

Local Members Interest
N/A

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 16 September 2021

Household Waste Recycling Centres – Insourcing Update and Potential Changes to the Management of Re-use Items

Recommendations

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Note the progress with the transition of the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC's) from an outsourced to an in-house provision.
- b. Consider how they think the benefit of re-use items should be managed in the future and what delivery models should be taken forward for further discussion.

Cllr Simon Tagg, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change and Cllr Mark Deaville Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. The Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on potential delivery models for the Staffordshire Household Waste Recycling Centre service on 26 February 2021. It was agreed that an in-house delivery model should be taken forward and Members asked that an update report be provided prior to the new arrangements being put in place.
2. The management of re-use items at the HWRC has been stable for several years but it is felt that it is appropriate to review the current arrangements. Members are asked to start the debate and provide their views on how re-use items should be best managed for the benefit of the Staffordshire Community.
3. In terms of next steps, subject to agreement with Katharine House Hospice, it is not envisaged that there will be any changes to the current management of re-use items until April 2023.

Report

Background and Project Progress

4. Cabinet approved the insourcing of the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) from 30 March 2022 on the 17 March 2021.

5. Following the Cabinet decision in March, communication was issued to both HWRC operational staff employed by Amey and internal 'client' staff employed by the Council.
6. An internal project group, with representatives from all appropriate teams, has been meeting fortnightly since the 22 April 2021 and an extensive project plan and risk log is now in place.
7. As highlighted in the March Cabinet report further work has been carried out on the right sourcing of the haulage element of the HWRC service and an officer decision (with Cabinet Member approval) has been made to outsource this component. The Amey personnel impacted by this decision have been informed and a procurement exercise is now underway.
8. Whilst the project team are focused on the transition arrangements close attention is being paid to current operations to ensure that the HWRC service continues to provide the required level of service to Staffordshire residents whilst ensuring that all operations remain safe and effective.
9. The nature of the interim contractual arrangements with Amey, which commenced in April 2020, means that the client team are now much more aware of operational costs and on-site challenges. In addition, the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on HWRC provision regionally has meant that the Staffordshire HWRC network has been impacted by the actions of other local authorities.
10. One of these challenges is how the financial benefits of donated items for reuse across the HWRC network are appropriately distributed to the charities based in Staffordshire.

Management of Reuse Items

11. Currently the outlet for all items collected for re-use across the Staffordshire HWRC network are management and co-ordinated by the Katharine House Hospice charity. This activity is centred around the re-use facility based at the Cannock HWRC site which receives c150,000 items (pre-Covid 19) of re-use from the whole HWRC network each year. Of these items around 80% are available for re-use and are offered for sale.
12. These arrangements were put in place in 2013 by the previous provider, FCC, under a commercial contract which the Council was not party to.
13. As part of the interim contractual arrangements, we now have a better understanding of the current financial position. In essence Katharine House sells on items for re-use directly from the charity shop in Cannock. They pay for any costs incurred in moving reuse items to the shop and for resources used in operating the shop.
14. There is a significant annual financial benefit for the Katharine House Hospice charity albeit that that actual value will fluctuate each year. In the future, with the right communication strategy, it may be possible to increase the value of the re-use

items by capturing more items and diverting items from other alternatives such as free or monetized websites.

15. Discussions are taking place with Katharine House Hospice to continue the current arrangements until April 2023. This will allow time to consider how the re-use items collected across the Staffordshire HWRC network can best be used for the benefit of Staffordshire residents.
16. In order to commence the debate, Members of this Committee are asked to consider and comment on the following potential options and suggest any additional potential models.
 - a. Secure a Lead charity provider, via a procurement exercise, for a fixed period of say five years for the complete Staffordshire HWRC network, continuing to use one or more of the HWRC sites as a hub (similar to current arrangements but fixed term).
 - b. Secure an independent provider (potentially Support Staffordshire) for the complete Staffordshire HWRC network using one or more of the HWRC sites as a hub with funds distributed to various local Staffordshire charities.
 - c. Local arrangements put in place (for a fixed term basis) associated with each of the 14 sites with re-use items managed locally to provide a local focus and potentially minimise carbon miles.
 - d. Run the service internally with any profits generated (after re-use operating costs) allocated to a charity of our choice such as the Chairman's Charity.

Summary

17. The transition of the HWRC service from an out-sourced provision to an in-house service is on track for the go live date of the 30th March 2022.
18. Any changes to the management of re-use items are not envisaged until April 2023. This will allow time for considered debate on how these items can best be used for the benefit of the Staffordshire community.

Link to the Strategic Plan

19. The provision of suitable waste disposal arrangements is key to a number of the Outcomes in Staffordshire County Council's Strategic Plan namely to be healthier and happier.
20. The proposals in this report link to the principles contained in the Strategic Plan including ensuring that Climate Change is considered in all that we do.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

21. The Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on potential delivery models for the Staffordshire HWRC network on the 26 February 2021.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

None

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