



AGENDA ITEM: 8

CABINET: 19 January 2010

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
4 February 2010**

COUNCIL: 24 February 2010

Report of: Executive Manager Street Scene

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor P Greenall

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**SUBJECT: PROPOSED COLLECTION CHANGES RESULTING FROM THE
ALTERNATE WEEKLY COLLECTION PILOT SCHEME ON WINDROWS
AND WILLOW HEY, SKELMERSDALE**

The following wards are affected: Ashurst, Birch Green, Tanhouse, Digmaor, Moorside, Skelmersdale North, Skelmersdale South

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with the results of the Alternate Weekly Collection (AWC) Wheeled Bin Pilot Scheme operated across Windrows and Willow Hey, New Church Farm, Skelmersdale.
- 1.2 To propose refuse and recycling improvements to bring Skelmersdale collection services in line with the majority of the Borough.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- 2.1 That the results of the Pilot Scheme be noted and that, subject to approval by Council, AWC be introduced across the remaining Skelmersdale Wards with effect from April 2010.
- 2.2 That the Executive Manager Street Scene be given delegated authority, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to take all appropriate action to facilitate the necessary service changes arising from 2.1 above.
- 2.3 That call in is not appropriate for this item as the report is being submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2010.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3.1 That the Committee consider the report and agree any comments for consideration by Council.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

4.1 That consideration be given to the report and the decisions of Cabinet in the light of any comments expressed by the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.2 That subject to 4.1 above, the decisions of the Cabinet be endorsed and the financial implications of the proposed changes be approved.

5.0 BACKGROUND

5.1 The Council introduced its AWC Wheeled Bin Services in the Autumn of 2005. Approximately 9,000 residential properties across the Radburn designed estates of Skelmersdale remained on a weekly sack collection service, due to the architectural make up of the Estates and other service issues.

5.2 In April 2006 the Council appointed independent consultants (SLR Ltd.) to research, review and advise on collection service provision across Skelmersdale. One of their recommendations was to set up a Working Group to explore current service provision and to develop a strategy for service collection improvements.

5.3 In August 2008 a Ward Councillors' Working Group was established, consisting of Officers, the relevant Portfolio Holder and Ward Members from across Skelmersdale.

6.0 ISSUES

6.1 The Working Group identified a number of issues that potentially restricted the provision of an AWC service across the Estates. A brief list is given below:

- Residents' storage facilities
- Bin presentation locations
- Anti Social behaviour concerns
- Collection and return to property
- Bin property identification
- Fire risk

6.2 In an attempt to explore these in more detail a consultation exercise took place across an agreed residential area (Willow Hey and Windrows). This exercise consisted of a door knocking initiative to explain and discuss issues with residents. The results of which are attached in Appendix 1.

6.3 In addition, the consultation also included the Council's Housing Staff and the Fire and Rescue Services.

7.0 CURRENT POSITION

7.1 Having consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, the Working Group recommended that a pilot scheme be operated in the agreed area for a six month period. The results of this pilot scheme would be used to make an informed decision on any future service changes across the remaining areas of Skelmersdale. The pilot covers 353 properties on the Windrows and Willow Hey Estates and commenced on 16 June 2009, for a period of six months.

7.2 It was agreed at conception that a dedicated Waste Minimisation Officer would be required on site during collection periods. The officer would be constantly available to communicate and assist both residents and collection crews, addressing any concerns they might have, whilst also being available to monitor the collection team's performance.

7.3 An information pack was hand-delivered to all households within the pilot area. The pack contained comprehensive information on the use of the service, together with details of support provided in respect of assisted collections and additional bin space for large families.

7.4 All grey bins were delivered one week after the information pack.

7.5 In order to ensure the communication of information and to speedily resolve any issues that residents may have, the Waste Minimisation Officer has spent considerable time in the pilot area, dealing with both residents and crews on a daily basis, as well as attending Community Group meetings and Residents' Forums.

7.6 The pilot scheme identified and addressed the following issues:

- Storage Facilities - In order to address residents' concerns with regard to storage facilities, and also in recognition that not all households would require a green bin for garden waste, it was agreed that a more pragmatic approach was required. It was decided that households would not be automatically delivered a green bin, in line with the AWC roll out across the rest of West Lancashire, but that an "opt in" scheme would be put in place. To date, 34% of households have been delivered a green bin.
- Bin Presentation Locations – Residents were advised that they could present their bin at either the rear or the front of their property, whichever they felt was more suitable. This led to identification problems when returning bins to properties and impacted on the length of time taken for the crew to complete the collection process. However, with increased experience and with the help of the Waste Minimisation Officer who has retrospectively stencilled house numbers on bins, the time taken for collection has been greatly reduced.
- Anti Social Behaviour and Fire Risk - To date we have had only one minor incident relating to waste being removed from a receptacle by youths.

- Bins Stolen –Over the period, 12 bins have been reported as stolen and have been subsequently replaced. Five of the missing bins have been later retrieved during the collection process.
- Fly Tipping and Side Waste - The Working Group were in agreement that the scheme would not work without public understanding and acceptance of the criteria. Initially, a six-week amnesty was given allowing all residents to present any extra waste for collection. During this time, the Waste Minimisation Officer, together with Street Scene Officers from within Community Services, embarked on a policy of education and support to ensure that residents were made aware that, on cessation of the amnesty, presenting extra waste in excess of that in the bin would not be acceptable.

It has been identified that fly tipping incidents have centred on residents from surrounding estates, not currently on wheeled bins, depositing their extra bags in the pilot scheme area. Collaboration between Street Scene and the Council’s Enforcement Officers has helped relieve the situation and in total, a minority of repeat offenders from the pilot and surrounding area have been fined during the period of the scheme.

- Local Environment – The use of wheeled bins to contain the waste, as opposed to sacks that are easily split and ripped open by animals, has resulted in a marked improvement to the cleanliness of the area concerned.
- Recycling – Since the introduction of the pilot, there has been an increase in the number of households presenting waste for recycling. Furthermore, Street Scene has also had an increased number of receptacle requests from residents who either did not recycle prior to the scheme or have now an increased volume of material for recycling. The Waste Minimisation Officer has also liaised closely with the English speaking members of the immigrant population in an effort to reach those households previously excluded due to language barriers.

ESTATE	TOTAL PROPERTIES	RECYCLING PRESENTED	PARTCIPATION %
WILLOW HEY 2008	138	82	59%
WILLOW HEY 2009	138	90	65%
WINDROWS 2008	209	109	52%
WINDROWS 2009	209	123	59%

- Requests for Additional Bins – In exceptional circumstances, such as a family of six or more, additional bin space will be considered. Within the pilot area, six households have been issued with additional bins, four on Willow Hey and two on Windrows.

8.0 PROPOSALS

8.1 The results of the pilot scheme, combined with the information collected during Ward Members’ walks (Appendix 2. plus photographs to be displayed at the meeting), indicate that while there are collection issues to be addressed by both residents and collection teams, these are achievable and subsequently, the Council should roll out AWC services across the remainder of Skelmersdale.

9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 9.1 As legislation from the EU, Central Government and the Disposal Authority, Lancashire County Council increases, pressure will grow to reduce, reuse and recycle as much municipal waste as possible. This roll out of a wheeled bin service will encourage residents to participate in the available recycling services, thus reducing the amount of material being sent to landfill.
- 9.2 The service change will also assist the Council in its overall climate change and carbon reduction objectives.

10.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 It is estimated that the cost of providing domestic and green waste bins for the extension of AWC into the remaining Skelmersdale wards will be £270,000. This allows for a grey bin to be provided to every household but assumes a 50% take up rate for green bins. This will be a one off capital cost and it is proposed that it is funded from the VAT windfall receipt that the Council has recently received from Revenues and Customs. The possibility of leasing the bins was also considered, but the estimated cost of £50,000 per annum over a seven year lease period would have been more expensive than the outright purchase option.
- 10.2 As a result of the new service delivery method there will no longer be a requirement to provide refuse sacks to households. This will produce ongoing revenue saving estimated at £30,000 per annum after allowing for a small annual budget for replacement bins. It is intended that this saving will be incorporated into the revenue budget for the 2010-11 financial year.

11.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 In addition, with the prospect of further service changes being considered in light of the opportunities offered by the new transfer facility available in Autumn of 2010, the introduction of AWC in Skelmersdale will allow for a more consistent and efficient approach to collection services across the Borough.
- 11.2 If AWC is not rolled out across Skelmersdale then an opportunity to increase recycling rates, which is a key corporate objective, will be lost

12.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 The Council has always intended to provide a consistent collection service across all wards. The work undertaken by the Working Group, Portfolio Holder and Officers has identified a number of issues requiring attention. However, these issues are not insurmountable and are not seen as an obstacle to the introduction of an AWC service.
- 12.2 After a successful consultation exercise and equally successful pilot scheme, there is no reason the roll out of an AWC service could not be achieved across the remainder of Skelmersdale.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality target groups.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Results of Consultation Exercise

Appendix 2 - Ward Members' Walks with Photographs