



<b>Subject:</b>	Review of Household Recycling Centres & Civic Amenity Sites
<b>Date:</b>	18 November 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Tim Walker, Head of Waste Management, City & Neighbourhood Services Department

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	At the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee of 23 September, the above report was presented to Members who requested that the item be deferred to enable the matter to be discussed at Party briefings before being represented to the Committee for consideration.
1.2	Members will be aware that the Council recently made a commitment to achieve 50% household waste recycling by 2020. During Party briefings, it was highlighted that maintaining the status quo would not deliver this and, despite considerable improvements over recent years, increases in the total amount of waste collected and the impact of local government reform now mean that more significant changes are needed to achieve this level of performance. Anticipating this situation, Waste Management commissioned IESE/Waste Consulting to undertake a review of the Council's Household Recycling Centres and Civic Amenity sites, the recommendations of which informed the Party briefings and these have now been completed. The issues and concerns identified by Members are addressed in this updated report.  The key recommendations of the " <i>Household Waste Recycling Centres &amp; Civic Amenity Site</i>

1.3	<p><i>review</i>” conducted by IESE are outlined below. By considering these fully in terms of Belfast, the Department is seeking to ensure that the recommendations included within the report can make a contribution to the vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city theme which is outlined within the Council’s draft Belfast Agenda, currently out for consultation. In order to consider the recommendations within the report, it has been recognised that a public consultation exercise now needs to be undertaken.</p>
2.0	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the report and agree to initiate a public consultation process on the proposed future provision of Household Recycling Centres within Belfast, as outlined in the review.</li> </ul>
3.0	<p><b>Main report</b></p>
3.1	<p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <p>The report’s primary focus was on the Council’s existing provision of Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) and Civic Amenity (CA) sites. The review outlines a series of recommendations which are summarised below:</p> <p><b>Civic Amenity Sites</b></p> <p>3.2 The review recommended that, subject to identifying suitable alternative options using an appropriate consultation process, the existing CA sites at Agnes Street, Springfield Road and Cregagh Road should close to the public on a phased basis. Based on their historical development, these sites facilitate residual waste disposal rather than recycling and, notwithstanding structural restrictions associated with most of these sites, further investment to improve their infrastructure and access will not necessarily redress this situation. The unit cost of managing waste at these sites is also significantly greater than at the better equipped HRCs.</p> <p>3.3 The report stated that, should no alternatives be identified for the CA sites, users should be redirected to the HRCs. Closure of the CA sites could result in efficiency savings of around £320K per year, while redirecting waste to the HRCs is anticipated to contribute positively to the Council’s recycling performance and will also result in reduced operating costs as recycling is cheaper than disposal.</p>

3.4	<p>The Council's four HRCs are located in each quadrant of Belfast, at;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Palmerston Road (East)</li> <li>▪ Ormeau Park/Park Road (South)</li> <li>▪ Blackstaff Way (West) and</li> <li>▪ Alexandra Park. (North)</li> </ul>																																
3.5	<p>The location of the CA sites and HRCs are contained in <b>Appendix 1 – Site location.</b></p>																																
3.6	<p><b>Performance &amp; Cost</b></p> <p>The HRCs are purpose built, split-level facilities operating to high standards with a similar size and layout. Each site is licensed to accept up to 10,000 tonnes per annum and based on existing use, have the capacity to accept more waste.</p>																																
3.7	<p>The HRCs offer as wide a range of recycling opportunities as anywhere else in the UK, and they are well run, safe and easy to use.</p>																																
3.8	<p>Total waste managed through the HRCs and CA sites amounts to 27,046 tonnes; 84% passes through the former and 16% through the latter sites respectively. Recycling performance, excluding the additional steps to recover recyclables from the residual waste skips, is around 60% at the HRCs, while at CA sites it averages 18%. The low tonnages presented at the CA sites and poor recycling performance drive up processing costs, meaning waste disposal costs nearly 42% more than at the equivalent HRCs. The HRCs are relatively close to the CA sites, less than 10 minute drive away and they provide more recycling opportunities and better value for money. An analysis of performance and costs per site is presented below in Table 1.</p>																																
3.9	<p><b>Table 1: HRC/CA Site Recycling Performance</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="263 1512 1204 1792"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Total CA's</th> <th>Total HRCs's</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Residual</td> <td>3,555</td> <td>9,181</td> <td>12,736</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dry Recycling</td> <td>770</td> <td>10,027</td> <td>10,797</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green</td> <td>17</td> <td>3,496</td> <td>3,513</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>4,342</b></td> <td><b>22,704</b></td> <td><b>27,046</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recycling Rate</td> <td>18.1%</td> <td>59.6%</td> <td>52.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost per Site</td> <td>£786,726</td> <td>£2,904,796</td> <td>£3,691,522</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Av. Cost Per Tonne</td> <td>£181.19</td> <td>£127.94</td> <td>£136.49</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The combination of low recycling performance, high cost per tonne, limited provision of facilities and restricted scope to improve services/layout/operations, demonstrates that the</p>	Description	Total CA's	Total HRCs's	Total	Residual	3,555	9,181	12,736	Dry Recycling	770	10,027	10,797	Green	17	3,496	3,513	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,342</b>	<b>22,704</b>	<b>27,046</b>	Recycling Rate	18.1%	59.6%	52.9%	Cost per Site	£786,726	£2,904,796	£3,691,522	Av. Cost Per Tonne	£181.19	£127.94	£136.49
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<p>3.10</p> <p>3.11</p> <p>3.12</p>	<p>CA sites are not the most cost effective use of Council monies and have become increasingly inconsistent with the recycling objectives of the Council. Given that existing users could be re-directed to the nearest HRC which are within 10 minutes and offer superior facilities, the report recommended that following a public consultation exercise and subject to subject no suitable alternative options being forthcoming, the Council should consider a phased closure of the CA sites to minimise disruption to users, after which the sites should be re-purposed.</p> <p>Discussions with Cleansing Services has highlighted that they would still require access to both Agnes Street, and Springfield Road CA sites which provide appropriate both arrangements for their respective areas. Work is underway to identify a suitable shared facility in the outer West for Cleansing and Parks which would mean that, once secured, this latter facility would be available for redevelopment.</p> <p>Cregagh CA site is considered to be surplus to operational requirements at this time. There may be scope for the Council to develop an environmental improvement scheme such as an alternative use (e.g. community garden or, subject to Council aims, achieve a capital receipt from the sale of the premises).</p> <p><b>Provision of Facilities – Benchmarking with other Cities</b></p> <p><b>Number of facilities per head of population</b> – Belfast has a population of 330,000, averaging one HRC per 82,500 residents. The WRAP Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Guide recommends that one HRC should serve up to 120,000 householders as a maximum<sup>1</sup>, and/or one per 50,000 households<sup>2</sup>. The Council’s HRC provision averaging 82,500 residents/35,000 households per site fits within these parameters indicating that the current provision is reasonable. Table 2 shows that Belfast’s provision compares well with other similar sized UK councils.</p> <p>Table 2 : Benchmarked provision of recycling centres/CA sites</p>
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<sup>1</sup> This figure was recommended in all but the most urbanised areas

<sup>2</sup> As above

3.13	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="261 152 730 271">City</th> <th data-bbox="735 152 879 271">Population (rounded to nearest 10,000)</th> <th data-bbox="884 152 1027 271">Number of HRCs</th> <th data-bbox="1032 152 1176 271">Average Population per HRC</th> <th data-bbox="1181 152 1324 271">Total HWRC National Directory Tonnage</th> <th data-bbox="1329 152 1473 271">Average Tonnage per site</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="261 277 730 306">Belfast</td> <td data-bbox="735 277 879 306">330,000</td> <td data-bbox="884 277 1027 306">4</td> <td data-bbox="1032 277 1176 306">82,500</td> <td data-bbox="1181 277 1324 306">22,700</td> <td data-bbox="1329 277 1473 306">5,675</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="261 313 730 342">Bristol</td> <td data-bbox="735 313 879 342">442,500</td> <td data-bbox="884 313 1027 342">2</td> <td data-bbox="1032 313 1176 342">221,250</td> <td data-bbox="1181 313 1324 342">31,352</td> <td data-bbox="1329 313 1473 342">15,676</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="261 349 730 378">Cardiff</td> <td data-bbox="735 349 879 378">350,000</td> <td data-bbox="884 349 1027 378">3</td> <td data-bbox="1032 349 1176 378">116,667</td> <td data-bbox="1181 349 1324 378">30,000</td> <td data-bbox="1329 349 1473 378">10,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="261 385 730 414">Portsmouth</td> <td data-bbox="735 385 879 414">210,000</td> <td data-bbox="884 385 1027 414">1</td> <td data-bbox="1032 385 1176 414">210,000</td> <td data-bbox="1181 385 1324 414">16,500</td> <td data-bbox="1329 385 1473 414">16,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="261 421 730 450">Southampton</td> <td data-bbox="735 421 879 450">250,000</td> <td data-bbox="884 421 1027 450">1</td> <td data-bbox="1032 421 1176 450">250,000</td> <td data-bbox="1181 421 1324 450">17,500</td> <td data-bbox="1329 421 1473 450">17,500</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	City	Population (rounded to nearest 10,000)	Number of HRCs	Average Population per HRC	Total HWRC National Directory Tonnage	Average Tonnage per site	Belfast	330,000	4	82,500	22,700	5,675	Bristol	442,500	2	221,250	31,352	15,676	Cardiff	350,000	3	116,667	30,000	10,000	Portsmouth	210,000	1	210,000	16,500	16,500	Southampton	250,000	1	250,000	17,500	17,500
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3.14	<p><b>Travel Distance/Journey Time</b> – The WRAP Guide also recommends that the catchment radii for a large proportion of the population should be 3-5 miles and/or within a 20 minute drive time for the majority of urban users. The Council's existing HRC provision meets this with 85% of Belfast's population being within a 3km radius of a HRC, and 100% within a 5km radius. Appendix 2 shows the travel distance/journey times between the CA s and HRCs – highlighting site proximity.</p>																																				
3.15	<p>The evidence suggests that the current HRC network alone is sufficient and it would be difficult to justify any additional provision.</p>																																				
3.16	<p>Following completion of the IESE report and consideration of its recommendations, discussions have started with the Council's Trade Unions to ensure all staffing matters are managed appropriately and subject to the final decision on the CA sites. Should the report's recommendations be implemented, there are no proposals for compulsory redundancy.</p>																																				
3.17	<p>Following discussions with both the Corporate Policy Unit and Equality Unit (Legal), the need for an appropriate public consultation process to present the IESE recommendations and provide users the opportunity to present additional information which may have a bearing on the final decision, was highlighted. This consultation exercise would present the IESE recommendations along with any supplementary evidence and actions which would need to be taken to mitigate the impact of any proposed changes. The exercise would also provide an opportunity for the public to present, for example, suitable alternative options which may be considered by the Council.</p>																																				
3.18	<p>In relation to the report's recommendations, the Council's Policy Unit recommended that a consultation exercise should be conducted over a 12 week period with appropriate support. In parallel, an equality screening will be conducted. The results from these will then be reviewed against the report's recommendations and a further report will be presented to Committee for consideration, after which, any recommendations or approvals will be actioned.</p>																																				

The indicative timescale for these steps is that the consultation exercise would commence in Q4 of the current financial year.

### **Mitigating Actions**

3.19 Members raised a number of points at the party briefing exercise which will be tackled going forward. Subject to the outcome of the public consultation exercise and final Committee decision, the Council will actively seek to target the CA site locations to improve general recycling. Should the recommendations in the IESE report be ratified, careful consideration will be given to publicity and timing of any next steps and supporting actions to ensure that the amount of materials collected for recycling could be increased.

### **Public Engagement**

3.20 The Service is aware that there are likely to be local concerns regarding any potential closure of CA sites. **A site-specific public communications campaign** would be developed for each CA site to address these concerns which could include;

- proposed notification of closure
- proximity of nearby HRCs
- install additional bring banks for glass (and other materials, where possible)
- use the education/community staff at the CA sites to specifically engage with users and address concerns
- publicise locally alternative Council services, such as bulky household collection scheme and
- Assistance and guidance from Resource Advisors to ensure that residents maximise the waste collection arrangements at the kerbside

3.21 **Bulky Household Collections** – As part of the communications campaigns, the Service will liaise with Cleansing Services to promote the free, bulky household collection service provided by the Council.

3.22 **Flytipping** - Historically, across Belfast, the majority of fly-tipping incidents occur in street entries. In the past, when the Council has closed a CA site, no significant increase in fly-tipping has been recorded which is possibly due to the extensive pre-engagement and communication campaigns targeted at users. Should fly-tipping become an issue at any of the CA sites, the Cleansing Service's Enforcement Team will seek to take appropriate enforcement action by either issuing a fixed penalty notice or taking further legal action.

<p>3.23</p> <p>3.24</p> <p>3.25</p>	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>It is estimated that adoption of the IESE recommendations is likely to result in a net saving of approximately £320K per annum.</p> <p>There should also be further efficiencies from the displacement of the CA site residual waste which is currently sent to landfill to the HRCs which have lower associated treatment costs per tonne, arising from higher levels of recycling. The extent of this change in users' behaviour is unclear, so it has not been determined at this stage.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>In parallel with the consultation process, an equality screening exercise will be conducted and the Consultation Institute exercise will be facilitated within existing revenue estimates.</p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p><b>Appendix 1</b> – HRC &amp; CA Site Locations</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> – Travel Distance/Journey Times</p>

