
SERVICE CHOICES – THREE WEEKLY REFUSE COLLECTION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Argyll and Bute Council agreed at its budget meeting in February to a number of policy changes to enable it to meet the reduction in revenue budget by some £10M for financial year 2016/17, with additional savings required for 2017/18 up to 2020. The range of policy changes is wide, including changes to refuse collection. The policy process is known locally to Argyll and Bute as Service Choices.
- 1.2 In order to progress a range of possible policy changes the Council put in place a Service Choices Project Board which consisted of Elected Members from the administration and opposition, Trade Union representatives, the Chief Executive and Executive Directors. The Project Board considered Service Choice options put forward by services. The Project Board decided which service choice policy options were to be recommended to Council for decision and to what extent policy changes were to be progressed. A range of consultation measures were carried out to canvas views of possible service choice options from staff and Trade Union members, members of the public and stakeholders.
- 1.3 The policy options agreed by Council at the February budget meeting are in the process of being implemented and in some cases have already been implemented. Within Roads and Amenity Services, 3 weekly refuse collections and where practical double shifting was agreed as a policy change.
- 1.4 The changes to refuse collections were designed to help reduce the amount of waste to landfill which reduces process costs, landfill tax (£84 per tonne) and moves towards Scottish Governments 2020 target of zero waste to landfill by encouraging individuals to place a greater percentage of material in the recycle stream. The policy also enables a reduction in the number of Refuse Collection Vehicles in the fleet thus contributing towards the necessary savings.
- 1.5 There is significant scope to reduce general waste to landfill as demonstrated by composition analysis carried out in Dunoon and Islay which confirmed that over 49% and 36% respectively of material placed in the general waste bins could be recycled. Whilst the policy modifies the frequency of general waste collections the collection of recycled materials will remain at two weekly and additional bins will be provided to households who generate more than one bin of recycled material.
- 1.6 It is recommended that members endorse the operational service procedure appended to this report.

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2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report proposes an operational service procedure which provides operational detail to support the policy that Council agreed at its meeting on 11 February 2016 as part of Service Choices.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that members endorse the operational service procedure appended to this report.

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 As part of the Council's Service Choices process which was put in place to deal with a revenue reduction of approximately £10M for this financial year with further reductions for subsequent years, Council agreed a policy of three weekly bin collections with alternative shift patterns. This policy was designed to minimise general waste to landfill, reduce the number of refuse collection vehicles required to deliver the service, and contribute towards the savings that are required as a result of the available revenue budget to Council.
- 4.2 The Council currently commits 30,000 tonnes of waste to landfill every year. Composition analysis carried out in November 2014 in Dunoon and Islay confirmed that the contents of general waste bins (green) included 49% and 36% respectively of material that could have been recycled. Each tonne of general waste costs the Council in processing and transportation costs, £84.40 in landfill tax which goes to Scottish Government. In addition to this, landfill sites need to be monitored and managed to comply with environmental regulations in perpetuity, the full costs of which are unknown and potentially could increase should environmental requirements increase.
- 4.3 Scottish Government, working together with Zero Waste Scotland, are looking to introduce a zero biodegradable waste to landfill policy from 2020. The full details of

this initiative have yet to be finalised. However, the proposals set out in this report help to reduce general waste to landfill.

- 4.4 At the April meeting of the ED&I Committee it was agreed that the Council would take no immediate action regarding the Household Recycling Charter and Code of Practice. It was proposed that the take up of the Charter be monitored across Scotland and a further report be brought to the ED&I Committee as part of the revised waste strategy. It should be noted that the Charter would have significant financial implications for a rural authority like ours.
- 4.5 The policy now agreed commits to three weekly general collections, whilst maintaining two weekly co-mingled recycling collections with the Helensburgh and Lomond area also receiving food and glass collections (government requirement due to population size in Helensburgh, currently no other areas requiring food waste to be collected). Since the policy was agreed, discussions have been ongoing with Trade Unions and affected staff regarding shift patterns and rotas that will be required to actually deliver the policy. The current proposal is that Helensburgh, Dunoon and Oban go to a two shift pattern which is essentially a 6am - 2pm and 2pm - 10pm shift with Mid Argyll, Bute, Mull and Islay working a four day shift pattern and Campbeltown and the remaining islands maintaining their existing shift patterns. These arrangements have been firmed up following discussions with Trade Unions and reflect the different service demands and logistical challenges that we have across our varied geography.
- 4.6 This report introduces an operational service procedure which provides the detail to support the policy agreed at the February budget meeting. In summary, the operational service procedure includes information on the following:
- Wheeled bin identification
 - Green bin/household waste
 - Blue bin/mixed recyclables
 - Grey bins/glass
 - Nappies and sanitary pads
 - Repair or replacement of domestic wheeled bins or food caddies
 - Presentation of wheeled bins or caddies
 - Wheeled bins or caddies on the public footpath/highway
 - Excess waste
 - Bins not put out for collection
 - Contaminated bins
 - Assisted collection service
 - Alternative disposal points for domestic waste
 - Designated collection point
 - Service disruption
 - Criteria for use of second green bin
 - Lawn composting
 - Waste from commercial premises
- 4.7 Where households already have a second green bin, the assessment criteria detailed in the operational service procedure will be applied. Any households who have purchased from the Council a second green bin since the policy decision was

put in place on 11 February 2016 to the current date will be entitled to a full refund on surrender of their second bin.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This report sets out the operational service procedure to support the three weekly refuse collection policy that was agreed on 11 February 2016. This operational service procedure will be available on the Council website for members of the public to access.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1	Policy	This report supports the policy agreed by Council on 11 February 2016.
6.2	Financial	The above mentioned policy has been designed to reduce waste to landfill and reduce the Council's cost in collection, processing and disposal of general waste.
6.3	Legal	None known
6.4	HR	Ongoing discussions with Trade Unions
6.5	Equalities	The Operational Service Procedure includes provision for assisted bin pull-outs.
6.6	Risk	None
6.7	Customer Services	None

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Three weekly refuse collections – operational service procedure