

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Environment Committee – 26 May 2010

RECYCLING INCENTIVE SCHEMES REVIEW

Report by the Depute Director (Environment)

Following the approval of recycling incentive schemes by the Environment Committee in June 2008, these were monitored in order to evaluate their impact. This report highlights the result of the evaluation and makes recommendations for future recycling incentives in Perth and Kinross.

RECOMMENDATION

The Environment Committee is asked to agree:

- (a) To the revised proposals laid out in the report with regards to the Recycling Centres and Points incentive scheme, along with the provision of bus travel to the Waste Education Boardwalk for local schools.

BACKGROUND

1. In 2008 the Environment Committee agreed to trial four incentives schemes (Report No 08/320), to encourage increased recycling at Recycling Centres and Points, and at the kerbside, for an initial period of one to two years.
 - Proposal One – Recycling Centres
 - Proposal Two – Recycling Points
 - Proposal Three - Kerbside Recycling
 - Proposal Four – Waste Education Boardwalk, Friarton
2. Proposal one was an extension of an existing scheme which had been operating for several years. The original scheme had been introduced to encourage garden waste recycling at Recycling Centres. The new scheme, which was introduced in August 2009, saw members of the public receiving a prize draw ticket when they participated in recycling any material at Recycling Centres.
3. Proposal Two complemented Proposal One, with Council operational staff issuing prize draw tickets to members of the public who were participating in recycling at Recycling Points.

4. The uptake of the Recycling Centres and Points scheme was monitored via the numbers of tickets issued. Around 25,000 prize draw tickets in total were distributed during the period August 2009 to February 2010. Tonnages of materials are continually monitored from Recycling Centres. Physical improvements at the Council's Recycling Centres, alongside, the incentives scheme, have resulted in landfill diversion rates from these Centres increasing by 13%. However in practice it has not been possible to calculate what proportion of contribution the incentive scheme has made to this improvement.
5. Proposal Three was designed to encourage householders who had recently moved onto the Kerbside Recycling Scheme, to put out the correct bin on the correct day with the correct materials. In 2008/09, a small trial of a 'Golden Ticket' kerbside incentive was undertaken with 5,000 households. The scheme asked householders to attach a golden hanger to their blue lidded bin on the next uplift date, to be entered into a prize draw.
6. The uptake by householders was higher than expected, with over 1,000 entries received during the period March to May 2009.
7. Proposal Four was originally based around asking people visiting the Waste Education Boardwalk (WEBWalk) to complete a quiz, and each month a winner would be chosen from all the entries. The winner would then receive vouchers.
8. The number of visitors to the WEBWalk was the basis for monitoring the usage of the facility. This scheme was never intended to have a measurable result in terms of recycling tonnages, as highlighted in the report to Committee in 2008 (Report No 08/320). However it is worth noting that feedback received from visitors using the WEBWalk has highlighted a high level of visitor satisfaction with facility and with the Waste Awareness Co-ordinators who guide the WEBWalk visits.
9. From discussions with many local schools, it had emerged that while most schools would like to visit the WEBWalk, the major barrier to schools participating was the cost and logistics of securing transport to the site. A very successful trial of offering schools bus travel to and from the WEBWalk was offered in September 2009 to all Council schools, with 10 schools (on a "first come first served" basis), being provided with travel to the facility. Due to the success of the initial trial, the scheme was continued with a further 10 schools receiving bus travel to the WEBWalk in early 2010. This allowed an additional 650 school children to visit the WEBWalk. Prior to this the annual average total number of visitors to WEBWalk was around 350..
10. The WEBWalk also plays a significant role in delivering environmental education as part of the Curriculum for Excellence. The recently launched Perth & Kinross Council's 'Waste Awareness Issues & Solutions - Resource Pack for Schools 3-18 Curriculum' highlights how waste awareness and the WEBWalk can be used in a number of curriculum areas.

PROPOSALS

11. Based on the monitoring and evaluation undertaken for the four proposals there are 3 options that can be considered. In the current financial climate, it is even more important to balance the benefits of ‘rewarding’ householders and schools that go out of their way to participate in, and learn about, waste and recycling, against the negative perception that the public can have against incentive schemes. The options considered are as follows:

Option 1	Continue with the incentive schemes previously approved by Committee
Option 2	a) Operate the monthly Recycling Centres and Recycling Points scheme. This scheme would be refocused on targeting materials which are harder for the public to recycle and those that are calculated to have a high tonnage still left in residual waste stream (for example we are currently only recycling 35% of the total glass in the waste stream). Participant’s would receive prize draw tickets for recycling these specific materials.
	b) Introduce bus travel for schools as an incentive to visit the WEBWalk
Option 3	Stop all incentive schemes.

12. The three options were assessed in Appendix 1 through a SWOT analysis. Option 2 is the proposed approach as it builds upon the strengths and opportunities arising from the existing incentive schemes.
13. This Option excludes the continuation of a kerbside incentive scheme. In practice it has proven difficult to gauge changes in householder behaviour through this scheme, without considerable resource-intensive follow up survey work.
14. Although Option 3 offers cost savings, the impact would mean a reduction in school visits to the WEBWalk, and may discourage people from segregating recyclable materials from general waste, particularly when visiting Recycling Centres and Points.
15. The proposed option maximises the use of existing facilities and resources and, with regards to the Recycling Centres and Points, allows the opportunity to focus incentives on specific materials where capture rates require further improvement.
16. For the proposed schemes, the administration and management is already in place. It is intended that the management of the bus travel scheme will remain unchanged. For each of the four school terms, all Perth and Kinross schools will be offered the chance to apply for the bus travel on a “first come first served basis”. This offer is limited to one trip per school per term, with up to a maximum of 40 schools / classes being provided with travel to the facility.

CONSULTATION

17. The Executive Director of Education and Children's Services was consulted on the preparation of this report.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

18. The original estimated additional annual revenue costs for incentive schemes as reported to the Environment Committee in 2008 (08/320) were:

Scheme	Cost
Recycling Centre and Point incentive	£4,800
Kerbside Recycling incentive	£2,800
WEBWalk	£1,200
Total	£8,800

19. Based on continuing with the Recycling Centres scheme and the bus travel to the WEBWalk being undertaken, resource implications for April 2010 to March 2011 are:

Scheme	Cost
Recycling Centre incentive	£4,800 (cost of prizes)
WEBWalk	£4000 (average bus cost £100 per school x 40 classes/schools)
Total	£8,800

This will be funded from the existing 2010/11 Waste Revenue budget.

COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009-2012

20. The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

21. An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.
22. The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
 - i) Assessed as **relevant** and the following positive outcomes expected following implementation:
 - Nursery, primary and secondary schools have access to this scheme.
 - Buses with disabled/wheelchair access would be sourced by individual schools as required – good partnership working between Education and Children Services and The Environment Service Waste Services.
 - The WEBWalk facility itself is suitable for disabled access including wheelchairs.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

23. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).
24. The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

CONCLUSION

25. The four initial incentives schemes were designed to encourage increased recycling at recycling centres and points, and at the kerbside for an initial period of one to two years. Although improvements have been observed in terms of recycling rates at both the kerbside and Recycling Centres/Points it is difficult to gauge any direct impact of these schemes to the improvements. However, it should be recognised that public opinion and satisfaction plays a large role in the willingness of residents to use recycling facilities that are available to them, especially if they have to 'go out of their way' to make use of them.

26. As such, continuing the Recycling Centres incentive should be beneficial, at a relatively low cost to the Council, particularly if following the focus on materials such as glass and timber to increase, capture rates.
27. By providing free bus travel for schools to the WEBWalk, it further demonstrates the Council's commitment towards supporting local schools by providing another opportunity for waste awareness; helps support Eco-Schools initiatives, and assists in the delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence in Schools.

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The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report; (list papers concerned)

- Report to the Environment Committee on 4 June 2008 entitled "Induction of Recycling Incentives", Report Number (08/320)

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Appendix 1

Scheme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Option 1: Continue with the previously approved incentive schemes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good public relations and support by public ▪ Rewards effort ▪ Administration and scheme management in place already for Recycling Centres + Points scheme and the bus travel offer ▪ Joint working with, and support for, Education & Children's Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficult to directly identify scheme as sole reason for increased tonnages for current Recycling Centre and Points scheme ▪ Inability to gauge any changes in householder attitude to waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce new scheme to households who correctly participate in kerbside recycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative feedback from households regarding any kerbside recycling incentive
<p>Option 2(a&b): Run only the monthly Recycling Centres and Recycling Points scheme alongside bus travel to the WEBWalk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good public relations and support by public ▪ Rewards effort ▪ Administration and scheme management in place already for Recycling Centres + Points scheme and the bus travel offer ▪ Joint working with, and support for, Education & Children's Services ▪ Already accepted by public. ▪ No negative feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Householders recycling at the kerbside are not included in rewarding positive behaviour ▪ Difficult to directly identify scheme as sole reason for increased tonnages for current Recycling Centres and Points scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optimise current Recycling Centres and Points scheme to focus on specific materials ▪ Above will allow greater opportunity to monitor tonnage increases as fewer other variables will impact on one material over the same three month period ▪ With recent upgrades or new build of RCs, the Recycling Centres and Points scheme further encourages individuals to use the facilities that have recently received substantial investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inability to gauge any changes in householder attitude to waste via the WEBWalk scheme

Scheme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Option 3: Stop all incentive schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Saves £8400 budget ▪ Saves staff time – site attendants and on a monthly basis, one hour administration time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public may feel like a withdrawal of a positive approach by Council ▪ Failure to continue positive working relationship with Education and Children Services and individual schools in terms of Curriculum for Excellence and Eco-Schools support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cost savings as per Strengths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public may feel like a withdrawal of a positive approach by Council ▪ Failure to continue positive working relationship with Education and Children Services and individual schools in terms of Curriculum for Excellence and Eco-Schools support ▪ Negative local press ▪ May discourage some individuals from recycling at Recycling Centres and Points.