

TWIN BIN FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Allan Holliday

LEAD OFFICER: Keith Parker

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Summary: This report advises member on the latest Waste Management developments in Cumbria and seeks approval to accept funding from Cumbria County council to extend the twin bin scheme.

Recommendation:	That Members agree to accept Cumbria County Councils offer of £117,468 from their Waste Performance Efficiency Grant and that it is combined with Copelands £22,182 Grant to be spent on extending the twin bin refuse system to a further 3200 properties as outlined in the body of this report.
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Impact on delivering Copeland 2020 objectives: Delivering a more sustainable waste management service is a key element of the Council's future vision.

Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21): Delivering a more sustainable waste management system in Copeland impacts directly on four best value performance indicators. Several waste indicators also have a direct impact on LA21 objectives

Financial and human resource implications: Total cost of the project is £139,650. This is to be funded by the joint pooling of £117,468 from Cumbria County Council Waste Performance Efficiency Grant (WPEG) and Copeland's WPEG of £22,182.

Project & Risk Management: Should the Council and its community not respond to current changes in waste management practices there is a risk associated Best Value Performance Indicators will not achieve the required levels.

Key Decision Status

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

Other Ward Implications: None

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members approved an interim waste strategy for Copeland in January having concluded the earlier Copeland Strategy 3 years early and pending the outcome of the developing Cumbria Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. This committed expenditure of the Council's Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant (WPEG) of £22,182 awarded by Defra towards achieving the objectives of the interim strategy, which included:

- *As financial resources allows, extend green waste collections to further suitable properties. The aim is to extend the scheme to at least another 1500 properties in 2005/6 and would utilise the £22,000 Defra grant*
- *To equalise service provision between properties serviced by black sacks with those on wheeled bins. The aim is to limit the number of black sacks collected per property per week over time.*

1.2 Subsequently joint working within Cumbria between the districts and the County Council accelerated. At the same time and largely due to capacity issues linked to the Council's restructure, progress with Copeland's Interim Strategy was slower than had been expected. However, as part of the joint working within the County, it has been agreed the County Council's WPEG, amounting to £210,000 this year should be distributed across Cumbria to those activities where it will derive the greatest benefit in terms of avoiding fines under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme.

1.3 In Copeland's case this has resulted in the Cumbria Waste Partnership agreeing, subject to Members approval, that the County Council will give £118,000 capital funding to support green waste collections over the next 6 months in the borough. Part of the funding will come from the 2005/6 grant (£57,000) and the remaining amount is already committed from the 2006/7 grant.

1.4 For information the other district initiatives to benefit from this sharing of budgets are as follows:

To Increase Garden Waste Collections

- Allerdale - £6500 Revenue funding
- Eden - £5,500 Capital and £3000 Revenue

To extend the collection of cardboard

- Allerdale - £6500 Revenue
- Barrow & South Lakeland - £16,800 Capital
- Carlisle - £8,875 Capital and £13,000 Revenue

To increase the collection and recycling of biodegradable waste from schools

- Barrow and South Lakeland - £8,400 Capital
- Carlisle - £16,375 Capital
- Eden - £5000 Capital

The remaining revenue funding is to be spent by the county, subject to negotiations with contractors, to pay for additional opening hours and accompanying publicity for their Household Waste Recycling Centres previously known as Civic Amenity Sites.

1.5 For Copeland this is consistent with but technically a departure from the Interim Waste Strategy. Members may be aware that the Council's in Cumbria have been subject to another Best value Inspection recently that highlighted some weaknesses in how we, as a county, manage our waste and work together. Combining our WPEG with Cumbria County Councils to extend the twin bin scheme addresses some of these issues. It also means members aspirations to extend the twin bin system is accelerated. Rolling out the twin bin scheme further will also assist in achieving the objective of equalising service provision between those on black sack collection and those on wheeled bins by allowing a single step change. The introduction of limits on black

sack collections and the accompanying publicity and awareness raising for those remaining properties can be carried out simultaneously.

- 1.6 Should members be minded to accept the recommendation to combine our grant with the county's grant it is estimated it will improve the Council's performance overall performance on recycling from 25% to 29% and concomitantly avoid Cumbria County Council having to pay fines up to a potential £500,000 over the next 5 years. Members should note that Copeland's overall recycling and composting performance for 2004/5 of 25% far exceeded the statutory target of 18% for 2005/6 a year early, making Copeland an above average performer for the first time.

2. OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- 2.1 Officers have learned a great deal from the roll out of the original twin bin scheme and would propose to do some things differently.

2.2 Publicity

- We will ensure that only Council staff with good local knowledge will distribute calendars and information leaflets rather than relying on sub contractors who do not know the area. This should eliminate inconsistencies and errors.
- We will use the knowledge and experience gained in operating the twin bin system for more than 2 years to target relevant information and advice to residents. A communications plan will be drawn up as part of the project plan.
- The Council's Customer Services Manager and Communications Manager will be involved in the project. Utilising the knowledge and experience of the Communications Manager should maintain good media relations and balanced reporting.

2.3 Education

- Training and awareness raising for waste employees will be given a much higher priority than in the previous roll out. This should ensure that front-line staff are better able to deal with change and to become ambassadors for the scheme.
- Increased capacity in the waste team should enable a greater level of support for residents in coping with the changed system.
- The Customer Services Manager can ensure Copeland Direct staff are fully informed and are readily equipped to deal with customer's queries from commencement of the project.

2.4 Bin Delivery

- We will ensure that Waste Staff lead and manage the delivery of bins rather than playing a supporting role to bin suppliers even if more time is necessary for distribution. This should minimise follow up visits to assess access and suitability issues.

2.5 Rounds Scheduling

- Although the Waste team did a splendid job and successfully re-scheduled around 80% of all refuse collections for the original roll out of twin bins. Largely due to new housing developments, some work is required not only to fine-tune those rounds but also to reorganise existing work to accommodate the additional 3200 properties into the twin bin system. Fortunately we have been able to secure some free consultancy time along with

access to dedicated routing software through the Governments Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to support the team for this re-scheduling exercise.

2.6 Contingencies

- In the last project we had not accounted for any contingency funding and found that the price of bins had increased significantly in a short time. Fortunately with Defra's approval we were able to spend less on vehicles than had been planned and more on bins. To ensure we are not left in a similar position this time we have accounted for a contingency fund of 5% of the total project budget. This will allow us the ability to adapt as the situation develops.

2.7 As the majority of the main urban areas in Copeland were included in the initial roll out of twin bins, the areas to be covered in this project will be rural villages such as Ennerdale, Lamplugh, Drigg, Haile and Wilton. Timescales have yet to be defined however it is anticipated that the first twin bin collections could be implemented by the end of April 2006.

3. The Future

3.1 In future years the WPEG will be given solely to the County Council who will be spending it in accordance with the wishes of the Cumbria Waste Partnership. Future spend will be where it has the best impact and benefit for the Council taxpayer of Cumbria. It is essential that future funding must be directed towards projects that support waste minimisation and to reducing the amount of waste produced per head of population in Cumbria. As was noted in the recent Best Value Inspection report Cumbria produces more waste per head of population than any other county in the UK.

3.2 Members should note that while the Best Value Inspection report is an internal document to help the Cumbria Waste Partnership and its constituents, this Council's response to this report will be assessed by the Audit Commission's direction of travel inspections.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 That Members agree to accept Cumbria County Councils offer of £117,468 from their Waste Performance Efficiency Grant and that it is combined with Copelands £22,182 Grant to be spent on extending the twin bin refuse system to a further 3200 properties as outlined in the body of this report.

List of Appendices

Appendix A - <Appendix Title>

Appendix B - <Appendix Title>

List of Background Documents:

List of Consultees: