

TO: EXECUTIVE – 9 February 2003

SUBJECT: Recycling

FROM: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 To agree the recommendations of Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee following their Scrutiny of recycling as detailed below:

- The success of the introduction of the red boxes and green bin recycling scheme, be noted;
- Consideration be given, as part of the budgetary and policy decisions over the next few cycles, to finding the additional £300,000 revenue cost for the introduction of the green bin recycling scheme across the district and funding for an additional post within the recycling services team.
- The gradual introduction of the mutli-materials recycling scheme be welcomed.
- The £1 charge for the collection of green waste for people not currently part of the green bin scheme, be continued;
- The possibility of recycling plastics remains an option but for the moment no further action be taken;
- Encouragement should be given, by the Council, to businesses to recycle more of the refuse;
- The possible introduction of special boxes should funding be granted by DEFRA to assist with the collection of both paper and multi materials from blocks of flats be welcomed;
- Both the Councils Recycling Team and ECT, hard work be applauded.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

2.1 To improve the recycling service within Warwick District.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 Environment Overview & Scrutiny has undertaken a thorough review of the Council's approach to recycling. Members have considered a number of alternative approaches and they have challenged current practices and activities. The recommendations in this report represent the considered and collective view of members of that committee as to the most appropriate way forward for the Council. A number of other options exist, ranging from doing considerably less to doing considerably more. These recommendations, however, are thought to be those that fit best the Council's budgetary and policy framework.

4. **POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council at this time. This service helps the Council to achieve one of the seven key themes within the corporate strategy "improve our services to provide a cleaner and greener environment".

Jose Compton
Chairman of Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee 9 September 2003 agenda and minutes
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2 December 2003 agenda and minutes

Areas in District Affected:	All.
Executive Portfolio Area and Holder:	Councillor Mrs Begg (Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services).
Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	Environment
Key Decision:	No
Included in Forward Plan:	No
If Yes, method of consultation:	

For further information about this report please contact:

Contact Officer: Graham Leach
Tel:(01926) 456102(Direct Line)
E-Mail: graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk

5.1 As part of its work plan for 2003/04 the Committee agreed to scrutinise recycling within the District. At its meeting in September 2003 the Committee agreed nine areas it wanted to investigate further. These were:

- 1) Process of selection for green bin and red box issuing.
- 2) Joint working arrangements with Warwickshire County Council and other local authorities;
- 3) The Council's performance on recycling against the defined action plan;
- 4) Public perception and impression of the services that the Council provide and the achievements which have been made;
- 5) Is the Council achieving its legal obligations for recycling?
- 6) How the Council itself considers recycling, what is practicable for recycling within the Council, and the resulting implications on resources;
- 7) How the Council can educate and encourage further participation in recycling throughout the District;
- 8) Scrutiny of the decisions made by the Recycling Steering Group; and
- 9) Performance of the Council's contractors who provide recycling services.

5.2 Following a further report in October 2003 it was agreed that pairs of Councillors would be charged with scrutinising different areas and would report back to the Committee in December. The areas were as follows:

Garden Waste - Councillors Mrs Blacklock and Gill.

Problems - including the areas and cases where recycling could be problematic - Councillors Copping and Smith.

Public Participation - including the public's view on the progress which the Council had made – Councillors Hatfield and Sandhar

Contractors - including the performance of the contractors providing the garden waste and paper recycling schemes - Councillors Mrs Compton and Davies.

5.3 After these mini reports were submitted to the Committee in December it was agreed that officers should use them and the content of the discussions at the meeting to form the basis of a report for submission to the Executive, following approval of the report by the Committee.

- 5.4 Following consideration of the information researched by the sub groups of the Committee, it was agreed that to date there was a number of positive aspects which had been achieved by the Council and its contractors which should be noted. These included its percentage of waste recycled which was the highest within Warwickshire.
- 5.5 The Committee felt that there was an urgent need to introduce the green bin recycling scheme across the remainder of the district, if nothing else as an act of equality. If this target is not achievable because of budgetary restraints a target date should be set to aim for introduction of the scheme and each resident not able to participate should be made aware of this date.
- 5.6 The gradual introduction of the multi materials recycling, across the district was recognised as the best way forward, for this to be publicised across the district and the imminent introduction of special boxes, for the collection of paper and multi materials, at blocks of flats, was also welcomed
- 5.7 Concern had been expressed, by the Committee at a previous meeting that there was a £1 charge, per bag, for the collection of green waste, from homes, outside of the green waste collection scheme. However following an explanation from the Council's waste strategy officer, it was agreed that this charge should remain.
- 5.8 The Committee considered that overall the market for plastics is extremely volatile which can have a major impact on local authority recycling schemes. The key element which determines the viability of schemes is the transportation of the collected material, either from door to door and then on to a transfer station or the final bulk haulage of the material to the reprocessor. Because plastic is so light, compaction levels have to be extremely high to make transportation economical. The measures introduced by the County Council's recycling centres are starting to address that problem, but kerbside collections in semi rural areas where the final reprocessor is some distance away and no bulking facilities exist is still uneconomical, even when the market for plastics is buoyant. Therefore it is recommended that the possibility of recycling plastics remains open, but no further action be taken.
- 5.9. The Committee were encouraged by the work of officers towards achieving its recycling targets. However, they did feel that support from the bigger companies within the district by increasing their levels of recycling both in the front line and behind the scenes.
- 5.10 The Committee also felt it was necessary to congratulate both the Council's recycling team and contractors (ECT) on their hard work. Although it should be noted that, for the service to continue to perform as effectively there is a desperate need for another team member to assist with the role of introducing the multi-materials recycling and closer scrutiny of the contractors performance.