
SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTING HOUSEHOLD GLASS COLLECTIONS FOR RECYCLING
DATE: 11 JULY 2013
RECIPIENT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER

SUMMARY:

On 16th July 2013 the Interim Director for Environment and Economy is scheduled to take a decision on the proposed kerbside mixed glass collection service for households across Southampton. If approved, it is recommended that the new service is implemented from October 2013

This new service will be funded by monies received from the Weekly Collection Support Scheme (WCSS) award, which is allowing us to improve our current services. The implementation of glass collections will help increase the City's recycling rate and make it easier for our residents to recycle their glass bottles and jars, especially for those who find it difficult to get to a glass bank.

BACKGROUND AND BRIEFING DETAILS:

1. The proposed new glass collection service is based on market research, the experience of other local authorities, industry experts and feedback from local residents involved in the pilot, which took place in Polygon. The service is being designed with a flexible approach to take account of property type and location to ensure maximum uptake by residents.
2. It is intended that boxes will be used to collect glass from most houses in the city and small recycling banks and wheeled bins will be used for flats, parts of the City with high concentrations of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) and for properties with certain access restrictions.
3. It is also proposed to replace the large noisy, steel, glass skip recycling banks (located in council and supermarket car parks) around the city with the smaller banks that are more attractive, quieter to use and more cost effective to empty.
4. The glass collection service to households will be rolled out in three phases commencing in October 2013 with full roll out complete by Summer 2014. This end date will not cause problems with WCSS performance or payment issues as glass implementation costs are spread throughout the WCSS funding period.
5. A phased introduction is necessary due to complexities around supplier capacity, space to store containers, vehicle procurement, making effective use of staff resources and managing customer engagement and feedback. For these reasons it would not be possible to implement phases 1, 2 and 3 at the same time.
6. Phase 1 will be the roll out of glass collections to flats and HMOs at the end of October 2013. This will involve locating community glass recycling points (a small glass recycling bank or wheeled bin) at locations within or near to flats and HMOs, where there is appropriate space. The service is currently undertaking a geographical information system (GIS) based property audit across the city to identify locations for community recycling points. This timescale also ensures a supplier has time to build the small banks and make sure they have noise reducing adaptations.

7. Phase 2 will be the roll out of kerbside glass collections to houses, apart from the central Southampton area (this would exclude parts of SO14, SO15 and SO17 postcodes). Residents will be provided with a plastic box with handles, which will be emptied every two weeks alongside their existing collection of dry mixed recyclables (DMR). Phase 2 should commence in January 2014 and be rolled out across the city by the end of March 2014.
8. Phase 3 will be the roll out to houses, apart from the central Southampton area (this would exclude parts of SO14, SO15 and SO17 postcodes). The central and city centre area presents particular challenges with the introduction of the glass collection service due to high numbers of HMOs, areas of high density housing and a lively night-time economy. Phase 3 will be implemented during June to August 2014 which will enable us to learn from the phase 1 and 2 roll out in other parts of the city and allow time to consider the challenges of this particular location. It is important that collections are right for the area and it is likely that they will comprise of a mixture of community recycling points and kerbside collections using boxes and wheeled bins.
9. The pilot of glass collections focused particularly on the Polygon area and finished on 18 June 2013. The trial will be extended at the end of June to another area of the city, which includes a number of flats in order to test collections in a part of the city, which is outside of the central area. The purpose of the trial was to evaluate the impact of potential anti-social behaviour and the presentation of glass containers for collection, to assess the types of containers including options for use of a smaller container for residents with mobility issues, to consider start times for glass collection to avoid containers being left over night and to trial community recycling points for HMOs and flats. The pilot will enable the service to design out any problems that might occur so that the new service is as safe and efficient as possible. Initial feedback from residents is positive and all those responding would continue to use the glass bank and the majority with kerbside boxes had no problems with moving the box. Further evaluation of the pilot will be used to develop the service, the information available to residents, branding and the communications plan.
10. Glass collections will be funded by WCSS until 31 March 2015. Thereafter the service needs to be self sustaining and funded by income from glass sales and avoided waste disposal costs. The most cost effective way to collect glass is alongside the existing DMR collections by using a split bodied vehicle, which will be procured. It is simpler and easier for residents to have collections on the same day for both glass and DMR.
11. With the launch of a new service it is important that a clear and robust communications campaign is developed to enable glass collections to take place safely and establish the right behaviours from our residents. Containers will be clearly branded and easily associated with glass collections. This will be part of an overarching campaign to Recycle for Southampton. This is a strand of the council's overall waste transformation programme and will build on national branding, the use of digital communications and social media to help ensure residents have access to the right level of information in order to change behaviours and at the same time increase the Southampton's recycling rate.
12. It is proposed that the SCC commercial waste recycling service to the city's business community will be expanded by the introduction of a chargeable glass recycling service which will enable greater efficiencies through the coordination of joint collections and maximised use of vehicles.

13. The introduction of glass collections requires careful consideration of health and safety issues, especially in terms of noise and manual handling. The collection of glass is noisier than the collection of recycling/household waste and broken glass is a hazard. These issues will be addressed through staff working groups and in consultation with the Unions and HSE as necessary to mitigate any risks identified and ensure appropriate hearing, hand and eye protection is in place. Health surveillance for staff will be required along with ensuring appropriate equipment is provided to reduce the impact of noise. Training for manual handling will be refreshed.

RESOURCE/POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Policy

14. The waste management policy will need to be reviewed and refreshed to take account of this new service and other changes to the service under the waste transformation programme, which is intended to be completed by November 2013.

Financial

15. All start up and operating costs for the new glass collection service will be provided by the WCSS fund until 31 March 2015. This equates to £845K of capital to purchase collection vehicles, collection boxes and banks. This is also supported by £1,699K in revenue to publicise the scheme and fund collection costs. It is proposed to use the WCSS fund to maximise take up of the scheme in the first two years to enable it to become self funding in future years from income and avoided disposal costs.
16. It is estimated that by collecting glass in the manner described, the additional cost of the mainstreamed service from 1 April 2015 is anticipated to be offset by increased income from recycled glass and other DMR plus reduced costs from avoided waste disposal costs. From 1 April 2015 onwards this would be a sustainable service, subject to overall budget considerations.

Property

17. It is intended to use a framework agreement to purchase the containers (boxes / wheeled bins) to achieve best value for money. Options are currently being reviewed on the options available to purchase small banks and the best procurement route. No property implications are identified however, it is possible that minor landscape work, funded by the WCSS may be required for some community glass recycling points in parts of the city.

OPTIONS AND TIMESCALES:

18. If the proposals in this report are approved implementation of phase 1 would commence October 2013 with full roll out complete by Summer 2014.

Appendices/Supporting Information:

19. None

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