

Customer Focus Scrutiny

Waste and Recycling Collection Service Change Update January 2021

Introduction

In October 2019 the Executive Committee and Council approved a new Kerbside recycling service which comprised of:

- A weekly collection of dry recycling (paper, card, mixed plastics, glass, tins & cans) and food waste and
- a three-weekly collection of residual waste.

The method of collection was suggested to be a 'kerbside sort' system, which means residents sort their recycling into up to three containers for dry materials and a separate caddy for their food. These materials were suggested to be collected on multi-compartment, single pass recycling vehicles similar to those operated by neighbouring authorities.

This meant that the majority of materials delivered to the Exton Road Materials Reclamation Facility (MRF) would be pre-sorted, with mechanised sorting limited to separation of cans and plastics. There would be little need for any hand sorting at the MRF which would just become a waste transfer station for the bulking up and onward transport of materials to reprocessors.

The changing habits of residents and operational concerns

Covid-19 has changed the way in which people shop and work, with increased online shopping and increased homeworking. This has changed the makeup of the waste and recycling stream and the amounts we collect of each material. Whilst our current comingled system has coped with these changes in volume very well, our neighbours running kerbside sort have experienced problems with increased tipping frequency as certain compartments are becoming full more quickly (mainly cardboard and food). Increased journeys to tip materials, costs time and drives down productivity.

Following vehicle trials, operational concerns were also raised which included:

- The room available for loading at the side of vehicles on our narrow city streets (we currently load at the rear). This is made worse by increased homeworking with more cars parked in residential areas during the day.
- Increased repetitive manual handling associated with kerbside sort methods.
- Longer loading times associated with this collection method and the impact that would have on residential traffic.
- The required redeployment of manual jobs from MRF sorting, to on-street collection and the disproportionate impact this would have on the largely female operatives in the MRF.

Maintaining our vital waste collection service during the pandemic has delayed progression of the scheme but we have used the time to review the decision to make sure that the right

system is chosen for the City. That review is currently underway and expected to make further recommendations by the end of January.

What is the review considering?

The review is looking at different collection methods which achieve the same outcomes for residents, meet the expected government legal requirements for waste collection and help to deliver our Net Zero ambitions.

The review will compare best practice options that deliver on our requirements and compare them financially in terms of revenue and capital investment, operational considerations and ease of use for residents against the currently proposed kerb side sort option. Should the review demonstrate that an alternative collection system is more appropriate for Exeter, then that recommendation will be put through the committee process in the usual way.

David Bartram

Director

20 January 2021

Greater consistency explained

Each system varies in its performance against the key factors considered as outlined in the underpinning evidence and analysis.

Multi-stream with separate food:

Household plastic packaging, metals (cans, aerosols and foil) and cartons

Glass containers and card*

Paper

Food waste separate

Two-stream (fibres separate) with separate food:

Household plastic packaging, metals, glass and cartons collected as one stream

Paper and card collected as one stream

Food waste separate

Co-mingled with separate food:


All dry mixed recyclables collected as one stream (co-mingled)**

Food waste separate

Multi-stream with separate food

 Residual waste (up to a maximum equivalent of 120 litres weekly)


Minimum of 120 litres collected weekly

 Plastics, metals and cartons

 Glass and card*

 Paper

 Food

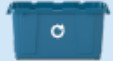

 Plastics, metals, cartons, glass, card, paper and food

Two-stream (fibres separate) with separate food


 Residual waste (up to a maximum equivalent of 120 litres weekly)

Minimum equivalent of 120 litres weekly

 Plastics, metals, cartons and glass

 or  Paper and card

 Food

 Plastics, metals, cartons, glass, card and paper

 Food

Co-mingled with separate food

 Residual waste (up to a maximum equivalent of 120 litres weekly)

Minimum equivalent of 120 litres weekly

 Plastics, metals, cartons, glass, paper and card**

 Food

 Plastics, metals, cartons, glass, card and paper

 Food

*Glass and card would be presented in the same box but separated into different compartments on the vehicle. In flatted properties card and paper could be collected together. Glass would be collected as a separate stream.

** The advice from reprocessors is that glass and paper are collected separately to maintain material quality.