

## **KERBSIDE RECYCLING SERVICE**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Cllr Allan Holliday  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Keith Parker  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Janice Carrol

### **Summary:**

In September 2006 when Doorstep Collections Ltd withdrew the kerbside recycling service and the Council's Waste Management team assumed the role of service provider to provide continuity of service, members wanted assurances that an in-house service provider offered Best Value for the Council. An independent review was therefore sought from the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP), the not for profit company created in 2000 by the Government to boost markets for recycled materials whose remit has since been broadened to provide advisory services on best recycling practice for local authorities.

**Recommendation:**

1. That members endorse the WRAP report recommendations and approve the in-house kerbside recycling service delivery option.
2. That members note the operational constraints of delivering kerbside recycling services in areas such as Copeland with high travelling distances and extreme rurality and therefore confirm that we will not seek to attain upper quartile performance for BVPI91a and BVPI91b.

**Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan** To minimise waste, maximise recycling and care for the environment is a key objective of the corporate plan.

**Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21):** Delivering a more sustainable waste management service in Copeland impacts directly on nine best value performance indicators.

**Financial and human resource implications:** Of this report, none although provision of the most efficient service together with high participation rates is key to the sustainability of the kerbside collection service. The 2007/08 budget reflects the continued delivery of the service in-house.

**Project & Risk Management:** The kerbside collection scheme is subject to a significant number of variables not all of which can be controlled by the Council.

### **Key Decision Status**

- **Financial:** None  
 - **Ward:** None

**Other Ward Implications:** None

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In September 2006 when Doorstep Collections Ltd withdrew the kerbside recycling service, Copeland's Waste team had already secured consultancy support through WRAP's Local Authority support programme to carry out a study of the kerbside collection service with a view to recommending a way forward. The Council had previously sought WRAP's advice in 2005 to assist in improving the performance of Doorstep Collections, which resulted in the Service Level Agreement with Doorstep Collections Ltd. Further assistance was being pursued as despite the SLA there had not been a measurable improvement in the performance of, or yield, from the dry recyclables collection service provided by Doorstep Collections.
- 1.2 Following the cessation of the services provided by Doorstep Collections Ltd, WRAP were therefore asked to evaluate the provision of kerbside recycling services in the Borough comparing the in-house service to an alternative, third party provider.

## **2. THE WRAP REPORT**

- 2.1 The WRAP report has now been finalised and a copy of the full report is available in the Members Room. An officer from WRAP will attend the Executive meeting to present the report and explain their findings.
- 2.2 In terms of contestability it should be noted that based on the information provided for the report the in-house option for delivery of the kerbside collection service is around half the estimated cost of an alternative provider. This gives members the assurance they were seeking that the in-house option for service delivery provides best value for the Council.

## **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS**

- 3.1 The WRAP report has provided external confirmation of a number of operational issues that members should note. The modelling work carried out in compiling the report indicate that even with reasonable levels of participation in the service, productivity levels in Copeland may be lower than "best practice" levels due to the population distribution and distance to off-loading facilities. Optimising vehicle use may also be difficult in Copeland for the same geographical reasons. A good example would be that best practice requires each vehicle to tip-off twice each day, which in practice would be impossible for a vehicle collecting in Millom and other areas in south of the Borough where the tip-off point is 40 miles and an hours journey away. For these reasons it should be noted that it is impractical for Copeland to aim for upper quartile performance for BVPI 91a and BVPI91b (percentage of households served by a collection of one and two recyclable materials respectively).

## **4. CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the following conclusions extracted verbatim from the report and endorse the recommendations made by WRAP.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

- The cost modelling indicates that in-house delivery of kerbside recycling services offers better value for money than an alternative provider. This is principally because the service can be added-on to existing waste collection activities: a number of operating costs associated with kerbside recycling

services, e.g. depot provision, are therefore already paid for. The scale of the dry recyclables operation for Copeland is such that it is much more cost-effective to share existing support infrastructure rather than develop a stand-alone service with dedicated management and support functions.

- Three vehicles are sufficient to collect the materials arising, including cardboard, provided that the kerbsider vehicles can tip twice per day. Using this fleet configuration cardboard must be collected co-mingled with paper with, perhaps, one of the materials being bagged to facilitate subsequent separation. If cardboard cannot be co-mingled with the paper fraction due to lack of market availability, the introduction of cardboard should be included only as part of an alternative collection system.
- To ensure that vehicle resources are deployed at a more acceptable level the substitution of the box van vehicle with a vehicle of larger payload capacity is required. A four vehicle kerbsider fleet is required if cardboard is to be collected in the most efficient manner and for tipping off to be reduced to once per day.
- The net additional cost of using a third kerbsider vehicle would be between £35 and £40 k in comparison to using the box van.
- The current three-person crew configuration can continue, although the geography and population distribution of the Borough and dynamics of the current collection service are such that achieving good practice productivity levels appears not to be possible. A maximum of 470 properties per loader compared with a benchmark value of 570 properties per load is indicated. For comparison reducing the size on the box van to a driver and one loader would increase productivity for all loaders to 550 properties per loader.
- As indicated in Appendix A the introduction and continuation of the Alternating Weekly Collection (AWC) form of collection service has been shown to significantly improve and maintain higher recycling rates. However this can only be achieved if all the elements of the service provision are of a

good standard. This includes ensuring that the arrangements are well-communicated, that participation is relatively simple for customers and that the services are efficient and customer focussed.

- Taking the opportunity, afforded by both the withdrawal of Doorstep Collections from the service, and the conclusions and recommendations from this report, should enable the Council to significantly improve the performance of its kerbside recycling and therefore its overall recycling rate.

#### Recommendations

We recommend that:

- I. kerbside recycling services for Copeland Borough Council are delivered in-house;
- II. a larger capacity 'third' vehicle - ideally a third 'Kerbsider' - is used in the delivery of kerbside recycling services in the Borough.
- III. A market for card and paper combined is sourced and secured. Alternatively a route for cardboard through an enhanced bring site service could be considered.
- IV. Re-promote the service carefully in controlled areas (which have an established efficient service level) and relate each crew to productivity/tonnage output. This will enable growth in yield to be checked against predictions and adjustments to rounds and resources to be made in good time.

#### **List of Appendices - None**

**List of Background Documents:** WRAP Report entitled "CBC Kerbside Recycling Services" A evaluation of kerbside recycling in the district.

**List of Consultees:** Corporate Team, Paul Robson