

## **f. Potential Changes the Refuse and Recycling Collection Service**

### **Potential Implementation from 2018**

**Potential annual savings between nil to £350,000 per year**

#### **1. Present Situation**

- **Recycling Targets**

The EU/UK recycling target has been set at achieving 50% by 2020.

Leicestershire as a whole and Oadby & Wigston specifically, are currently recycling just under 50% of waste per year. It should also be noted that national statistics show that Oadby & Wigston residents create and put out much less waste than nearly every other council area in the country.

- **Collection Methods**

Latest statistics show that nationally:

- a. Over 60% of Councils collect residual waste on a two weekly basis using wheeled bins.
- b. 10% of Councils collect refuse weekly using wheeled bins.
- c. 30% of Councils collect refuse on a weekly basis using bags.
- d. A number of councils are now also experimenting with three weekly collections.

- **Leicestershire**

All districts in the county and the city collect residual waste (refuse) using wheeled bins with all having a fortnightly collection. The only exception to this, other than Oadby & Wigston, is Blaby who use wheeled bins and collect weekly. It is understood that Blaby will be collecting refuse every two weeks from April 2018.

Four districts collect recycling in wheeled bins every two weeks where residents mix all their recycling together. The other three districts including Oadby & Wigston collect recycling that has some element of pre-sorting by residents.

#### **2. Summary of Refuse and Recycling Services Provided by the Council**

- **Weekly Refuse Collection**

Residents can put out up to three black 40 litre bags per week at the kerbside. The resident is expected to provide the bags at their cost. The Council will not collect waste in any other receptacle but will collect one black 40 litre bag and one normal dustbin if the resident does not want to use just bags. Once the waste has been collected it is taken to the Whetstone transfer station where the County Council then transport it onwards to their landfill site. The Council collects approximately 8,000 tonnes of refuse per year.

The Council has recently procured a new modern and flexible fleet of refuse vehicles which can collect both wheeled bins and bags. It should be noted there also

continues to be significant ongoing health and safety concerns about crews collecting bags specifically with regards to sharp injuries and weight.

- **Weekly Recycling Collection**

Residents can put out an unlimited amount of recycling at the kerbside for collection in the green and brown bags. An unlimited amount of green and brown bags are available from the Council on request and are supplied free of charge. The Council collects approximately 4,000 tonnes of recycling each year.

Once the recycling has been collected it is delivered to the Oadby & Wigston depot where it is further sorted in the Council's Material Recycling Facility (MRF). This creates several pure waste streams that enables the Council to sell the recyclables to merchants who collect the material from the depot. The national and international market for this has dropped substantially in recent years and continues to fluctuate unpredictably. In 2013/14 the Council received £378k by selling its recycling, however this has dropped dramatically due to the poor market to £168K in 2015/16. The annual cost of processing the recycling at the MRF is £355k (2015/16).

The County Council pays a recycling credit to Oadby & Wigston Borough Council, together with all of the other district councils in Leicestershire for every tonne of waste it recycles as this avoids the need for the County Council to have to pay for it to be landfilled which is more expensive.

Leicestershire County Council who are the waste disposal authority have the legal power to "direct" districts councils in relation to the collection of waste. The County Council are doing this in relation to all of the recycling that is collected from the kerbside from April 2018. In reality this means that the County Council have said that they will not dictate to the districts how they should collect their recycling, ie frequency, method of collection or what they collect. What they will be dictating however is that each district will be told to which location they should deliver the recyclables they collect. The County Council have yet to stipulate where this will be. The Direction Notice will also set out that the County Council will then pay for any onward transportation, if it is outside of the Councils administrative area, together with the sorting costs. It will also stipulate that the County Council will no longer pay the districts a recycling credit for each tonne of recycle that they collect. It will also stop the district councils from selling their recycling and making any income from it which in future the County Council will do and receive itself. The implications of this are set out in Paper A in relation to the MRF.

It should also be noted that the current fleet of recycling vehicles are nearly at the end of their life and decisions will need to be made within the next six months as to if and what vehicles should be procured. It is therefore essential that the Council is clear as to what recycling service it wishes to provide in the future.

### **3. Consultation**

The Council has recently carried out a borough wide survey about its waste collection services. The results have been published on the Council's website with the following link.

<https://www.oadby->

[wigston.gov.uk/news/2017/06/23/results from the recent waste survey](https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/news/2017/06/23/results_from_the_recent_waste_survey)

#### **4. Options**

The Refuse and Recycling rounds cost the Council around £744,000 per annum. This is not the total cost of the service but simply the rounds which consist of 6 teams of a vehicle of 3 staff, two spare vehicles, sick and holiday cover. A range of options is available to the Council to vary either or both the frequency of collections and the ways in which refuse and recyclable materials are collected. The range of saving is from nil, if the services were to remain as they are now, up to approximately £350,000 per year if the Council were to move to two weekly refuse and recycling collections using wheeled bins. Other options, such as maintaining weekly collection of domestic waste, but collecting recyclables fortnightly or visa-versa; would also yield some savings.

Obtaining a more detailed proposal on specific options would involve Council officers working with external waste specialists in order to produce a detailed report on possible changes to existing arrangements, revenue costs savings, impact on front-line service for residents, one-off investment costs, time-scales for delivery, etc. to bring to Council for consideration later this calendar year. It is estimated that this exercise could cost £10,000

In all options where wheeled bins are a possibility then specific rounds could be set up to service terraced housing.

If the Council does not move from bags to wheeled bins then there will still be the continuing issue of health and safety for the crews with sharps injuries and lifting.

The other option that is available to the Council is to benchmark and market test its in house provision against the private sector. External waste specialists would be required to facilitate this.