

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING – 29TH APRIL 2009

Report Title. RECYCLING – SOURCE SEPERATED & CO-MINGLED COLLECTION METHODS IN HARINGEY

Report of Councillor Gina Adamou – Chair of the Scrutiny Review Panel.

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Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: Non Key Decision

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

To present to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the final report and recommendations of the Recycling Review of Source Separated and Co-Mingled Collection Methods in Haringey

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (if necessary)

2.1. N/A

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

The Greenest Borough Strategy

The work of this Scrutiny Review links closely to the Council's priorities for a The Greenest Borough Strategy aimed at highlight the key environmental issues that the council needs to tackle.

4. Recommendations

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees the recommendations of the report.

5. Summary

5.4 The report sets out the findings of the Panel.

6. Chief Financial Officer Comments

6.1 Recommendations agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be considered by the Cabinet. Some of the recommendations will have financial implications for the Council, possibly involving significant additional resources. These will need to be costed so that additional funding requirements are clearly identified either from existing approved budgets or from external bidding opportunities where appropriate, or through the Council's business and budget planning framework.

6.2 Recommendations will also have implications for the development of a new waste management contract. The Urban Environment Directorate will need to ensure it obtains best value for the Council from any new arrangements eventually agreed for delivering waste management services.

7. Head of Legal Services Comments

8. Equalities &Community Cohesion Comments

8.1 These are considered throughout the report

9. Use of appendices /Tables and photographs

9.1 Please see the report.

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Cleaner Environment Act 2005

Overview & Scrutiny Work programme 2009/2010

11. Background

11.1 A Scrutiny review into Waste, Recycling, Collection and Disposal was completed in April 2008. The review made a number of recommendations on a range of issues aimed at improving performance across various waste management activities within the Service. The Cabinet responded to the recommendations on 15th July 2008 and commented that the Council's own comparison of source-separated and mixed material collection methodologies demonstrated that the latter [mixed, co-mingled] was more cost effective for Haringey when this issue was examined in detail in 2006. Over 65,000 properties receive a regular collection of food and green garden waste on a weekly basis as part of the mixed recycling service, which will be extended to remaining 'kerbside' households during 2009.

11.2 Recycling Collections In Haringey

11.3 The recycling bank network in Haringey has been converted to co-mingled facilities. Panel Members suggested that Haringey should consider retaining separate paper and glass banks in some parts of the borough to preserve the quality of the recycling and achieve a better market value. The Panel also suggested that the council should consider options other than co-mingled.

11.4 The recycling banks are now part of an expanded network of recycling facilities for estates, blocks of flats and schools. It is not cost-effective to operate these separately, so the recycling banks have been converted to co-mingled so that the same vehicles can serve all sites. This has also allowed plastic bottles and cardboard to be collected, improving the service for residents living in flats above shops.

11.5 Haringey would continue to operate its existing recycling fleet for the next few years. However, a four-stream collection system could be looked at when the new waste contract is in place, as the refuse fleet could be replaced with split-bodied vehicles.

11.6 Conclusions

11.6 The debate about which of the two methods is better is ongoing. Haringey provide co-mingled services where the materials are collected from households and then taken to a Materials Recovery Facility [MRF] for sorting into constituent materials and from there are sent to the reprocessors. Some authorities operate the two systems side by side. Hackney has been running co-mingled collections systems on housing estates where there are communal collection containers and then source-separated collections for individual low rise properties.

11.6 The aim is to make recycling easier for the average householder. The view is that co-mingled collections [where all dry recyclables are placed by householders into just one bag ready for collection] are the way forward, as oppose to source separated collections [where householders are expected to separate their recycling at home for refuse workers, working “kerbside” to then put these sorted materials by hand into separate containers on their vehicles, which some believe are less efficient, both environmentally and economically. The traditional argument against co-mingled is that it gets more contaminated than kerbside. Due to advances in technology the situation has improved. Nine of the ten best performing local authorities, when it comes to recycling rates, use co-mingled collection methods and reporting up to 20% increase in recycling rates.

11.7 One of the main issues regarding the co-mingled verses source separated collections debate is the level of contamination in co-mingled collections and the reject rates from the MRFs as well as the quality of the recyclate from the MRFs and the markets for the material resulting. Some UK reproprocessors are reluctant to take material that has been collected from a co-mingled service. Levels of contamination are higher for co-mingled collections compared to source separated services. However there is a need to future proof design of MRFs to take account of advancement in technology.