

SUBJECT:	<i>Review of Recycling Centres</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>Cllr C Jones, Portfolio Holder for Environment</i>
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WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>All</i>

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the closure of recycling centre sites within the Chiltern District.

RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET:

- 1. Based upon information contained within this report, Cabinet is recommended to agree the recommendation to close sites in accordance with the programme set out.**

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. In October 2018, officers presented a report to the Joint Waste Collection Committee (JWCC) with the following recommendation: *That JWCC consider and support in principle the recommendation presented by officers for the closure of recycling centres, with support through subsequent reporting for the respective authorities to make an informed decision.*
- 2.2. The JWCC approved the recommendation
- 2.3. In November 2018, officers presented a report to the Services Overview Committee with the following recommendation: *That the Services Overview Committee supports the recommendation to close the remaining eight recycling centres and seeks to advise Cabinet of future direction for this service.*
- 2.4. The Services Overview Committee agreed with the rationale presented, but rejected the recommendation highlighting specific concerns highlighted in section 3.7.
- 2.5. In 2017, recycling centres in Chiltern and Wycombe were reduced to eight and seven sites respectively. These eight sites were kept as a temporary measure to consider whether there was a genuine need to retain some strategic sites and to gauge the effect of closing the other sites.

	Chiltern	Wycombe
1	Rickmansworth Road, Amersham	Asda, Cressex
2	Watermeadow car park, Chesham	Morrisons, High Wycombe
3	Cameron Road, Chesham	Beaumont Way, Hazlemere
4	Snells Wood car park, Little Chalfont	Park Parade, Hazlemere
5	Blizzards Yard car park, CSG	Chorley Road, West Wycombe
6	Church Lane car park, CSP	The Mount car park, Princes Risborough
7	Link Road car park, Great Missenden	Riley Road, Marlow
8	High street car park, Prestwood	

2.6. It is within the scope of the current contract to close the recycling centres

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1. Recycling centres were introduced before the Council provided each household with a comprehensive domestic collection service.
- 3.2. The benefits delivered by the recycling centres in terms of useful recycling and convenience for residents are now not proportionate to the costs of collection and sorting of material, the need for clearance of spillages & fly tips and other antisocial activity associated with this sites.
- 3.3. The material collected from recycling centres is regularly contaminated with non-recyclable waste which ends up being sent for energy recovery. The Government's waste strategy in England has a strong emphasis on improved quality. Looking forward we want to ensure the authorities are in the best possible position.
- 3.4. At this critical stage in the procurement of the new joint waste collection contract for the three authorities, both SBDC and WDC have progressed plans to close facilities, in order to realise efficiencies.
- 3.5. It is essential to release this specialised resource, in order to support front line collection services to flatted communities, an area which has seen considerable growth since the start of the current contract.
- 3.6. The continued use of these facilities by businesses for the disposal of commercial waste needs to be addressed. On-going enforcement or a presence to police these facilities is not considered a viable option for the Joint Waste Team or its partners.
- 3.7. At the time, Services Overview Committee did not support the recommendation highlighting the following concerns:
 - 3.7.1. The timescale for the implementation of the closures was too short. A replacement service would need to be in place and any outstanding issues resolved prior to any of the centres being removed. This would need to be communicated to residents in advance.
 - 3.7.2. Residents living on high streets would have no suitable alternative recycling service.
 - 3.7.3. The centres were well used and valued by local residents. Evidence was needed on the usage of each individual recycling centre before a decision could be taken on whether to remove them. This could be used to explain the decision to residents.
 - 3.7.4. The closures would increase the burden on kerbside collections.
 - 3.7.5. Fly tipping was a problem across Bucks; removing the recycling centres would exacerbate this and any savings made may be offset by increased clear-up costs.
 - 3.7.6. There was a lack of monitoring/enforcement at recycling centres to improve the quality of material collected and to deter fly tipping.
- 3.8. In response to concerns raised by the Services Overview Committee (3.7.1) the Council has taken action to implement solutions for the following communities. These include:

Town	Location	Solution
Little Chalfont	1. Halifax House;	1 & 2: shared facility (bulk bins)
	2. Applefield;	
	3. Chenies Parade;	3: shared facility (bulk bins)
	4. Nightingale Corner;	4: modified solution (sack/box/bags)
	5. Snells Wood Court	5: shared facility (bulk bins)
Chesham	1. Victoria Road;	1: shared facility (bulk bins)
	2. Gordon Road;	2: modified solution (sack/box/bags)
	3. Springfield Road;	3: modified solution (sack/box/bags)
	4. Stoney Grove;	4: shared facility (wheeled bins)
	5. Greatacre	5: shared facility (wheeled bins)

- 3.9. When the Serco contract was mobilised, the Council specifically looked at the issue of flats above shops. In particular high streets in Great Missenden, Chesham and Amersham. To reassure Committee (3.7.2), residents living on high streets already have access to kerbside services. We have different solutions in place, ranging from single use colour sacks; reusable bags & box; wheeled bins and/or shared communal facilities.
- 3.10. Please refer to **appendix A**, which presents results of surveys undertaken at recycling centres by officers over a one week period between 13.05.2019 – 17.05.2019 in response to 3.7.3.
- 3.11. Following the rationalisation of recycling centres in recent years there is no evidence to suggest the kerbside collection service is now overburdened (3.7.4). Our partners Serco are supportive of the recommendation that channels material through the kerbside collection service. It offers greater control to monitor the quality of material collected. Local businesses using recycling centres to dispose of trade waste will need to seek alternative, legitimate disposal solutions.
- 3.12. In our experience the closure of recycling centres has improved or eradicated anti-social activity previously associated (3.7.5). There is no evidence to suggest this action has exacerbated the problem. That resource will be re-deployed to concentrate on other essential tasks.
- 3.13. Our monitoring (appendix A) highlights the continued misuse of these facilities, by businesses disposing of trade waste. Staff on site to police and enforce correct use would be costly and ineffective, particularly outside of core business hours. Enforcement powers are limited. In our experience it is extremely unlikely any successful prosecutions against those caught fly-tipping could be achieved. Any immediate benefits are not expected to be sustainable and the Council would question whether this approach represents good value for money as well as raising safety concerns for staff welfare.
- 3.14. Contamination of containers with non-recyclable waste remains an issue. Many of the examples demonstrate a blatant disregard for disposing of waste items responsibly. These facilities have become convenient outlets for socially irresponsible individuals to dump waste at the expense of our residents.
- 3.15. Of those residents we spoke to, most indicated that it was a choice to use the facility, instead of or as well as using the kerbside collection services. What the

findings highlight is that the Council needs to do more to promote the collection of extra recycling at the kerbside and this is an action the Council will take forward with initiatives that include bin tags to promote '*extra recycling is collected at the kerbside*'.

- 3.16. The recycling centre at Watermeadow car park, Chesham, has twice been subject to suspected arson attacks since officers last presented SOC with the recommendation to close these facilities. There has been no significant backlash following the removal of those damaged containers.
- 3.17. In 2019 both South Bucks and Wycombe Members have approved and progressed plans to close recycling centres within the districts.

4. Options

- 4.1. Subject to Cabinet approval officers suggest the following programme:
 - 4.1.1. Members are invited to nominate communities and properties they believe don't currently have access to kerbside recycling collections by the end of July 2019 for officers to investigate.
 - 4.1.2. Officers will implement a communication strategy through July that will notify stakeholders of the decision to close sites.
 - 4.1.3. During the period to notify, officers will respond to customer, Member and stakeholder enquiries. Any cases in response to 5.1.1 will be investigated and solutions implemented.
 - 4.1.4. Following the period to notify, officers will implement closure plans with partners Serco. This includes any remedial work to 'make good' the condition of the site following closure.
 - 4.1.5. Additional resource (an extra RCV) is brought in to support front line collection services for flatted communities, as a cost neutral benefit to the authorities (Chiltern and Wycombe).
 - 4.1.6. The process to procure a new waste service provider for the three southern districts will progress, on the assumption that there are no requirements by the authorities to include recycling centres within scope of the new contract.
 - 4.1.7. Parking Services are able to realise the potential income for extra parking spaces created as a result of closing recycling centres

6. Corporate Implications

- 6.1 The anticipated annual saving due to the closure of all remaining recycling centres is approximately £164k (based on annual sums in the Bill of Quantities and other on-going service costs).
- 6.2 One off costs associated with ad hoc cleansing and remedial works are estimated to be £5k.
- 6.3 The anticipated cost of resources needed to support the bulk bin collection service is estimated to be approximately £149k.
- 6.4 Requests from residents for additional kerbside containers can be met from existing budgets.

- 6.5 Therefore this proposal is expected to be cost neutral for Chiltern District Council for the remainder of the existing Waste Collection & Street Cleaning contract and may realise some cost savings.
- 6.6 The extra car parking spaces are expected to generate additional annual income of £12,520.64
- 6.7 There are no legal implications as it is within the scope of the current contract to close the recycling centres
- 6.8 There is a significant risk to service quality and corporate reputation if the release of resource to support collection services at flatted communities is not realised.

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 7.1 This proposal helps the authority to achieve our three shared headline objectives:
- Delivering cost- effective, customer- focused services
 - Working towards safe and healthier local communities
 - Striving to conserve the environment and promote sustainability
- 7.2 Keeping residents at the centre of our objective to provide easy, convenient and accessible domestic collection services, to ensure customer satisfaction remains high. Latest available figures from November 2018 show customer satisfaction in Chiltern at 93.4% (*recycling collection service*)
- 7.3 Providing services that represent good value and divert much needed resource to front line services
- 7.4 Reducing anti-social activity, whilst improving the local community street scene through sustainable services and solutions.

8. Next Steps

As set out in section 5 above.

Background Papers:	<p>Previous report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Recycling Centres (bring sites) – recommendation to Services Overview Committee 27 November 2018 • Recycling Centre Recommendation – report to JWCC October 2018
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