

CITY OF PLYMOUTH



Scrutiny Report

Waste Reduction and Diversion Initiatives

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Working Group

DECEMBER 2005

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
Preface.....	3
Glossary.....	4
1.0 SUMMARY	5
2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS	5
3.0 INTRODUCTION.....	8
3.1 Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel / Select Committee	8
3.2 Terms of Reference.....	8
3.3 Scope of the Inquiry	8
3.4 Scrutiny Issue – the facts	8
4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION	9
4.1 The National Context.....	9
4.2 The Local Context – Experience in Plymouth	10
5.0 EVIDENCE	10
5.1 Written Evidence	10
5.2 Oral Evidence.....	10
6.0 FINDINGS	10
6.1 Limited and Unauthorised use of Civic Amenity Recycling Centres.....	10
6.2 Bulky Waste Collection Charging	10
6.3 Enforcement	11
6.4 Change to collection frequencies and container sizes	11
7.0 CONCLUSION	11
7.1 Overall Conclusion	11
7.2 Progress on Implementation	11
Appendix 1 – Contributors	12
Appendix 2 – Letter to all Councillors	13
Appendix 3 – Minority Report.....	16

Preface



For over 40 years, Plymouth has had the benefit of its own landfill site at Chelson Meadow. This has given us cheap and convenient waste disposal, something that has been denied to most other areas of the country. Other waste disposal authorities have had to pay greater charges to private sector landfill operators or find other alternatives such as incineration, which are usually even more expensive. In addition, our waste collection vehicles have been able to take our waste directly to Chelson Meadow. We have not had to arrange for our waste to be taken to facilities some distance from the city, which again is an expense most other authorities have had to incur for some years.

However there has been a down-side to having our own landfill site: we have had less incentive to reduce our dependence on landfill. There has been less need for Plymouth to look to waste reduction either by reducing the amount of waste produced or by increasing our recycling rates.

New legislation has now been introduced which imposes expensive penalties if waste disposal authorities fail to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. We also have to contend with the closure of Chelson Meadow within two years, which will not just increase the cost of final disposal but will give us the expense of transporting our waste some distance to another landfill site.

These two factors make it imperative for Plymouth to drastically improve our performance in both recycling and waste reduction. Our recycling rates are improving markedly but we are producing more waste per person than is produced in other areas. This review has been looking at how the latter problem can be addressed.

As a result of our review, we are suggesting various measures. The most important proposals are about raising awareness of the problem and the solutions. There is a wide appreciation that waste is a problem for all of us but some people still see waste just as a problem for the council. The measures we are proposing are intended to encourage residents to think about whether something really is rubbish and unlikely to be of any further use. We stress the need to ensure that people know what should be put in the green bin/box for recycling and what should go in the brown bin/black bag. We urge that enforcement action will be needed, but should be a last resort.

We also address the issues of the bulky waste collection, the use and misuse of our civic amenity sites, the frequency of waste collections and the sizes of the containers used for waste collection. These proposals may well not be popular but we think they are necessary.

I would like to thank the members of the Working Group, the witnesses from community groups, the lead officers Fiona Tame and Paul Marten and other council officers who have assisted, particularly our democratic support officer, Gemma Bartell

Councillor George Wheeler
Chair, Waste Reduction and Diversion Initiatives
Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Working Group

Glossary

BVPI – Best Value Performance Indicator

CARC – Civic Amenity Recycling Centre

DEFRA – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

HWRC – Household Waste Recycling Centre

LATS – Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme

MSW – Municipal Solid Waste

PACE – Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984

1.0 SUMMARY

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Working Group has completed its enquiry into Waste Reduction and Diversion. The working group's aim was to reduce the total waste produced in the city and actively encourage re-use and recycling rather than disposing of waste to landfill. Some of the following recommendations are of the majority of the working group and are not unanimous, please see the minority report attached (appendix 3).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Awareness Education and Enforcement

2.1 **We recommend** that a three tier enforcement approach against incorrect separation and fly tipping be adopted:

- Awareness-raising, education and encouragement (group or neighbourhood activity);
- Persuasion and warning (discussion with individuals);
- Enforcement action.

For the attention of: Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhood Services

2.2 **We recommend** that Plymouth City Council promote and support so far as possible re-use groups, noting the success of the Resettlement Agency.

For the attention of: Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhood Services and Deputy Leader

2.3 **We recommend** that there be an initial awareness-raising campaign and we endorse the present approach based on collection rounds. This should be followed up with continuation programme, involving individual discussions where compliance is not forthcoming. We recommend that consideration be given to the reopening of the Greenhouse Centre to help with the general awareness and education programme.

For the attention of: Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhood Services

2.4 **We recommend** that for increased enforcement, Plymouth City Council work with other teams and agencies where appropriate.

For the attention of: Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhood Services and Director for Development

Bulky Waste Collection

2.5 **We recommend** that Plymouth City Council introduce a charged for bulky waste collection service.

For the attention of: Cabinet

2.6 **We recommend** that there be a charge of around £15 for up to 3 items (according to the list of acceptable items held by the waste enquiry helpline).

For the attention of: Cabinet

- 2.7 **We recommend** that a system of concessionary charges should be operated. People on income-related benefits should be charged an amount of around £5 (one third of the full amount) for 3 items.

For the attention of: Cabinet

Civic Amenity Site usage

- 2.8 **We recommend** that steps be taken to prevent the illegal use of the civic amenity sites for trade waste which could include vehicle recognition software and other means. Measures be taken to ensure that non-Plymouth residents are either banned or charged through their Local Authority (This may require issuing Plymouth residents with permits).

For the attention of: Deputy Leader and Director for Development

- 2.9 **We recommend** that the existing layout of Chelson Meadow be redesigned to improve performance including better signage.

For the attention of: Deputy Leader and Director for Development

Frequency of Collections

- 2.10 **We recommend** that the collection system in wheeled bin areas should revert to the original system. The green and brown bins should be collected on a fortnightly basis, brown one week and green the next. Special arrangements should be made for households with special circumstances, e.g. for large families or those with conventional bins instead of 240 litre wheeled bins.

For the attention of: Cabinet

- 2.11 **We recommend** that in non-wheeled bin areas, householders are limited to putting out the equivalent to 3 full black bags of residual waste per week.

For the attention of: Cabinet

Resourcing / Staffing

- 2.12 **We recommend** that that two additional civic amenity sites be investigated to the north of the city.

For the attention of: Director for Development

Our recommendations, particularly for awareness raising, education, persuasion, and enforcement are likely to require additional staff. However the savings associated with increased performance may outweigh this cost.

- 2.13 **We recommend** that provision of extra staffing be considered.

For the attention of: Director for Development

Other recommendation

- 2.14 **We recommend** that investigation be made into whether and how the number of disposable nappies could be reduced.

For the attention of: Director for Development

Tracking Progress

- 2.15 **We recommend** that the Panel review the progress made on the recommendations of this review by July 2006

For the attention of: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Working group

3.1.1 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed at their meeting on 5 September 2005 to undertake a review of Waste Reduction and Diversion Initiatives. This was approved by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 3 November 2005. A working group was appointed comprising the following Members –

- Councillor Wheeler (Chair)
- Councillor Bray
- Councillor Vincent
- Councillor Viney

3.1.2 The working group met on 6 occasions between October and December 2005.

3.2 Terms of Reference

3.2.1 The purpose of the review, as identified in the working groups scrutiny plan was to reduce the total waste produced in the city and actively encourage re-use and recycling rather than disposing of waste to landfill.

3.3 Scope of the Inquiry

3.3.1 In addition to being more sustainable, reducing waste arisings will improve the Council's position in respect to statutory landfill allowance allocations – thereby reducing disposal costs and the Council's potential for further government financial penalties. The aim of the scrutiny was to -

- analyse new waste reduction initiatives;
- investigate best practice;
- assess initiatives with a view to prioritisation;
- recommend further action required to meet aim of the project

3.3.2 As part of its review, the working group

- held a number of evidence sessions;
- visited two examples of best practice;
- held a witness session;
- heard from Plymouth City Councillors on their concerns

3.4 Scrutiny Issue – the facts

3.4.1 In 2004/05 Plymouth City Council collected 160,000 tonnes of MSW of which 16 per cent was recycled or recovered.

- 3.4.2 Plymouth produces more waste than the national average - 530kg of waste collected per head of population.
- BVPI 86 shows that the cost of waste collected per household in 2004/05 was £52.68.
 - The cost of waste collection and amount collected per head is higher in Plymouth than the national average.
- 3.4.3 Chelson Meadow landfill site will close in 2007. This will add considerably to the overall costs of waste disposal in the city.
- 3.4.4 Plymouth City Council has the following statutory targets -
- 24 per cent recycling rate by 31st March 2006 (DEFRA).
 - by 2010 we must reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill by around 63,000 tonnes.

4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Plymouth City Council is responsible for collecting and disposing of the waste arising in Plymouth. The collection is managed by a total of 21 rounds, 14 in respect of domestic waste and 7 for recycling.

Plymouth City Council provides the residents of Plymouth with a weekly refuse collection and a fortnightly recycling collection as well as providing two civic amenity centres and 'bring banks' across the city for glass, cans, plastic and paper recycling.

4.1 The National Context

- 4.1.1 Plymouth City Council has been set a statutory recycling and composting rate of 24 per cent to be reached by 2005/06, by meeting this we will be helping England and Wales meet the overall target of recycling and composting 25 per cent by 2005/06.
- 4.1.2 Waste disposal and unitary authorities, are governed by LATS. This is the government's key measure to meet the demands of the European Landfill Directive in England, and began on April 1, 2005.
- 4.1.3 Tying in with the targets of the Landfill Directive, the LATS system sees progressively tighter restrictions on the amount of biodegradable municipal waste - defined as paper, food and garden waste - that disposal authorities can landfill.
- 4.1.4 The LATS system works by councils being set allowances on the amount of biodegradable material they can send to landfill. In two-tier areas, this refers to waste disposal authorities (County Councils) only. Plymouth City Council, a unitary authority, is responsible for both collection and disposal
- 4.1.5 These allowances are tradable, so that high landfilling authorities can buy more allowances if they expect to landfill more than the allowances they hold. Similarly, authorities with low landfill rates can sell their surplus allowances. Councils will then be fined £150 for every tonne they landfill beyond the limit set by the allowances they hold.

4.2 The Local Context – Experience in Plymouth

- 4.2.1 Chelson Meadow provides a cheap disposal route, which has led to a generous service, e.g. the free bulky waste collection service. Nevertheless, 10 years ago, Plymouth was in the forefront of separate kerbside collections for recyclables though that position has not been sustained
- 4.2.2 There is a Long-standing fortnightly kerbside recycling service as well as a free unlimited bulky waste collection service in Plymouth
- 4.2.3 Plymouth has to recycle or compost 24 per cent of the total waste arisings by 2005/06

5.0 EVIDENCE

5.1 Written Evidence

During the course of the review, the working group consulted Plymouth City Councillors with a view to seeking their thoughts on waste reduction issues. One response was received and is attached in appendix 2

5.2 Oral Evidence

- 5.2.1 The working group held sessions to hear from council officers and representatives from community groups between November and December 2005 and also visited two civic amenity sites in Somerset to speak with officers on the practices at their sites, one of which has recently won the Best Household Waste Recycling Centre in the country award. The findings of these sessions are at Section 6.0 FINDINGS of the report.

6.0 FINDINGS

6.1 Limited and Unauthorised use of Civic Amenity Recycling Centres

- 6.1.1 Reviews of other local authorities showed that tonnages are way above national average, surveys indicate that large amounts of trade waste are entering sites and that they are being used by non Plymouth residents.
- 6.1.2 To combat the problem there was a ban on vans and opening hours changed at Weston Mill and van permits were introduced at Chelson Meadow in November 2002 allowing up to 12 visits per year. However CA tonnages are now rising again, waste arising is still too high, trade abuse is still taking place and both CA sites are still being used by residents from outside the Plymouth boundary.

6.2 Bulky Waste Collection Charging

- 6.2.1 The working group was informed that Plymouth City Council currently offers a free collection service to all residents with very few constraints.
- 6.2.2 The current service arrangements do not encourage residents to reduce waste or consider re-use or recycling. They also encourage diversion of waste into the household waste stream which would normally be the responsibility of commercial organisations, e.g. sellers of white goods or house-builders.

- 6.2.3 Alternative disposal routes available are to take it to CARC sites, give to charity groups, or to use commercial services.
- 6.2.4 Charging (of £18 plus VAT for 1-6 items) ran for about three months from May 2001, during this time it was estimated that there was a 40 per cent reduction in requests and the call centre took the brunt of the calls regarding complaints about the charges. This was, however at a time when Plymouth was ahead of the game in recycling and had not learnt the lessons that it has now.
- 6.2.5 Estimates indicate an average charge of £15 a collection would save £200,000 per year, even allowing for additional costs such as administration, potential increased fly tipping, increased hot spot monitoring and additional enforcement.

6.3 Enforcement

- 6.3.1 The working group heard that the 'Clear up Pay up' Campaign concentrates on fly tips and putting bins out too early. It is run by the Environmental Regulation Team with 2 full time PACE trained officers.
- 6.3.2 Plymouth City Council have enforcement powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, sections 87 and 88, (littering or dumping), The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environmental Act 2005 (comes into force in April 06) (contamination of recycling bins), and The Waste (Household waste duty of care)(England and Wales) Regulation (householder has a responsibility to pass waste onto authorised person).

6.4 Change to collection frequencies and container sizes

- 6.4.1 There is currently a programme being rolled out ensuring that everyone has recycling facilities, including delivery of re-useable 75 litre bags to residents who do not have suitable room for boxes. This programme will be completed by the end of March 2006.
- 6.4.2 Introducing an alternative weekly collection would restrict the amount of recyclable household waste being thrown away as it acts as an incentive for people to recycle. Waste collected per head of population in Plymouth is well over the national average, currently we provide or allow residents up to 720 litres of waste capacity fortnightly as opposed to the recommended 480 litres.
- 6.4.3 A fortnightly collection will increase the tonnage recycled and divert more waste from landfill, helping Plymouth to meet its landfilling and recycling targets. In addition to this there are significant savings in collection costs as well as savings in disposal and increased income from the sale of increased recyclables collected.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 Overall Conclusion

- 7.1.1 Bulky Waste Collection is a "Special" service not a statutory service. Plymouth City Council should not continue to provide this service at no charge. At this stage it is not considered possible to recover the complete cost of collecting bulky waste, we should be recovering part of it.

7.2 Progress on Implementation

- 7.2.1 It is suggested that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel should ask the Cabinet Member to report on the progress of the approved recommendations arising from this review by July 2006

Appendix 1 – Contributors

The working group would like to express their sincere thanks to all those who provided information and advice:

Teresa Harvey, Sedgemoor District Council

Peter Lech, Somerset County Council

Paul Marten, Waste Projects Officer, Plymouth City Council

Colin Mercer, Sedgemoor District Council

Dave Oaten, Somerset County Council

Fiona Tame, Waste Projects Officer, Plymouth City Council

Mark Turner, Waste Projects Manager, Plymouth City Council

Staff at Saltlands Household Waste Recycling Centre

Staff at Highbridge Household Waste Recycling Centre

The Admirals Landing, Bridgewater

Appendix 2 – Letter to all Councillors



Barry Keel
Chief Executive
Floor 1 - Civic Centre
Plymouth
PL1 2EW

e-mail: gemma.bartell@plymouth.gov.uk
<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk>

Your Ref: Date: 03/02/06 Telephone Enquiries 01752 305546 Fax 01752 304819

My Ref: 5/SCOSP/GB Please ask for: Miss Gemma Bartell

Dear Councillor

Review of Plymouth City Council's Waste Reduction and Diversion Initiatives

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is undertaking a review of waste diversion and recycling initiatives. The Panel is looking to collect information on the way the existing schemes are run to enable it to consider the following points and will address the following questions during the review:

1. Should the Council introduce charges for bulky waste collection?
2. If so, what should the level of these charges be?
3. Should we offer concessions – if so, what type?
4. How do you feel about a two-tier enforcement approach – initial soft approach, for example a letter or visit and then a harder approach for persistent offenders for example, a fixed penalty notice?
5. What are your views on illegal usage of Chelson Meadow i.e. non-acceptable waste and non-Plymouth residents?
6. What are your views on alternate weekly collections of residual waste and limiting amount of waste per household?
7. Should we consider allowing large families or those with children in nappies additional refuse?
8. Do you consider that a clear education and awareness campaign and a strict enforcement policy would be of benefit?

The Panel would like to know your views on the identified issues. If you would like to have an input into this review we would be pleased to receive your written comments or notice that you wish to provide your views to the Panel in person at a public meeting on 28th November by Thursday 24th November 2005 addressed to Miss G Bartell, Democratic Support Officer, Democratic Support, Room 17/18, Plymouth City Council, Civic Centre, Plymouth, PL2 2EW.

Yours sincerely

Miss Gemma Bartell
Democratic Support Officer

Plymouth City Council - Conservative Group Response

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the above and hope that the City Council will fully consider all the objections and suggestions contained in this response document.

In answer to the questions posed in the letter reference 5/SCOSP/GB dated 21.11.05:

1. The Council should definitely **not** introduce charges for bulky waste collection. When charging was previously introduced it led to: increased fly tipping (including an influx in trade waste); stress for those who could not afford the charges (ie the elderly and unwaged); unstabilised bio hazardous items leaking noxious fumes and chemicals into the environment (ie fridges/freezers and asbestos).
2. Not applicable – see answer to 1
3. Not applicable – see answer to 1
4. Not applicable – see answer to 1
5. Please define ‘non acceptable’ waste.
We believe that non-Plymouth residents should be charged for using Chelson Meadow.
6. We believe that waste collection is one of the most important front line services we can offer. Many residents believe it’s the only service they receive from the Council. Given the amount of Council Tax that residents are paying, the least the Council can do is collect their waste on a weekly basis.
7. Not applicable – see answer to 6
8. We would require a clear and unequivocal education and awareness campaign to inform residents on how and what they can recycle, in order to reduce their waste. We will not support a strict enforcement policy.

In addition to the responses to the questions posed, the Conservative Group would like to outline some sensible proposals for waste reduction that includes:

1. Increasing the garden waste ‘green bag’ collection to the rest of the City, where appropriate (ie to those properties who have gardens).
2. Subsidising the provision of compost bins to residents where requested.
3. Re-opening the Education Centre at Chelson Meadow.
4. Increasing the number of different materials that can be collected for recycling - ie glass recyclables - as per other Local Authorities.
5. Streamlining the way recycling is collected across the City; the current system is a confusing mish-mash of different methods.
6. Reducing the lead-time for the recycling boxes etc to be delivered to residents when they are requested. The waiting time is currently in months.
7. Review a more efficient system of separating the recyclables collected, ie kerbside sorting, which will have the benefit of reducing contamination.

8. Review any new method of recycling and organic composting, i.e. bokashi empowered systems.
9. Consult with environmental organisations and take their advice on making the City more environmentally conscious in terms of waste minimisation.
10. Consult with other Local Administrations who have a better record than Plymouth City Council to learn best practice.
11. To lead by example, i.e. for the Council to only use recycled materials wherever possible (paper, pens etc).
12. Provide recycling collection for **all** education establishments – including the university - and government bodies across the whole City.
13. Stop penalising residents for the amount of waste produced by putting pressure on the retailers and manufacturers that create the waste – i.e. packaging - in the first instance.

Appendix 3 – Minority Report

Scrutiny Report Waste Reduction & Diversion Initiatives Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Working Group December 2005

Minority Report Submitted by Cllr David Viney on 13th December 2005

I Councillor David Viney, a member of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, was appointed to a working group tasked with researching waste reduction and diversion initiatives and I submit this minority report for your consideration.

Introduction

I am unable to support some elements of the majority report because having heard and considered the evidence submitted, on balance, I have come to an alternative conclusion.

Some parts of the report are unsubstantiated and very narrow. It seems to me to be a strategy to reduce costs as opposed to dealing with waste management.

Awareness Education & Enforcement

I cannot support recommendation 2.3. Enforcement must not form part of the awareness and education campaign, and should only be used in relation to fly tipping. In addition, I believe the Greenhouse Interactive Centre at Chelson Meadow must be reopened and part of the educational programme. Young people should be made aware of how to recycle effectively, which would dovetail into the schools recycling initiative.

Bulky Waste Collection

I cannot support recommendations 2.5 and 2.6. Charges should not be brought in for the following reasons:

- Evidence from community groups goes against the findings and recommendations of the working group. Community groups feel that fly tipping would increase and will lead to a two-tier society, ie where the single elderly resident is penalised. Surveys from these community groups are appended.
- Bulky waste charges were withdrawn due to massive objections from the public, when it was introduced in June 2001.
- The cost implications have not been quantified.
- Officers did suggest that diversion and reuse facilities should be explored more fully (recommendation 2.2). Utilising reuse facilities would obviously reduce the amount of bulky waste and thus reduce the reason for charging for bulky waste collection.

- The WEEE regulations for June 2006 will require manufacturers of white goods to get back 80 per cent of what they produce. This will help the accumulation of freezers / washing machines etc. As retailers will be the ones responsible for taking back old white goods when they deliver new ones, the reason for charging for bulky waste collection is again diminished.

Frequency of Collections

I cannot support recommendations 2.10 and 2.11. The frequency of brown waste collection should not be reduced due to the following reasons:

- The reduction in collections from weekly to fortnightly in respect of the brown bin will not reduce the arisings, and will in fact allow them to build up. Until the ratio of brown waste to recyclable waste is more equal, then the current weekly brown bin collection should remain.
- The cost implications for 'special collections' have not been quantified.
- The diversion of certain arisings in recyclable materials – which at present go into the brown bin – can be obviated by a significant and sustained education awareness and promotional campaign.

Residents tend to err on the side of caution in regard to their recycling, as they are anxious not to contaminate or cause problems in the program. Therefore, unless there is a clear and ongoing information system people are going to be cautious. Indeed, evidence was produced that people did not know what was recyclable and that recycling streams do vary depending on market conditions.

Other recommendations

With regards to recommendation 2.14, nappies are just one element of waste reduction that needs to be evaluated. A concerted campaign of working with retailers and manufacturers to reduce packaging etc, should also be conducted.

Conclusion

In summary, I would like to suggest that

- Section 2.1 should not include enforcement action for incorrect separation, as I believe this will negatively affect certain groups of people more than others.
- Sections 2.5 and 2.6 are not actioned, as I believe this will not produce the required result and will be detrimental to the environment.
- Sections 2.10 and 2.11 are not proceeded with; as until the balance of putrescible waste and recyclable waste is more equal the weekly collection of brown waste should be maintained.

End of Minority Report

Councillor David Viney

Witness Questions - Pembroke Street Estate Management Board

Should the Council introduce charges for bulky waste collection?	While revenue will be needed – will increase fly tipping.
If so, what should the level of these charges be?	If there has to be a charge - has to be enough to cover costs, no profit.
Should we offer concessions – if so, what type?	Would this be fair, if there is a tier system it should be realistic tier system.
How do you feel about a two-tier enforcement approach – initial soft approach, for example a letter or visit and then a harder approach for persistent offenders for example, a fixed penalty notice?	Too lengthy to administer after initial warning and fixed penalty notice.
What are your views on illegal usage of Chelson Meadow i.e. non-acceptable waste and non-Plymouth residents?	Pay tax – non Plymouth residents should pay waste tax
What are your views on alternate weekly collections of residual waste and limiting amount of waste per household?	Too long – problem in summer – problem with maggots
Should we consider allowing large families or those with children in nappies additional refuse?	Everyone has additional waste. Everyone should be treated equally.
Do you consider that a clear education and awareness campaign and a strict enforcement policy would be of benefit?	Does PCC have resources?

Witness Questions – Plymstock Community Forum

<p>Should the Council introduce charges for bulky waste collection?</p>	<p>NO – The Forum feel that the introduction of charges would be a retrograde step. This has already been proven when a charge was introduced some time ago. The increase in fly tipping was massive. Illegal dumping occurred not only throughout Plymouth, but surrounding countryside including Dartmoor and the South Hams. The cost of recovery and ‘sanitising’ these fly tipping sites far outweighs the initial cost of collection.</p>
<p>If so, what should the level of these charges be?</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Should we offer concessions – if so, what type?</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>How do you feel about a two-tier enforcement approach – initial soft approach, for example a letter or visit and then a harder approach for persistent offenders for example, a fixed penalty notice?</p>	<p>Enforcement would indeed prove very difficult, both for non-conformation of time & date collection on brown waste, but also non-recycling of green waste. There is a wide variety for homes in Plymouth i.e. student lets, H.M.O’s, Immigrants & Asylum Seeker rents. We feel that a letter, especially to non-ownership properties would, in most cases, be ignored and non-payment of fixed penalty notices would incur far more cost to retrieve. Recycling as a philosophy has to be encouraged and nurtured. It also has to be made simple and as easy as possible. The council should be making a greater effort to promote the environmental and economic benefits of recycling, and giving feedback and thanks to those people who do make the effort to recycle. The council have an obligation to both the residents and the environment as a whole to promote recycling as second nature to all. This is a global issue which nobody can ignore. The Council also has to be flexible when collecting green waste. Instances have been highlighted where additional green waste has not been collected and is left for two weeks and so it goes on leading to possible fly tipping.</p>
<p>What are your views on illegal usage of Chelson Meadow i.e. non-acceptable waste and non-Plymouth residents?</p>	<p>The forum feel that there are two sides of the equation here. Firstly, yes there should be strong enforcement and penalties for the illegal usage of Chelson Meadow, and non-Plymouth residents. However, we can envisage difficulty in enforcement such as identification of non-residents. We also feel that South Hams council should be providing more facilities for their residents. Alternatively, they should be made to pay a “Waste Tax” to Plymouth in order to cover costs incurred by Plymouth.</p>

<p>What are your views on alternate weekly collections of residual waste and limiting amount of waste per household?</p>	<p>This question has to be answered two-fold:</p> <p>a) BROWN WASTE</p> <p>To collect fortnightly would, in the forum's opinion, be a health hazard. When wheelie bins were first introduced alternate collections were put in place. Obviously, problems were encountered, hence the re-introduction of a weekly collection. These problems have not gone away so we feel there cannot be any justification in alternate weekly collections. The amount of waste produced per normal family with 2.4 children would far exceed the capacity of a normal sized wheelie bin which would then lead to black bags being left by the side of bins thus increasing the problems of rats, foxes, seagulls and other vermin. Categorically, this SHOULD NOT be considered.</p> <p>b) GREEN WASTE</p> <p>Again, education and active encouragement to recycle waste, which in most households is considered 'brown bin waste' i.e. vegetable waste to compost. Perhaps glass could also be included in green waste collection.</p>
<p>Should we consider allowing large families or those with children in nappies additional refuse?</p>	<p>Again, this would be difficult to manage and control. We could envisage that this would be open to abuse i.e. this facility being used by others who are not within the household. We also feel that limiting the amount of waste to the size of the household is not the way forward. We see more education throughout the whole of society as the answer. Take for example the question of disposable nappies. The council should be promoting the use of towelling nappies by raising awareness of cost savings i.e. washing etc as opposed to total cost of disposable nappies, especially highlighting the total cost of a span of say three years usage. Also the health hazards of having these soiled nappies lying around waiting for collection once a week, especially in hot weather. Surely some scientific tests have been carried out on just this subject. Certainly Friends of the Earth have carried out investigations and these should be publicised and highlighted vigorously by the Council as part of an education programme.</p>
<p>Do you consider that a clear education and awareness campaign and a strict enforcement policy would be of benefit?</p>	<p>The Forum wholeheartedly support a very active campaign of education and awareness as is apparent from our previous remarks. We do feel that the council has not been as active as it could have been in education etc.</p> <p>Our suggestions are as follows:-</p>

- | | |
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| | <p>a) Get out into the primary schools, talk to young children, catch their interest whilst they are still young and then recycling will become second nature to them when they are old enough to influence the situation.</p> <p>b) Make recycling as easy as possible i.e. more frequent and local recycling bins/skips.</p> <p>c) Clarification with a detailed booklet for each household outlining what can or cannot be put in the green and brown bins.</p> <p>d) Vigorously pursue the fly tippers with swinging fines.</p> <p>e) Build the energy to waste plant adjacent to the proposed Langage Power Station.</p> <p>f) Actively pursue the use of the old South Hams quarry site offered to Plymouth some years ago. Apparently this could take 50 years of waste. In view of the two proposed developments of Plymstock Quarry and Sherford, amounting to some 6,000 dwellings being built in the next few years, this is of paramount importance and one which should be actioned NOW. Not years later when it is too late. Forward planning has to be the key here.</p> <p>g) Finally, we feel it necessary to highlight the subject of commercial waste. It is apparent that commercial waste is not being given the incentive to recycle waste as well as it could. We suggest that issuing of different skips for recyclable and non-recyclable materials and the charging by weight of the non-recyclable would go some way to alleviating the situation. This could also be applied to the building trade when on renovation work.</p> |
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Finally, the Council should be congratulated on introducing the garden waste collection. This initiative has been a boon to all residents, especially the elderly, disabled and one-parent families who find it difficult to access Chelson Meadow. It has, we are sure, gone a long way to reducing garden waste fly tipping which has become so prevalent over the years. Well done and many congratulations.

Commercial Waste

All waste goes into one skip and dumped as too pricey to sort or recycle waste.

- Could have 2 skips – recyclables and non-recyclables
- Charge for non-recyclables be greater than recyclables
- Goosewell school have a recycling scheme – all schools have.
- Schools promoting recycling – on going and helps to have a dedicated person.