

DATE: 18 June 2008

**New Waste Collection Service – Marketing and Communication Plan and
Revised Policies**

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr R Walker - Environment

Summary of report:

This report details the draft marketing and communication plan and proposed policies for the new waste service and seeks members' comments and recommendations as requested by the Waste Management Working Group on the 4th March 2008.

Background papers:

1. Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2004
2. Cabinet report – 19 September 2007
3. Cabinet report – 19 March 2008
4. Domestic Waste Collections Equality Impact Assessment

Reason for scrutiny:

The new waste collection service has been identified as a service that the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel wish to consider as part of their scrutinising role and a Waste Management Working Group was set up in order to carry out this role.

At a Waste Management Working Group on the 4th March 2008, the group requested that they be given the opportunity to consider the policies for the new service prior to approval by Cabinet.

This report details the policies due to go before Cabinet on 18 June 2008 and updates Members on the Marketing and Communication Plan.

Resource and legal considerations:

Legal advice has been taken on the content of the policies with Pinsent Mason, the Council's appointed legal advisors on waste related issues. Pinsent Mason have advised that there are no legal issues with the content of the policies and further consultation will continue throughout the process as necessary to ensure probity.

There are no financial resource implications in respect of the policies; any changes to existing policies will be managed as part of ongoing revenue budgets.

All changes to policies will be advised to members of the public in accordance with the communication programme for the new waste service later this year. A copy of the draft Communication Plan is attached for information (**Appendix 2**).

All Street Pride employees will undergo training on the revised policies and new waste collection service relevant to their role.

Citizen Impact

The new waste collection service will involve significant changes in the way that residents' waste is collected and it will be important that the Council communicates these effectively to residents well in advance. This communication is an ideal opportunity to confirm the policies for collection with the public and this will be managed by a comprehensive publicity and education campaign as previously advised.

Environmental impact:

Landfill waste produces landfill gases which contribute towards global warming and have significant negative impact upon the environment. Walsall Council is committed to reducing the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill. Recycling and composting are very important in meeting the challenge of diverting waste from landfill.

The new service will make a positive impact to climate change, reducing the amount of residual waste to landfill and reducing the number of vehicle movements on the highway. Many residents are keen to play their part in tackling the problems associated with climate change and the proposed improvements to the waste collection service will further assist them to do this.

Some of the individual policies address environmental issues in that the preclusion of side waste minimises wind blown litter and vermin and encourages waste minimisation. The move away from a box collection service will minimise or eliminate altogether vermin and wind blown litter. Addressing issues such as contamination and informing residents on acceptable materials for each bin will increase recycling participation and performance and minimise the amount of rejected loads at the re-processing facilities that could otherwise end up in landfill if high levels of contamination were present.

Performance management:

In 1999, the European Union Landfill Directive set targets to reduce the amount of Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) to be land filled. The UK Government has introduced the Directive through the Waste and Emissions Trading Act (2003). The Act forms a legal framework to control the amount of waste sent to landfill and sets up a system of tradable permits. Landfill allowance trading scheme (LATS), restricts the amount of waste that authorities can send to landfill by allocating specific 'landfill allowances'.

The Government's waste strategy aims to minimise the production of waste, and either recycle or compost as much as the remaining waste as practicable. This approach is reflected through relevant National Indicators, Defra's PSA targets and the Governments Waste Strategy for England 2007.

Failure to meet Government targets will negatively impact on Walsall becoming an excellent local authority.

The proposed policies and communication place emphasis on the prevention and re-use of waste. As such, they will help meet the landfill directive diversion targets, with particular emphasis on target years under the landfill allowance trading scheme being 2010, 2013, 2020, and so deliver on the Council's obligations under the National Waste Strategy for England. A policy with no side waste also discourages vermin and prevents wind blown litter which has a detrimental effect on the street scene.

Equality Implications:

The policies contribute to a waste and recycling services that affect all sectors of the local community and future provision will help to ensure equality of choice and opportunity for all.

An Equality Impact Assessment for domestic household collections including refuse, garden waste and recycling was completed in 2006/07. A Key recommendation as a result of the assessment was that options for supplying lids for the boxes of the dry recycling collections be investigated.

The new service will address these needs through the switch to lidded wheeled bins for recycling materials.

It was also recognised that the Council provides a service that offers equal opportunity for all including assisted collection service for the elderly and infirm.

The change to service will benefit residents in that:

- (i) Containers will be on wheels, eliminating lifting and handling issues associated with box collections.

- (ii) Containers will be lidded to stop materials getting wet and displaying consumption to neighbours.
- (iii) It will minimise the number of containers necessary to facilitate card and plastics recycling.
- (iv) It will reduce the number of vehicle movements on the highway as a result of route optimisation and fewer journeys to tip sites.


Consultation:

The implementation of the new waste service is being overseen by a Project Team that includes members from Financial Services, the Communication Team, the First Stop Shop, Operational Waste Management Staff and Waste Management Policy Staff. All members of the team have contributed to the review of the policies.

Legal advice has also been taken on the content of the policies with Pinsent Mason, the Council's appointed legal advisors on waste related issues. Pinsent Mason have advised that there are no legal issues with the content of the policies.

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1. Report

A copy of the proposed Waste Collection Policies is attached (**Appendix 1**).

The following table summarises the changes from current policy that are proposed:-

Policy Summary:

Policy	Current policy summary	Revised policy summary New Service from Feb 09
Green waste collection service	82,000 currently receiving service.	No change
Charges for bins	£18.50 per 240 litre bin. Green boxes – Free of Charge.	£TBA per 240 litre bin £TBA per 140 litre bin
Side waste/closed lid policy	No side waste - other than specific pull back/recovery arrangements over the Christmas period. Wheeled bin lid must be closed.	No change
Additional capacity/larger family	Households with 7 or more occupants are entitled to a second bin. Additional green boxes on request – Free of Charge.	Households with 6 or more occupants are to be entitled to 240 litre bin as opposed to 140 litre bin. Green box scheme superseded by switch to a 240 litre bin for recycling
Bank holiday working	Work 8 of the 12 bank holidays with re-alignment to service at Christmas.	No change
Contamination (i.e. where waste has been placed in a container that is not acceptable e.g. food waste in with paper, glass and cans)	Container not emptied – householders responsibility to remove contaminated materials and present correctly for next collection or use Household Waste Recycling Centre sites	No change
Bin too heavy	Same as contamination	No change
Bins left on footpath	Monitor and communicate to residents.	No change

Policy	Current policy summary	Revised policy summary New Service from Feb 09
	Communication is done via direct mail shot to households advising on their obligations to remove bins from the footpath following a collection	
Access for collection vehicles	Where access for collection vehicles is restricted, return same day, if still no access, collect following week and take excess.	No Change
Assisted collections	Elderly or infirm – collect from householders' premises as opposed to kerbside.	No Change

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**WALSALL MBC
WASTE COLLECTION POLICY
JUNE 2008**

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- a. **General**

Following implementation of the revised collection service in January/February 2009 residents at single residential properties will receive the following collection service:-

- (i) The current 240 litre green coloured bin previously used for general waste will be used to store all the dry recyclates that households generate and will include glass, paper, cans and foil, plastic bottles and cardboard. This will be collected on a fortnightly basis.
- (ii) The new 140 litre grey coloured wheeled bin will be distributed to all households over this period and will be used to store the general waste. This will be collected on a weekly basis.
- (iii) The current garden waste for compost scheme; 240 litre brown coloured wheeled bin, will remain unchanged for the 82,000 properties that receive this service. This will be collected on a fortnightly basis over 9 months from March to November. This service will be reviewed annually and non participants will be offered assistance on home composting.

The current kerbside 55 litre green box service will cease.

The new collection service will maximise participation in the recycling service and reduce the amount of general waste sent to landfill. This will help the Council meet statutory recycling and landfill diversion targets.

b. Waste Minimisation

Walsall Council limits the volume of waste that it will collect from households. This practice of 'waste minimisation' is necessary to help the Council in its aims to achieve strict targets for diverting as much waste as possible from landfill.

Attempts are then made to reuse or recycle as much of the waste that is collected.

This policy is therefore consistent with the objectives set out in the Council's Municipal Waste Management Strategy and the waste hierarchy:

Step 1	Reduce	Reduce the amount of waste being created for example using real nappies instead of disposables.
Step 2	Re-use	Re-use items instead of throwing the away. For example donating unwanted clothing, games and books to charity.
Step 3	Recycle or Compost	Recycle or compost items so they can be made into other products. For example paper and glass can be recycled back into paper and glass products, garden waste can be composted to produce a compost or mulch for gardens.
Step 4	Recover	Recover value from the remaining waste. For example through energy-from-waste plants which produce electricity. The bottom ash can also be 'recycled' as an aggregate.
Step 5	Landfill	This is the last option, only to be undertaken when as much possible or practical has been recycled and recovered. Final disposal will be to landfill.

The Council will promote this hierarchy through its;

- (i) Educational programme to schools
- (ii) Service Standards
- (iii) Waste audits and advice to householders
- (iv) Web site
- (v) Road shows and exhibitions

c. Green Waste Collection

The garden waste for compost scheme currently serves 82000 properties and is used to treat organic waste to be reprocessed to an approved soil conditioner standard.

In addition householders are offered access to home composting scheme via the national WRAP campaign on www.recyclenow.com

The criteria for selecting the most appropriate areas for the scheme are as follows:-

- (i) Those that are willing to participate
- (ii) Those that fit current operational requirements and viability. Properties must be grouped into areas that cover 1,200 properties as this represents a day's work for one crew.
- (iii) Those that can accommodate a second wheeled bin and have large gardens that can generate acceptable levels of green waste.

The collection service runs from March to November.

Opportunities to extend the service are reviewed each year, but are subject to funding constraints. The Council will keep a record of households that have requested the service.

In order to maximise coverage of the scheme across the borough, only 1 bin per household is allowed, additional or larger green waste can be recycled at the Household Waste & Recycling Centres at Fryers Road, Bloxwich and Merchants Way, Aldridge.

d. Charges for Bins

We make a charge for replacement bins in the following circumstances:-

- (i) Bins reported lost
- (ii) Bins reported stolen
- (iii) Bins reported vandalised
- (iv) Bins reported damaged – other than by Walsall MBC operatives or equipment
- (v) Bins for new properties
- (vi) Bins for new occupants of existing properties

We provide wheeled bins at no charge as follows:-

- (i) Where there are more than six occupants in one household.
- (ii) When bins have been damaged by Walsall Council, operatives or equipment.
- (iii) When bins are allocated as part of the extension of the garden waste.
- (iv) When bins are allocated as part of the new collection scheme.

The charges will be made in line with the costs of buying the bin to the Council, and will be reviewed annually to reflect this.

The householder does not have to buy a replacement or new bin from Walsall Council. They can make arrangements to purchase a bin from an outside supplier, but it must be the same size, colour and specification as that supplied by the Council.

e. Side Waste/Closed Bin Lids

The Council recognises that waste has a major impact on the environment and is a growing problem. It also recognises that waste reduction/minimisation is the top

priority in the waste hierarchy and that Walsall Council should encourage residents to reduce the amount of waste they generate and throw away.

The new service reflects our assessment that each household will generate no more than 140 litres of general waste per week.

The Council will not:

- (i) Collect more than 140 litres of waste from each property each week. The waste must be contained within the wheeled bin which is presented with the lid closed.
- (ii) Take any waste that is left beside or on top of the bin, or which prevents the bin from closing. A sticker will be placed on the bin by the collection crew to notify the householder why the bin has not been emptied. Information gathered by collection crews about the side waste is given to the Waste Minimisation Team to enable them to target their information work on households that are leaving this waste out for collection
- (iii) Give any householder a second domestic wheeled bin. Where there is a second bin at one property only one bin will be emptied unless other arrangements have been made.

The Council will:

- (i) Provide waste minimisation advice free to householders.
- (ii) We will take 2 additional bags of waste on the next collection date when a general waste collection has been missed. The two additional bags should be placed neatly at the side of the bin.
- (iii) Take any additional dry recyclates that are correctly stored in boxes or bags for collection.
- (iv) Give residents the opportunity to have a larger bin when there are certain circumstances (see Additional Capacity Requirement).

f. Additional Capacity Requirements

The Council recognises that some households produce more than 140 litres of waste each week despite taking part in the recycling service, and therefore need a larger bin. Where this is the case we will exchange the 140 litre wheeled bin for a 240 litre bin free of charge.

In order to qualify for a 240 litre bin, households need to meet one of the following criteria:

- (i) There are 6 or more people in permanent residence at the property.
- (ii) There are large quantities of non hazardous medical waste generated.

Households that request a larger bin will have to fill in an application form (**Appendix A**) and may be subject to a waste audit.

g. Missed Collections

All collections will take place on a scheduled day. However, when a collection is missed due to operational problems or inclement weather, the following will apply:-

- (i) The collection crew wherever possible will return on the next working day, and if not then a collection will take place on the next scheduled collection day. This will apply for both general waste and recycling collections.
- (ii) We will take 2 additional bags of waste on the next collection date when a general waste collection has been missed. The two additional bags should be placed neatly at the side of the bin.
- (iii) We will take all additional bags of recycling materials on the next collection date when a recycling collection has been missed. The additional materials should be placed neatly at the side of the bin in a green box or bags.

h. Bank Holiday Working

The collection crews operate a normal service on all bank holidays except the Christmas and New Year period. During the Christmas and New Year period householders will be advised of their revised collection days via the following means of communication:

- (i) A sticker placed on the bin
- (ii) A calendar detailing collections for the following year
- (iii) The Council web site
- (iv) Walsall Pride

i. Contaminated Contents in the Bin

The wheeled bin for the general waste collection will not be emptied if found to contain large bulky items or non domestic waste (e.g. soil, rubble bricks, concrete and cement), that will cause damage to the vehicle if emptied into it.

The wheeled bin for the garden waste collection will not be emptied if found to contain any waste other than that can be accepted at the composting re-processors, as this will lead to the whole load being rejected and sent to landfill.

The wheeled bin for dry recyclates will not be emptied if found to contain materials that have not been specified for recycling, as this will lead to the whole load being rejected and sent to landfill.

Where any bins have been found to be contaminated, the householder will be notified by means of a sticker on the bin requesting that they remove the incorrect material, properly dispose of it and notify the Council this has been done. The collection service will then resume on the next collection date.

j. Bin Too Heavy

When a bin is presented by a householder with contents that make it difficult, due to the overall weight of the bin, for the collection crew member to manoeuvre and position onto the vehicle lift safely, it will be left un-emptied. The most common reason for the general bin being too heavy is that it contains unacceptable amounts of building material.

Where any bins have been found to be too heavy, the householder will be notified by means of a sticker on the bin requesting that they remove the offending material, properly dispose of it and notify the Council this has been done. The collection service will then resume on the next collection date.

k. Bins left on Footpath

Prior to emptying, bins should be left at the edge of the property by the householder. After emptying, the collection crew will return, as near as possible, to their original position. After emptying the bin should be collected and returned to the property by the householder at the earliest opportunity.

I. Access for Refuse Vehicles

In order for collection crews to empty bins from all types of premises across the borough, residents will be asked to assist the Council by leaving reasonable vehicular access for the collection vehicles.

m. Assisted Collections

Where a resident, due to an infirmity or ill health, is unable to wheel their bin to the edge of the property for collection, the Council is able to offer an assisted collection, subject to satisfactory completion of an application form.

Upon satisfactory acceptance of their application, their details will be entered on the collection crew's round schedule and the crew will then collect, empty and return the bin to the property.

Householders that request assistance to empty their bin will need to fill in an application form. (**Appendix B**)

This system will be reviewed from time-to-time to ensure that households still qualify for this assistance.

APPLICATION FOR A LARGER WHEELED BIN

Reference No:	Application for a Larger Wheeled Bin	Date Received:
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The Council collects 140 litres of general waste contained within a wheeled bin each week.

The only exceptions to this policy are as follows;

- (i) There are 6 or more people in permanent residence at the property.
- (ii) There are large quantities of non hazardous medical waste generated.

Where this is the case we will exchange the 140 litre wheeled bin for a 240 litre bin free of charge.

If you meet the above criteria and wish to apply for a larger bin please complete the attached form.

Name:

Address:

Postal Code:

Telephone Number:

E-mail address:
(if available)

1. Details of ALL permanent residents – please list name of main contact first

Title	Forename	Surname
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2. Is your wheeled bin full every week? Yes No

3. How much extra waste, that does not fit in your wheeled bin, does your household produce each week?

----- bags

4. How often do you take waste to the Household Waste Recycling Centres?

5. Please tell us which of these you have

Green bin – dry recyclates Yes No

Brown bin – organic waste Yes No

Home Compost bin Yes No

Please explain your reasons for needing a larger bin:

Thank you for completing this form.

Please allow 7 working days for the Council to receive and process your form. An Officer may contact you for additional information. Please supply us with a contact number that can be used to contact you during the day.

Please return this form to:

Walsall MBC
Street Pride
Waste Management
Norfolk Place
WALSALL
WS2 7BA

ASSISTED COLLECTION FORM

Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Date:
Please Ask For: Contact Centre
Direct Line: 01922 653344
Email: Streetpride@walsall.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

WHEELED BIN – ASSISTED COLLECTION FORM

Thank you for your recent enquiry. If by virtue of disability, or infirmity you are unable to wheel your bin to the boundary of your property, and have *no-one able to assist you*, please complete the form below.

All sections must be completed

Name:

Address:

Postal Code:

Telephone Number:

E-mail address:
(if available)

Nature of Infirmity:

Please list details of **any** adults living with you, and please state whether they have any infirmity/disability:

A decision on your request will be made as soon as possible and may involve a visit to you. In cases of extreme difficulty please contact our office on the above number.

Yours faithfully

STREET PRIDE

Appendix B

DRAFT Marketing & Communications Plan **A New Waste and Recycling Collection Service for Walsall**

1. Background – Communication Context

Walsall Council has to achieve tough statutory recycling and landfill diversion targets. The targets get tougher year on year until 2020. In order to meet these targets the council has strategic short and medium term plans.

In the short term the council wants to increase the amount of recyclable materials collected from the kerbside and is subsequently changing the waste and recycling collection service. Residents will be given a new grey coloured 140 litre wheeled bin for residual waste which will be collected on a weekly basis. The existing green coloured 240 litre residual bin will be used for recyclable materials, including glass, paper, cans, cardboard and plastic bottles, this bin will be collected fortnightly. The ‘brown bin’ service will remain the same.

These changes do not apply to residents living in flats, as they use communal facilities.

A maximum budget of £125,000 has been ear-marked for this project.

2. Communication Objectives

The objectives for this campaign are:

2a. Residents

- To raise awareness of all residents that the way in which their waste is collected will be changing from January 2009 onwards
- To inform residents that the old collection system is coming to an end
- To give residents clear and simple instructions on how they will recycle more of their waste and dispose of less of it to landfill, therefore changing the emphasis from disposal to recycling.
- To ensure that adequate timescales are allowed for the communication of this information
- To ensure that adequate communication and information resources are in place to inform all residents of the changes
- Sense test communications materials to a resident workshop to ensure clear understanding is achieved through the campaign materials
- To remind employees and members that we a three-star council delivering excellent services – our new waste service aims to continue this standard of service delivery

2b. Employees & Elected Members

- To raise awareness of employees and members
- Provide regular, quality updates to both employees and elected members on the changes, as well as how they can access further information
- To remind employees and members that we a three-star council delivering excellent services – our new waste service aims to continue this standard of service delivery

2c. Partners & Stakeholders

- To raise awareness of partners and stakeholders that the recycling and waste collection service is changing from January 2009 onwards
- To utilise partner communication channels and forums to promote the changes to our recycling and waste collection services
- To leave our partners and stakeholders with the clear feeling that Walsall is delivering excellence and will continue to do so in the way in which it collects, recycles and disposes of waste

3. Key Message(s)

3a Residents

- These changes are essential if we are to hit tough statutory targets set nationally by the Government
- If we fail to deliver against these targets we face heavy fines that could mean an increase in the amount of council tax we need to collect to pay for this and the hundreds of other services we provide
- Recycling is important and many of us could do more to play our part – as a Council, we are committed to recycling and other practices that can help to safeguard our environment
- We will make council services accessible and tailored to meet the needs of all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle or disability

3b Employees

- These changes are essential if we are to hit tough statutory targets set nationally by the Government
- If we fail to deliver against these targets we face heavy fines that could mean an increase in the amount of council tax we need to collect to pay for this and the hundreds of other services we provide

- Recycling is important and many of us could do more to play our part – as a Council, we need to lead by example if we are to expect residents to recycle more of their waste
- We will make council services accessible and tailored to meet the needs of all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle or disability

4. Call to Action

All residents need to be aware of, and respond to, changes in the way in which we will collect their waste and recyclable materials from January 2009 onwards. The new service will be a big change in habit for residents, their support is essential because without their co-operation the scheme will not succeed.

Our communications activity and materials will need to effect real change in order for this new service to be successful

5. Target Audiences(s)

- Residents – except those living in flats that are serviced by communal facilities
- Employees
- Cabinet and all other elected members
- Partners & stakeholders
- Media

6. Communication Deliverables Required

Our marketing and communications materials must be clear, simple and effective in explaining the changes to this service.

Existing artwork is available for our use, from national campaigns and other initiatives – this will need to be looked at closely and assessed as to whether it can deliver what the Council wants, and Walsall residents' need.

The range of awareness raising material and collateral required includes:

<p>Pre- launch frequently asked questions leaflet This will give easy to follow guidance on the planned changes</p>
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<p>Information Leaflets</p> <p>Information leaflets will be made available during the implementation of the new service</p>
<p>Information handbook including calendar</p> <p>A simple to follow pictorial guide to the new collection arrangements. To be delivered to all 101,000 homes in the borough, plus made available upon request.</p> <p>Tapes to be produced for partially sighted and blind residents.</p>
<p>Display and promotional materials</p> <p>Mobile displays, posters, book markers to be used at road shows and static display locations</p>
<p>Council Website</p> <p>Develop dedicated website area, clearly found from homepage, with full details of collection changes, pictorial guide, plus advice line details</p>
<p>Advice Line (through the council's contact centre)</p> <p>Establish dedicated advice line for direct queries on the waste collections</p>
<p>AdVans</p> <p>To travel around borough during the launch and implementation phases to raise awareness of changes. Advans can be parked up in areas of specific collection/recycling problems as well as areas of high resident footfall/traffic, e.g. supermarkets, DIY stores etc.</p>
<p>Advertising on council vehicles</p> <p>Utilise advertising panels on the side of the waste and recycling vehicles</p>
<p>Media Releases</p> <p>using Walsall Pride and other local media, local government and specialist media</p>
<p>Photography</p> <p>To support both targeted media releases and for use in awareness-raising materials</p>

7. *DRAFT* Communications Programme

Activity	Sept	Nov	Dec	Jan 09	Feb	Mar
Soft launch						
Road shows / displays						
Advertising						
Press releases						
Update web pages						
Information handbook distribution						

8. Review & Evaluation

We need to build in from the start, systems that will allow us to monitor and evaluate the success of the campaign.

The evaluation will include;

- the tonnage of recyclable materials collected
- Monitor number & quality of press releases published
- Analyse all feedback and responses
- Calculate the number of hits to the relevant area of the website
- Calculate the number of campaign generated phone calls
- number of enquiries from CRM
- Was the campaign delivered to time and to budget?
- Were the campaign's original communications objectives met?