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**HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CHANGES**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update for Members on the changes implemented at the Household Waste Recycling Centre as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

**Summary**

2. Changes were introduced at the Household Waste Recycling Centre in April 2012 restricting use of the site to household waste only. This change was introduced as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan with an identified saving of £45,000 per annum.
3. Non-household waste was banned from the site and a height restriction barrier installed to stop use of the site by vans and large trailers, which were generally the vehicles used for disposing of non-household waste by traders. A permit scheme was introduced to allow residents who wished to dispose of genuine household waste who only had access to a larger vehicle, e.g. van or utility type vehicle.
4. Since the introduction of the changes on 16 April 2012, there has been a significant reduction in waste going through the Household Waste Recycling Centre, however there has been a small increase in waste collected through the weekly refuse collection service, which may have previously been taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centre. Overall, there has been a significant reduction in waste, which has resulted in a financial saving to date of approximately £75,000.

**Recommendation**

5. It is recommended that Members note the content of this report

**Richard Alty**  
**Director of Place**

**Background Papers**

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Ian Thompson : Extension 4447  
LCD

S17 Crime and Disorder	As a result in the change to Council policy at the Household Waste Recycling Centre to only permit household waste, it has resulted in an increase in fly tipping, however this is being monitored and action taken as appropriate by the Council's Environmental Crime Team.
Health and Well Being	It is not considered that there is any impact on health and well being as a result of this report.
Carbon Impact	Reduced waste going through the Household Waste Recycling Centre and therefore reduced vehicle movements to transport the waste, will have a positive impact on carbon.
Diversity	No impact identified.
Wards Affected	The Household Waste Recycling Centre is located in the Harrowgate Hill Ward, however residents from across the Borough use the facility.
Groups Affected	All residents can access the Household Waste Recycling Centre.
Budget and Policy Framework	No changes are proposed to the budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	There is no key impact on the Sustainable Community Strategy.
Efficiency	The changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre were part of the medium term financial plan, which identified a £45,000 efficiency.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

#### Background

6. As part of agreeing the Medium Term Financial Plan, Members implemented changes at the Household Waste Recycling Centre that restricted waste entering the site to household only.
7. The Council has a legal obligation to provide a household waste recycling facility for the receipt and disposal of household waste. Household waste is defined as arising from the day to day running of a household and not part of the house itself, e.g. DIY waste or trade waste, therefore the following materials were stopped from entering the site:
  - (a) soil and rubble
  - (b) tyres
  - (c) bonded asbestos
  - (d) gypsum
  - (e) plasterboard
  - (f) waste oil
  - (g) batteries (other than those associated with household appliances)
8. The majority of the non-household waste was generally coming from traders using vans/trailers, therefore these vehicles were banned from the site and a height restriction barrier put in place. Householders who need to use a larger vehicle for disposing of household waste, e.g. three-piece suite, can contact Customer Services and receive a permit, which allows them access to the site to dispose of genuine household waste.
9. Alongside these changes, the contractor put in place a 'pay as you throw' service, which allows householders who enter the site in cars to dispose of the small amounts of non-household waste at a minimal charge.
10. The changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre were introduced on Monday 16 April 2012.

#### Permit Scheme

11. A permit scheme was introduced which allows householders to use larger vehicles to dispose of genuine household waste. Residents contact Customer Services who then issue a permit via the post, which allows access to the site Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm, and Saturday between 8.00 am and 12 noon. The resident then visits the site and is allowed to use the Transfer Station adjacent to dispose of genuine household waste.
12. As the height barrier is set at 6 feet, there are some larger utility type vehicles, e.g. 4 x 4s, that are unable to go under the height barrier. Residents using the site with

this type of vehicle are issued with a letter each year enabling them to use the Transfer Station for disposal of genuine household waste.

13. Since commencing the scheme on 16 April 2012, up to the end of September 2012 1091 permits have been issued; broken down monthly as follows:

<b>2012 Month</b>	<b>No of permits issued</b>
April	126
May	216
June	158
July	232
August	208
September	151

14. In addition, 44 letters have been issued to residents with utility type 4 x 4 vehicles to use the site on an ongoing basis.

### **Complaints/Comments**

15. The Council's Complaints and Information Governance Team monitors all complaints, compliments and comments and requests for information received by the Council. The Council categorise dissatisfaction with policy decisions (i.e. decisions taken by elected Members) as a comment rather than complaint. In the six months since the changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre were introduced, the Council received 33 comments, of which 31 were from residents expressing their dissatisfaction with the changes. The Council also received one compliment and one Environmental Information Request.
16. This feedback received was from a small percentage of the overall number of people accessing the service and many of the individual issues were resolved by the issuing of a permit or letter as appropriate. Following the initial comments received there has been a decline in the number of representations made.

### **Fly Tipping**

17. The Council monitors the level of fly tipping across the Borough and classifies into two areas; small fly tips, which tend to be one black sack, and large fly tips, which tend to be the size of the contents of a small van and upwards. The type of waste that has been restricted from entering the Household Waste Recycling Centre will be large fly tips as opposed to individual black sacks.
18. Fly tipping, by its very nature, is opportunist and there is no particular pattern to when and where waste will be dumped. Certain locations become popular and then through enforcement action, the activity is moved on to another location. The Council, through the Environmental Crime Team, investigate fly tipping and take action in line with the Council's Enforcement Policy.

19. When comparing the last three years, April to September, fly tipping has risen as follows:

	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2010</b>	16	11	12	12	6	5	<b>62</b>
<b>2011</b>	12	5	5	8	11	9	<b>50</b>
<b>2012</b>	16	12	13	9	17	16	<b>83</b>

20. As can be seen from the above table, there was a reduction in fly tipping during 2011 from 2010 and then an increase in 2012, which could partly be attributed to the changes at the Household Waste Recycling Centre. However the Council's Senior Enforcement Officer has not seen an increase in fly tipping around the Household Waste Recycling Centre and activity continues to be sporadic and dealt with where evidence exists in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.

### **Changes in Waste Tonnage**

21. There has been a significant reduction in waste going through the Household Waste Recycling Centre since the introduction of changes, as detailed below:

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Difference</b>
April	2365.73	1606.28	759.45
May	2119.02	1032.17	-1086.85
June	1904.49	1038.36	-866.13
July	1837.90	1341.64	-496.26
August	2202.42	1245.36	-957.06
September	1968.50	1071.94	-896.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>12398.06</b>	<b>7335.75</b>	<b>-5062.31</b>

22. As can be seen from the table above, there has been a 41% reduction in the waste going through the Household Waste Recycling Centre.
23. However it must be noted that for the same period, there has been a slight increase of 986.62 tonnes of waste collected from households through the weekly refuse collection service. There may be some correlation between the two but overall there is still a significant reduction of household waste.
24. This overall reduction in waste of approximately 4,000 tonnes will have been trade/commercial waste being deposited at the Household Waste Recycling Centre. Private businesses have a legal responsibility to dispose of their waste through a licensed facility, making the appropriate payment to the provider. The Council, through the Household Waste Recycling Centre do not have to provide a free disposal facility for businesses.
25. Although fly tipping has gone up slightly, the tonnages involved are extremely minimal compared to the waste now diverted from the Household Waste Recycling Centre. It is likely that responsible traders are now disposing of their waste through licensed facilities as opposed to using the Household Waste Recycling Centre. In

addition, as the site at Whessoe Road was one of the only ones in the area that did not restrict the use of the site to high-sided/commercial vehicles, a number of traders from outside of the area will have been depositing waste at the facility.

### Pay As You Throw

26. As part of the changes, the contractor introduced a 'pay as you throw' for small amounts of non-household waste that residents brought to the Household Waste Recycling Centre in their car. The charges were based on an average boot-full of material, apart from tyres which are charged per tyre. The charges were:

- (a) £5 for soil/rubble
- (b) £2 per tyre
- (c) £25 for asbestos

27. Following a review by the contractor in August 2012, the charge for soil/rubble was reduced to £2 from £5. Full months' tonnages through the 'pay as you throw' service are as follows:

2012 Month	Tonnages
May	87.20
June	50.76
July	74.94
August	91.22
September	88.68

28. The contractor does not make any money out of this service as the charge is simply to cover haulage and disposal, and generally the tonnages are low, but the service does provide an option for residents to dispose of small amounts of non-household waste.

### Financial Implications

29. As part of the Medium Term Financial Plan, a saving of £45,000 was identified by introducing the changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre. When reviewing the financial implications it is necessary to take into account the changes in the different waste streams; Household Waste Recycling Centre, weekly household waste collection service and operational waste (such as fly tipping, street cleaning, etc). At the end of September 2012, the financial saving for 2012 compared to 2011 is as follows:

Waste Streams	Financial Saving
Household Waste Recycling Centre charge	-143,510.71
Household waste collection disposal charge	76,532.11
Operational waste disposal charge	-7,333.37
<b>Total Saving</b>	<b>-74,771.05</b>

30. The overall financial saving for six months is £74,771.05.
31. As tonnages of waste do fluctuate from month to month and waste tonnages are generally lower in the winter months, it is not anticipated that the saving will double, however it is expected that an overall £100,000 saving can be achieved.

### **Conclusion**

32. Overall the changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre have been successful and delivered significant financial savings. There have been some negative comments from residents but generally, once aware of the system, do accept the changes are reasonable and necessary. There has been an increase in fly tipping, however this continues to be monitored and appropriate enforcement action taken where evidence exists.
33. Officers will continue to monitor the Household Waste Recycling Centre to ensure that the savings identified in the Medium Term Financial Plan can be delivered.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

34. No consultation has been carried out in the production of this report, however as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan, significant consultation was carried out across the Borough.