

Scrutiny – 22 February 2007**REVIEW OF CHANGES - WASTE COLLECTION****Report of Strategic Director (Operations)**

Statutory Powers: Environmental Protection Act 1990 Sections 45, 46.

Financial Implications: The budget for the collection of household waste by the Operations Team for 2006/07 including any inflationary costs is £2073400. The current service is operating at 9.3% over budget due to additional resources being required to assist with the change of collection day. The intention is that the budget will be brought back inline with the modifications now being explored as highlighted in this report.

Purpose

To update Members on the progress of changes to household waste collection services within the District. Together with identifying key achievements in relation to performance, this activity supports the Council's priorities of maintaining a clean environment (CP4) and improving core service performance in a cost-effective way (CP6).

RECOMMENDATION

That the Scrutiny Group notes the progress made in the introduction of the waste changes and supports further investigation to streamline the service.

Background

1. Changes to the District's waste collection services have taken place over a number of years starting in 2003 when South Hams, Teignbridge, and Mid Devon District Councils together with Devon County Council were awarded £5 million by DEFRA to advance food and green waste composting initiatives. This Council's share of the partnership award was £1.1 million. With a further DEFRA grant awarded for £129000 in January 2004, the Council was able to fund a radical new system for household waste collection with an emphasis on recycling and composting.
2. In order to decide how to make the best use of the DEFRA grant award a Members' workshop was held in May 2004 to examine different methods of collecting household waste separately. From the workshop the Members' view was that:
 - the Council should look at collection methodology that ensures it discharges its duty of care to its employees in terms of health and safety and manual handling.
 - The current collection arrangements needed to change so as to meet the requirements of the Landfill Directive.
 - That the Council should work towards a kerbside or boundary collection system utilising containers.

3. Having examined a series of combinations of collection frequencies, types of receptacle and costs the waste collection option chosen by Members was the implementation of an alternate weekly collection service for household waste materials utilising wheeled bins. This system enables the waste to be separated into two streams. One week an organic collection takes place using a 180 litre brown wheeled bin and the following week, residual waste (i.e. waste that cannot be recycled or composted through the Council's scheme) is collected in a grey 180 litre wheeled bin. In addition all households are offered the household recycling scheme using coloured sacks to collect cardboard, paper, cans, aluminium foil and plastic bottles.
4. Making best use of the grant funding together with a re-direction of resources Members took the decision in July 2004 (Minute E29/04) to opt for a combination of collection equipment and infrastructure to enable households to separate organic waste from mixed waste and provide a dry recycling collection service across the District. This decision was ratified by Council on 30th September 2004 (Minute 49/04)

Implementation Programme

5. As part of the requirements of DEFRA's grant funding the Council was initially asked to prepare a spending plan showing how it would implement its new initiatives by March 2005 for which the grant was awarded. However such a tight timescale would not have allowed sufficient time for the Council to put its new infrastructure in place and explain to all our residents how to use their new systems. Consequently, the Council successfully negotiated for the grant funding to be reallocated to 2005/06.
6. To begin work on implementing the changes a project team of officers was established consisting of; Waste Management; Operations; Public Relations; Customer Services; and ICT. A phased and time specific project plan was put in place that allocated specific tasks to various members of staff.
7. Waste Management managed the project for phases 1 to 5. For phase 6 the Operations Team took sole control of the project which included bin delivery for the remaining properties not an alternate weekly collections and round restructuring for the whole district.
8. For the purpose of implementing the new arrangements the district was broken down into different areas known as phases. The first area or phase that was identified for the new arrangements was Dartmouth, Slapton, Strete and Stoke Fleming with roll-out phased across the whole district by March 2006.
9. Between January and March 2005, 1,510 households were issued with the new wheeled bin and recycling sack service in Phase 1 (i.e. Townstal area of Dartmouth, Slapton, Strete and Stoke Fleming). Of these households only 175 residents (12%) were unable to accommodate the wheeled bins and remained on the old weekly sack system. The rest of the households (88%) accommodated the new wheeled bin system.

10. The timetable for the roll-out of the new system district-wide by March 2006 was:

	Area covered	Timescale
Phase 1	Townstal area of Dartmouth, Slapton, Strete and Stoke Fleming.	March 2005
Phase 2	The remaining accessible areas of Dartmouth Town, plus properties in the following areas that currently receive the household recycling collection. Kingsbridge Town, Salcombe Town, parts of Ashprington, Aveton Gifford, Bantham, Bigbury, Bigbury-on-sea, Buckland, Chillington, Churchstow, Cornworthy, East Charleton, Frogmore, Galmpton, Hope Cove, Loddiswell, Marlborough, Modbury, South Milton, Stokenham, Thurlestone, Tuckenhay, West Alvington, West Charleton.	May/June 2005
Phase 3	Properties in the following areas that currently receive the household recycling collection. Totnes Towns, parts of Ashprington, Berry Pomeroy, Dartington, Harberton, Harbertonford, Kingswear, Landscope, Littlehempston, Marldon, South Brent, Staverton, Stoke Gabriel.	July/August 2005
Phase 4	Properties in the following areas that currently receive the household recycling collection. Brixton, Cornwood, Ermington, Heybrook Bay, Holbeton, Ivybridge, Lee Mill, Lee Moor, Luton, Newton Ferrers, Noss Mayo, Sparkwell, Yealmpton, Wembury, Woolwell, Wotter.	September/October 2005
Phase 5	All the remaining properties throughout the district that are not currently served by the household recycling collection.	January/February 2006.
Phase 6	Additional phase required due to lack of round restructuring information being received.	August/September 2006.

11. Due to difficulties with round restructuring, Phase 5 was subsequently split again and a further Phase 6 introduced. This was due to a combination of a delay in formulating new waste collection rounds district-wide and bringing the outlying rural properties onto the dry recycling service at the same time. The effect of this delay meant that the completion of the roll out for alternate weekly collection services was delayed until September 2006.
12. Officers did have to report the fact of the delay to DEFRA as this change of timescale did not fall in line with the original project and spending plan. DEFRA subsequently agreed the new timescale and confirmed that funding would not be altered.

Service Delivery

13. **Wheeled Bin Delivery** – In the run-up to the new scheme an extensive assessment of all households in the district took place to ascertain which households were able to accommodate a wheeled bin within the boundary of their property. The survey revealed that 81.6 % of properties across the South Hams would have sufficient storage for the new wheeled bin service.
14. The information collected in the property survey was sorted into existing collection round order and used as a reference document for the delivery of wheeled bins. Otto UK Limited, was awarded a contract to both supply and deliver our wheeled bins to each of the properties identified in the survey. Otto, who directly employed the delivery company Driveline, was supplied with delivery schedules together with members of staff from Operations who had knowledge of the delivery area. The successful delivery of these wheeled bins would not have been achieved without local knowledge.
15. Of the 37333 properties in Phase 1 to 5 inclusive, 32639 now have wheeled bins. This equates to 87.43% of the properties. This left 3956 remaining properties in Phase 6.
16. 198 domestic properties which are let for self catering purposes have elected for a trade waste collection service as they feel they could not meet the requirements of the new waste schemes.
17. **Assisted Collections** – Some customers have requested assisted collections and have been supplied with the Council's standard form to complete. All requests for assisted collections are assessed and processed by the Operations Team prior to the provision of the service. Where necessary officers have given advice and support. To date there are 1,912 households who receive an assisted collection.
18. **Communal areas** – Some properties within the district are either multi-occupied or, due to the design of the property, have some storage issues. Discussions were undertaken with owners/occupiers of specific properties to determine the best fix. This has amounted to 1833 properties.
19. Overall the principle of sharing containers has been successful. However there have been some isolated incidents of contamination of material by specific residents.
20. **Telephone Calls** – All initial enquires concerning the new scheme were dealt with by the Customer Services Team (CST). Since the inception of the scheme in February 2005 and up to Phase 5, there had been over 38500 telephone calls. The nature of the calls can be broken down into the following categories;

• Missed collections	33%
• General enquiries	34%
• Clarification of scheme	7%
• Reassessment of properties	11%
• Collection date queries	<u>1%</u>
• Complaint (other)	14%
	100%

21. Phase 6 was implemented in conjunction with the district-wide round restructuring which was necessary to improve collection efficiency and balance the workload of each crew now that dry recyclables were being collected separately. For Phase 6 the level and nature of the calls can be broken down into the following categories:

• Missed collections	67%
• General enquires	10%
• Clarification of scheme	5%
• Reassessment of properties	2%
• Non delivery of containers	1%
• Collection date queries	1%
• Order organic liners	8%
• Non delivery of recycling sacks	1%
• Complaint (other)	5%
	100%

22. Clearly given the level of calls in Phase 6 some additional work is now required to further improve our internal processes and public awareness of the new systems. Changing the day of collection has been confusing for many householders. Some calls relate to how we deliver our services and the processes associated with them. Discussions are already taking place on what further action is needed. Areas for improvement are:

- Re-evaluation of processes to ensure that key information given to stakeholders is correct and accurate.
- Ensure that all parties are aware of actions requested and actions implemented.
- Establish key performance objectives for delivering services which are achievable and can be informed to customers. ie. when can I expect my container to be emptied.
- Improvement of electronic communication between CST and the Operations Team.
- Research into PDA systems on refuse vehicles that allows real time communication.
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities to ensure the line of accountability is not lost.
- Information provided not correctly utilised by all users.

23. **Communications** – It was identified at an early stage of this project that a variety of communication methods would be needed. Officers therefore identified key stakeholders in the scheme and methods in which to communicate the changes to them. These have all been used and include:

- For Council Members as a whole, officers have used the Members Bulletin as a tool to provide information on the scheme. There have also been a series of letters sent to Members detailing events.
- For those Members whose wards have been directly affected by the first 'roll out' we have provided letters detailing the scheme and the schedule involved. Officers have also taken some of these Members on site to see the scheme in operation.

- Updates have also been provided to Members and to Parish and Town Councils via a series of letters detailing the scheme and what the schedule was for that area.
 - Officers have been visiting Town and Parish Councils to introduce the scheme and to answer any queries. Officers have also carried out a briefing event's for Members and Parish and Town Councils to detail all aspects of the scheme and the reasons behind the changes.
 - Householders affected by the scheme received a leaflet introducing the scheme two weeks before their bins were due to be delivered. Householders were delivered a second detailed leaflet with their bins. A third leaflet which reiterates certain points and provides an update on the scheme is sent out after the scheme has settled in.
 - Road shows are also undertaken prior to the introduction of the scheme. This gave householders the opportunity to speak to officers, see the bins and recycling sacks, and to discuss any specific issues or concerns. These events were advertised in the householders' leaflets and also by the use of posters. The events dates were also listed in the letters sent to Councils and Members. To date there have been 35 road shows.
 - Information regarding the waste changes has also been provided to the editors of Parish/Town/Community magazines and newsletters to ensure that householders have every opportunity to hear about the new scheme.
 - Prior to each phase officers issued a number of press releases to ensure that a positive angle was covered and to counteract any reports of problems perceived by residents. Officers also held a media briefing for the press to ensure that journalists understood the background to the scheme and the issues the Council face.
 - These issues and 'frequently asked questions' were also addressed in South Hams Matters, and via the leaflets delivered to householders.
 - The website has also been utilised to provide details of the new scheme, to provide answers to the frequently asked questions and has also been used for householders to request an assisted collection application.
24. So as to ensure that the momentum is maintained of the success of the scheme officers recognise that there will be a need to continue with a pro-active media campaign.
25. **Compostable Wheeled Bin Liners** – In relation to the organic 'brown' bin, the perception of storing organic waste in a wheeled bin for two weeks has been an issue for some householders. Our advice has been that food waste should be wrapped in newspaper or put into cardboard boxes (eg. cardboard cereal packets) and many householders have taken this advice and are successfully wrapping their food waste without fear of smell. However, one other way to resolve is to place the material in a biodegradable bin liner made of corn starch inside the container (normal plastic bags won't suffice as they will not rot in the compost process). In promoting this option it is essential that the product is actually biodegradable and cannot be confused with any other products e.g. there are some types of plastic sacks including carrier bags that claim to be biodegradable but are not suitable for this scheme. The 'degradable' carrier bags cause confusion for crews in collecting and are not suitable for the composting plant we are using. The partnership has agreed a standard specification for liners such as to ensure consistency throughout the Councils. Consequently, the Council now sells kitchen caddy liners for £3 for 50 or £3.50 if posted. This is

managed directly by the CST. There are also proposals to sell larger liners for wheeled bins in 2007.

- 26. Vehicle Resource and Capacity** – The Council has taken delivery of three new refuse vehicles and three recycling vehicles, all funded from the DEFRA grant. The refuse vehicles are fitted with twin bin lifts and body weighing mechanisms. These vehicles have been used on the new scheme as the project has been rolled out. In addition a number of vehicles have been retro-fitted with twin bin lifts so as to accommodate the 180 litre wheeled bins. This ensures that two bins can be emptied at any one time. At present the separation of material into two different fractions has had no effect negative on the vehicles.
27. Owing to the success of the scheme, householders are now putting out more separated material for collection and onward recycling than ever before. This has meant that the present arrangement of cage recycling vehicles has experienced some problems in terms of coping with the volume of sacks. At times there have been delays in collections which have triggered a ‘missed collection’ complaint into CST. Further research is now being undertaken on vehicle design to see if the issues of capacity on the dry recycling vehicles can be resolved. There may be potential to reduce costs for transferring recyclable material, together with using fewer vehicles. Other opportunities may also be to investigate one pass vehicles in the rural areas that collect more than one type of material.
- 28. In Vessel /Process Plant** – The composting process plant at Heathfield, Newton Abbot is fully operational and is the final destination for organic waste placed in the ‘brown’ wheeled bins. In the first year there had been some issues with the plant that were causing some concern for the collection authorities feeding into the plant:

 - Lack of capacity in the receiving area.
 - Batches of material not reaching the required temperature.
 - Plant breakdowns.
 - Issues with input standard of material.
 - Capacity issue with the maturation pad.
 - Lack of maintenance regime.
 - Lack of technical knowledge of operation staff at plant.
29. In operational terms the performance of the plant has meant that some material has had to be bulk hauled up to the Dimmer Composting Site in Somerset to be processed rather than landfilled at Heathfield. So far the cost of hauling the material has been met by Devon County Council.
30. The issue of capacity at the composting plant is of great concern and there are some thoughts that the agreed capacity of the plant are based on an annualised figure and do not take account of seasonal variation. There have been some recent changes to the plant which have included alterations to the receiving area so to increase capacity. Additionally works are to be undertaken in February on the maturation pad where the compost is stored to also increase the capacity.
- 31. Compliance** – The Crews, the wider Operations Team and Waste Management staff undertake checks on how householders are complying with the requirements of the new scheme. Warning stickers are placed on containers to make households aware of problems such as; the wrong day of collection; contamination or wrong material; wrong container; or side waste. Further compliance checks will also be undertaken by the Street Scene Section.

32. It has been decided that at this stage education is the better tactic rather than a taking a more proactive enforcement approach. However, once the scheme has been fully implemented and has bedded in, then the process of ensuring households are complying will be enforced.
- 33. Holiday or Second Homes** – the Council has an adopted policy on how waste from holiday and second homes can be managed. A number of domestic and business rated properties have now taken up the trade waste services of the Council. There are a number of second homes in the district that are not let for financial gain and are just used for the sole use of the owner. Issues have arisen that the day of collection may not suit the needs of the owner. Options offered up are:
- Take the waste home.
 - Use wheeled bins supplied but inform the Operations Team of their circumstances.
 - If no wheeled bins supplied then again inform Operations Team of circumstances.
34. In some instances properties have been let for financial gain by owners of properties but have given no clear guidance to the occupiers on how to manage their waste. There have also been some instances whereby the occupiers of the properties have been placing waste out on the wrong day or indeed dumping the said material at various locations. The likelihood of finding evidence within the waste that directly connects the material to a property or owner is fairly remote. However in principle the Council will always prefer to manage waste from source and therefore tries to resolve these issues before it becomes an enforcement issue.
35. Where a day of collection is not appropriate for second home owners who say visit their property at weekends alternative solutions need to be in place. One option would be to allow them to take waste to a Recycling Centre managed by the County. Devon County Council has been challenged by all districts in Devon that they are not meeting their obligations under section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act. That is they are not allowing putrescible waste at Recycling Centres. They have sought legal opinion and have agreed they do indeed have an obligation to receive putrescible waste. However The County considers that to meet that requirement they only have to nominate one site in Devon. The District Councils do not consider that this is reasonable. Further more there is also concern that this is not reflecting well on Councils given that most people do not recognise the difference between Districts and County Councils. The matter is still under discussion.
- 36. Round Restructuring and Phase 6** – Having moved to an alternate weekly collection service using two wheeled bins over an 18-month period a project was initiated during the Summer of 2006 to achieve 3 things:-
- Roll out to Phase 6 (outlying properties) of the dry recycling scheme.
 - Re-organisation of household refuse and recycling rounds to ensure equity of workload and gain efficiencies now that wheeled bins had bedded-in (ie. reduction of vehicles in use, transport distances etc.)
 - Separation of trade waste from household refuse rounds to enable a dedicated trade waste recycling service to take shape.

37. Funding was secured from WRAP (the Waste and Resources Action Programme) to employ external advisors to re-route collection rounds using data provided by the Council. Working from basic information provided in April 2006 by the advisors, an internal Project Team lead by the Head of Operations mapped new collection rounds based on post code information. Zones for collection days were set out as shown in Appendix 1 and route lists prepared. The new collection rounds meant that over 90% of households had a change of day for collection.
38. Members may recall that households were notified of their new 'day of collection' by letter during August and early September 2006. Unfortunately the company employed to undertake this mailing posted incorrect information to some residents which confused large sections of the community from day one. This was subsequently corrected at no financial cost to the Council.
39. Wheeled bin collection rounds were established and zoned north and south of the district, by post code as follows:

In week 1 crews empty grey mixed waste wheeled bins and collect any black sacks from properties still on the historic weekly service due to access problems using a compaction vehicle. This all goes to landfill and is relatively straight forward.

In week 2 the same crew collects brown bin (organic waste), using compaction vehicles together with a separate caged recycling vehicle and crew collecting the dry recycling sacks. Additionally however in week 2 another vehicle picks up the black sack mixed waste from the historic weekly properties.
40. As part of the service there are 1,851 households who are provided with an 'assisted collection' and 8,676 properties still receiving a historic weekly black sack collection. The new Collection Rounds began on 25 September 2006.

Issues from Round Re-structuring

41. The Operations Team carries out approximately 62,000 separate collections from the 43,000 households in the district every week. (i.e. collection of a brown bin and a grey bin or in some places a standard weekly mixed black sack instead and two recycling sacks of sorted material). Having altered the day of collection for over 90% of these households at worst 2.33% of properties were not collected in any one week (that is 1,441 properties out of 62,000 collections).
42. The impact of these changes did cause confusion for some residents which resulted in a large increase in the volume of calls from the Customer Services Team (CST). CST dealt with many callers who did not understand why the change of day was necessary. Given households (and crews) had been working to the same day of collection for the last ten years and had only recently got used to a fortnightly pattern of weekly waste collections, understanding which week and which day of the week each house should expect to have its waste collected proved difficult to explain.
43. Refuse crews were re-organised and given route lists and areas of the district to cover some of which were unfamiliar to them. The resultant outcome was that in some areas of the district, where residents put out the right waste on the right day of the week, the crews failed to collect it. Consequently CST received an escalation of calls about missed collections as well queries about the new service.

44. In both week 1 and week 2, there is still a large proportion of weekly collections (8,676) which is proving challenging to service especially in Torr Quarry Wednesday zone (Dartmouth area).
45. A number of anomalies have occurred during the change of collection day and roll out of Phase 6 for different reasons. These can be summarised in three parts; Communications, Set-up and Operation of Policy:

46. Communications

- The initial mail out to inform residents about their new day of collection was delivered incorrectly in some parts of the district.
- District Councillors and Town/Parish Councils were informed late in project about the changes and were not given an opportunity to input local knowledge into the new rounds.
- Crews were re-organised and given some new geographic areas to service with insufficient time to familiarise themselves with the routes and access to property issues.
- Due to short timescale between receiving basic information from external advisors and the implementation date of round restructure there was insufficient time for face to face communications and team meetings.
- ICT linkage between CST and Depots and Depot to Depot were basic and under developed.
- Communication links from Depots to crews en-route relied on mobile phones making reacting to a genuine missed collection difficult.

47. Set-up

- There is a question mark over the work done by the external advisors in relation to the lack of local knowledge and the accuracy of information provided prior to commencement of the project. Internal resourcing of the officer project team, project planning and quality control of the output was also an issue.
- Existing route lists may not have been as up to date as they should have been prior to the reorganisation and supporting information systems largely rely on a paper based system.
- Database property information is not held on one master system and does not readily relate to post code information.
- Insufficient resources were in place to enable parallel collection and work shadowing prior to commencement of new rounds.

48. Operation of Policy

- Lack of clarity and consistency of the application of new waste policies between depots, and between managers and crews – kerbside/boundary collection, presentation of waste by the householder, definition of a missed collection and procedures for dealing with contamination.

- In some places several crews collect from the same property and therefore there is a high degree of risk that at least one of these collections will be incorrect and trigger a customer complaint. Ensuring all crews understand where to find the waste at a given property relies on impeccable communication standards.

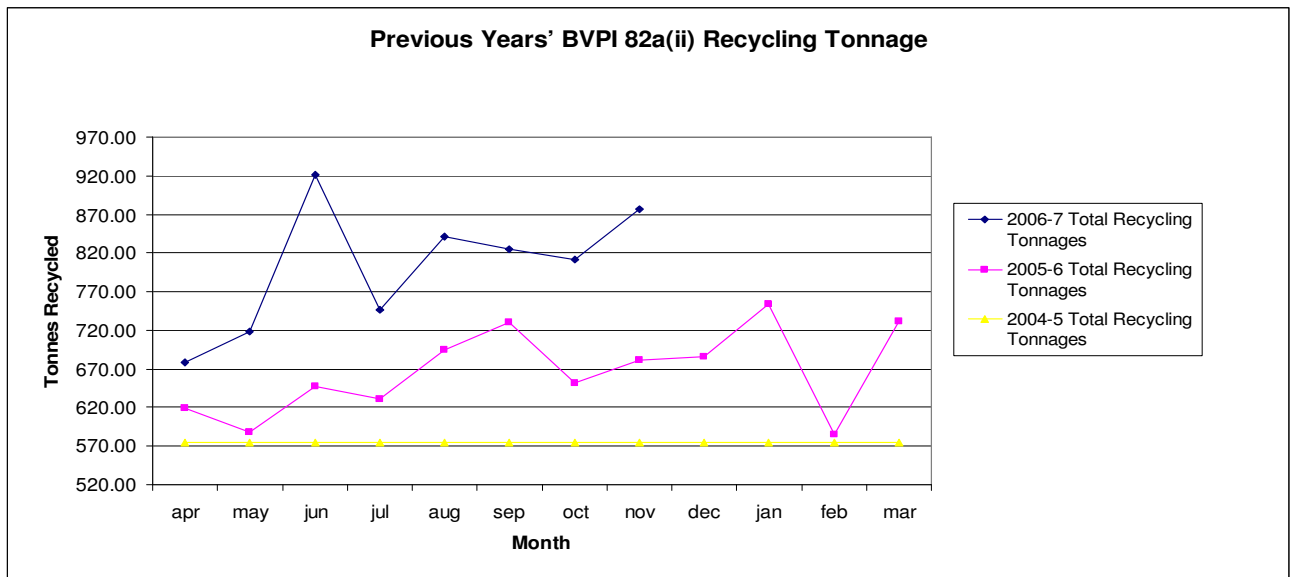
Current Status

49. The vast majority of waste collections happen each week and without a problem given that the crews are now becoming familiar with the new routes and complexities of local collection points. However there are properties that still report a missed collection of one sort or another. In one area we have had to run a Saturday collection service due to the non-completion of Friday's round which is not sustainable.
50. During the 5-day week crews finish at different times and the early finish crews are sent in to help with a crew that maybe behind on its round. Although this is getting the waste collected, the public sees a series of different refuse vehicles pass their door, in their view, unnecessarily. Zoning of the rounds has also meant that half of the fleet is driving around one discrete area in the north of the District and the other half is driving in the south of the District on a given day of the week. Again, this exacerbates the public's frustration at seeing so many refuse vehicles in one place.
51. The current number of vehicles being used on dry recycling collections is too high but is programmed this way currently to ensure collections are carried out on correct day and within timescale. In the medium term the option of moving to vehicles with a greater capacity to store the volume of recyclables or indeed to compact the material now being collected needs consideration. In overall terms, the quantity of collection vehicles being used means that it is difficult to identify whether the current collection service is the most efficient it can be in terms of distance travelled and speed of collection.
52. The budget forecast for the year for household waste collection is projected to over-spend in the region of £190,000 which in part will be redressed for 2007/08.

Waste Performance

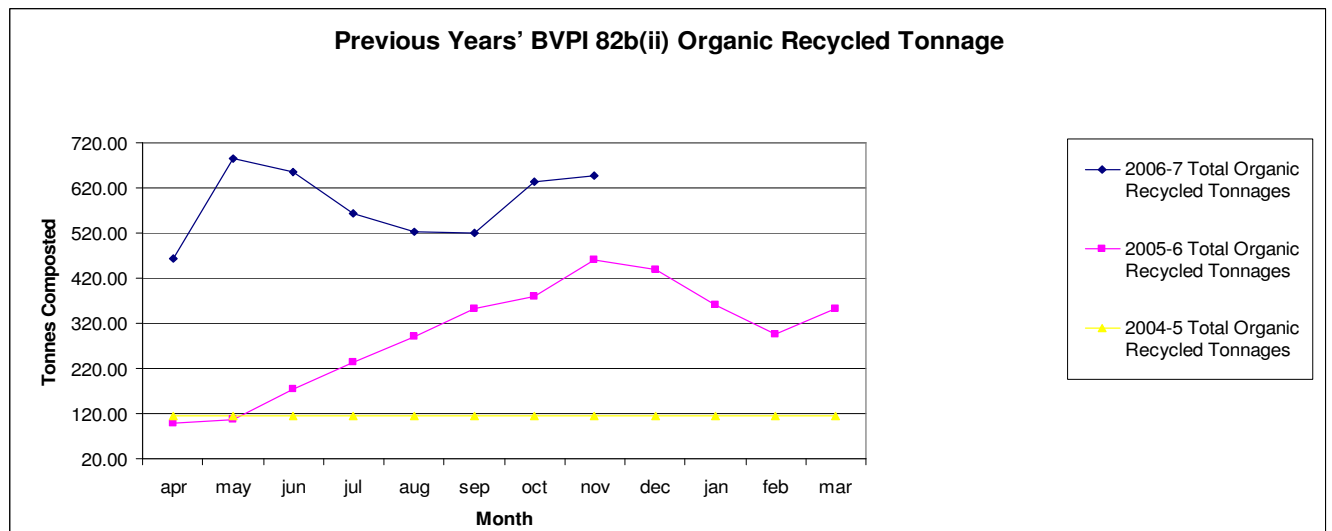
53. The main body of this report has outlined the mechanisms that have been put in place to manage waste. It is important that when reading this report that one does not lose sight of why we have implemented these changes in the first place. The key objective was to recycle waste and divert waste away from landfill.
54. **BVPI 82a** – Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for recycling.

2006/7	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Ave / Total to Date
Tonnes Recycled	677.67	719.05	921.02	746.43	840.70	825.30	811.75	876.19	6418.11
% of total waste recycled	25.31	23.36	25.77	25.88	26.17	26.80	27.60	27.85	26.10



55. BVPI 82b – Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for composting.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Ave / Total to Date
2006/7									
Tonnes Composted	461.89	684.82	653.79	563.70	523.05	518.78	632.21	646.82	4685.05
% of total waste composted	17.25	22.25	18.29	19.55	16.28	16.85	22.35	20.56	19.05



Next Steps

56. Officers have looked at the existing outcomes with a view to adjusting operational practices. This is being led by the Strategic Director (Operations) with support from both Heads of Operations and Business Development and key frontline staff from within the Operations Service with extensive local knowledge. The aim in the next six months is:

- To make the rounds efficient in terms of distance travelled, location of tip and weight of waste carried (on all 3 collection schemes) and number/type of vehicles we use.

- To improve paperwork and IT links with crews for route lists (as listed in paragraph 22).
- To make sure that back office staff and managers in Operations support the frontline staff by adhering to policy on missed bins due to bins not being out on time or contamination and adjust/update route lists on a weekly basis if necessary, as currently happening.
- To investigate the crew/driver's view of what further adjustments can be made to assist them. This may include limiting the number of different crews that collect from one house alone.
- To improve communication with each and Town/Parish Councils and our own Members so they know precisely what changes we may need to make and when and where householders should present their waste i.e. on the right week and at the right time of day.
- To improve financial monitoring and also information data bases - we need to look at assisted collections and weekly collections as part of this.
- To deliver the service within existing budget.

Risk Assessment

Risk Identified	Mitigating Actions
That waste is collected efficiently and cost effectively.	Further adjustments may be necessary to the current collection rounds in time. Any further changes to the frontline service however will only be undertaken once every eventuality has been considered.
Customer satisfaction reduces due to the alteration of the service and unreliable collections.	Further publicity and communication will be undertaken to highlight the correct use of the new services. It is fair to say that the current service does require adjustment to ensure householders receive the best service possible at an affordable price.
The effectiveness of communication links and Information data systems.	Subject to affordability improvements will be made to hardware updates and software systems in order to focus on delivery of a service the customer demands.
Adherence to waste policy and consistent application of policy.	Method statements for operatives will be amended to ensure policy is applied consistently. Staff at all levels will receive training and support on the waste policies in place.
Compliance on the grounds of equality	Current waste policies ensure assisted collections are made available to those households in need.

Conclusion

57. The waste collection service has been changed dramatically over the past three years to accommodate changes in customer expectation and legislation imposed on councils. Clearly the residents of the South Hams want to recycle and compost their waste and it is for this Council to determine how best to enable them to do so within the confines of a limited budget resource.
58. The Council and its residents are achieving huge results in the field of recycling which puts the South Hams in the top ten councils in the UK for recycling and composting. However, it is important not to lose sight of the householder in this achievement and ensuring our future waste services are as reliable as possible is essential. Recognising the major shift change in service which has taken place, further work will be undertaken to streamline collections and further embed new policies and procedures.

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22 February 2007

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Background documents:

None