

## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE-COMMUNITY 7 JUNE 2011

#### **COST OF REVERTING TO WEEKLY RESIDUAL REFUSE COLLECTIONS**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To present Members with an estimated cost of returning all households to a weekly residual collection, and to highlight other implications associated with so doing.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At Scrutiny Committee: Community on 18 January 2011 Members instructed officers to report back on the full cost to the council tax payer of re-introducing a weekly refuse collection to those 48,000 households in Exeter currently having their residual waste collected on an alternate weekly basis.
- 2.2 Currently the preferred collection system is for the Council to provide householders with two wheelie bins, a black one for residual waste (waste that can not be recycled) and a green one for waste that can be recycled. These are collected on a fortnightly basis with one week waste and the next recycling (an alternate weekly system). This system has successfully been in use for most properties since the 1990's, and in 2010 a further 14,000 households out of 19,000 households that were previously on a weekly refuse collection, were moved to the alternate weekly system.
- 2.3 The Council does not operate a 'one-size fits all' service, and so a weekly collection of waste remains for approximately 5,000 households (mainly living in flats) that don't have adequate storage space for a bin. These properties are also offered a fortnightly recycling collection, using small containers that can be stored indoors, communal large wheelie bins or clear bags.
- 2.4 In Exeter, the city's domestic waste is collected by 10 crews each with their own RCVs (refuse collection vehicles) working in 5 zones; one zone for each working day of the week. There are 2 reserve RCVs and additional pool drivers and loaders to deal with breakdowns and absences. The same vehicle and crew is used to collect the two types of waste on alternate weeks from the same household; by so doing, the crews get to know their rounds very well.
- 2.5 The method of alternative weekly collection is carried out by a large number of councils in the UK, and statistics indicate that councils adopting this system have higher recycling rates than those that do not. A recent study in Exeter showed that residents on a weekly refuse collection produce 20% more waste on average.

#### **3. MAIN IMPLICATIONS OF REVERTING TO WEEKLY RESIDUAL COLLECTIONS**

- 3.1 Reverting to weekly residual collections of residual waste for all 53,000 households will increase the annual road miles travelled by approximately 30%, and consequently inflate the considerable fuel cost further. It will also necessitate the procurement of 5 additional RCVs, and recruitment of 5 extra crews and supervisor in order to carry out new requirement of 159,000 collections per fortnight.

- 3.2 The amount of residual waste collected is likely to increase by approximately 20%, resulting in additional land-fill costs (£86 per tonne) and a reduction in the recycling rate, together with the amount of recyclates collected. This in turn is likely to lead to a sizable fall in recycling credits (currently worth £46 per tonne).
- 3.3 Furthermore, there would be a need to extensively remodel the existing collection rounds to incorporate the expanded service and communicate these changes to every household. This would be a huge logistical operation to undertake, which will be resource-intensive in its planning and execution, following on from the recent major re-modelling of the collection rounds in 2010.

#### **4. COST TO THE EXETER COUNCIL TAX PAYER**

- 4.1 The full cost of all households returning to a weekly refuse collection is a one-off capital cost of £757,500 and on-going revenue cost of £912,068. See Appendix I.

#### **5. RECOMMENDED**

That Members note the report.

HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

S:PALP/ Committee/611SCC7  
4.5.11

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**  
**Background papers used in compiling this report:**

**APPENDIX 1**

**COST OF REVERTING TO WEEKLY COLLECTION OF DOMESTIC RESIDUAL WASTE**

<b>Revenue costs per year</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Total</b>
Driver plus 2 loaders plus agency / pool cover	71,561	5	£357,804
Running costs for additional wagons	20,000	5	£100,000
Additional Supervisor	27,520	1	£27,520
Cost of running supervisor's van	3,000	1	£3,000
(1) Estimated cost of lost recycling revenue	19,200	1	£19,200
(2) Estimated cost of additional waste to landfill (DCC cost)	404,544	1	£404,544
<b>Total Revenue</b>			<b>£912,068</b>
<b>Capital / one off Costs</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Total</b>
5 new lorries	£125,000	5	£625,000
Reschedule all rounds and replacement calendars etc	75,000	1	£75,000
Bartec equipment	4,000	5	£20,000
Supervisors van	£17,500	1	£17,500
Temporary Tech Support staff	20,000	1	£20,000
<b>Total Capital</b>			<b>£757,500</b>
<i>(1) Assumes loss 5kg recyclables per household pa worth average £80 per tonne</i>			
<i>(2) Assumes additional 98kg per household per year - cost per tonne £56 landfill tax plus assumed £30 gate fee</i>			