

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 10
FEBRUARY 2021



Title of Report	RECYCLE MORE UPDATE	
Presented by	Paul Sanders Head of Community Services	
Background Papers	Recycle More was adopted by Cabinet on 9 April 2019	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	Financial implications have been embedded within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The council has a statutory responsibility to collect household waste from the kerbside, Leicestershire County Council has the responsibility for disposal.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	Staffing implications are built into the MTFP and relevant business cases particularly in respect of increasing capacity to deal with food waste collections and meeting the growing number of new builds within the district.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To update on the progress made during year one of Recycle More.	
Reason agenda item submitted to Scrutiny Committee	To allow the committee to note the progress that has been made during year one of Recycle More	
Recommendations	THAT COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NOTES THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE WITH THE RECYCLE MORE PLAN TO DATE AND 2. COMMENTS UPON THE UPDATED ACTIONS BEING PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN DURING YEAR 2 OF THE PLAN TO FEED INTO CABINET'S CONSIDERATION AT ITS MEETING ON 2 MARCH 2021 	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A key task within the North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) Delivery Plan for 2018/19 was to develop a recycling strategy. Recycle More was devised and subsequently adopted by Cabinet on 9 April 2019. It sought to encourage households to recycle more items, more often, increasing dry recycling by 100 tonnes over the next 3 years and generate £500,000 by selling the dry recycling collected from households across the district. Recycle More will support and commit to the delivery of these three objectives.

- 1.2 The plan's main aim is to increase the recycling rate from the 2018/19 rate of 46.7% to 50% over the following years - 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. Over the last 5 years the recycling rate has plateaued been between 46.1% and 46.7%.
- 1.3 Recycle More identified six key themes which are listed below. Each of the themes are incorporated into a yearly action plan which supports Recycle More over four years. This report will detail the progress made during year one – 2019/20.

1. Reducing black bin waste
2. Food waste recycling
3. Increasing recycling
4. Employers and employees
5. Changing hearts, minds, and habits
6. Housing growth

2. SIX KEY THEMES – PROGRESS ACHIEVED

2.1 ***Reducing black bin waste – “additional capacity for the disposal of nappies will no longer be offered”***

- 2.1.1 As a result of Cabinet adopting Recycle More on 9 April 2019, additional capacity for the disposal of nappies was no longer offered. Subsequently this was updated in the Refuse and Recycling Collections Policy.
- 2.1.2 This policy change was communicated to the Customer Services team, so they were able to inform those customers contacting them requesting additional capacity for the disposal of nappies. The team were also provided with alternative solutions to pass onto customers such as the use of reusable nappies and included a reusable nappy scheme operated by Leicestershire County Council allowing customers to trial a free kit for four weeks.
- 2.1.3 The online form on the council's website was also amended, so that customers were no longer able to request additional capacity for the disposal of nappies. The online form is still available for those customers requesting additional capacity due to a medical condition which gives rise to additional waste such as incontinent pads. This request can also be made via telephone.

2.2 ***Reducing black bin waste – “removal of additional capacity for nappies from households currently receiving the service”***

- 2.2.1 The intention was to write to those customers who receive additional capacity advising them it would no longer be provided for the disposal of nappies. However due to Covid-19 it was decided this support for young families should remain during these difficult times. Therefore, at an appropriate time when the pandemic has eased, and it is deemed appropriate these customers will be contacted advising them the additional capacity will no longer be provided.

2.3 ***Food waste recycling – “carry out a food waste collection trial with a number of selected households in partnership with Leicestershire County Council (LCC)”***

- 2.3.1 A weekly food waste collection trial was launched in November 2019 for 2,000 households in part of Measham and for the whole of Appleby Magna, Appleby Parva, Chilcote, Newton Burgoland, Snarestone and Sweptstone. The council worked with colleagues at LCC as they have an existing contract with Biogen. Biogen operate an anaerobic digestion facility on the Leicestershire/Warwickshire border. They process

and recycle food waste which produces green electricity and a by-product which is used as a bio fertiliser on local farmland.

- 2.3.2 The food waste trial launched successfully and customers on the trial contacted the Waste Services and Customer Services teams to say how pleased they were to receive the service. Also, on the day of the trial starting BBC Radio Leicestershire interviewed the Waste Services Development Officer live regarding the trial. This helped to promote the trial across the district, but also more widely in Leicestershire.
- 2.3.3 Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 the trial was suspended on 18 March 2020 as some staff had to follow stay at home guidance, which meant other staff were redeployed onto the collections of domestic waste and recycling. However, 41.18 tonnes of food waste was collected and recycled when the trial launched on 26 November 2019 until it was paused. This represented a CO2 saving of 30.89 tonnes, rather than if the food waste had been disposed of at landfill.
- 2.3.4 The participation rate of those households using the service, varied between 35.17% - 44.2%. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) work with governments, businesses, and communities to improve resource efficient. WRAP calculates levels of participation as:
- Poor participation = less than 35%,
 - Average participation = 35% to 55%
 - Good participation = 55% and above
- 2.3.5 The participation of the trial before it was suspended was classed as “average”. However due to Covid-19, no communication intervention with residents took place. This would have involved placing “no food waste” stickers on residents’ domestic black bins. This encourages those residents who are not engaging and participating with the service to do so, by using it instead of disposing of food waste in the domestic black bin.
- 2.3.6 Officers will also carry out a door knocking campaign amongst those households who are not participating in the service. This will assist in identifying what barriers are preventing them from doing so. These communication interventions will take place when the pandemic has eased, and it is deemed appropriate.
- 2.3.7 The provision of free compostable liners are available to customers on the trial, which is recommended by WRAP, as they identify that such provision helps to maintain engagement with the service amongst customers.
- 2.3.8 Before the trial was suspended, the average amount of food waste collected per household per week was between 2.97 kg – 3.34kg and is defined as “yield” by WRAP. WRAP calculates the average yield per household receiving a separate weekly food waste collection service is 1.5 kg - to date the average yield for the trial is twice this figure.
- 2.3.9 This demonstrates those households using the service are engaging with it very well, which is further supported by compliments received from residents recorded by the Feedback team. A number of the compliments are provided below.

“I’m so pleased to be able to recycle more - the kids are enthusiastic about it too. I do hope the scheme gets taken further”.

“We think the food waste recycling is absolutely fantastic, we have used it so much. The collection drivers are also so courteous and efficient. Really hoping the trial becomes a permanent arrangement”.

“My family are very happy with recycling our food waste and it is having a real impact reducing the amount of waste in our black bin on a weekly basis”.

2.3.10 The trial resumed on 3 November 2020, and two weeks later on 17 November it was doubled in size to include a further 2,000 households in Coalville, Ravenstone and Whitwick. Information regarding this will be detailed in a further report in the autumn of this year confirming the progress made during year two of Recycle More.

2.4 Increasing recycling – “carry out a trial with 250 households of a stackable wheeled container system to make recycling easier, convenient, and safer”

2.4.1 A number of suppliers were invited companies to submit a proposal for a recycling container system which would making recycling easier and more convenient for customers, compared to the current recycling boxes and bags provided.

2.4.2 The successful submission was from a company called Straight. They design and manufacture a recycling trolley. It still keeps the recycling separate, but it is on a wheeled trolley so that it can easily be moved to the kerbside by customers.

2.4.3 Customers were encouraged to volunteer to take part in the trial at various events held across the district which officers attended, including Picnic in the Park in Coalville with hundreds of customers expressing an interest in participating on the trial.

2.4.4 The trial launched in October 2019 and was featured live on BBC East Midlands Today as one of the customers on the trial and the Recycle More officer were interviewed. East Midlands Today also featured the recycling depot on Linden Way in Coalville. This not only helped to promote the trial but Recycle More too. The trial was also featured on ITV News Central and in the local press.

2.4.5 A survey was sent to all those customers on the trial. The full results will be detailed in a further report confirming the progress made during year two of Recycle More. However, some of the headline results include 94% of customers (out of 189 responses) find it easier to move the recycling trolley to the kerbside than the red boxes and blue bags. Also 83% have noticed a reduction in the amount of recycling escaping from the trolley causing a littering issue, compared to the red boxes and blue bags.

2.4.6 A second wheeled recycling container system has become available on the market which officers would also like to trial by the end of March 2021. The team intend to trial this with 250 volunteers, but will be seeking to include some of the customers who are trialling the current recycling trolley to trial it too. This will allow for a comparison between the two systems. Also, engagement will take place with the recycling operatives to see how practicable the systems are when carrying out the recycling collections.

2.5 Increasing recycling – “review the 36 mini recycling sites and the effectiveness of them, alongside the kerbside recycling collection service. Look at ways of recycling tetra paks, nappies, small electrical items, pringle and toothpaste tubes at possible collection points”

2.5.1 An audit of all the mini recycling sites has been carried in out in 2019 ensuring that all the recycling banks were fit for use i.e. not damaged and that signage was clear and in situ.

2.5.2 The majority of the sites accept materials which are already accepted at the kerbside for recycling. This includes, glass, cans, tins, paper and cardboard, however this is a duplication of the service provided at the kerbside. Officers are exploring how these sites could be used more effectively. Please see **Appendix One** which details the location of these sites and the materials accepted at each one.

- 2.5.3 An online consultation was made available on the council's website regarding the sites asking for views from customers, parish councils and members. The consultation closed on 31 January 2021 and the results will be presented at the meeting.
- 2.5.4 Officers are considering removing those banks from sites which accept materials that can be recycled at the kerbside. This could result in some sites closing as they are only made up of one or two banks such as a single glass bank situated on a pub car park. Once the full results from the consultation are known, officer's recommendations will be presented at the meeting allowing the Scrutiny Committee to provide their feedback.

2.6 Increasing recycling – “further promotion of textile recycling at the kerbside through possible partnership with a Leicestershire based charity”

- 2.6.1 Textile recycling has been available at the kerbside since 2011/12, however as a container isn't provided (this is standard practice amongst local authorities) some customers are not aware they can be recycled. Therefore, further promotion of textile recycling has taken place. This has included displaying a new banner on one of the recycling collection vehicles and regularly promoting it on our social media accounts.
- 2.6.2 Furthermore, every household was hand delivered a [recycling guide](#) in November 2019 along with the annual waste collection calendars. The guide provides comprehensive information regarding the kerbside recycling collection service (including the recycling of textiles) as well as other services provided by Waste Services.
- 2.6.3 Due to Covid-19 we have not been able to partner with a Leicestershire based charity, as charities have been placed under significant pressure which has seen their shops and other outlets close due to the pandemic. Therefore, at an appropriate time when the pandemic has eased, and it is deemed appropriate officers will engage with appropriate charities.

2.7 Increasing recycling – “introduce household battery recycling on the kerbside recycling collection service”

- 2.7.1 The recycling of batteries at the kerbside was introduced in December 2019. Customers are able to recycle AA, AAA, watch, hearing aid, mobile phone, laptop, and power tool batteries. At the same time, the Waste Services team were able to introduce mobile phone recycling at the kerbside.
- 2.7.2 This new service was promoted on the annual waste collections guides and in the recycling guide which was hand delivered to all households in November 2019. Also, a banner was created and is displayed on one of the recycling collection vehicles to further promote this new service.

2.8 Increasing recycling – “review the bulky waste collection service particularly focussing on items for reuse through partnerships with local charities and diverting items away from landfill”

- 2.8.1 The Waste Services team previously partnered with The Marlene Reid Centre (MRC) in Coalville. MRC is a non-profit charity working collaboratively with individuals, families, groups, and organisations to encourage, facilitate, manage and deliver, positive community activity in North West Leicestershire and beyond.
- 2.8.2 A list of addresses requesting a collection of items were compiled on a spreadsheet and it was emailed to MRC. This allowed MRC to visit those addresses the day before, however due to resourcing issues MRC were unable to support the bulky waste collection process for a period of time.

- 2.8.3 However, the Waste Services Development Officer and Recycle More Officer have since met with the manager of MRC discussing the opportunity to work together again. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 these discussions have been placed on hold, but at an appropriate time when the pandemic has eased, discussions will resume with MRC.
- 2.8.4 The Waste Services team are also exploring with the Legal Services team whether suitable items collected on the bulky waste collection service could be taken to a sales auction, or possibly opening a second-hand shop selling furniture and white goods.
- 2.9 Employers and employees – “*leading by example as all waste which is recyclable at the Council Offices will be diverted away from landfill. Adopt a no single use plastic policy*”**
- 2.9.1 Before Recycle More was adopted in April 2019, improved recycling facilities were introduced at the Council Offices and at the Recycling Depot in Coalville. Dedicated bins for cans, tins, plastics, glass, paper and cardboard are provided in kitchens and communal areas. Also, there are collection points for the recycling of batteries, mobile phone, and ink cartridges. Crisp packet recycling was introduced in April 2019 and stationary recycling in January 2020. These collections points are also available to customers visiting the Council Offices.
- 2.9.2 In December 2018 single use plastic cups were removed from all water coolers at the Council Offices and Linden way Depots. Instead plastic reusable beakers are provided for visitors to the offices and staff are encouraged to use their own refillable water bottles. The water coolers are also available for visitors and people passing-by the council offices to fill their own refillable water bottles.
- 2.10 Employers and employees – “*promoting our commercial recycling service to businesses in the district. Advising businesses best practice for diverting waste away from landfill*”**
- 2.10.1 Waste Services provide commercial collections for recyclable and non-recyclable waste for business. Since Recycle More was adopted, glass collections have been introduced alongside collections of cardboard, papers, plastics, tins, and cans.
- 2.10.2 A [leaflet](#) regarding the commercial waste service was included in the business rates letters sent to all businesses in the district. Due to Covid-19 we have not been able to visit businesses to promote the service and advise best practice for diverting waste away from landfill. Therefore, at an appropriate time when the pandemic has eased, and it is deemed appropriate officers will make visits to businesses. However, during year one of Recycle More the number of recycling contracts with business has increased by 9.8%.
- 2.11 Employers and employees – “*effectively consult and engage with the Waste Services operational staff as they will be important ambassadors of Recycle More*”**
- 2.11.1 The Waste Services operational staff are regularly updated regarding Recycle More through memos. However, it is key they are able provide their input. This has taken place through focus groups regarding the new recycling trolley which is currently being piloted. There is also a suggestion box available at the Recycle Depot where the staff start and complete their rounds, allowing them to put forward suggestions for Recycle More.
- 2.12 Changing hearts, minds, and habits – “*Ensure everyone is engaged with Recycle more through competitions, visits to schools and colleges, tour of the recycling*”**

depot, use of social media, signage on vehicles, community recycling champions, name the recycling vehicles and other initiatives”

- 2.12.1 To launch Recycle more, “Recycle more...the tour” was held across the district in August 2019. Over 700 people attended roadshows held in Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Castle Donington, Coalville, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham.
- 2.12.2 The tour allowed people to find out more about Recycle More, also there were recycling goodies available such as pencils made from CD cases and reusable shopping bags. For children there was also fun and interactive games with prizes available which had been kindly donated by local businesses. Prizes included a free annual family pass to Conkers and a free visit and a cream tea for a family of four at Alpaca Park Farm in Snarestone.
- 2.12.3 For those people who were not able to attend the roadshows, online competitions were staged throughout the week of Recycle More...the tour with prizes available too.
- 2.12.4 Also, other tours and visits took place prior to Covid-19 promoting Recycle More:
- Seven tours of the council’s recycling depot were provided for parish and town councils and for local community groups
 - Two assemblies delivered for local primary schools
 - Two sessions with Coalville Beaver group
 - Four community talks delivered
 - Six events were attended including Picnic in the Park 2019 in Coalville, Party in the Park 2019 in Castle Donington and Christmas in Coalville 2019.
- 2.12.5 Six new banners for the recycling collections vehicles were designed to promote kerbside recycling. Also, regular posts regarding encouraging recycling are posted on the council’s social media accounts.
- 2.12.6 A successful competition was held with primary schools asking for the children to name the six recycling collection vehicles. Over 300 entries were received, the winning names include Recyclosauras Rex and Bindiana Jones, which will appear on the collection vehicles at the beginning of February 2021.
- 2.12.7 Due to Covid 19, the Waste Services have not been able to sign up any recycling community champions. However, when the pandemic has eased and it is deemed appropriate the Waste Services team will launch the community recycling champion initiative, asking those people who are avid recyclers if they would be interested in becoming recycling community champions to help promote Recycle More.

2.13 *Changing hearts, minds, and habits – “Focussed and targeted communications where recycling participation has been identified as lower”*

- 2.13.1 Before Recycle More was adopted, officers had identified those areas in the district where recycling participation is lower. The intention was to carry out a door-stepping campaign in the areas, to identify the barriers preventing people from recycling. However due to Covid 19, officers have not been able to do this. When the pandemic has eased, and it is deemed appropriate a door-stepping campaign will take place.

2.14 *Changing hearts, minds, and habits – “Promoting reuse for people who live and work in the district by partnership with local business and community groups - e.g. refillable water bottles and stations, reusable coffee cups and plastic free communities and businesses”*

- 2.14.1 For Picnic in the Park 2019 held in Coalville, those food outlets which attended were provided with environmentally friendly food packaging such as food trays made from plant-based material (instead of polystyrene) and compostable cutlery.

2.14.2 The Council Offices have refillable water stations as well as the water cooling machine on the landing is available for customers and passers-by to fill up their reusable water bottles. Also, our waste and recycling operatives have been provided with reusable water bottles and coffee cups.

2.14.3 Due to Covid-19 the Waste Services team haven't been able to visit and engage with businesses regarding reuse, however when the pandemic has eased, and it is deemed appropriate this engagement will take place.

2.15 Housing growth – “Ensure all new residents occupying new developments participate in recycling by using the council's kerbside recycling scheme, through consultation with the Planning team and developers ensuring recycling is easy and convenient for residents”

2.15.1 Waste Services is a statutory consultee for planning applications received by the council. The design of a development is reviewed ensuring recycling is easy and convenient for new residents. This includes not having an over-reliance on bin collection points where residents have to take their recycling to if the property is served by a private driveway.

2.15.2 The council has submitted its own application for a development of 101 dwellings off Waterworks Road in Coalville. The Waste Services Development Officer is working closely with the planning officer for the development as well as the Urban Designer ensuring the development is designed to facilitate easy and convenient recycling collections. If the development is approved, it is hoped it can be used as a blueprint for other developers to use when designing new developments.

2.15.3 The Scrutiny Committee are kindly asked to take note of the Recycle More Action Plan for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 in **Appendix Two**.

3. FURTHER UPDATES

3.1 Introducing a subscription service for additional garden waste

3.1.1 Since the Refuse and Recycling Collections Policy was adopted in 2013, a maximum of one garden waste wheeled bin is allowed per household. However, some households have two garden bins, and this dates back to a period where the NWLDC made additional garden bins available. Over time this resulted in significant additional time to collect the garden waste being produced.

3.1.2 If customers have a smaller 140 litre garden bin, they can exchange it for a larger 240 litre garden bin. However, the Waste Services team receive a small number of requests from residents who would like a second garden bin, with some of them willing to pay for one.

3.1.3 The Waste Services team are currently undergoing a route optimisation project of the recycling, garden waste and domestic waste rounds with a company called Webapx. Webapx use technology to make local government municipal services more efficient and effective. The project has identified that the garden waste and cardboard collections are not running at 100% capacity.

3.1.4 Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, local authorities do not have a statutory responsibility to collect garden waste from households. However, most local authorities do as the garden waste collected contributes towards the household waste recycling rate.

- 3.1.5 Furthermore, as it's not a statutory service, local authorities are able to charge for the collection of garden waste. Currently NWLDC is the only authority in Leicestershire that does not charge for garden waste in Leicestershire as per the table below.

Local Authority	2020/21 charge	2021/22 charge
Charnwood Borough Council	£40.00 Direct Debit	£41.00 Direct Debit
	£45.00 non Direct Debit	£46.00 non Direct Debit
Blaby District Council	£37.00 Direct Debit/Online	£37.90 Direct Debit/Online
	£39.00 by phone	£39.90 by phone
Harborough District Council	£40.00	£55.00
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council	£24.00	TBC
Leicester City Council	£47.00 Direct Debit	TBC
	£52.00 non Direct Debit	TBC
Melton Borough Council	£70.92	TBC
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	£40.00	TBC

- 3.1.6 Officers are exploring the possibility of introducing a subscription service for additional garden waste bins, which would include those households which currently have a second garden bin. From feedback from the garden waste and cardboard crews, it estimated between 50% - 60% of households have a second garden bin (in the region of 22,000 households).. This is potentially a significant service change; therefore the Waste Services team would like to carry out a full and detailed appraisal in the next financial year of 2021/22, presenting a Cabinet report in November 2021 for decision.
- 3.1.7 There are several opportunities and challenges if a subscription was introduced for additional garden waste bins. Opportunities would include income generation and every household would have the opportunity to have additional garden bin(s).
- 3.1.8 However there are a number of challenges, including the potential impact it could have on the household waste recycling rate, DEFRA (through the Waste and Resources Strategy) may legislate against local authorities charging for garden waste and it could possibly conflict with the council's zero carbon agenda.
- 3.1.9 These opportunities and challenges are set out in **Appendix Three**.
- 3.1.10 In the interim whilst the appraisal is being drawn together with customer feedback, it is proposed those customers who contact Waste Services regarding an additional garden bin(s) are provided with one, but at a charge of £45.00. This is the average annual charge other local authorities currently make for the collection of garden waste. This however would not preclude those customers from an annual subscription should one be introduced for the collection of additional garden waste bins.

3.2 Introducing a Waste Services App

- 3.2.1 Whitespace currently provide the waste management software for the back office team and the in-cab technology for the operational staff.
- 3.2.2 Whitespace have developed a Waste Services app which can detail the dates for domestic waste, garden waste and recycling collections. The app can also provide other council services, such as viewing planning applications and seeing what classes are available at leisure centres. The app could also link to the council's social media accounts.

- 3.2.3 Many services provided by Waste Services are available online, such as a repair to a domestic waste or garden waste bin, ordering recycling containers or reporting a fly-tip. The app will initially run alongside the annual waste collections calendars which are hand delivered to every household, but the calendars would eventually be phased out. However, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) would be carried out as the app requires customers to own a smartphone which they download it onto.
- 3.2.4 The app would help Waste Services to communicate effectively and instantly with customers. This will be useful if there is any disruption to the service, such as the garden waste and cardboard collections which were suspended at the beginning of the pandemic. Also, recycling messages could be sent out, for example making customers aware they can recycle batteries and mobile phones at the kerbside which is a relatively new service.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Developing a clean and green district
Policy Considerations:	<p>Refuse and Recycling Collection Policy adopted by Cabinet in October 2013</p> <p>Recycle More... The Plan adopted by Cabinet in April 2019 - full document available at the bottom of this webpage - www.nwleics.gov.uk/recyclemore</p> <p>Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England published by HM Government, December 2018.</p>
Safeguarding:	None
Equalities/Diversity:	Equalities Impacts Assessment (EIA) will be carried out and any necessary engagement will take place with the Equalities Officer
Customer Impact:	Facilitating easier and more convenient recycling for customers. Exploring the option of a subscription service for additional garden bins could impact on those customers which currently have a second garden free of charge as they may have to subscribe for it to be collected
Economic and Social Impact:	Part of the development of each business case linked to the actions
Environment and Climate Change:	Recycle More forms an important element of the Zero Carbon Roadmap and Action Plan adopted in March 2020
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Online consultations highlighted in the report are a fundamental part of each action plan
Risks:	The plan is managed under project management principles and the risk register is monitored regularly
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