

Report

Report to:	Clydesdale Area Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 November 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Household Waste and WRC Booking System - Carluke Pilot
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update members on proposals for the implementation of an online booking system, on a pilot basis, at Carluke Household Waste and Recycling Centre.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

(1) to note the content of the report

3. Background

3.1. The Council operates six Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

3.2. Five of the centres are managed by Biffa on behalf of the Council: Blantyre, Rutherglen, East Kilbride, Larkhall and Strathaven. The sixth site, Carluke is managed by the Council.

3.3. The sites are well used by members of the public. Approximately 35,000 tonnes of waste is accepted across the sites each year.

3.4. During peak times (e.g. summer months, weekends and public holidays) the demand for the sites can be significant. This can, on occasion, result in long queues on access roads and can impact on local businesses and lengthy waiting times can cause frustration amongst members of the public. Unfortunately, this frustration can lead to incidences of verbal abuse and aggression towards site staff, and additional measures have been put in place to address this, i.e. bodycams, CCTV. This is particularly the case in Carluke given the location and nature of the site.

3.5. Prior to lockdown, vans and cars with trailers required to book prior to visiting Carluke HWRC. The booking system allowed Waste Services to control the number of visitors to the site which significantly reduced queue lengths. Staff reported that they were subjected to less verbal abuse and aggression from visitors and there were less reports of 'trader abuse'.

3.6. Bookings were taken by telephone and administered by the customer contact centre. There was no facility for online booking but requests could be taken during normal office hours.

- 3.7. Several local authorities introduced booking systems to coincide with the re-opening of HWRC sites, after COVID-19 restrictions were relaxed, in June 2020. Booking systems were seen as a cost-effective way of managing queues during a period of exceptional demand. The booking system at Carluke was not introduced when the sites re-opened. This was because the telephone booking system was resource intensive and the contact centre was already facing pressures caused by staff shortages due to COVID19. The telephone booking system could also only be used during normal working hours, which meant that residents were unable to phone to make appointments in the evening or at weekends. Given the amount of additional waste that was being produced, it was also likely that the site would receive a high number of 'first time visitors' and that these visitors would not be aware of the booking requirement. Turning them away from the site without a booking could have led to a higher number of abusive/ aggressive incidents.
- 3.8. There are currently 17 local authorities in Scotland that operate a booking system for HWRC sites. Four local authorities require all visitors to book in advance and 13 require visitors coming to the sites in vans or in cars with trailers, to book a slot prior to visiting. Five local authorities do not require pre-booking but do require visitors to have a permit before access is given. More information about the prevalence of booking systems is provided in the appendix to this report.

4. Proposal and Next Steps

- 4.1. It is proposed that the Council implements a booking system, on a trial basis, for Carluke HWRC. The booking system will be predominantly an on-line system but customer contact centre staff will have access to the system so that residents who do not have internet access would still be able to book slots, albeit only during normal office hours.
- 4.2. Waste Services recognise the importance of communicating the new requirement to members of the public. A minimum lead in time of 4 weeks will be given between notifying residents of the new requirement and the system being implemented. Waste Services will consult with the Head of Communications and Strategy to ensure the booking system is adequately promoted.
- 4.3. In the initial 4-week period of the system being operational, residents who visit the site without a valid booking will be allowed to access the site (on a one-off basis) where this can be safely facilitated. This will aid the smooth transition to the new system.
- 4.4. It is proposed that the booking system is implemented from Monday 7 February 2022. The system will be promoted, in conjunction with Corporate Communications, from Monday 10 January 2022. This will allow the system to be fully bedded in before the longer summer opening hours start on 1 April 2022. It is proposed that the pilot will last for 6 months. Customer satisfaction surveys will be devised and issued to site visitors during this time to assess the success of the pilot. Following the initial 6 month period, a further report will be provided to the committee to review the success of the pilot and determine whether the booking system should be in place on a permanent basis.

5 Employee Implications

- 5.1. Evidence from other local authorities suggests that introducing a booking system leads to less incidents of verbal abuse and aggression from members of the public. This proposal has been discussed with trade unions colleagues and they are fully in support of the proposal.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The cost of implementing the on-line booking system is £5,000. It would be delivered as Phase 2 of the on-line booking system for bulky waste collections and met from the existing Waste revenue budget.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1. The booking system will result in shorter queues and reduce engine idling outside the site.
- 7.2. The booking system confirmation will remind visitors to separate the waste they are depositing on site. This will help improve recycling rates at the site.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. Shorter queues at the site will benefit members of the public and local businesses.
- 8.2. The on-line booking system supports the Council's channel shift agenda.
- 8.3. The on-line booking system will reduce the risk of site employees being subject to abuse from residents because of long queues at the site.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 9.2. Legal Services were consulted when the bulk waste booking system contract was awarded and as a result a Privacy Impact Assessment has already been undertaken.
- 9.3. Waste Services have consulted with other local authorities, via the Waste Managers Network, who have successfully implemented a booking system for their Household Waste and Recycling Centres. Two local authorities, Edinburgh City Council and Fife Council have given presentations on the subject at APSE Waste and Recycling Group.
- 9.4. Visitors to the site will be consulted on the success of the system via the customer satisfaction surveys.

Michael McGlynn

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

4 November 2021

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Ambitions /Values

- Ensure communities are safe, strong and sustainable
- Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and tackle disadvantage

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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Appendix

Name of Local Authority	Booking System	Other Control Measure
Edinburgh	Yes – All vehicles	
South Ayrshire	Yes – All vehicles	
Dumfries and Galloway	Yes – All vehicles	
Aberdeenshire	Yes – All vehicles	
Glasgow	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
North Lanarkshire	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
East Renfrewshire	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Mid Lothian	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
West Lothian	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Angus	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Aberdeen	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Moray	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Highland	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
East Dunbartonshire	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
West Dunbartonshire	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Inverclyde	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Western Isles	Yes – Vans and Cars with Trailers	
Renfrewshire		Permit required
North Ayrshire		Permit required
Perth		Permit required
Dundee		Permit required
Falkirk		Permit required