

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 17 JANUARY 2017

CHARTER FOR HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING IN SCOTLAND

REPORT BY HEAD OF REGULATORY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES

ABSTRACT

The Scottish Government have introduced a Charter for Household Recycling in Scotland and associated Code of Practice. This report considers the potential implications for Angus Council and recommends sign-up to the Charter.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Agrees to sign the Charter for Household Recycling in Scotland and agree to the development of a transition plan for future consideration.
- (ii) Agrees to the amendments to the waste and recycling bin policy as shown in **Appendix 1**.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Our communities are developed in a sustainable manner

3. BACKGROUND

In late 2013, the Scottish Government and COSLA agreed to convene a Zero Waste Taskforce to provide strategic leadership and direction in order to address the challenges around maximising the economic footprint from waste management in Scotland.

One of the key recommendations from the Taskforce was that local authorities should be empowered to move towards more consistent recycling collection systems across Scotland. The key principles and approach of this consistent system have been articulated through the development of a Household Recycling Charter and the associated Code of Practice.

The Household Recycling Charter and associated Code of Practice, was introduced by the Scottish Government and agreed by COSLA Leaders on 28 November 2015. Richard Lochhead (then Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment) wrote a letter to all Scottish local authority Leaders and Chief Executives, dated 4 February 2015, urging them to sign-up to the Charter.

The Charter sets out 21 high-level principles and refers to the development of a Code of Practice. The full text of the Charter can be seen in **Appendix 2**. The Code of Practice contains a more detailed set of outcomes that will deliver the aspirations of the Household Recycling Charter and sets out specific requirements that signatories are expected to follow. These relate both to the design of waste and recycling collection systems and policies that support collection systems. The full text of the Code of Practice can be seen in **Appendix 3**.

Any local authority which signs the Charter will be expected to review their practices against the Code of Practice. Councils will develop a transition plan with support from Zero Waste Scotland, detailing what service changes would be required in order to follow the principles contained in the Code of Practice and identifying the associated costs.

Where there is a funding shortfall when compared to existing budgets, an application would be made to the Scottish Government for support. If this application is rejected, no service changes will be required to be made. This essentially means signing the Charter does not commit local authorities to implementing service changes that will result in higher costs than currently budgeted for.

Where funding is agreed, any changes in service will be developed into an Implementation Plan in line with the Council's requirements with support from Zero Waste Scotland. Any funding provided would be on a short term basis and would be to assist, for example, migrating from the current single household recycling bin to two recycling bins for the separate collection of the component materials.

Sign up to the Charter is voluntary but councils are being strongly encouraged to sign up by the Scottish Government, Zero Waste Scotland and COSLA.

4. CURRENT POSITION

The policies detailed in the Code of Practice are mainly consistent with current Angus policies as detailed in the current Waste and Recycling Bin Policy agreed by Communities Committee on 4 March 2014 (Report 112/14).

The major issue regarding transition to a Code of Practice compliant collection system would be the specified requirement for a three stream recycling system – there would be the requirement to collect the following materials separately either at the kerbside or via neighbourhood recycling points: paper/card; mixed glass; and metals, plastics and cartons. Angus Council currently collect all these materials in a single bin (later sorted at a recovery facility). A major service change would therefore be required.

20 of the 32 Scottish local authorities have already signed up to the Charter. This includes neighbouring Tayside authorities in Dundee and Perth & Kinross.

Reference is made to Report 170/16 to the Policy and Resources Committee on 26 April 2016, which set out a programme of collaborative work in partnership with neighbouring Councils, to commence in 2016/17. "Integration of Waste" was identified as one of the 10 areas for potential collaborative working.

Discussion is currently on-going with Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils regarding opportunities for shared waste management services. It has been identified that the transition to a single household waste and recycling collection system across the three authorities would enhance opportunities for shared services and that the sign up to the Recycling Charter by all would facilitate this process.

Consultation has taken place with Zero Waste Scotland and they have confirmed that they would assist in the development of a transition plan and business case on behalf of all three authorities for a single household collection system that was compliant with the requirement of the Charter and Code of Practice. For this to be progressed, however, all three authorities will need to be signatories of the Charter.

5. PROPOSALS

It is proposed that Angus Council sign up to the Charter for Household Recycling in Scotland so that opportunities for shared waste management services with neighbouring Tayside authorities can be properly explored. This is essential to enable Zero Waste Scotland to support the development of a transition plan and business case on behalf of all three authorities for a single household collection system.

It is important to stress that signing the Charter does not commit local authorities to implementing service changes that will result in higher costs than currently budgeted and that

approval from members is only sought for development of a transition plan. Any proposal to proceed with actual changes to waste and recycling services will require further scrutiny and approval from members.

It should also be recognised that if there was a change to a Charter compliant system this would likely be several years away – there is no maximum length for a transition period by the Charter as it is understood that local circumstances may influence when changes can be implemented.

It is recognised that the current kerbside recycling service is working extremely well as highlighted by the fact Angus had the highest household recycling rate in Scotland in 2015. However the review of waste and recycling services is something that should be carried out on a periodic basis to ensure that services are fit for purpose, deliver best value and are in accordance with national priorities.

The Communities Committee on 4 March 2014 (Report 112/14) agreed to the adoption of a waste and recycling bin policy, which set out policies and procedures associated with the provision of waste and recycling bins. This was put in place in preparation for the roll-out of the new kerbside recycling service that year. Now that the kerbside recycling service has been in operation for over 2 years and there have been changes made to the food and garden waste services it is proposed that the content of the policy is reviewed. This also provides the opportunity to align our policies more closely to those set out in the Charter and Code of Practice. The proposed changes to the policy are shown as tracked changes in **Appendix 1**.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications directly associated with this report. Sign up to the Charter only requires local authorities to develop and consider a transition plan. The Charter does not commit local authorities to implementing service changes that will result in higher costs than currently budgeted for.

A further report would be submitted to Communities Committee if there was a proposal to implement any significant change to the current waste and recycling collection service.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Report 112/14 to Communities Committee
- Report 170/16 to Communities Committee

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List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Angus Waste and Recycling Bin Policy
- Appendix 2 – Charter for Household Recycling in Scotland
- Appendix 3 – Code of Practice (for Charter for Household Recycling in Scotland)