

Gloucester City Council



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECYCLING TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OCTOBER 2013

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Section 1 - Introduction

Background

This report sets out the recommendations of the Recycling and Bulky Items Task and Finish Group which was established following ratification by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 November 2012. The report details the purpose and process of the review, the Task and Finish Group's findings and its recommendations.

Membership

The following cross-party Members were confirmed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 December 2012:-

- Councillor Sebastian Field (Chair)
- Councillor Kate Haigh
- Councillor Gordon Taylor

Terms of Reference

The Group agreed its terms of reference by way of a scoping document in March 2013.

The agreed ambitions for the review were:-

- To increase recycling percentages
- To make recycling more accessible to the community

The anticipated outcome for the review was:-

- An improved service






Section 2 - Summary of the current service




Current Recycling Scheme for Flats' Waste and Recycling

Recycling Material	👍 Yes Please! 👍	X No Thanks X
All Plastic Bottles (including lids) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please wash and squash • Remove pump action triggers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Milk/Juice Bottles ✓ Bleach/Detergent Bottles ✓ Toiletry Bottles 	Any other plastics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Yoghurt Pots/Margarine Tub × Fruit and Veg Punnets × Ready Meal/Meat Trays × Cling Film × No Carrier Bags
Mixed Glass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove all lids • Please Rinse No carrier bags!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clean Glass Jars ✓ Glass Bottles (all colours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Window Panes × Spectacles × Pyrex Dishes/Crockery × Light Bulbs × Glass Milk Bottles × Medicine/Pill Bottles × Broken Glass
Food and Drink Cans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please Rinse No carrier bags!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Steel Food Cans ✓ Aluminium Drinks Cans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Pet Food Pouches × Crisp Packets × Paint Tins × Aluminium/Tin Foil × Metal Food Trays × Aerosols
Mixed Paper and Light Card <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please flatten light card No carrier bags!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Newspapers/Magazines ✓ Phone Directories including Yellow Pages ✓ Toilet Roll Tubes/Kitchen Roll Tubes ✓ Catalogues/Paperback Books ✓ Junk Mail, Letters and Cards ✓ Envelopes (including windows) ✓ Cereal Packets and Food Packaging Boxes ✓ Light Card Egg Boxes ✓ Shredded Paper (securely bagged not loose) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Wet or Dirty Items × Wallpaper × Hardback Books × Shiny Gift Wrapping Paper × Corrugated/Thick Cardboard (eg Washing Powder Boxes) × Cartons × Plastic Egg Boxes × Take Away Pizza Boxes
Food Waste No carrier bags!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dairy Products (Cheese, Yoghurt, etc) ✓ Fish (including bones and scales) ✓ Meat & Bones (chops, chicken carcass etc) ✓ Breads & Pastries ✓ Fruit & Vegetables ✓ Egg Shells / Tea & Coffee Grounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Milk (pour down the sink) × Liquids / Cooking Oil × Food Packaging × Plastic type bags (use paper) × Crockery × Pet carcasses or faeces

- Weekly food waste collections are only available in certain flat complexes if they are found to be suitable i.e. well ventilated bin stores, secure location, etc.
- Most complexes have one set of 240L, 360L or 820L mini-banks for recycling, consisting of Plastic Bottles, Mixed Glass, Food/Drink Cans, Mixed Paper/Light Card. These are emptied over a 10 day monitoring cycle.
- Bulky items, such as mattresses and furniture, etc, should not be left in the refuse bins or in the bin store, as the bins will not be emptied if there are any obstructions in the way or if they contain unacceptable items. Bulky item collections are a chargeable service which can be arranged through the Contact Centre to book a date/time. The current charge is £24.00 for up to 3 items (£8.00 for any additional item). Alternatively, bulky items can be taken to the Household Recycling Centre at Hempsted.
- Contamination in the recycling bins results in them not being collected for recycling and may result in the commodity being landfilled.
- We operate a closed bin lid policy – we will not collect bins that have their lids open.
- Any waste left at the side of the bins will not be collected.

Current Waste and Recycling Service for Normal Domestic Households

Service - All receptacles to be presented by 7.00am on collection day	Yes Please (✓)	No Thanks (X)
<p style="text-align: center;">Weekly Recycling Collection in 55L Green Recycling Box</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">  </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center; width: 15%;">  <small>food tins & drink cans</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center; width: 15%;">  <small>mixed glass bottles & jars</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center; width: 15%;">  <small>plastic bottles</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center; width: 15%;">  <small>mixed paper & card</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center; width: 15%;">  <small>batteries</small> </div> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Food and Drink Cans (Rinsed) ✓ Glass Jars and Bottles (Rinsed) ✓ ALL Plastic Bottles (including the tops) (includes Bleach, Shampoo and Shower Gel Bottles, etc) ✓ Mixed Paper and Light Card ✓ Light Card (i.e. Cereal/Tissue Boxes) ✓ Yellow Pages / Phone Directories ✓ Envelopes (with or without windows) ✓ Dry Cell Batteries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Aerosol Cans X Foil Food Trays X Foil Pie Dishes X Aluminium Foil X Window Glass and Mirrors X Pyrex Dishes X Crockery X Glass Milk Bottles X Spectacles/Reading Glasses X Glass Medicine/Pill Bottles X Light Bulbs X Rigid Plastic (i.e. Margarine Tubs, Food Trays, Yoghurt Pots, Ice Cream Tubs) X Bottle Triggers and Pumps X Corrugated Cardboard (including Takeaway Pizza Boxes) X Juice Cartons/Tetrapaks X Packaging X Laptop, mobile phone, hearing aid, watch, car batteries
<p style="text-align: center;">Weekly Food Waste Collection in 23L Kerbside Caddy (in conjunction with 7L Kitchen Caddy)</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">  </div>	<div style="background-color: #8B4513; color: white; padding: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>fruit & vegetables</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>bread & pastries</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>fish</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>meat & bones</small> </div> </div> <div style="background-color: #8B4513; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px; display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>dairy</small> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>tea & coffee grounds</small> </div> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Liquids X Food Packaging X Plastic Style Bags X Crockery X Pet carcasses, feathers or faeces X Cooking Oil

<p>Fortnightly Residual Waste Collection in 240L standard black wheeled bins (360L bins or an additional 140L issued to residents with exceptional circumstances following a Waste Audit) Bin lid must be closed</p> 	<p>√ Only non-recyclable material that will not go into the kerbside recycling collection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Food Waste × Garden Waste × Recyclable Material × Soil and Rubble × Electrical Goods × Needles/Sharps × Window and Mirror Glass × DIY Materials × Business Waste
<p>Fortnightly Residual Waste Collection in 75L purple sacks for terraced properties with no frontage or room to store a bin (specific allocated streets only) 4 bags are allowed per collection (additional bags are issued to residents with exceptional circumstances following a Waste Audit)</p> 	<p>√ Only non-recyclable material that will not go into the kerbside recycling collection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Food Waste × Garden Waste × Recyclable Material × Soil and Rubble × Electrical Goods × Needles/Sharps × Window and Mirror Glass × DIY Materials × Business Waste
<p>Fortnightly Garden Waste Collection Service in 240L standard green wheeled bins (Chargeable service : £36 per year per bin) Bin lid must be closed</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ Grass Cuttings √ Weeds √ Leaves and Bark √ Plants and Cut Flowers √ Hedge Clippings and Prunings √ Twigs and Small Branches (max 10cm diameter) √ Real Christmas Trees (cut into sections) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Plastic Plant Pots × Chemicals and Cooking Oil × Animal Faeces × Garden Tools and Furniture × Soil, slabs, bricks and stone × Animal litter × Food Waste × General Rubbish × Recyclable materials × Cold ashes × Plastic bags/liners

Section 3 – Findings

Introduction

The Task and Finish Group met with a variety of Witnesses during its study. A summary of the evidence, along with headlines is shown below.

Meeting 1 – 18 February 2013

The Group reviewed findings from a previous Recycling Task and Finish Group and explored specific topics for the new study along with a list of potential Witnesses and consultees. At this meeting the ambitions for the study were identified as:-

- *To increase recycling percentages*
- *To make recycling more accessible to the community*

and the agreed outcome was defined as:-

- *‘an improved service’*



Meeting 2 – 16 April 2013

This meeting was attended by two managers from the Council's streetscene partner 'Amey'. The Group took the opportunity to question Amey on the following matters:-

- Lining of caddies with composting bags
- Recycling of more plastics such as meat trays
- Possible tetrapak collection
- Possibility of alternative collections for dry recyclables
- Co-mingling
- Collection of cardboard
- Steps taken to divert bulky items from landfill to recycling
- Recycling of nappies
- Impact of City Council budget cuts on the service and what could be done in mitigation

Key Points from Meeting 2

- Amey confirmed that corn starch bags or newspapers could be placed in caddies
- If more plastics were collected and sorted at the kerbside it would be necessary to reconfigure vehicles and processes at the Depot
- It was identified that the high proportion of flats and Victorian in certain wards in the City posed challenges if alternative weekly collections were introduced. There were plans to issue purple bags to these residents and explore the provision of large communal recycling bins.
- Some bulky items which were in good condition and could be re-used were still going to landfill
- There were costs associated with recycling nappies and further research was needed with an authority which already had a scheme.
- Amey was asked to review its rounds and look at changing the collection day for City Centre properties and those in the Barton and Tredworth area where bins left out on a Thursday night/Friday morning could become the target for vandalism.

Meeting 3 – 13 May 2013

The Group interviewed the Head of Service for the Gloucestershire Joint Board Scheme and his colleague from the Joint Waste Team, Gloucestershire County Council. The following matters were discussed:-

- Latest recycling figures both nationally and locally
- Difficulties posed to refuse vehicles accessing new estates where there were design features such as archways
- The unsuccessful planning application for the controversial proposed incinerator
- Promotion of the use of compostable bags for lining caddies and possible liaison with local supermarkets on same
- The future of the food waste processing plant at Dymock
- The amount of food waste which ended up in landfill
- Recycling of textiles and electrical goods
- Over-ordering of food by supermarkets and what happened to it

Key Points from Meeting 3

- Possible relaunch of the food waste collection service with the cost of issuing free caddy liners to be investigated. Local supermarkets to be involved. The message being 'Love Food – Hate Waste'.
- It was noted that end of life goods in supermarkets could not be passed to community groups/charities. However, the Gloucester Fairshare Food Charity collected over-ordered goods direct from supermarket depots and distributed them to the community.

Meeting 4 – 3 June 2013

The Group received presentations from the Chief Executive of the Gloucester Furniture Recycling Project and his colleague, and from the Public Space Manager and Officer of Stroud District Council. The following matters were discussed:-

- Progress report on the current trial for the collection of bulky and electrical goods being carried out by the Furniture Recycling Project and exploration of issues arising
- Changes to the waste recycling service at Stroud District Council. The service had been restyled following requests from residents for extra storage and the collection of more materials. The new service had resulted in the number of bring sites being reduced from 39 to 7.

Key Points from Meeting 4

- The City Council's website pages were to be updated with more focus on what could be re-used so that the message was not just about getting rid of rubbish
- The Call Centre's 'script' would be revised to give customers more information about the service provided by the Furniture Recycling Project
- An analysis would be carried out on how much cardboard was going to residual waste
- There would be discussions with Amey on co-mingling

Meeting 5– 17 June 2013

The Cabinet Member for the Environment attended the meeting and was given a briefing on the Group's work to date. The following matters were also discussed:-

- The Cabinet Member gave his views on the main challenges for the existing service
- The Furniture Recycling Project trial was reviewed
- The Cabinet Member's views were sought on possible co-mingling
- Problems posed to refuse vehicles by poor estate planning on new developments
- Over-ordering of food by supermarkets leading to waste and the amount of unnecessary packaging on goods

Key Points from Meeting 5

- Group to work on a campaign with supermarkets, local traders, farmers' markets and schools with 'Love Food – Hate Waste' as the theme.
- Financial models on co-mingling to be obtained

Meeting 6 – 5 August 2013

This meeting was attended by the General Manager of Amey who brought a recycling options paper with him. The following matters were discussed:-

- Evaluation of weekly and fortnightly service options along with financial data
- The current fleet of vehicles
- Alternative recycling regimes at Brighton and Hove, Bristol and Birmingham
- An update on the Furniture Recycling Project Trial

Key Points from Meeting 6

- There needed to be an up to date analysis of the waste stream
- There was little capacity to add extra items to the current scheme without moving to a co-mingled regime
- The trial on the collection of white goods by the Furniture Recycling Project would cease at the end of August

Meeting 7 – 4 September 2013

The Group considered the following information:-

- Weekly recycling options with financial data
- An evaluation of the compartments in a current fleet vehicle
- An analysis of the recycling service provided by Bristol City Council

Key Points from Meeting 7

- Exploration of whether cardboard could be collected at the same time as green waste
- Exploration of whether existing fleet vehicles could be replaced at the end of their life with vehicles similar to those used by Bristol City Council
- Opportunity identified for an officer to have a 'day out' with the recycling crews of Bristol City Council
- Consideration of conclusions and recommendations arising from the study



Section 4 - Other Evidence

Introduction

The Group examined various items of data during its study and these are detailed below.

- **Report on Recycling at Council Premises**

One of the items identified in the scoping document was:-

'Council's championing of recycling on its premises would be reviewed'

A short report on this topic is attached in the appendices to this document

- **Examination of recycling schemes at other local authorities:-**

Services at Stroud, Bristol, Birmingham and Brighton and Hove were considered

- **Alternative options produced by Amey:-**

At the Group's request, Amey provided a variety of different service options based on both weekly and fortnightly collections



Section 5 - Conclusions

The Group has concluded that whilst the City Council's current recycling regime is efficient and cost effective that the opportunity should be taken to remodel the service when the current fleet of vehicles is due for replacement. At that time the routes could be revised to take account of changes and local issues which have arisen since they were drawn up by using a computer modelled process.

The current fleet with its existing compartments offers little scope for collecting different materials, but a change to a split back vehicle or similar to a 'May Gurney' truck in the future could allow cardboard to be collected at the same time as garden waste. There would, of course, be implications for the numbers of vehicles and crew members needed and modelling would need to be carried out.

It is clear that the food waste service is not being used to capacity resulting in more food items ending up in the residual waste stream than is necessary. It appears that residents are not aware that they can use compostable bags or newspaper to line their caddies. The message 'Love Food – Hate Waste' is one which the Group would like to endorse and a relaunch of the food waste service is one of the recommendations arising from this study. Local supermarkets could be encouraged to join in with the campaign and perhaps sponsor free compostable bags.



There is evidence that the City Council's website needs to change its focus from 'rubbish removal' to highlighting to residents what can be recycled.

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Section 6 - Recommendations

The Group proposes the following recommendations to improve the current service:-

- **A report should be prepared to go to Cabinet within the next six months** suggesting a number of changes to the existing service with a view to implementation in two years using computer modelling. The revised scheme should coincide with the replacement of the current fleet of vehicles. Any new scheme should include the following:-
 - An analysis should be carried out of the current waste stream as the recycling profile has changed. This could be performed by examining the contents of a fleet vehicle at the Depot.
 - Consideration of a change of vehicles to a split-back refuse truck or a 'May Gurney' type vehicle similar to that used in Bristol. This would achieve a key objective of increasing the number of items that can be recycled.
 - Exploration of collecting garden waste and cardboard at the same time within a split-back truck.
 - The current rounds should be re-examined to take account of local issues and changes which have taken place since they were originally drawn up. For example, access problems in Kingsway and anti-social behaviour in Barton and Tredworth and City Centre properties caused by bins being left out on the streets on busy nights.
 - Rounds should be remodelled using a computerised model approach.
 - Crews and shift patterns will need to be examined and the necessary changes made.
 - There should be a trial using a split-back vehicle on one round such as Tuffley for a period of three months.



- When the new service is introduced the opportunity of changing existing bin sizes can be explored bearing in mind the constraints posed to residents living in terraced properties.
- There should be a relaunch of the food waste service using '*Love Food – Hate Waste*' as a slogan so that residents are aware they can use compostable bags or newspaper to line food caddies. Local supermarkets should be encouraged to join in with the campaign and sponsor free caddy bags to residents.
- Amey should have a containerised area at the Depot for holding furniture collected via the Council's Bulky Waste Service so that local charities such as Emmaus and the Furniture Recycling Project can be invited to view it to see if it is suitable for recycling.
- The City Council's website should be updated to provide better information for residents. The message should emphasise what can be recycled, rather than what can be thrown away.



Section 7 - Acknowledgements

The Task and Finish Group would like to thank the following individuals/organisations for their help and support during the study:-

- The City Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment
- Amey
- Gloucestershire County Council's Joint Waste Project Team
- The Furniture Recycling Project
- Stroud District Council's Public Space Team
- Staff from Gloucester City Council who have assisted the Group and attended meetings

Thank You!

Section 8 - Appendices

Contained within this section are:-

- **Timeline**
- **Scoping Document**
- **Report on Recycling at Council's premises**



TIMELINE FOR RECYCLING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Date	Activity
12/11/12	Recycling topic selected by Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a task and finish group
10/12/12	Members ratified by Overview and Scrutiny Committee
18/02/13	First meeting of Task and Finish Group. Councillor Field elected as Chair
18/03/13	Final scoping document agreed
09/04/13	Report on review of recycling at Council premises completed
16/04/13	Second meeting of Task and Finish Group. Attended by Amey
13/05/13	Third meeting of Task and Finish Group. Attended by Andy Pritchard and Steve Read of the County Council's Waste Project Team
03/06/13	Fourth meeting of Task and Finish Group. Attended by FRP and Public Space team from Stroud District Council
17/06/13	Fifth meeting of Task and Finish Group. Attended by Cabinet Member for the Environment
05/08/13	Sixth meeting of Task and Finish Group. Attended by Amey.
04/09/13	Seventh meeting of Task and Finish Group. Draft report considered at this meeting



Scoping Document

SCRUTINY REVIEW – ONE PAGE STRATEGY FINAL 18/02/13	
Broad topic area	Recycling and Bulky Items Councillors Field (Chair), Haigh, Taylor
Specific topic area	Recycling (with bulky items to be the subject of a separate review at a later date if time permits)
Ambitions for the review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase recycling percentages • To make recycling more accessible to the community
How do we perform at the moment?	Figures will be provided
Who should we consult?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Officers • County • Schools and Academies • Enterprise • Gloucester City Homes • Recycling organisations • Other relevant local authorities • Local Government Association (for best practice studies)
Background information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round information from Enterprise • Performance statistics and other data
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ross Cook • Caroline Wayman • Gordon Buchanan • Democratic Services
How long will it take?	4-5 months
Outcomes	Improved service

**GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**



**TASK AND FINISH GROUP
ON
RECYCLING**



A report on recycling at Council Premises

INTRODUCTION

The Task and Finish Group for Recycling agreed at its meeting on 18th February 2013 to include the following matter in the scoping document for the project:-

Council's championing of recycling on its premises would be reviewed

Accordingly, a survey has been carried out of practices at the Docks Offices and the outstations (Guildhall, Museums, Crematorium) and these are the results.





































BACKGROUND

THE COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT

In 2001 the City Council signed up to a Waste Minimisation Charter which applied to the main offices in the Docks and all City Council operated sites, offices, leisure facilities and the Depot.

Promotion of in-house recycling is now carried out by the Council's 'Green Team' through the energy champions network. The Environmental Co-ordinator collects recycling data and reports it annually.

A SNAPSHOT OF RECYCLING CARRIED OUT AT COUNCIL PREMISES

Premises	Paper	Cardboard	Glass	Cans	Light bulbs	Batteries	Various Plastics	Food waste	Furniture	Metal hardware	Garden cuttings	Computer consumables
City Museum												
Crematorium												
Docks												
Folk Museum												
Guildhall												

INFORMATION TO SUPPORT RECYCLING SNAPSHOT SUMMARY

LABELLED RECYCLING BINS

It appears that these receptacles are available at all premises, appropriately marked. The Guildhall has indicated that they would like larger bins similar to those seen at festivals for use when they have concerts, etc.

FOOD WASTE

Regrettably there is no recycling of any food waste at Council owned premises. It appears that a licence would be required as Council offices are classed as commercial premises. This is a pity, particularly as the Council has cafes at the Museums, Guildhall and Crematorium and its own catering facility at the Docks.

FURNITURE

Furniture is recycled via an external contractor. The Guildhall has also taken an innovative approach by converting old tables into shelving units.

GARDEN CUTTINGS

Good use is made of hedge, grass and tree cuttings at the Crematorium. These are put through a chipper, along with dead flowers, and made into compost which is placed in the bottom of graves to absorb water and make the graves look more presentable.

RECYCLING AMBITIONS

The Guildhall has indicated that they would like to generate income from recycling. They are currently preparing evidence for a Green Tourism Business Award Grading. Their current status is 'bronze'. The Guildhall would also like to publicise its recycling so that potential users could compare its statistics with other venues in the City.

CONCLUSIONS

It would seem that the Council is actively encouraging recycling at its premises. However, there is still more that can be done, particularly regarding food waste. The Museums could also be encouraged to recycle computer consumables.