

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20TH JULY 2005

Report of the Acting Director of Community Services **WHEELED BIN IMPLEMENTATION**

purpose of the report

1. To update Members on the progress of the implementation of wheeled bin and green waste collection services.

background

2. Members may recall previous reports to this Committee on 19th January, 15th March and 1st June 2005 with regard to the implementation of wheeled bin services for both household refuse and green waste. Actions taken since Members considered these reports are as follows:
 - Collection of all wheeled bins throughout the District now being undertaken.
 - Collection of all garden waste wheeled bins in selected trial areas now being undertaken.
3. All assisted collection requests have now been undertaken. Officers have investigated the vast majority of concerns following the implementation of wheeled bins and at the time of writing only a few outstanding concerns remain.

requests/complaints regarding wheeled bin refuse collection services

4. Members may recall, at the previous Community Services Committee on 1st June 2005, details regarding the number of requests and enquiries received with regard to wheeled bin collection service and other refuse matters were provided. Attached to this report is a graphical representation for Members detailing the number of calls received in recent weeks (Annex 1).
5. Attached at Annex 2 is a copy of a petition received from the residents of Copeland Road, Edith Terrace and George Street, West Auckland, regarding arrangements for collection from the said properties. As a result of the petition the Acting Director of Community Services and the Head of Service Contracts attended a residents' meeting at Copeland Road on 27th June and, as a result of the aforementioned meeting, collection arrangements were confirmed as either wheeled bin or black sack from the front door and/or gable end of the terraces. Based on evidence of collection days since the meeting it is apparent that the meeting has produced a very significant improvement in the situation at those properties.

6. Work will continue to resolve outstanding issues, e.g., issues raised at recent public meetings with residents of some properties in Howden-le-Wear.

financial implications

7. A total capital allocation of £750,000 was made available over the financial years 2004/05 and 2005/06 to implement both schemes.

legal implications

8. Under Section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act Wear Valley District Council has a duty to collect waste as a waste collection authority. Under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act the Council can require the occupier to place the waste for collection in a receptacle or receptacles of a kind and size and number specified and to place their receptacle at a specified place for collection.

crime and disorder implications

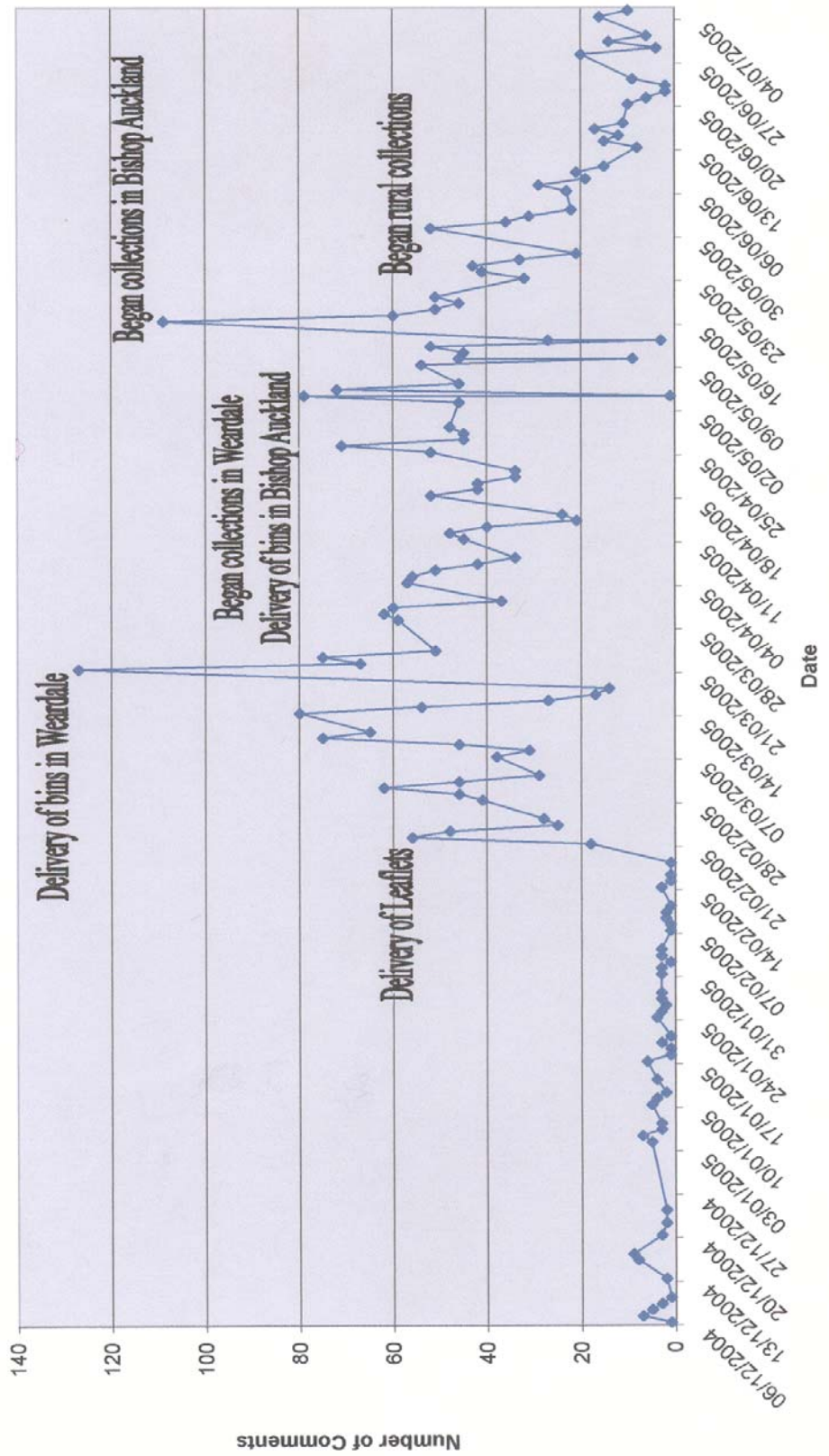
9. Initial evidence following the implementation of the wheeled bin scheme indicates that the amount of litter and waste throughout the District has reduced following implementation. It is also anticipated that wheeled bins will remove the possibility of operatives suffering a drugs related needle stick injury or other problems created by spillages or splitting of bags.

RECOMMENDED that Members note work undertaken to date and endorse the proposed further actions intended to complete the introduction of a wheeled bin refuse collection service and a green waste wheeled bin service within the District.

Officer responsible for the report
Max Coleby
Acting Director of Community Services
Ext. 218

Author of the report
Brian Graham
Head of Service Contracts
Ext. 453

Wheeled Bin Comments Received December 2004 to July 2005



The Residents of Copeland Rd, Edith Terc, George St
C/O 82, Copeland Road
West Auckland
County Durham
DL14 9JL

Tel: 01388 834170

Tuesday, 14 June 2005

To: Ian Philips
CC: Cllr Neil Stonehouse.

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned would like to bring to your attention the dissatisfaction of the residents of the above named area pertaining to the collection (or lack of it) by Wear Valley Council. We were sent leaflets stating that these wheeled bins would be collected from our back gates, which is acceptable to all residents.

Our rubbish has now not been collected for 3 weeks and we would like to inform you that it is starting to be a health hazard and request that you collect it as soon as possible.

Your suggestions for alternative collection are not acceptable because of the reasons listed below:

1. We have been asked to discard the Wheeled Bins that have been purchased using our council tax and go back to using black bin liners. We do not agree to the waste of our money in this way.
2. We have been asked to place the wheeled bins at the gable ends. This is not possible as it would restrict access by vehicles.
3. We have then been asked to place the bin bags without the wheeled bins at the front of the property on Copeland road. This is not acceptable for a number of reasons such as they would constitute a danger to people using that footpath on a night as the footpath is already badly lit, another reason is that we do not carry public liability insurance should there be an accident. We are not prepared to risk carrying bin bags through our property, because of the damage that could be caused should one of the bags split. Also Copeland Road has a school and as such has a large volume of user's so putting bin bags at the front of the property would cause an obstruction for parents with pushchairs.

It has also been brought to our attention that you are collecting wheeled bins from the back gates of similar properties to ours (properties where the wagon can't get to), which seems a little hypocritical.

We are sending this letter as this is the only cause of action we have left since you are not prepared to hold a public meeting. We look forward to a speedy solution to this increasingly dangerous problem.

Yours Sincerely

See Attached Petition.

House No.	Address	Print	Sign
2	Copeland Road, West Auckland		
4	Copeland Road, West Auckland	N R WALLIS	N R Wallis
6	Copeland Road, West Auckland	R. HOWARD	R. Howard
8	Copeland Road, West Auckland	H. P. BRIDGEMAN	H. P. Bridgeman
10	Copeland Road, West Auckland	L. QUINN	L. Quinn
12	Copeland Road, West Auckland	D. R. JONES	D. R. Jones
14	Copeland Road, West Auckland	G. SHIELD	G. Shield
16	Copeland Road, West Auckland	M. TWEDDIE	M. Tweddle
18	Copeland Road, West Auckland	S	
20	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. RACE	A. Race
22	Copeland Road, West Auckland	S. WADGE	S. Wadge
24	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. BURKE	A. Burke
26	Copeland Road, West Auckland	P. CURRY	P. Curry
28	Copeland Road, West Auckland	PAT PALMER	P. Palmer
30	Copeland Road, West Auckland	S. WALKER	S. Walker
32	Copeland Road, West Auckland	C. WOODON	C. Woodon
34	Copeland Road, West Auckland	JANE RUSSELL	J. Russell
36	Copeland Road, West Auckland	B. HINDRICKS	B. Hindricks
38	Copeland Road, West Auckland		
40	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. AYRE	A. Ayre
42	Copeland Road, West Auckland		
44	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. DOBSON	A. Dobson
46	Copeland Road, West Auckland	G. A. RUSSELL	G. A. Russell
48	Copeland Road, West Auckland	J. JONES	J. Jones
50	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. CHOPMAN	A. Chopman
52	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. MILLS	A. Mills
54	Copeland Road, West Auckland	B. MCCANN	B. McCann
56	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. DUNCAN	A. Duncan
58	Copeland Road, West Auckland	J. ANDERSON	J. Anderson
60	Copeland Road, West Auckland	R. G. ATKINSON	R. G. Atkinson
62	Copeland Road, West Auckland	B. KEENE	B. Keene
66	Copeland Road, West Auckland	J. MURDALL	J. Murdall
68	Copeland Road, West Auckland	J. KELBURN	J. Kelburn
70	Copeland Road, West Auckland	A. DYKE	A. Dyke
72	Copeland Road, West Auckland	G. ACKROYD	G. Ackroyd
74	Copeland Road, West Auckland	M. DAVIES	M. Davies
76	Copeland Road, West Auckland	L. WILKINSON	L. Wilkinson
78	Copeland Road, West Auckland		

80	Copeland Road, West Auckland	J OYSTON	J Oyston
82	Copeland Road, West Auckland	GARY YOUNG	G. Young
84	Copeland Road, West Auckland	EMPTY	
86	Copeland Road, West Auckland		
1	George Street, West Auckland	EMPTY	
2	George Street, West Auckland		
3	George Street, West Auckland	Paul Callaghan	Paul Callaghan
4	George Street, West Auckland	C JARVIS	C Jarvis
5	George Street, West Auckland	T STONES	T Stones
6	George Street, West Auckland	P. WINTER	P Winter
7	George Street, West Auckland	M OYSTON	M Oyston
8	George Street, West Auckland	J. SWAINSTON	J Swain
9	George Street, West Auckland		
10	George Street, West Auckland	M R ROX	M R Rox
11	George Street, West Auckland	F FOSTER	F Foster
12	George Street, West Auckland	J ERN MOONEY	J Ernie Mooney
13	George Street, West Auckland	N ROBSON	N Robson
14	George Street, West Auckland		
1	Edith Terc, West Auckland	D SMALLWOOD	D Smallwood
2	Edith Terc, West Auckland	D BOY	D Boy
3	Edith Terc, West Auckland	Michelle Jackson	M Jackson
4	Edith Terc, West Auckland	KAREN COLLIER	K Collier
5	Edith Terc, West Auckland	NICOLA RAINBOLD	N Rainbold
6	Edith Terc, West Auckland	ASSISTED	
7	Edith Terc, West Auckland	M PATE	M Pate
8	Edith Terc, West Auckland	ASSISTED	
9	Edith Terc, West Auckland	L Kerr	L Kerr
10	Edith Terc, West Auckland	SEED	SEWARD
11	Edith Terc, West Auckland	G Bayles	G Bayles
12	Edith Terc, West Auckland	EMPTY	
13	Edith Terc, West Auckland		
14	Edith Terc, West Auckland	D REED	D Reed
15	Edith Terc, West Auckland		
16	Edith Terc, West Auckland	W BEAMAN	W Beaman
17	Edith Terc, West Auckland		
	Edith Terc, West Auckland		
	Edith Terc, West Auckland		

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20TH JULY 2005

Report of the Acting Director of Community Services
GENERAL WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL ISSUES

purpose of the report

1. To inform Members of a recent meeting between representatives of Wear Valley District Council and Durham County Council regarding the above.

background

2. Members will be aware that Wear Valley District Council is authorised as a waste collection authority and as such operates a weekly refuse collection service, recycling service, green waste collection service and a bulky waste collection service.
3. As of 6th December 2004 Durham County Council introduced a permit scheme within the household waste recycling centres throughout County Durham. This requires any resident who uses a van, pickup or tows a trailer, to obtain a permit to deposit household waste at any of the County Council's household waste recycling centres. Permits need to be applied for in advance of depositing the waste at a site. Furthermore, on 22nd February 2005, Durham County Council closed the household waste recycling centre at Browns Houses, Frosterley. This resulted in there being no waste disposal facility available to any member of the public in Weardale and it would involve a 50 mile round trip for residents to deposit waste at either Newfield or Bishop Auckland.
4. As a result of the aforementioned decisions by Durham County Council Wear Valley District Council has witnessed an increase in the number of requests from householders for the bulky waste collection service. At present the amount of requests received has increased by 40%. As a result of the increase in the number of requests being received demand now outstrips the capacity of the service. There is also evidence of a 10% increase in fly tipping throughout the District.
5. Furthermore, a letter received from Premier Waste Management indicated that as of 1st July 2005, Wear Valley District Council refuse collection and street cleansing vehicles would no longer be allowed to utilise the Todhills landfill site at Newfield. The proposed replacement sites would be Annfield Plain in Derwentside District and Heighington in Sedgefield District. This would increase the down time for every vehicle in the fleet by approximately 1 - 1½ hours per day. Should this diversion prove necessary then the additional demands to the service would be unsustainable.

6. As a result, Members and officers of Wear Valley District Council met with their counterparts from Durham County Council on Monday, 27th June 2005. The outcome of the meeting was as follows:

(a) **Waste Permit Scheme**

Durham County Council outlined their intentions to make access to the permit scheme easier either by online booking or by mail. It is also intended to extend the period during which a waste permit may be used. Furthermore, Durham County Council was made aware by officers of Wear Valley of the effect the implementation of the waste permit scheme has had on the District in the form of increased demand for the bulky waste collection service.

(b) **Provision of Household Waste Recycling Centre in Weardale**

Durham County Council advised it is actively looking for a replacement site and at present correspondence is taking place with a landowner in the Wolsingham area. However, further advice indicates that the earliest a replacement site could be provided would be approximately 18 months. It was agreed that both parties investigate potential sites for a household waste recycling centre in the Weardale area and progress this as a matter of urgency.

(c) **Possible Reduction in Waste Disposal Facility at Todhills Landfill Site, Newfield**

Officers from Durham County Council apologised for the manner in which Wear Valley District Council was informed of this matter. However, notwithstanding the above, it was advised that there may be the necessity to reduce the amount of vehicles delivered to sites by Wear Valley District Council in the very near future. Indeed, it is further advised that although the site is scheduled for closure in March 2007 it may, in fact, close some time earlier. Officers of Durham County Council offered to liaise with officers of Wear Valley District Council in an attempt to find a suitable solution.

financial implications

7. It is anticipated that an overspend of £42,500 will be incurred in this (2005/06) financial year as a result of increased request for the bulky waste collection service following implementation of the waste permit scheme and closure of Browns Houses Household Waste Recycling Centre. Furthermore, it is not possible to determine at present additional costs that would be incurred as a result of vehicles having to take waste to disposal facilities other than at Newfield. Ongoing discussions between officers at Durham County Council and Wear Valley District Council are taking place and, upon conclusion, an accurate figure may be determined. It is anticipated however, that diversion from Todhills landfill site to other sites throughout County Durham, will incur significant additional costs to the service.

conclusion

8. Members should be aware of the potential for significant increases in costs to the service as a result of actions taken by Durham County Council. Officers will continue to liaise with their counterparts from Durham County Council in an attempt to reach amenable solutions to these issues.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the above and endorse officers' continued attempts to develop solutions with Durham County Council.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20TH JULY 2005

Report of the Acting Director of Community Services
PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLE

purpose of the report

1. To inform Members of the need for the purchase of an additional refuse collection vehicle and to seek Members approval for the actions taken by officers directed at procuring an additional vehicle.

background

2. Members will be aware that Wear Valley District Council has recently implemented a wheeled bin refuse collection service. As part of the process of implementation it was necessary to change current collection rounds to facilitate the transition from the previous black sack collection method to the new wheeled bin collection method. This was undertaken in January 2005.
3. Although extensive preparatory work was undertaken it was only when the first collection of the wheeled bins took place would it be possible to evaluate the changes to the refuse rounds and, following introduction of wheeled bins in April/May of this year it has proved necessary to utilise the Council's spare vehicle (used to cover for breakdowns, MOT, servicing, etc.), as a front line vehicle servicing a number of properties each day of the week. As a result, should the service suffer a breakdown or have a vehicle scheduled for MOT or servicing, the service is one vehicle short of that required to empty the wheeled bins.
4. It is estimated that there are approximately 2,500 properties (out of a total of 29,100) throughout the District where refuse collection vehicles cannot gain access to the rear lanes to service wheeled bins. Should it be deemed necessary for collection crews to collect wheeled bins from the rear of these properties, this would necessitate the operatives making two journeys to each of the properties. Therefore, the additional time allocated to collect from these properties would seriously impact upon the provision of refuse collection to other households scheduled for collection that day.
5. As a result of the above the refuse collection service is incurring additional costs in order to hire cover vehicles, etc., and pay overtime to operatives to ensure the bins were serviced each day. The overspend for April was £17,000 and projecting this forward on an annual basis there is the possibility of a £150,000+ overspend on the service.

6. As a result of the above, officers investigated alternatives with a view to reducing the amount of overspend. These alternatives are as follows:

Option 1

To continue with the present resources necessitating the need for overtime, hire of vehicles, etc. - £150,000 overspend possible.

Option 2

Provision of an additional member of the crew to each of the refuse collection vehicles - £80,000 overspend.

Note - This would remove the necessity for overtime, etc., however, hire of additional refuse collection vehicle at approximately £1,100 per week would still be necessary.

Option 3

Purchase of additional refuse collection vehicle.

Capital purchase of vehicle	£25,000 (from £750,000 capital allocation for wheeled bin implementation)
Additional revenue costs:	
Fuel	c £9,000 per annum
Repairs, maintenance, etc.	c £10,000 per annum

This would result in an overspend of approximately £41,000 to the end of this financial year. It would also result in an additional year on year increase in revenue costs of approximately £19,000. It was determined by officers therefore that the best option available was the purchase of an additional refuse collection vehicle adding capacity to the fleet ensuring all wheeled bins were collected within the allocated working week.

7. On the basis of discussions with Members and the Director of Central Resources, officers have solicited quotations from a number of suppliers of second hand refuse vehicles in line with standing orders. Those submitting quotations have also been asked to provide details in respect of warranties, etc. One important consideration is that any additional vehicle should preferably be compatible, in terms of repairs and maintenance needs, with the existing fleet - to do otherwise would increase costs in this regard. Subject to approval by Members, officers have identified a short list from which they intend to purchase the additional vehicle.
8. The additional cost of £41,000 can be funded from underspends in 2004/05 from the Council's general fund revenue account and its capital programme. The ongoing revenue costs of £19,000 per annum will be included with the draft 2006/07 base budget.

human resource implications

9. No additional members of staff would be required to service the additional vehicle.

conclusion

10. The purchase of an additional refuse collection vehicle will allow for all wheeled bins to be emptied within the working week without the necessity for overtime nor the hire of refuse collection vehicles.

RECOMMENDED that Members note work undertaken to date and endorse the proposed purchase of a refuse collection vehicle.

Officer responsible for the report
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COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20TH JULY 2005

Report of the Acting Director of Community Services
COMMUNITY STROKE REHABILITATION SUPPORT SERVICE

purpose of the report

1. To seek Member approval to work in partnership with Durham Dales Primary Care Trust and Teesdale District Council to develop a Community Stroke Rehabilitation Support Service as part of the Durham Dales Healthy Living Centre Programme.

background

2. Wear Valley District Council commenced joint working with Durham Dales PCT on the Cardiac Rehabilitation Scheme in 1989 and followed this with the Exercise on Referral Scheme in 1994. Further joint working with the PCT has been taking place since July 2003 with the advent of the Durham Dales Healthy Living Centre Programme which provided further funding for significant expansion of the existing programme.
3. Incidence of stroke in the United Kingdom is on the increase and is now the third most common cause of death in England and Wales after heart disease and cancer (Office for National Statistics 1996). Where many local authorities make provision for coronary heart disease and other chronic long term conditions through cardiac rehabilitation/exercise referral schemes, there is little community rehabilitation provision for stroke survivors.
4. The current situation typically for a stroke patient following stroke in the Durham Dales area is a period of hospitalisation, followed by care at home depending upon severity and where possible, visits to the hospital physiotherapy unit. Stroke survivors can go for many years receiving physiotherapy treatments.
5. Stroke patients at the milder end of the spectrum are discharged from the physiotherapy service after a relatively short period of time and generally have no exit routes or alternative treatments available to them.

proposal

6. It is proposed to work with the PCT and Teesdale District Council along with other agencies on developing an exit route for the physiotherapy service around stroke rehabilitation.

7. The PCT has acquired a commitment for £50,000 of NRF capital funding for the feasibility and pilot.
8. The PCT, working with District Councils, is to take the lead and develop the service framework. It will ensure that professional issues in the field such as Clinical Governance are consulted upon at critical stages, and that any draft plan has full approval of the PCT's own risk management section. The feasibility should necessarily conclude that delivery can be provided safely.

financial implications

9. It is aimed to provide this service within existing available resources. For Wear Valley, this would be approximately two one-hour sessions weekly in year one and three one-hour sessions in year two. It is proposed to free capacity within the current programme of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Exercise Referral funded via a mixture of Big Lottery, PCT and current mainstream District Council revenue budget.

RECOMMENDED that Members endorse actions taken so far by officers and approve continued work with the PCT with a view to developing a Rehabilitation Support Service for stroke patients within Wear Valley.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20TH JULY 2005

Report of the Acting Director of Community Services **HENKNOWLE PAVILION**

purpose of the report

1. To seek Member approval to enter into negotiations with Henknowle Community Association and Bishop Auckland Croquet Club on the future management of Henknowle Pavilion.

background

2. Henknowle Pavilion was built in the late 1970s as a pavilion for the bowls green, the then tennis courts and changing room for the football pitch. Bowling ceased about 15 years ago as usage had declined and the bowls green was not the correct dimensions for competitive purposes. The tennis courts were removed approximately seven years ago due to declining use and condition.
3. Bishop Auckland Croquet Club took over maintenance of the bowling green as their croquet facility and currently manages the maintenance of the green. However, the external areas are maintained by Sones, the Council's grounds maintenance partner. Football continued to be used on site and the pavilion for changing. However, this Council took a decision not to replace the vandalised hot water system in 2002 and had withdrawn staff from the pavilion for the football matches due to budgetary constraints. Subsequently the condition of the building internally has been in decline for a number of years.
4. In January 2004 a burst water main inside the building caused considerable internal damage to the changing facilities and meeting areas and made them unusable. The Croquet Club continued to use the facility over the summer and made representations on the condition of the building to the Community Services Department. The Croquet Club is now the only remaining user group and in agreement with the club, repairs have been effected to the rear half of the building so that the Croquet Club could continue. The Croquet Club has subsequently expressed an interest in taking over the management of all or part of the building providing that repairs are effected and arrangements were beneficial to the club.
5. This Council has now also received firm interest by way of a proposal from Henknowle Residents' Association. Henknowle Residents' Association have used the building and recreation ground for one-off fun days and have foreseen a future use for the building.

6. Henknowle Residents' Association would like to enter into negotiations with the District Council around the management of the 5-a-side/basketball court side of the building. Proposals include looking after and improving the internal fabric of that half of the building to run activities for young people. They are hopeful of securing external funding to make significant upgrades to the pavilion and for revenue funding to employ a part time youth worker.
7. The issues raised by the specific representations made to Wear Valley District Council by Bishop Auckland Croquet Club and Henknowle Residents' Association have echoes in respect of similar applications from other community groups. Most importantly, all such aspirations of community groups refer to intentions to request external funding support in order to fund their plans. External funders invariably require the applicants to have security of tenure of the building/facilities in question. The normal (and easiest) way to do that is for the Council to provide a lease on the basis of a "peppercorn" rent. Members are asked to note that such leases are of lengthy duration, typically between 10 and 20 years. However, such arrangements do represent a positive approach to dealing with deteriorating facilities which Wear Valley District Council does not have the funds to adequately maintain themselves.

crime and disorder implications

8. It would obviously help the Council in pursuing its objectives due to the community engagement and enhanced facilities for young people which would take place in Henknowle through the increased opportunities with the Henknowle Residents' Association acquiring management of one half of the building. The best way of maintaining a building is enabling its regular use.

financial implications

9. A condition survey is currently being undertaken by the Facilities Manager. Until the outcome is known it is not possible to ascertain the cost of repair of the external fabric of the building. This cost would have to be borne by Wear Valley District Council.
10. The Council receives £60 per annum from the Croquet Club and has the full responsibility for repair and maintenance of the facility. The repairs and maintenance liability is likely to be reduced to the external fabric of the building only under the terms of a lease and therefore cost savings would be made if this arrangement was to take place.

conclusion

11. The pavilion has seen a decline in structured usage over the last 15 years and in line with a reduced budget the building condition internally has deteriorated. The Croquet Club and Henknowle Residents' Association have both expressed interest in the management of two halves of the building for different needs. These, however, could be beneficial to all parties.

12. The officers of the Council would like to enter into negotiations with both organisations on the future of Henknowle Pavilion.

RECOMMENDED that Members endorse the actions taken so far by officers and instruct officers to enter into negotiations with Bishop Auckland Croquet Club and Henknowle Residents' Association.

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Author of the report
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COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20TH JULY 2005

Report of the Acting Director of Community Services **FOOTBALL PITCH, WILLINGTON**

purpose of the report

1. To advise Members of the ongoing negotiations with Yuill Homes and Sport England regarding the proposed redevelopment of the football pitch off Manor Road, Low Willington, and to seek member approval to continue negotiations.

background

2. The open space off Manor Road Low Willington is under the ownership of Durham County Council. Contained within this open space is one 11-a-side football pitch. The pitch is shared by two teams - Cottles FC and Willington WMC FC who currently have a licence agreement with Durham County Council giving them free use of the football pitch in return for cutting the grass/ pitch marking, etc. This pitch is currently of low quality.
3. Yuill Homes submitted a planning application to build twelve dwellings on the open space of Manor Road. An appeal against refusal of that permission was allowed by a Planning Inspector, subject to a unilateral undertaking whereby Yuill Homes agreed to pay £70,000 for the development and maintenance of the open space.
4. The arrangements were to be that Yuill Homes would pay for the pitch to be redeveloped at a cost of £70,000 and provide £30,000 through a Section 106 Agreement for maintenance of the pitch, the open space and ancillary equipment for a 20 year period (some £1500 per year).
5. In January 2005 officers and representatives met with a local action group to discuss the new plans. At this time Yuill Homes had obtained a contractor (Brambledown) to undertake the works to develop the football pitch. Objections were raised by this group that Yuill Homes were providing the contractor, and that this should be done by the District Council because they believed that only the District Council could ensure that best value was obtained.

6. When a subsequent planning application was put forward which, in addition to the erection of 12 dwellings included the landscaping of the open space, Yuill Homes offered to pay for the improvements to the open space and to give £30,000 to the District Council for future maintenance. Sport England objected on the grounds that the football pitch was of reduced size and the pitch did not have a means to drain surface water away apart from a soak away. Durham County Council and Northumbrian Water had been consulted on this issue however and would not give permission for water to be discharged from this pitch into the main sewer serving the estate.
7. Yuill Homes provided an updated specification for the football pitch of enlarged size which Sport England accepted. However Sport England still had an objection in relation to how the future maintenance of the pitch would be carried out. Sport England instructed Yuill Homes to provide an independent report on the maintenance aspect of the pitch which would take into account or ameliorate the effect on the pitch given that no connection to the sewer was available, so that the pitch would be of a suitable quality.
8. A feasibility study was undertaken by STRI Agronomy Service on the redevelopment of the pitch and a report provided dated 1st June 2005.
9. An extract from the STRI report is set out below

...“we are of the opinion that the new pitch will enhance the quality of the playing surface available on this site and provide a facility which is more in accordance with general Sport England requirements with the possible exception of its drainage which will nevertheless be improved overall. However, this statement is made on the assumption that the works are carried out to the required standards by a competent and experienced sports ground contractor. Also in order to compensate for the absence of a piped drainage system on the pitch allowance should be made for appropriate compaction relief and aeration treatments being made as part of its annual programme of management.”
10. The management works that STRI recommended were costed using equivalent prices obtained from the works currently being undertaken to our current stock of football pitches as part of end of season maintenance. This work was estimated to be £5451 at today's prices. To put this into context (and because of budgetary limitations) Wear Valley District Council currently spends around £1800 per annum on class one pitches only.
11. Discussions then took place with planning officers from Sport England, to make representation on what officers believed to be an extremely onerous maintenance regime for this type of facility, and one that could not be afforded within the £30,000 Section 106 allocation. Sport England suggested that STRI had prescribed this specification and it could not be altered by Sport England but that we were free to seek further clarification from the STRI.
12. This information was relayed to Nigel Bell at Yuills in a conference call. It was resolved that Yuill Homes would approach the STRI as they had commissioned the report.

13. STRI have now provided written communication which states that the maintenance regime can be trimmed down because of budgetary limitations and have suggest some basic requirements. Brambledowns have advised Yuill Homes of revised indicative costs (of £1760) to carry out this work on an annual basis (at this year's prices).
14. It should also be noted that the costs provided only take into account the end of season maintenance of the football pitches and not to cut the outfield, upkeep of shrubs/hedges and maintenance of seats/bins and ball stop fencing. The two teams will continue to cut the grass on the field as now.
15. A further £42,750 is held as section 106 agreement from phases 1 to 5 of the Low Willington estate.

proposal

16. That Wear Valley District Council ask Sport England to approve revised "basic" annual maintenance.
17. A further top up be provided from the Section 106 monies from phases 1 to 5, of around £1000 per annum.
18. That officers invite tenders from contractors on the Council's approved list to tender for the redevelopment of the pitch.
19. That officers continue to work with Yuill Homes and Sport England to resolve this issue.

financial implications

20. As above

legal implications

21. This issue needs to be resolved before the project can proceed.

RECOMMENDED that officers be authorised to continue negotiations as indicated in order to resolve the current impasse.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20 JULY 2005

Report of the Director of Central Resources

SMART CARDS

purpose of the report

1. To inform Members of the potential offered by the introduction of smart cards.
2. To agree a long term strategy to adopt smart cards within the department and corporately.

background

3. As part of the e-government agenda, the Authority is required to adopt the use of smart cards as a means of improving access to services. This report sets out below the implications of introducing smart cards into the Authority initially for sports and leisure services.

what are smart cards?

4. Smart cards are essentially a development of the credit card. They are the same size and shape and are made out of plastic. The differences are that smart cards have a computer chip imbedded in them instead of a magnetic strip, are able to hold much more information, and are more durable and less easier to tamper with. Cards of various types are currently used by local authorities covering applications ranging from library lending to employee identification. Most, if not all of them, could potentially be replaced by a single card.
5. At present the Authority does not have smart cards in use. However, within the Leisure Centres, magnetic swipe cards are used by customers. This is a hybrid form of swipe card.

e-government links

6. A priority service outcome for e-government is to adopt a long term strategy for smart cards. Specifically, the requirements are:
 - (i) Integrated delivery to all access channels.
 - (ii) Implementation of an integrated smart card system.
 - (iii) Implementation of an integrated back office system.

application to services

7. Smart cards can be used to address social inclusion issues. The use of smart cards helps address such issues by:
 - increasing the take up of concessionary rates for services
 - Increasing the take up of welfare benefits by retaining accurate information about eligibility
 - Reducing the stigma associated with claiming benefits and concessionary rates
 - Giving service providers the information they need to target their services to groups with a low take up
 - Facilitating a 'Whole Authority' approach to direct services, tackling barriers to social cohesion
 - Providing easier access to information and services to all citizens, and focusing upon those in the community who have the greatest needs
 - Helping citizens to be confident in the use of technology and the learning resources it will unlock
 - Increasing citizen affiliation and involvement in local activity.

8. The following services can be used with smart cards:
 - (i) Leisure services
 - (ii) Concessionary transport services
 - (iii) Payment for services e.g. rent/council tax
 - (iv) Benefit take up
 - (v) Licensing e.g. market traders, taxi, public entertainment licences
 - (vi) Voting/electoral registration
 - (vii) Parking.

application to leisure services

9. In adopting a long term plan, it is proposed to target leisure services initially. This would include:
 - (i) payment for leisure services
 - (ii) entitlement for concessions
 - (iii) Capture of static customer data (e.g. name, date of birth etc.).

joint working

10. Smart cards interoperability is the cornerstone of improved citizen service delivery. Cards need to work across geographical and organisational boundaries to maximise the benefit to the citizen. Interoperability requires both technical and business interoperability. The former can be derived from using common technical standards and specifications but the latter requires the development and implementation of common business rules and policies.

economies of scale

11. Economy of scale is a key factor in local authority smart card schemes. Substantial items of capital and operating cost can cover multiple applications and multiple geographic areas. An obvious example is the card itself. A single card can carry multiple applications and therefore the physical card cost per application reduces as the number of applications on the card increases. Other examples are major capital items such as card printers and management systems, which can be shared by applications with local authorities and between groups of local authorities. The process of authentication can apply to several applications/authorities etc. As the number of applications on a card increases and as the number of organisations in a card scheme increases, scheme management and operational complexity increases and the cost of managing these complexities can offset some if not all of the economies of scale. Optimising economies of scale therefore requires careful planning and research.

national smart card project

12. The introduction of smart cards has been recognised nationally through the introduction of a national smart card project. The Government recognises the importance of smart cards in meeting e-government targets and improving service access. The deliverables of the national smart card are:
 - (i) Improve access to services for citizens and promote social inclusion and opportunities for lie.
 - (ii) Put forward the business cases for smart cards.
 - (iii) Develop business and financial models.
 - (iv) Produce a standards framework that supports recognised standards.
 - (v) Produce best practice guidelines and toolkits for purchasing and procuring smart cards and smart card technology.
 - (vi) Produce a Smart Card Starter Pack for use by local authorities wishing to implement smart card technology.

- (vii) Develop software for use by local authorities wishing to implement smart card technology.
 - (viii) Identify links with government departments.
 - (ix) Provide information and advice to interested parties about the work of the project.
13. A forum has been established to exchange ideas about smart cards between Authorities. The forum is also designed to explore the potential uses of smart cards and research external funding possibilities. This forum will clearly be a valuable source of information for the Authority in introducing smart cards. A substantial amount of work is available on the national project web site about all aspects of introducing smart cards into a local authority.

planning for smart card introduction

14. The essential elements to consider in the long term introduction of smart cards:

(i) Choice of Smart Card

There are two types of smart card. First type requires a reader i.e. a card terminal to read the information contained on it. The second type is whereby a smart card uses radio frequencies. This second type of card can be used where it is impractical to use a card reader e.g. the use of smart cards for transport which require a reader would seriously slow down the loading of a bus with passengers.

(ii) Standards

Technical standards and operating rules are necessary to allow the Authority to purchase cost effectively and with confidence that they will not be locked into a restricted supply situation or implement systems that will become obsolete. These standards are needed as a basic building block for the development of smart cards. Interoperability (sharing of information etc.) with other local authorities is also a relevant consideration when considering smart cards

(iii) Hardware/software

This will include the purchase of card holder database, links to the smart card website, service point outlets and smart card production. Depending on how the Authority were to implement smart cards will have an impact upon the quantity of hardware and software necessary.

(iv) Authentication

It is important to ensure that only those individuals entitled to cards have the ability to use them.

15. All of the above issues have been extensively considered within the national smart card project which is available to the Authority to use.

procurement

16. The National Smart Card Project has produced a procurement good practice check list which is designed to assist authorities in procuring smart cards. This procurement check list covers the following:

- (i) Strategic options
- (ii) Risk management
- (iii) Tender documentation e.g. specification, technical issues, roles and responsibilities, standards etc.
- (iv) Contract terms
- (v) Bulk purchasing and commercial issues e.g. length of contract, pricing, negotiation options etc.

17. The above is designed to assist the Authority in any introduction of smart cards.

financial implications

18. Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from an, in principle, agreement to introduce smart cards the long term financial implications of their introduction would need to include an assessment of the following:

- (i) Card costs
- (ii) Registration costs
- (iii) Staff costs
- (iv) Marketing and awareness raising
- (v) Development costs
- (vi) Ongoing maintenance costs
- (vii) Technology re-fresh costs.

19. The main cost will be the purchase of the card. This is estimated to be approximately be £5.00 per card and based on 10,000 leisure users, would cost approximately £50,000 capital resource. The other costs would vary however, a broad cost would be approximately £400,000. The ongoing maintenance costs would be estimated to be approximately 13.5% of the introduction cost (i.e. £50,000 card cost and £400,000 other cost). This would give an annual charge of £60,750 (13.5% of £450,000). A technology re-refresh would be required after five years at an estimated cost of 20% of introduction costs (i.e. 20% of £450,000). This would be a charge of £90,000 which would be a capital cost. Further work would be needed on these costs for their introduction.
20. At present there is no capital or revenue resources available to introduce smart cards on a pilot basis. Funding opportunities will be considered as they become available for their introduction. Furthermore the Council will consider joint working arrangements with other authorities as a means of reducing cost/achieving economies of scale.

legal implications

21. Whilst there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, there are important legal issues to consider. These include:
 - (i) Financial services regulations
 - (ii) Card governance
 - (iii) Security issues e.g. electronic signatures
 - (iv) Data protection
 - (v) Commercial conditions of contract
22. The National Smart Card project has carried out substantial work in the above areas as a means of assisting authorities address the legal issues. Information is available on their web site.

i.t. implications

23. The cost of operation and support of smart card hardware and software is very significant. In house provision would therefore not be an option for the Authority. Some form of managed service would be needed, provided perhaps by either a regional or national partnership. The supplier of the Leisure systems software would also be need to be involved to ensure integration with the smart card system.

equality/community safety implications

24. No direct implications arise from this report. However, as noted above, the introduction of smart cards can improve social inclusion as a means to improving equality of service delivery.

conclusion

25. The above paragraphs outline:
- (i) The applicability of smart cards to service delivery
 - (ii) The links to the achievement of e-government targets
 - (iii) The links to tackling social inclusion
 - (iv) The key issues to consider in developing a long term strategy for the introduction of smart cards.
26. The introduction of smart cards offers an opportunity to use I.T. to improve service delivery, providing resources are in place to enable this to happen.

- RECOMMENDED**
1. Members note the report.
 2. Members agree to the long term introduction of smart cards, subject to:
 - (a) Revenue and capital resource availability.
 - (b) The production of a detailed business case.
 - (c) Outputs from the National smart card project being available to assist the Authority.

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