaluation, in addition to DEFRA guidelines on PFI funding, a slightly different approach is now considered as the preferred option. This would involve a de-coupling of disposal and collection, with the County Council and Southend putting in an application for PFI funding only for disposal on a two area basis (North and South), with collection still being progressed on the original three area basis.

As part of the Thames Gateway Group, Rochford are actively working with the partner authorities in exploring potential economies of scale through joint procurement and/or horizontal integration of services. This process will also necessitate the “system design” of any service specifications and procurement processes, so that there can be effective “system integration” (rather than contractual integration) between collection and disposal. This process could obviously have a major impact on the decisions that are made on how future recycling is to be carried out and therefore, in conjunction with the previously mentioned length of our current contracts, it is only appropriate to plan and estimate our recycling service for the next two years.

FUTURE RECYCLING DEVELOPMENT

Recycling Performance Breakdown

1. Current Kerbside Scheme - a continuation of the current scheme collecting, glass, paper and cans from approx. 28,000 households on a fortnightly frequency. The scheme has now bedded in and operates smoothly, producing a consistent tonnage pattern over the fortnightly collection schedule and an estimated total tonnage of 3,900 tons for 2005/6. This level of material has been gained from a participation rate of approx. 65/67% and with a view from Serviceteam that the paper tonnage could be significantly higher than at present. Based on this information and also with the impact of a targeted education / awareness campaign (detailed later in this section), it is anticipated that a 10% tonnage increase each year, over the next two years, is achievable from the 28,000 households currently on the scheme.
2. Kerbside Scheme Expansion - this will involve an expansion of the current scheme to the “round 6” households (approx. 3,500 properties) that is made up predominately of outlying / hard to reach areas and is due to commence on 13 February 2006. These properties were not included on the initial launch due to their accessibility issues and in order to overcome this situation, the Council has purchased a purpose built narrow bodied vehicle, utilising external funding of £61,335, again from the DEFRA Waste Minimisation Fund (approx. 85% of the total cost of the vehicle). This expansion will take the kerbside coverage up to approx. 95% and take the Council much closer to its target of a full District-wide scheme, that in turn will meet the requirements of the Household Waste Recycling Act.

3. Kerbside Expansion to Flats - a further and final expansion of the current scheme is being developed for residents living in flatted accommodation, with a targeted commencement date of June 2006. In order to address the specific issues associated with recycling schemes for this type of accommodation, the Council is part of a County-wide flats recycling project, which is being coordinated by a firm of consultants across the area. In addition to analysing the different equipment and collection options, the project will also include a specific programme of consultation with residents, to ascertain their views and wishes on the scheme and then be incorporated into the final solution. This expansion would take the kerbside coverage up to 98/99% and therefore complete the District wide rollout of the scheme.
4. Bring Banks - bank sites continue to be monitored closely, to ensure optimum efficiency and effectiveness in terms of the suitability of the site, usage levels by material etc. The sites are to be promoted as a complementary facility to the kerbside scheme, particularly where different materials can be accepted e.g. plastic bottles and textiles. Individual contracts for the various materials will be reviewed and re-tendered as and when they are due for renewal, to maintain the condition and standard of the sites and to maximise value for money for the Council. Whilst taking into account the potential reduction in use due to the above mentioned kerbside expansions, it is forecast by the raising of the profile of recycling through not only the kerbside provision but also the education / awareness campaigns, the current tonnage levels generated through the banks can be maintained at the present amounts and possibly a slight increase.
5. Green Garden Waste - a continuation of the private scheme operated by Green Recycling and supported and subsidised by the Council. Significant advertising and promotion of the scheme is to be implemented in late Winter / early Spring of 2006, targeting to at least double the current figure of 1,050 households in 2006/7, with a further smaller increase for the following year. These targets do not seem unrealistic due to initial levels of interest in the last few months and giving consideration to participation levels in similar schemes in other local authorities of a similar size / nature.
6. Education / Awareness Campaign - the implementation of a planned and targeted education campaign during 2006/7, aimed at increasing participation rates and also awareness of what materials can be put out e.g. directories, magazines etc. Funding for this campaign will come from the funding received under the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant (WPEG) of £65,449 in 2006/7, with an overall target of increasing current tonnage by 10%. Officers will put together a specific and costed plan for this campaign and gain approval from the Waste Management Sub Committee, to the costs involved with its implementation. Consideration should also be given to how best to utilise the WPEG funding of £68,554 in 2007/8, incorporating a further 10% increase on tonnage collected. Regular participation monitoring will be undertaken in order to inform the process and enable greater targeting of awareness campaigns to any specific areas of the District that may be under performing, compared to the remainder of the District.
7. Additional Materials - discussions have already commenced with elected Members and Serviceteam around the implementation of a trial round for cardboard collection early in 2006, with pending its success, a rollout across other collection rounds. Work is already taking place by the Council's Recycling Team and Serviceteam management, in discussing with their material contractors, the possibility of increasing the range of material that can be included in the collections, particularly the types of paper but also aerosols etc.

RECYCLING TARGETS / CALCULATIONS

The calculations detailed below are specifically for 2006/7 and 2007/8 taking the Council up to the end of the current contracts and to a stage where outcomes of the Essex Procurement process should be known. The calculations are based on the information detailed in points 1 – 7 of the previous section and incorporate similar participation and capture rates that have been achieved so far in the kerbside scheme. Figures for tonnage levels from the current kerbside properties and total waste arisings from 2005/6 have been included, to show the base level from which the subsequent two years' estimates / targets have been calculated.

1. Current Kerbside Scheme

28,000 households:	2005/6	3,900 tons
	2006/7	4,290 tons (10% increase)
	2007/8	4,720 tons (10% increase)

2. Kerbside Expansion February 2006

Approx. 3,500 households	2006/7	680 tons
	2007/8	750 tons

3. Kerbside Flats June 2006

	2006/7	200 tons
	2007/8	350 tons

4. Bring Banks

	2006/7	700 tons
	2007/8	750 tons

5. Green Garden Waste

Increased take up to at least 2000 households in 2006/7

	2006/7	630 tons
	2007/8	770 tons

6. Education / Awareness Campaign

This will have contributed to producing the percentage increases in the existing kerbside scheme and achieving the tonnages on the various expansions, bring banks and green garden waste schemes.

7. Total Waste Arisings

2005/6	33,000 tons
2006/7	33,660 tons (increase of 2%)
2007/8	34,330 tons (increase of 2%)

8. Estimated Recycling Rates

2005/6	15%
2006/7	19.3%
2007/8	21.4%

KEY ACTIONS

- Launch of round 6 kerbside expansion in February 2006.
- Launch of kerbside expansion to flatted accommodation in June 2006.

- Production of and approval to a specific targeted education / awareness campaign.
- Detailed discussion through Waste Management Sub Committee around the most beneficial way of investing the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grants (WPEG), for 2006/7 and 2007/8.
- Implementation of a programme of regular participation monitoring.
- Maximise joint promotional opportunities for the green garden waste scheme.
- Expansion of the materials that can be collected within the current vehicle capacity.
- Submission of applications for any further sources of external funding, where the nature of the funding / schemes are appropriate.
- Continue to work closely with Thames Gateway Partner Authorities and the County Council in possible joint procurement arrangements.
- With regard to funding for the above actions, they are either already budgeted for within contract arrangements or will be funded through external funding gained under the WPEG.

CONCLUSION

Whilst the Council is not currently meeting its recycling targets, there has now been an ongoing trend over the last four years of increasing levels of recycling. With the implementation of the various schemes and initiatives detailed in this plan, further significant increases can be made in the recycling levels over the next two years. From the DEFRA consultation process that is currently being carried out into future recycling targets for primarily 2007/8 (but also beyond), it appears likely that Rochford's target will be 20%, if DEFRA's currently preferred option becomes reality.

From the calculations and targets detailed earlier, it can be seen that Rochford would meet and exceed that target and in doing so, set a decent standard for future contracts to achieve and build upon, whether they be purely for Rochford or as part of a Thames Gateway Area contract.

