

Appendix 1: Recycling Centres Review – Option Appraisal Summary

Background

A strategic review of recycling centre provision within Angus was undertaken during 2015/16. The objectives of the review were as follows:

1. Fulfil recommendation 3 of the Scrutiny and Audit Report 328/14, namely to “consider the need for the current number of recycling centres; assess the fitness for purpose of each centre; look at options for extending the range of materials that can be recycled at the centres; and highlight investment needed to create an appropriate number of centres to complement the kerbside recycling service.”
2. Realise an ongoing annual saving of £250,000 as agreed at a special meeting of Angus Council held on 13 February 2014.
3. Facilitate increased opportunities for recycling and reuse at recycling centres in line with the Scottish Government’s Zero Waste Plan.
4. Improve traffic management at recycling centres by reducing waiting times for customers while skips are being exchanged and eliminating traffic congestion.
5. Provide strategic regional coverage of recycling centres within Angus with facilities located in or near to areas with the highest population density.
6. Provide an appropriate number of recycling centres for a council with the population size of Angus.
7. Deliver maximum availability of centres in terms of opening hours within the resources available

A number of potential options were identified for consideration, and in order to identify a preferred option which met the above objectives a comprehensive option appraisal exercise was undertaken.

The current status of each site and potential for development was also considered and is summarised in table 1.

Table 1 – Current status of recycling centres

Recycling Centre	Space restrictions on no. of containers	Occasional queuing traffic onto main road	Area available to expand site	Other comments
Arbroath	No	Yes	Yes	
Montrose	Yes	Yes	Yes	Suffers from traffic congestion
Forfar	Yes	Yes	No	Suffers from traffic congestion
Brechin	Yes	Yes	No	Suffers from traffic congestion and limited circulation space within the centre
Carnoustie	Yes	Yes	Limited	Next to council depot. Requirement to drive through centre to access depot
Monifieth	Yes	Yes	Limited	Required to make payment to MoD for access to land
Kirriemuir	Yes	Yes	No	Single car access lane into site, site on a hill and bend

Identification of options

Potential options were identified and then short listed based on their operational feasibility and whether they could deliver the objectives of the review, in particular the £250,000 saving target. The five options detailed in [table 2](#) were put forward for full appraisal.

Financial information was gathered for each of the identified options and the estimated savings for each option is shown in [table 2](#). This takes into account reductions in costs for staff, transport, rates, repairs/maintenance, land rental and SEPA licencing. Additional staffing costs are accounted for where applicable.

Table 2 – Summary of identified options

	Option Summary	Estimated saving
1	<p>Arbroath: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. No change to current opening hours</p> <p>Forfar/Kirriemuir: Development of a new recycling centre in the area. No change to current opening hours</p> <p>Brechin, Carnoustie, Kirriemuir, Forfar, Monifieth, Montrose: Close</p>	£332,000
2	<p>Arbroath: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. No change to opening hours</p> <p>Montrose: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. No change to opening hours</p> <p>Forfar/Kirriemuir: Development of a new recycling centre in the area</p> <p>Brechin, Carnoustie, Kirriemuir, Forfar, Monifieth: Close</p>	£258,000
3	<p>Arbroath: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. No change to opening hours</p> <p>Brechin: Retain but open only Saturday and Sunday</p> <p>Carnoustie: Retain but open only Saturday and Sunday</p> <p>Forfar/Kirriemuir: Development of a new recycling centre in the area. Open 7 days per week</p> <p>Montrose: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. No change to opening hours</p> <p>Kirriemuir, Forfar, Monifieth: Close</p>	£210,000
4*	<p>Arbroath: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. Opening hours changed to 11am to 4pm, 7 days per week.</p> <p>Montrose: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. Opening hours changed to 11am to 4pm, 7 days per week</p> <p>Forfar/Kirriemuir: Development of a new recycling centre in the area. Opening hours changed to 11am to 4pm, 7 days per week.</p> <p>Brechin: Opening hours 11am to 4pm but only open Fri to Monday</p> <p>Carnoustie: Opening hours 11am to 4pm but only open Fri to Monday</p> <p>Kirriemuir, Forfar, Monifieth: Close</p>	£245,000
5*	<p>Arbroath: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. Opening hours changed to 9.15am to 4pm seven days per week</p> <p>Montrose: Retain and carry out improvement works to enhance layout. Opening hours changed to 12noon to 4pm, Monday to Friday, and 9.15am to 4pm Saturday & Sunday</p> <p>Forfar/Kirriemuir: Development of a new recycling centre in the area. Opening hours changed to 12noon to 4pm, Monday to Friday, and 9.15am to 4pm Saturday & Sunday</p> <p>Brechin: Opening hours changed to 12noon to 4pm, weekdays and 9.15am to 4pm Saturday & Sunday but only opened Fri to Monday</p> <p>Carnoustie: Opening hours changed to 12noon to 4pm, weekdays and 9.15am to 4pm Saturday & Sunday but only opened Fri to Monday</p> <p>Kirriemuir, Forfar, Monifieth: Close</p>	£253,000

* Reduced opening hours and days could be changed as needed provided overall working hours remains the same e.g. change from 11am – 4pm to 9am – 2pm.

The option to retain the 7 existing recycling centres with the introduction of a charging system for all customers coming on to the sites was evaluated following feedback from the

community. After careful consideration a decision was taken not to pursue this option on legal and practical grounds. The introduction of a charge would potentially contravene the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and the introduction of a barrier or ticket type system would potentially exacerbate queues and traffic congestion on site. The current locations and layout of sites are not considered compatible with such as scheme and significant capital investment would be required to make them suitable.

Assessing and Analysing non-financial factors

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of each option, as shown in [table 4](#) was carried out. Each option was then scored against each of the identified objectives as detailed in table 3.

Table 3 – Scoring of options against objectives

Positive alignment to objective scored as low (1), medium (2) or high (3)

Objective	Option					Comment
	1	2	3	4	5	
Fulfil recommendation 3 of the Scrutiny and Audit Report 328/14	3	3	2	1	1	Options 4 and 5 do not address the number of current facilities, fitness for purpose of each centre or range of materials recycled as per the recommendation
Realise an ongoing £250,000 annual saving	3	3	1	3	3	Only option 3 would not fully deliver the target saving
Facilitate increased recycling and reuse at recycling centres	3	3	2	2	2	Options 3 to 5 would mean some centres remaining open where space restricts opportunities for increased recycling and reuse
Improve traffic management at the recycling centres, including waiting times for customers	3	3	1	1	1	Options 3 to 5 would mean centres remaining open where there are space restrictions and waiting times while skips are exchanged. This would be exacerbated by reduced opening times/days
Provide strategic regional coverage of Recycling Centres within Angus	1	2	3	3	3	All options would mean some having to travel further but more severe for options 1 and 2
Provide an appropriate number of recycling centres for a council with the population size of Angus	3	3	1	1	1	Based solely on population, 3 recycling centres is considered adequate for a council with population size of Angus
Maximise opening hours within resources available	3	3	2	1	1	Options 3 to 5 would mean shorter opening hours with half day or full day closures at some centres
Totals	19	20	12	12	12	

The table below shows the impact of each option in terms of reduction in the number of opening hours at each of the existing centres (Forfar and Kirriemuir were combined on basis that a new centre to serve both areas is proposed as part of all the options).

Recycling Centre	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Arbroath	0	0	0	33%	7%
Brechin	100%	100%	74%	62%	59%
Carnoustie	100%	100%	74%	62%	59%
Forfar/Kirriemuir	0	0	0	33%	36%
Monifieth	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Montrose	100%	0	0	33%	36%

Preferred Option

Whilst options 4 & 5 delivered the required level of saving, they fell short in terms of meeting the other objectives identified in this review and in particular do not address Recommendation 3 of the Scrutiny and Audit report 328/14.

One of the main issues experienced at existing centres is traffic congestion and vehicles queuing back on to main roads during busy periods. The introduction of reduced opening hours at all centres would inevitably lead to increased volumes of traffic when the centres were open, exacerbating problems with traffic congestion. This gives rise to very real health and safety concerns not only within the centres themselves but also on public roads. In addition the risk of skips filling up more quickly during the constrained opening hours may lead to additional site closures during peak times resulting in frustration for customers and increased levels of dissatisfaction overall. Should the envisaged problems with traffic management materialise, then it must be noted that there are no smooth or easy operational solutions open to management to overcome these. Issues with lack of space, limited opportunities for recycling and reuse would not be addressed and the proposed investment in a new facility, which would only be open a few hours every day, may need to be reviewed in terms of best value, as would the proposed investment in Arbroath and Montrose.

Given the financial pressures facing the Council (as outlined in Section 6 of the main report), it is highly likely that if option 4 or 5 was selected as the preferred option, then the possibility of closing these centres at a future date to deliver a further saving could not be discounted. The provision of reduced opening hours across the full estate would mean when the saving is revisited those facilities that could be retained would be done so on the reduced hours further eroding the service in all areas of Angus. Options 4 and 5 are therefore short term stop gap options that have a very limited shelf life in the current climate and are not recommended.

In conclusion, option 2 was identified as the preferred option as it met the agreed savings target and was most strategically aligned with the objectives of the option appraisal and the recommendation of the Scrutiny Panel.

A major positive is that it would provide three adequately sized recycling centres that would improve traffic management on site (including elimination of waiting time for customers while skips are exchanged) and provide more space/opportunities for recycling and reuse of materials collected at the sites.

The SWOT analysis did identify that a weakness of the preferred option was the increased distances a proportion of Angus residents would need to travel to their nearest Recycling Centre. This would be offset to some extent by an enhanced customer experience through the elimination of waiting time when skips need changed and improved layouts and designs at the remaining centres.

The increased environmental impact from residents having to travel further to their nearest recycling centre was also identified as a risk. The environmental impact of this review should be considered in the overall context of the Council's move towards more source segregated recycling and not viewed in isolation. The roll out of kerbside recycling services over the past two years means that householders are now able to recycle a wide range of materials on their doorstep, eliminating the need to travel to a recycling centre or neighbourhood recycling point. Figures shown in Section 4 of the main report demonstrate that the volume of materials such as cans, plastic, paper, cardboard and glass collected at recycling centres has dropped by 46.28%, which strongly suggests people are now recycling at home rather than travelling to recycling centres. The positive impact of the reduction in visits mitigates any negative impact brought about by increased travelling distance.

It is also anticipated that any adverse environmental impact from closing centres would be mitigated to a degree by a reduced number of service vehicle movements and the anticipated increase in recycling linked to improved layout/design of sites and an expanded range of recycling and reuse opportunities. A change to customer behaviour would also be encouraged through an education and awareness campaign e.g. more multi-purpose trips and less trips with smaller amounts of waste and a positive promotion of the special uplift service.

The risk of a significant increase in fly tipping was identified as a threat and was highlighted in community feedback. Similar concerns were raised two years ago when the decision was taken to reduce the opening hours of recycling centres in Angus and remove evening opening, but no increase in fly-tipping materialised. The vast majority of people are law abiding and environmentally responsible, and are not likely to commit a crime when there is a very real threat of prosecution. There is a lack of case studies or data from other Scottish Councils to confirm the likelihood of this occurring; however two councils that have closed recycling centres and were contacted and they reported no increase in fly tipping as a result. Overall, the severity of any fly tipping problem was considered a low level of risk to have a significant financial impact, and as it is a criminal offence this would be tackled through increased vigilance and prioritising investigation of all fly tipping incidences.