

5 July 2018		ITEM: 5
Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Linford Household Waste & Recycling Centre – 12 month update following in-source		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key	
Report of: Beau Stanford-Francis, Environmental Protection & Contracted Services Manager		
Accountable Assistant Director: Daren Spring, Assistant Director Street Scene & Leisure		
Accountable Director: Julie Rogers, Director Environment & Highways		
This report is Public.		

Executive Summary

On the expiration of the management contract the Linford Household Waste & Recycling Centre was in-sourced in June 2017. Following the site returning to direct Council control a programme of improvement projects have been undertaken including a planning application for the site to be redeveloped. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress and performance of the site in the first year and to detail the ongoing improvement and redevelopment programme.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 Cleaner, Greener, Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the content of the report.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Council has a statutory obligation under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to provide residents with a facility for the disposal of bulky household waste. Thurrock Council currently provides a single site located in Linford. The site at present is not of a sufficient operational capacity to support throughput and will be inadequate in meeting the boroughs short to medium growth projections. In terms of layout and facilities the site is not in keeping with those at comparable modern facilities. This has a knock on effect of the sites efficiency, capacity and ease of use for staff and the public.

- 2.2 On 6 June 2017 the Council in-sourced the Linford Household Recycling Centre (HWRC) which had been operated by a private contractor. Initial discussions with the incumbent contractor and market testing determined that the site as-was would not meet the boroughs future requirements and if put out to tender would not deliver a solution that would deliver best value. In order to bring the site in line with modern facilities and meet the current and future demand the only viable option was to bring the site management under the control of the Authority.
- 2.3 In the 12 months since the in-source of the facility a number of site improvements have been implemented to improve the site user experience and efficiency in the period up to which redevelopment can take place. Site improvements implemented to date include:
- New site signage and markings
 - New site CCTV and security measures
 - Introduction of the new site operating plan
 - TUPE Transfer of existing staff and transfer of agency staff to permanent roles
 - Introduction of new waste disposal containers including revised paint containers, chemicals, co-mingled hard core and ceramics, acceptance of fluorescent light tubes, PVC bin
 - Extensive staff training to improve the site efficiency, health and safety and the customer experience
 - Introduction of a new uniform policy to make staff more visible
 - Introduction of new on-site material handler to improve efficiency
 - Introduction on commercial vehicle permit system to address capacity

3. Update regarding Commercial Vehicle Access Policy

- 3.1 Following a report to Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2017 a paper was put forward to Cabinet outlining the principles of a Commercial Vehicle Access (permit) Policy. The Policy was approved by Cabinet in December 2017.
- 3.2 Fundamental to the implementation of the policy were the results of an independent survey undertaken which identified that up to £250,000 of unauthorised waste was being disposed of on-site.

Aside from the financial impact this unauthorised waste represented a number of risks; the risk to the site environment permit, that accepting unauthorised commercial waste represented, and the tightening up of site access policies in the region which was having and had the further potential to result in unauthorised waste disposal from 'out of borough' at Linford.

- 3.3 In order to address the amount of unauthorised commercial and 'out of borough' waste a permit scheme was implemented for commercial vehicles. The permit scheme is free to all borough residents allowing 12 visits per year to deposit household waste in a commercial vehicle. Cars which represent the

bulk of all site traffic remain permit free with unlimited access for residents to deposit household waste.

- 3.4 In order to publicise the permit scheme a comprehensive communications campaign was put in place; including
- On-site security presence from November 2017 informing van users of the permit scheme. From February 2018 all vans accessing the site were handed a leaflet outlining the criteria, the application process and notified of licenced outlets for commercial waste.
 - Articles and press releases detailing the permit scheme. The Council website, social media and resident email updates all contained articles regarding the scheme. This communication activity started in December 2017 and included articles in local newspapers.
 - A leaflet was sent with Council Tax bills which included an article regarding the permit scheme.
- 3.5 The permit scheme went live on 3 April 2017. As of 31 May a total of 1,686 commercial access permits have been issued to borough residents. The Council are currently working to a commitment of a two week turnaround on the issue of permits, at present all permits have generally been issued within 10 days, some much quicker. Due to the site constraints, specifically absence of power and internet the current process is manual with physical permits being issued by post. Officers are currently working with IT colleagues to further automate the process in order to speed up fulfilment time.

Month	Permit Type			Month Total
	12 Month Permit	7 Day Permit	Replacement Permit	
Mar-18	252	2	1	255
Apr-18	869	12	1	882
May-18	532	10	7	549
				<u>1,686</u>
<p><i>In addition to the above a total of 155 permit applications were rejected during the time period specified. Rejections were as follows: duplicate applications, failure to provide adequate documentation and failure to meet borough residence requirement.</i></p>				

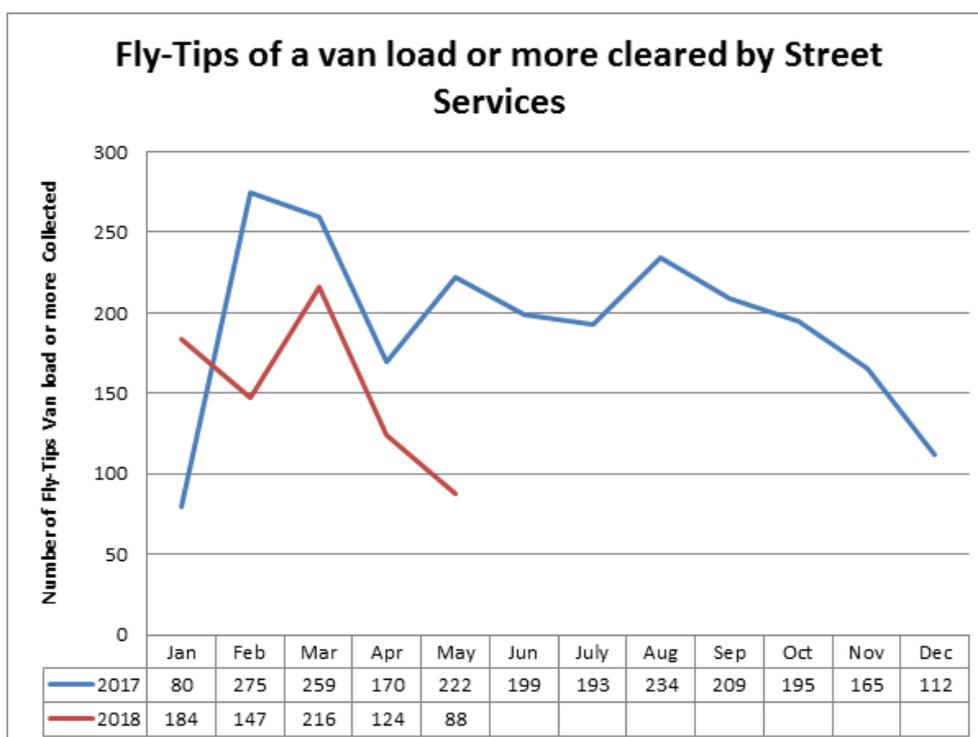
- 3.6 To date there have been 9 formal complaints regarding the permit scheme, none of which were upheld in favour of the complainant as they were broadly comments in relation to not liking the scheme, not being aware of the scheme and not being given enough notice of the schemes implementation. Anecdotally we are aware that a number of residents are unhappy with the permit scheme and this has been reflected in a number of articles in the local press. We are also aware that a number of commercial ventures that had been using the site have now had to source and pay for legitimate disposal of their waste and have vocalised their objections.

In response to feedback outlined above, a trial commenced in May 2018, whereby residents using vans who had not arranged permits for the site were allowed access on condition that they commenced the application process within 24 hours. The permit would then be issued retrospectively with the first visit clipped off, allowing 11 further visits. The trial was undertaken for a 7 day period. The site does not currently have internet access or electricity and therefore all records had to be taken manually on paper and later input, which was inefficient and unwieldy and contributed to on-site queues. During the 7 trial day period, 206 commercial vehicles were allowed on-site on the condition that they could provide Identification, proof of residence and that they applied for a permit within 24 hours. Of the 206 that entered on the trial scheme only 25 applied for a permit. Clearly from a process and compliance perspective the pilot proved not to be viable.

3.7 As mentioned previously the HWRC currently has no electricity or internet connectivity. Additionally, the focus of the staff at the site is to ensure the safe use of the facility and to ensure that materials are disposed of appropriately. These constraints have had to be considered in designing the permit process. It is however clear that the process that was implemented quickly to address abuse of the site, should be continually reviewed and adjusted to ensure that residents can receive permits as quickly as possible. Some of the actions being taken to address this are:

- An ANPR (Automatic Number Plate recognition) system for the site is being procured. This will help to ensure that we capture accurate data about the use of the site. It will also ultimately help to ensure that access to the site can be automated.
- There are currently a number of manual steps in the permit issuing process. Work has been initiated with ICT to review how these can be automated thereby reducing timeframes further.
- The timeframe for process of applications has been reduced and will continue to be reduced as each of the above processes are implemented. The site is scheduled to have broad band connectivity within the next 3 months.

3.8 To date, following the implementation of the permit scheme there has not been a significant increase in the amount of fly-tips reported by the public or collected by Thurrock Street Scene Teams. This will continue to be monitored closely.



3.9 In order to ascertain whether the permit scheme is working in reducing the level of unauthorised waste deposited on-site, year on year tonnage throughput figures for April and May across the core commercial waste categories have been compared. Broadly tonnages have reduced across a large number of waste types. The core commercial indicators have been summarised below. We expect to see a further reduction over the course of the year as the limit of 12 van visits per year feeds through into user behaviour and tonnage data.

Waste Type	Current Disposal Rate Per Tonne*	April & May 2017 Tonnage	April & May 2018 Tonnage	Year On Year Reduction Tonnes	Equivalent cost efficiency by waste type
Landfill Waste	£102.00	855	632.14	223	£22,779
Wood (low grade)	£35.00	702	547.92	154	£5,397
Garden Waste	£28.00	137	113.64	23	£653
Hardcore	£18.00	523	454.9	68	£1,228
					£30,057

* Disposal costs do not take into account haulage and handling charges of £120 per load.

4. Update regarding future site redevelopment

4.1 Following a report to Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2017 a paper was submitted to Cabinet outlining the principles for redevelopment of the site at Linford. The proposed site redesign

principles and procurement delegated authority was approved by Cabinet in December 2017.

4.2 The current site is over capacity and the design is inefficient and is not in keeping with comparable sites. The key issues are as follows:

- Site Highway Access
- Size of the licenced/permitted area for waste operations
- Poor site layout and stepped access to containers
- Lack of services and all utilities; no mains power, water, sewerage or broadband
- Land Management Issues relating to landfill data specifically ground conditions, drainage and gas migration monitoring

4.3 Both Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet were asked to and approved the following design principles for the new site:

- Expand the site to include the 'unmade' area in site permit and operations.
- Introduce a split level site with step free access.
- Improve Highway Access including improving site lines and dedicated turn lanes.
- Connect the site to utilities and services; water, sewerage, power and broadband.
- Significantly increase in Recycling and Re-use facilities on-site.
- Introduce a dedicated charged commercial waste avenue to promote responsible waste disposal and generate income.

4.4 In order to start the planning process an outline site design has been completed supported by a consultation with key internal stakeholders such as highways and assets. This culminated in a planning pre-application letter being submitted to the planning department on the 6 of December 2017.

4.5 On the 9 of March 2018 a pre-planning meeting was held with Thurrock Planning Officers. This meeting was followed up with written outcomes from the meeting via a formal response letter on 4 of May 2018. This letter detailed a number of the elements of the redevelopment and design proposal that planning advise is required prior to seeking formal planning permission. In order to address the matters raised in the pre-planning application the following further pre-application work is required:

- Formal Traffic and Highways Assessment
- Land Quality/Contaminated Land Assessment
- Hydrology and Flood Risk Assessment
- Landscape Assessment
- Lighting Impact Assessment
- Alternative site evaluation

4.6 In order to proceed to a full planning application the assessments and evaluations detailed in 4.5 will need to be undertaken. This is estimated to be

completed by the end of August with a formal planning application being submitted in September 2018.

- 4.7 Upon receipt of planning consent, the previous Cabinet report gave delegated authority to procure contracts for the redevelopment of the site. This process is expected to take 3 months for advertisement, evaluation and award of contracts to take place. The successful bidder will be required to submit a build plan and timeline for the works to be completed including a phase plan to determine the viability of keeping part of the site operational whilst redevelopment takes place. Initial estimates are that the build depending on the phasing and requirement to maintain some level of operational capacity will take between 6 and 9 months.
- 4.8 Planning permission, the procurement process and the requirement to liaise with utility companies may all impact on the build timeline. Based on the timeline above a build programme could potentially look as follows:

Task	Duration	Potential Date
Pre Application Meeting		
Post Pre App Evaluation and Analysis Studies.	2 months	July to August 2018
Seek and obtain Planning Permission	1 month	September 2018
Procure Build and Project Management Contracts	3 months	October to December 2018
Undertake Build	6 - 9 months	January to September 2019
Project Completion		

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Site in-source; Cabinet March 2017.
- 5.2 Commercial Vehicle Access Policy & Site Redevelopment – Cleaner Greener Overview & Scrutiny October & November 2017; Cabinet December 2017.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The redevelopment and enhancements to the HWRC support the Council's priority of 'Clean Environments that everyone has reason to take pride in' and 'High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time'.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**
Management Accountant

The redevelopment of the site has been allocated for within the capital programme. Implementation of the permit scheme will contribute towards the reduction in waste disposal budgetary pressures.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Assistant Director Law & Governance

The Council has a legal obligation under Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to provide a facility 'for persons in its area 'to dispose of household waste. The site Environmental Permit conditions prohibit the deposit of commercial waste at the site in order to satisfy the permit conditions measures need to be taken to ensure that controls on prohibited waste are in place and effective.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

The redeveloped site will result in improved access to the site for those with accessibility requirements. The removal of stepped access to container and dedicated parking bays will resolve significant impediments that currently Severely restrict site access by disabled and elderly people. A full Equalities Impact Assessment will be required as part of any redevelopment.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

Both the act of unauthorised disposal of waste and knowingly allowing the unauthorised disposal of waste is a criminal offence under Section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Procurement of Future Waste Disposal Contracts. Cabinet March 2017; Decision 01104412

- Linford Household Waste and Recycling Centre – Commercial Vehicle Access Policy and Future Site Redevelopment Cabinet December 2017 (Decision 0110450)

9. Appendices to the report

None

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