

REPORT TO: Climate and Environment Advisory
Committee

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Review of Waste and Recycling collections at South Cambridgeshire Hall and the use of single use plastics

Purpose

1. This report provides a briefing for the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee on the Review of Waste and Recycling at South Cambridgeshire Hall and the use of single use plastics.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee note the actions outlined below.

Background

3. It has been noted by both Single Shared Waste Service and Facilities staff that the collection arrangements for waste and recycling at the Cambourne office were not up to date and could be improved to reflect current practice at Waterbeach office and also the service we deliver for residents and businesses at the kerbside. The need for change was also highlighted in the motion that Cllr Heylings brought to Council, which outlined a number of measures that could be taken to reduce single-use plastics and recycle more plastic where ever possible.
4. The current system of waste and recycling collection in South Cambs Hall is:
 - Numerous standard “bucket” style bins for general waste. These are currently placed beside desks within the office environment.
 - Numerous tall green bins for the collection of paper. These are currently scattered beside desks and by printers.
 - A recycling station in the canteen, for the separate collection of general waste, cans, paper and plastic.
5. These bins are emptied daily by the cleaning contractors into the bins in the storage compound. The bins in the compound are emptied by the commercial waste service and consist of:
 - 4 x 1100 litre mixed recycling bins. These are emptied once a week
 - 4 x 1100 litre general rubbish bins. These are emptied twice a week

Options

6. Facilities and waste management have worked together to conduct a review of the building and identify locations and suitable style of bins to be used. It is proposed that all of the current bins are removed and new waste and mixed recycling points are

established at logical and convenient locations around the building. The existing rubbish bins can be sent for recycling along with old wheeled bins from the depot. The green bins for the collection of paper are made from cardboard and so can be flattened and recycled.

5. The benefits of this are:
 - Consistent approach across the main council buildings of Cambourne and Waterbeach. Waterbeach already has specific disposal points and mixed recycling collections
 - The style of bins are tried and tested at Waterbeach and are similar to the ones in the canteen and so will be familiar to staff
 - A mixed recycling collection will replicate what most staff are familiar with at home.
 - It will allow staff to recycle a full range of materials and therefore decrease the amount of rubbish that goes for general disposal. In addition to paper, staff should be recycling cans; plastic bottles, tubs, pots and trays; cardboard; glass and cartons.
 - It ensures the council is following the same recycling principles that we expect of residents.
 - It has political support and directly follows the motion that was taken to council to review the use and recycling of plastics
6. Once the new collection arrangements are established inside the building it will allow for review of the number and frequency of the external collections, with a view to cutting costs.
7. The emptying of waste and recycling bins can be done in a more efficient manner as it will reduce the number of bins that cleaning staff need to empty allowing their time to be spent on other cleaning options.
8. In addition to the above, we aim to reduce the use of single use plastics within the office to zero. The common plastic items currently at South Cambs Hall are typically:
 - Packaging from food and drink staff have purchased at work e.g from vending machines
 - Plastic cups at water coolers and meeting rooms.
 - Packaging from food that staff have brought with them
9. Introducing a mixed recycling system will mean that all of the above types of items can be effectively recycled by staff at work and the communications described above will encourage them to do this.
10. However, best waste management practice places an emphasis on prevention and reduction practices before recycling and therefore steps are being taken to reduce the use of single use disposable plastic within the building, including;
 - Review of what drinks are provided as part of the catering and vending machine service to ensure that drinks are sold in cans only and not plastic bottles.
 - Although water is not usually sold in cans, the provision of bottled water via vending machines should not be necessary as water coolers are available in the building.
 - Plastic cups at vending machines can be removed and staff reminded to use glasses or the refillable bottles they have already been issued with.
 - The use of plastic cups for water in meetings should be replaced with glasses.

- The provision of re-usable cups for hot drinks from the main bean to cup coffee machine
 - The removal of cups from the instant coffee machines.
 - The provision of mugs for drinks in the meeting rooms.
11. If a stock of disposable cups needs to remain for use within the building then it is recommended that these are made of plastic as they currently are. Replacing plastic cups with paper style cups would be counter productive as they are not recyclable, due to them being a composite of plastic and paper. We recommend the use of plastic cups is to be eliminated over the next few months.

Implications

12. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

13. The most significant expenditure will be for the new bins but this will be a one-off cost to introducing the scheme. This will require the purchase of waste and recycling bins of two different sizes to suit locations. This will be 55 bins in total at a cost of £4,200. This can be done from the existing Facilities Management budget.

The current cost of emptying all the bins from the bins store on site is £8,440 a year. The commercial waste team have advised that as part of this change the provision of bins and frequency of the external bins can be rationalised and general rubbish collection can drop from twice a week to once a week. This will bring a saving of £3,000 to the authority in collection costs.

Climate Change

14. The recycling collected from the office will be sent for recycling in the same way as all the domestic household recycling as part of the MRF contract with our contractors Amey. An increase of good clean recycling is beneficial to the income that can be made as part of this contract.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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