

Report

Report to:	Community Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	25 November 2014
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Household Recycling
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- advise Committee on proposed action to increase recycling rates in South Lanarkshire including the appointment of a Council Recycling Officer

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation:-

- (1) that the proposal to add a post of Recycling Officer at Grade 3, Level 4 (£31,188 to £34,107) to the current staffing establishment within Facilities Waste and Grounds Services, who will be responsible for developing and delivering on-going initiatives to increase household recycling rates within South Lanarkshire be approved.

3. Background

- 3.1. In June 2010, the Scottish Government published the Zero Waste Plan (ZWP), a 10 year waste policy strategy for Scotland. The ZWP contains a number of ambitious recycling and landfill diversion targets designed to assist the Scottish Government achieve its vision of a 'Zero Waste Society'. The Council's household recycling/composting rate for 2013/2014 was 39.7%. This falls short of the current 50% target and significantly short of the 60% target that will apply from 2020 onwards.
- 3.2. The Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (WSR) were implemented to support the ZWP recycling targets. In recognition that improvement of kerbside collections is the most cost effective way of increasing household recycling rates, the WSR placed a statutory obligation on all Scottish local authorities to provide services to allow householders to easily recycle a wide range of key materials including paper, cardboard, glass, cans, tins, plastic bottles and food waste.
- 3.3. The WSR also introduced the forthcoming ban on the landfilling of biodegradable municipal waste. The ban, which comes into force on 1 January 2021, means that the Council needs to find an alternative to landfill in advance of this date. As a consequence of this, the Council has commenced the procurement of a long term contract for the treatment (rather than landfilling) of its municipal residual waste. It is likely that the treatment will involve the waste being sent to an energy recovery facility.

- 3.4. Current environmental legislation requires that all municipal residual waste must undergo a mechanical pre-sort to remove hard plastics and non-ferrous metals before the waste can be used as fuel in an energy recovery facility. The financial implications associated with this legally required pre-sort are significant. Recent estimates suggest that the Council could potentially avoid costs in excess of £1million per annum if this pre-treatment was not required.
- 3.5. In May 2014, SEPA published the *Thermal Treatment of Waste Guidelines 2014* ('the Guidelines'). The Guidelines set out SEPA's approach to permitting the operation of energy recovery facilities in Scotland. The Guidelines state that '*where a Local Authority is committed to securing high capture rates for target materials on a source segregated basis, it is open to them to provide evidence that further residual waste treatment steps are not practicable*'. Effectively, this means that if the Council can provide evidence to SEPA that it is not practicable to pre-treat its waste then the legal requirement will be removed. This evidence is known as a 'Practicability Assessment'.
- 3.6. In terms of the Practicability Assessment, the Council must be able to demonstrate that it can achieve full coverage for kerbside recycling services by the contract commencement date of 1 April 2017. There must also be a commitment to deliver education and awareness raising initiatives, as well as evidence that the Council is committed to a dedicated programme of on-going communications to increase participation rates amongst householders and capture rates for target materials.
- 3.7. On 17 June 2014, the Community Services Committee noted the use of the Restricted Procedure to procure services for the treatment of the Council's residual municipal waste; and also the arrangements for the submission of a practicability assessment in terms of the Thermal Treatment Guidelines 2014.

4. Proposal

As a consequence of the requirement for the Council to demonstrate its commitment to increasing and maintaining recycling rates and capture rates, the Council requires to develop and deliver on-going education and awareness raising programmes to encourage stakeholders to participate in new and existing recycling schemes. To support these programmes, the Council will need to prepare a Communications Plan, setting out how the Council intends to engage, on an on-going basis, with the different stakeholder groups. It is proposed that a position is created within Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services to fulfil this role.

The post holder would be responsible for a number of tasks related to increasing recycling rates throughout South Lanarkshire including:

- development of a Communications Plan to support initiatives designed to improve household recycling rates
- development of new waste minimisation/recycling initiatives aimed at encouraging participation rates amongst householders
- evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness of waste minimisation/recycling initiatives with a view to their continuous improvement
- co-ordination of the communications programme that will accompany the roll out of food waste collections
- engagement with Elected Members, Heads of Service and senior Officers to raise awareness about sustainable waste management practices
- fulfilment of the 'Single Point of Contact' role for any enquiries relating to the Council's legal requirement to recycle the waste it produces

- development and delivery of internal training programmes on sustainable waste management issues
- compilation, verification and submission of statutory information relating to the Council's municipal waste arisings (Waste Data Flow)
- development of the Council's Waste Management Strategy

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. It is, therefore, proposed to increase the establishment of Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services as follows:-

<i>Post Title</i>	<i>Current No of Posts</i>	<i>Proposed No of Posts</i>	<i>Grade/ Level</i>	<i>SCP range</i>	<i>Hourly Rate</i>	<i>Annual Pay</i>	<i>Total Cost (including on costs)</i>
Recycling Officer	0	1	Grade 3 Level 4	68-74	£17.09 - £18.69	£31,188 to £34,107	£39,827 to £43,555

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The cost of the post will be funded from the existing revenue budget for Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. There is a risk that the Council will fail to meet the requirements of the Practicability Assessment in terms of the SEPA's Thermal Treatment Guidelines 2014 without the establishment of this post.
- 7.2. The recommendations contained within this report will contribute to increased household recycling rates and, as a consequence, there are direct links to both the Council's Sustainability Strategy 2012 to 2017 and the Carbon Management Plan.
- 7.3. The recommendations will help to address the 'perceived need for more kerbside recycling services' highlighted as one of the most commonly occurring comments made by residents who responded to the Council's 'Household Survey 2014'.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 8.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy; consequently, no impact assessment is required.
- 8.2. Trades Unions have been fully consulted on these proposals.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Colin McDowall

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

6 November 2014

Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives

- Sustainable Development

Previous References

- Community Services Committee 17 June 2014

List of Background Papers

South Lanarkshire Council's Practicability Assessment in terms of the Thermal Treatment Guidelines 2014

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Stephen Kelly, Head of Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services

Ext: 4705 (Tel: 01698 454705)

E-mail: Stephen.Kelly@southlanarkshire.gov.uk