

Leicester  
City Council

CABINET

WARDS AFFECTED : CHARNWOOD & CASTLE

28<sup>th</sup> January 2002

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## TRADE WASTE AT COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRES

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### Report of the Director of Environment, Development and Commercial Services

#### 1. Purpose of Report

This report highlights the increasing problems associated with trade waste being illegally deposited at Community Recycling Centres which is increasingly denying residents the opportunity to deposit their own household waste items as well as causing significant budget pressures. The report highlights these difficulties and requests authority to implement a free permit scheme for vans and trailers using the Centres at Freemens Common and Bridge Road.

#### 2. Summary

- 2.1 The Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) at Bridge Road and Freemens Common have been subject to significant increases in the amount of waste deposited since 1998 averaging 20 % per annum. This compares to an annual increase of household waste arisings of approximately 5% per annum.
- 2.2 The increase in waste deposits is due to
- (a) householders taking their bulky household waste direct to the CRCs rather than pay the £15 collection charge
  - (b) some County residents with vans and/or trailers using the City Council CRCs instead of obtaining permits from the County Council to use their own facilities
  - (c) by far the major contribution is commercial waste being passed off as household waste by small jobbing builders or landscape gardeners.
- 2.3 Due to the significant increases in deposits, the CRCs have had to close early on occasions, especially at weekends, because they have been full. This has led to criticisms of the City Council as householders tend to make special journeys to make use of the CRC facilities.
- 2.4 The County Council operate a permit scheme for residents who wish to deliver their own household waste to CRCs in vans and trailers which are issued free of charge on request. Their intention was to deny traders the opportunity to dispose of their trade waste as household waste and since the permits were introduced the County Council advise that there has been a 20% drop in the tonnage of waste deposited at their CRC sites.

- 2.5 Permits are issued, free of charge, to residents on request, who have to verify that the waste they intend to take to deposit is their own household waste and the permit details both their address and vehicle or trailer details. In addition the County Council impose a limit on the amount of **demolition/construction** waste that residents may deposit and have a maximum equivalent to 6 bags of rubble/inert waste, 4 windows and 4 doors **on any one occasion for the duration of the permit.**
- 2.6 Any restriction on traders depositing their waste at CRCs may lead to some illegal flytipping as the unscrupulous trader will still want to avoid paying commercial disposal costs of £30 per tonne. Flytipping has become increasingly recognised as a national problem principally because of the introduction of the landfill tax. The Waste Management Team are working with colleagues both within the County and District Councils of Leicestershire to prepare and comply with a common working protocol to identify and prosecute flytippers with the assistance of the Environment Agency and Police.

### **3. Recommendations**

It is recommended that Cabinet :-

- 3.1 Approves the introduction of a free permit scheme for city residents using vans and trailers over 4ft 6 inches to deliver household waste to the CRCs in the city.
- 3.2 Approves the implementation of the other Action Plan proposals as set out in Section 2 of the Supporting Information
- 3.3 Requests the Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services to provide a monitoring report to Members 6 months after the scheme implementation date.

### **4. Financial Implications**

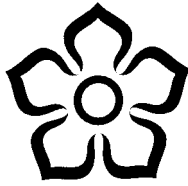
- 4.1 By preventing the disposal of trade waste at CRCs, the introduction of such a permit system should generate savings in the region of £80,000 per annum.
- 4.2 Additional administration costs for implementing the scheme and set aside costs for any potential increase in flytipping are £25,000 per annum.

### **5. Legal Implications**

The changes to the operating procedures for the CRCs will require a formal variation to the management contract for the sites between Leicester City Council and its contractor, Environ.

### **5. Report Author/Officer to contact:**

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**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Report**

**1. Background**

- 1.1. The Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) at Bridge Road and Freemans Common have seen a significant increase in the amount of waste being deposited over the last 2 years :-

1998/99 = 11,801 tonnes  
1999/00 = 15,792 tonnes = 33.8% increase  
2000/01 = 17,662 tonnes = 11.8% increase

The current year is showing a potential increase of 19% based on figures from April 2001 to November 2001

This has represented a significant contribution to the budget pressure for the City Council and for Environment & Development a revenue waste management budget shortfall of £200,000 is predicted for this financial year of 2001/2002.

- 1.2. The increase is attributable to :-

- a) generally there has been a national increase in waste arisings annually of approximately 5% per year.
- b) increases in commercial waste being passed off as household waste. Typically this will be small builders or landscape gardeners. The principal reason is due to the landfill tax substantially increasing the gate fee for trade waste by 40%
- c) introduction of the permit system by Leicestershire County Council for vans and trailers has led to some migration of household waste from County residents and an exacerbation of point (b) above.

d) the charge of £15 for City Council bulk collections imposed last year has incentivised some residents to take their bulk waste direct to the CRCs themselves. Although this has put pressure on the CRCs the benefits of the bulk collection charge to the City Council amount to a saving of £50,000 per annum for it's waste management budget for financial year 2000/2001 and thereafter.

1.2. The increase in tonnage deposited at the CRCs has created difficulties at the CRCs particularly at the weekends when they have been closed early because they are full. Landfill sites are normally closed from noon Saturday to 8.00 am Monday, so the Cleansing DSO attempt to ensure the majority of the skip containers at the CRCs are empty ready for Saturday afternoon. Once they have been filled by customers, the sites have to be closed as we are not allowed to store waste (other than garden waste at Freemans Common) that is not contained in a skip. The other key factor for early closure over the last few months is the redevelopment work currently being carried out at Freemans Common which has reduced capacity by about 50%

1.3. The early closure of the CRCs has led to criticisms of, and complaints directed to, the City Council by frustrated members of the public who have been denied tipping facilities. Their frustration is understandable as residents will make a special journey to the CRC for depositing their waste, which may have been specifically bagged or bundled for transport following garden maintenance or a special clearout. This denial of access is not acceptable to the City Council in relation to it's obligations to residents and any measures adopted to ensure a reduction of illegally tipped trade waste at CRCs can only improve residents accessibility.

1.4. The CRCs are managed by Environ under contract to the City Council and they have undertaken a study which indicates that up to 20% of the vehicles visiting the two CRCs are vans or cars with trailers. The tonnage attributable to these visits is approximately 3,500 tonnes per annum and costs the City Council £80,000 per annum in disposal charges. The vast majority of the vans have no commercial markings but Environ believe that they are small jobbing builders/landscapers. Although their staff do challenge these individuals it is very difficult to prove that it is not household waste. The van personnel invariably claim the waste is household and often subject the CRC staff to verbal abuse and occasionally threats of violence. Environ's subcontractor who staffs the CRCs also manages one of the County Council Civic Amenity Sites and he advises that with the permit scheme any doubt is removed and there is less confrontation.

1.5. Following the imposition of the landfill tax the Cleansing DSO report a significant increase in flytipping. This has shown an increase of approximately 35% over original estimates. In relation to additional occasions, it was 176 in 1999/00, 1551 in 2000/01 and so far this year it is 1130. The Dayworks Schedule has been increased accordingly by £9,000 per annum to meet the additional costs of removal.

1.6. The Waste Management Team at the County Council advise that when their permit scheme was introduced :-

a) although they initially received complaints about the scheme, this has now reduced to virtually nothing;

- b) there was an initial increase in flytipping but they believe this has reduced back now to its pre-permit scheme level;
- c) although there was an initial deluge of permit requests the system has now settled down and an additional 1.5 staff are now permanently employed on dealing with permit calls and permit issues.
- d) significant savings have been achieved by reducing both the actual tonnage to landfill and transport costs, by 20%. This saving has been achieved by preventing the tipping of trade waste and also by limiting the amount of **demolition/construction** waste deposited by residents. A limit on construction and demolition is now imposed of a maximum equivalent to 6 bags of rubble, 4 windows and 4 doors **on any one occasion during the duration of an existing permit.**

## 2. Action Plan

In order to address the problems of the illegal tipping of trade waste at the CRCs, capacity problems and associated flytipping, an Action Plan is proposed which incorporates the following .

- 2.1. A free permit scheme for residents who wish to use vans or trailers over 4ft 6 inches to transport their household waste for deposit at the CRCs. Permits will be initially issued for specified occasions and assigned to individual residents identifying their vehicle particulars. **A 6 month permit will be issued to residents who have their own vans and/or trailers. For residents who need to specifically hire or borrow vans or trailers to take bulky household waste to the CRCs, a temporary weeks permit will be issued which shall allow up to 4 individual trips. The condition of one delivery of demolition/construction waste on the guidelines adopted by the County Council will only be allowed whichever permit is issued.** As well as ensuring that traders are prevented from using the City Council CRCs to get rid of their trade waste, the permit scheme will also show continuity with the rest of Leicestershire.
- 2.2. Limit the amount of building-type materials allowed to be deposited to the guidelines imposed by the County Council (maximum equivalent to 6 bags plus 4 windows/doors as an example) **and only on one occasion during the duration of the permit.** Where customers have large quantities of garden refuse they will be encouraged to have a free bulk collection rather than be automatically given a permit.
- 2.3. Increase the staffing resources of the Waste Management Team by one permanent Administrative Officer to assist in the administration of the scheme. The cost of £20,000 per annum will be met from anticipated savings of £80,000 per annum from reduced landfill costs.
- 2.4. Prepare an advertising leaflet for issue at CRCs and an advance publicity campaign involving the Leicester Mercury and LINK to ensure that residents are fully aware of the proposed changes and the reasons for them.
- 2.5. Require the Cleansing DSO to monitor the level of flytipping to ascertain whether any increase is directly due to the imposition of the permit scheme. If the experience of the County Council is repeated, a figure of up to £5,000 has been estimated to take

account of any temporary increase. Again this additional cost can be met from within the savings to landfill.

- 2.6. In parallel to this monitoring by the Cleansing DSO, a flytipping protocol is presently being agreed with all of the Leicestershire local authorities, the Police and the Environment Agency. The terms of reference agreed for the preparation of the working protocol are :-
- (a) to use coordinated methods to reduce the level of flytipping in Leicestershire and the associated risks;
  - (b) to identify offenders and initiate prosecutions;
  - (c) to identify actions to reduce the reoccurrence of flytipping;
  - (d) to work in a coordinated fashion to utilise the expertise and resources of group members to bring benefits to the environment, raise awareness and engage members of the public to cooperate with investigations; and
  - (e) to gather data on the problem of flytipping to target actions and to allow the success or otherwise of the project to be measured

The City Council intends to be proactive in the prosecution of flytippers in the future and will use Environmental Health Officers as well as those officers within the Waste Management Services to investigate and prosecute offenders. This objective will be implemented irrespective the permit scheme, as this is a pre-existing problem.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1. An estimated reduction of 3,500 tonnes in the amount of trade waste prevented from being deposited at the CRCs will generate savings in the region of £80,000 per annum.
- 3.2. Additional costs for administrating the permit scheme have been estimated at £20,000 per annum and anticipated increases in flytipping will require an increased expenditure of £5,000 per annum.
- 3.3. Any net savings achieved by the introduction of the permit scheme will be used to mitigate this years projected £200,000 increase in waste management costs for the additional growth in waste arisings.
- 3.4. Although the imposition of the bulk collection charge has put pressure on the CRCs and may have increased flytipping costs, the net savings to the City Council is still £50,000 per annum as required by the Department's previously approved budget strategy. Furthermore, the recent increase in flytipping problems is predominantly associated with the illegal disposal of trade waste, rather than with the dumping of bulky household items.

#### 4. Legal Implications

The City Council has a contract with Environ to manage the CRCs at Freemens Common and Bridge Road. The need for CRC staff to check permits following the introduction of the scheme will require a formal variation to the Contract. Agreement has been reached with Environ that there shall not be any variation to the current contract price.

The permit scheme will also help to prevent the illegal disposal of trade waste at CRCs.

#### 5. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting information	References
Equal Opportunities	No		
Policy	Yes	Paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 & 2.6	
Sustainable and Environmental	Yes	Paragraph 2.6	
Crime and Disorder	Yes	Paragraphs 1.4, 1.5 & 4	
Human Rights Act	No		
Elderly/People on Low Income	No		

#### 6. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

None

#### 7. Consultations

Leicestershire County Council  
Cleaving DSO  
Environ

#### 8. Report Author

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