

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Environmental Services Portfolio Holder  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Director Health and Environmental Services

29 April 2014

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### TEXTILE COLLECTION TRIAL

#### Purpose

1. To inform the Portfolio Holder of the Textile Collection Outline Business Case.
2. This is not a key decision but has been brought for consideration as part of the on-going BIEP waste and recycling review.

#### Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Portfolio Holder agrees that the:
  - 1) current textile collection trial ceases as soon as practicable;
  - 2) textile recycling banks continue to be provided along with promotional material and support for existing charity recycling banks;
  - 3) outline business case does not currently support a district wide collection of textiles as part of the blue bin scheme.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

4. Whilst a trial demonstrated the success of the collection methodology further work need to be undertaken to assess the financial viability. This has now been undertaken demonstrating a potential for operational costs to outweigh income.

#### Background

5. Having secured WRAP funding, a trial commenced in January 2013 to collect textiles in blue plastic sacks from 6,500 properties (one tenth of the district) using blue sacks which were collected at the same time as the blue bins.
6. As advised in the report of the 24 September 2013, the trial established the collection methodology but the financial feasibility needed to be assessed if the textile collections were to be rolled out district wide.

#### Considerations

7. Waste analysis indicated that textiles made up 4% of black bin waste giving a potential of 960 tonnes per annum district wide. However the 6.8 tonnes collected in the first 8 months only increased to 8 tonnes for the full year.
8. If we assume a similar take up of the trial scheme if the scheme were to be rolled out district wide, then we would anticipate collecting a total of around 80 tonnes of textiles per year. The revenue we would generate for this, from the textile re-processor, would be £34,000.

9. From resident feedback, we know that unauthorised collections of some of the blue bags containing textiles have been made by person(s) unknown. To attempt to stop this would require an unknown amount of officer time to establish sufficient evidence to bring a successful prosecution and this may have to be repeated if others decide to take bags of textiles placed out for SCDC to collect.
10. During the trial, the textiles were being separated and stored free of charge by Ameycespa, pending collection by the re-processor, Black Country Rag. Ameycespa have recently advised that if textile collections were expanded district wide they would need to recover their costs. They would need to employ at least one person, full time, to sort the bags of textiles from the paper (bags are collected and co-mingled with the paper on blue bin days). There would also be costs associated with storage and overheads. The total cost to SCDC would be £35,000.
11. With the likely income being negated by the predicted cost, alternative collection methods have been considered, see a) and b) below). If the bags of textiles could be kept separate from other materials then they would not need to be sorted and the Ameycespa costs avoided. Unfortunately neither of the two alternative methods are feasible.
  - a. Separate textile collections - The collection of textiles by using a small vehicle and driver would cost circa £50,000 p.a., assuming that one such van could get round the district in a fortnight; to match the frequency of blue bin collections. This would result in an additional cost.
  - b. Storage cage on RCVs - Another solution would have been to fix a storage cage to the chassis of the collection vehicles. The bags could be placed in this cage and transferred to a larger container at the depot. With the advent of the new 'Euro6' vehicle design requirements (reducing exhaust pollutants) additional vehicle equipment is now placed along the chassis by manufacturers and there is no longer any space for the proposed cage.
12. If the collections of textiles via blue bags were to cease, affected residents would be informed via a leaflet left in the handle of the blue bin, where blue sacks are seen, advising them that the service had now stopped and further textiles should not be placed out for collection by SCDC. Temporary arrangements would be put into place to collect this dwindling number of blue bags so that resident's efforts to recycle are not wasted.
13. The Marketing Group of RECAP have been given the approval to promote textile recycling by a campaign to encourage increased use of the existing textile recycling banks throughout the county.
14. Recent editions of trade publications have been reporting a global down turn in prices for re-used textile. It is not known how widespread this is or how long this will last but it does pose an additional risk to any potential income.

### **Options**

15. Option 1 – Roll out co-mingled textile collections district wide with
  - c. a small cost (circa £1,000 p.a.)
  - d. the risk of unbudgeted cost due to illegal collections of material placed for SCDC to collect; and
  - e. a reported period of volatile textile re-use prices.

16. Option 2 – Stop the textile trial, continue to provide textile recycling banks, promotional material and support for the existing charity recycling banks.

### **Implications**

17. 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***

18. As contained in body of the report.

### ***Risk Management***

19. As contained in body of the report.

### **Background Papers**

Textile Collection Trial Evaluation Report to Environmental Services Portfolio Holder dated 24 September 2013.

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