

FUTURE PROPOSED APPROACH FOR THE COLLECTION OF TEXTILES AND SMALL WASTE ELECTRICALS AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

REPORT OF: Divisional Leader for Commercial Services & Contracts
Contact Officer: Jo Reid (jo.reid@midsussex.gov.uk) and Alex Donley
(alex.donley@midsussex.gov.uk)
Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: No
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Customer Services and Service Delivery 23
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Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to:

- a) evaluate the trial collection of textiles and small waste electricals and electronic equipment (small WEEE), conducted in partnership with Serco and the British Heart Foundation (BHF) between November 2017 and September 2018;
- b) to set out the options available to provide an enhanced collection service of textiles and small WEEE across the District.

Recommendation

The Committee are recommended to note the proposals for developing an enhanced collection service for both recyclable and reusable textiles and small WEEE for consideration following the BHF trial.

Key Points

1. Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) provides 14 mini recycling sites across the District, 13 of which facilitate the recycling of textiles. There is currently no provision to recycle small WEEE at any mini recycling site. Residents can however take both textiles and small WEEE to one of the 11 West Sussex County Council Household Waste Recycling Sites, two of which are within Mid Sussex.
2. MSDC and Serco worked in partnership with the BHF between November 2017 and September 2018 to trial a kerbside collection of reusable (second-hand quality) textiles and small WEEE with the intention of:
 - Increasing the amount of textiles and small WEEE reused in the trial area;
 - Reducing the amount of reusable textiles and small WEEE in the residual waste stream.
3. The trial was supported by funding from both BHF and MSDC.
4. Taking into account national best practice and the results of the trial, it is recommended that the Council explore the potential to provide an enhanced service provision for the collection of textiles and small WEEE.

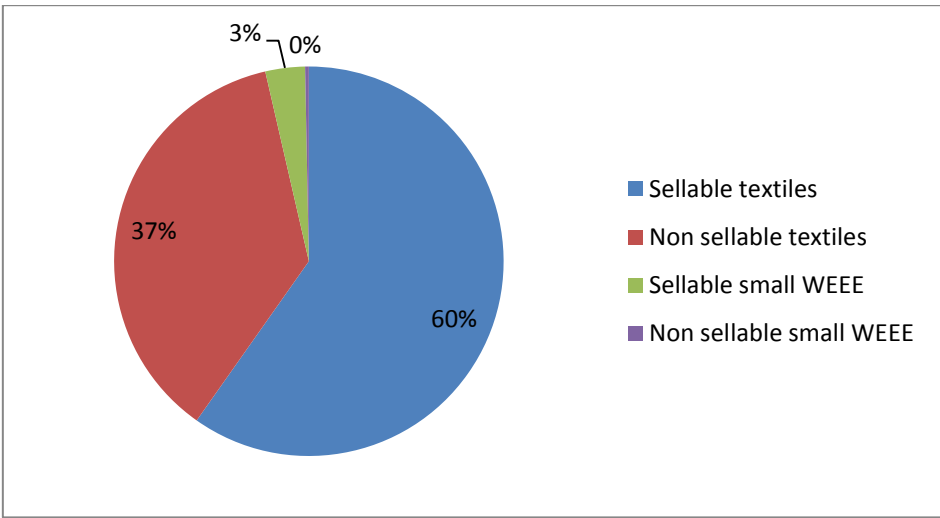
Context

- 5. In 2017 a composition analysis of residual (black bin) waste in Mid Sussex revealed almost 5% of the waste sampled was potentially reusable and/or recyclable textile items. A further 1% was small WEEE. (West Sussex Waste Partnership 2017). A further composition analysis was undertaken in October 2018; the results of which are not yet available.
- 6. Between November 2017 and September 2018 MSDC worked in partnership with Serco and the BHF to trial a kerbside collection of second hand quality textiles and small WEEE from 20,132 properties. Textiles and small WEEE were collected from participating properties three times during this period, with the aim of reselling as much as possible through BHF outlets.
- 7. Householders were notified of their participation in the trial by letter from the BHF. A week prior to the scheduled collection a bin hanger was placed onto the handle of the wheelie bins of participating households by Serco. The BHF covered the costs of the direct mail and the production of the bin hangers. The Council covered the costs of the bin hanger distribution (a total of £5,200).
- 8. The trial successfully met the objectives, with a total of 47 tonnes of textiles and small WEEE collected for reuse and recycling from participating households with just over half of the materials collected being suitable for resale.

Table 1: Tonnages of textiles and small WEEE collected and the percentage of eligible households using the service

WAVE	Wave 1 (Nov-17)	Wave 2 (Apr-18)	Wave 3 (Sept-18)	TOTAL
Tonnage	16.3	16.7	13.4	46.5
Participation level	17%	18%	14%	16%

Graph 1: The breakdown of materials collected from eligible households



- 9. It was also noted that for the duration of the trial period, the tonnages of textiles collected from bring banks located at mini recycling sites across the District, increased compared with previous years.

Table 2: The total tonnage of textiles collected from bring banks for recycling in Mid Sussex (2016/17 – 2018/19)

YEAR	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Tonnage	77	189	153

Proposal and Options

10. In most local authority areas, there is more than one method used for the collection of textiles and small WEEE for reuse or recycling. WRAP (the leading advisory body for waste and recycling sector) recommends offering a choice to householders in order to maximise capture. The exact mix of services depends on local factors including (but not limited to) demographics, existing reuse and recycling services and geography but include all or a combination of the following:
- a) Kerbside collection services provided through an existing waste and recycling collection contractor, for recycling;
 - b) Kerbside collection services provided through a charitable or commercial contractor, for resale;
 - c) A network of bring banks located at mini recycling sites across the local authority area.
11. Given the analysis of the BHF trial, it is recommended that a collection system incorporating all three options outlined above is recommended. Officers will prepare a business case for all three options for consideration at Scrutiny Committee on 13 March 2019.
12. It is proposed that the Council works with Serco to provide all households in the District with a kerbside collection of recyclable textiles and small WEEE alongside existing waste and recycling services. It is possible to modify the current collection vehicles by installing a small cage on the near-side undercarriage, in front of the rear wheel.
13. By developing this kerbside collection service residents in Mid Sussex would not have to transport their textiles and small WEEE to either a bring bank or a Household Waste Recycling Centre. Extending the range of materials collected at the kerbside has also been shown to increase the capture rate of other materials.
14. Given that there is the potential for income generation from the sale of both materials, the Council and Serco would work together to provide storage for both waste streams within the Bridge Road Depot rather than work with West Sussex County Council to facilitate disposal at a waste transfer station.
15. It is unlikely that the storage solutions developed would be entirely weather-proof and in order to be reused by a charitable or commercial operator both material streams need to be kept dry. Therefore the Council would only seek to collect textiles and small WEEE for recycling (not reuse) through this collection service. It should also be noted that many residents prefer to donate reusable textiles and small WEEE to charity.
16. The relative success of the trial kerbside collection service has been demonstrated in paragraphs 6 to 8 and the Council should explore the potential of working with the charitable sector to provide a kerbside collection service to selected households in the District. As previously noted, extending the range of materials collected at the kerbside, coupled with working with a charity partner, will increase the amount of waste sent for reuse but also increase the capture rate of other materials.

17. The textiles and small WEEE collected from the kerbside would be used as stock, to be sold in charity shops within the UK. If items are not suitable for the second-hand market they cannot be sold. Therefore, the Council would only work with a charity partner to provide a kerbside collection service for reusable textiles and small WEEE.
18. Initial discussions with the BHF following the conclusion of the trial suggest they will be unable to accommodate those properties where there is restricted access and those properties which use communal waste and recycling facilities. This would mean approximately 15,000 households would be unable to use this service. The BHF have also indicated that they would only offer participating households two (rather than the trialled three), collections over a 12 month period.
19. It is also recommended the Council continue to maintain existing (and look to increase the) numbers of textiles bring banks at the mini recycling sites located across the District. As noted in paragraph 9 and Table 2, the tonnages collected in these bring banks continued to increase throughout the trial period. Other local authorities have had some successes with providing bring banks for small WEEE and this option should also be explored.
20. MSDC is one of seven District and Borough Councils within West Sussex, all of whom work closely together under the umbrella of the West Sussex Waste Partnership (WSWP). A key function of the WSWP is the promotion of waste reduction and reuse activities across the County. MSDC would continue to participate in the promotion and organisation of waste reduction events should the recommendation be approved.

Timeline

21. The Council would prioritise the introduction of a kerbside collection service with a charitable partner. This could reasonably be introduced in the early part of 2019/20 financial year.
22. Concurrently the Council will work with Serco to develop a business case for the provision of a kerbside collection of recyclable textiles and small WEEE to all households by the Autumn 2019.
23. A thorough review and enhancement of the bring bank service would also be completed and reported to Scrutiny by Autumn 2019.

Resource Implications

24. It is not anticipated the Council or Serco would require additional resources for the exploration or delivery of the recommendations.

Legal Implications

25. A kerbside collection service provided by Serco could be accommodated by way of a contract variation.
26. In order to introduce the services being recommended in this report, the Council and Serco would work with external providers to:
 - Manufacture and install undercarriage cages onto the existing waste collection fleet
 - Recycle the textiles and small WEEE collected by Serco
 - Secure an agreement with a charitable organisation to provide a kerbside collection service
 - Secure a provider for the collection of small WEEE from bring bank facilities

27. Whilst it is unlikely other charities would be able to offer a service comparable to that trialled by the BHF the Council would carry out a procurement exercise to ensure the service was exposed to competition.

Equality and Customer Impact Implications

28. The collection of textiles and small WEEE goods would not adversely affect any householder in the District. Existing collection points (including those for households in receipt of assisted collections) would be maintained for all kerbside collection services..

Risk Management

29. The Council are aware the BHF do not currently work with any other local authority partner (although they have done in the past) and there is a very real risk that current BHF budgets and staffing levels may not be able to accommodate a District wide service to replicate that delivered during the trial (the proposed BHF service is briefly outlined in paragraph 18).

30. Undertaking a procurement exercise to secure a charity partner for recommendation b) would enable the Council to minimise these risks and guarantee some continuity of service through a contractual arrangement.

31. Any risk of the Council's chosen charitable partner being unable to operate a collection service would be directly mitigated by the introduction of a kerbside collection service in partnership with Serco.

Background papers

BHF Pilot Project Report (September 2017)