

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 27 February

Household Waste Recycling Centres: Commercial Waste Policy and Reopening Braehead Recycling Centre

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee approve:
- 1.1.1 the immediate changes to the Council's policy on restricting the illegal deposit of commercial waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres;
 - 1.1.2 an investigation into the reopening of Braehead Recycling Centre during the 2021/22 financial year to increase service to Edinburgh residents and relieve usage at Sighthill; with a report with officer recommendations on the subject being provided to TEC during 2020/21, and
 - 1.1.3 the principle of introduction of a permit scheme for vans and other commercial style vehicles using the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC).

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Household Waste Recycling Centres: Commercial Waste Policy and Reopening Braehead Recycling Centre

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Waste and Cleansing service acknowledge the effect unauthorised commercial waste deposits have on queues and costs at HWRC. The service is seeking to alleviate this through strengthening current policies regarding commercial access, reopen the Braehead HWRC to provide more options for Edinburgh residents, and to introduce a permit based system for commercial style vehicle access in the future.

3 Background

- 3.1 HWRCs are provided for residents of Edinburgh to deposit their household waste free of charge. These sites are not licensed to accept commercial waste and businesses have a responsibility to dispose of their waste lawfully.
- 3.2 Many Local Authorities across Scotland, including the City of Edinburgh (CEC), suffer from a level of 'commercial waste abuse' at HWRCs where businesses seek to deposit their waste free of charge. This leads to:
- 3.2.1 longer queues at recycling centres as traders often bring their waste in vans / larger vehicles and take longer to unload. Members will be aware that busy recycling centres are currently a particular issue in Edinburgh;
 - 3.2.2 council revenue budgets paying for the handling and disposal of this waste; a cost which should be met by the business; and
 - 3.2.3 some traders become abusive / aggressive towards site staff, when challenged at HWRC.
- 3.3 The current Council policy with regard to commercial waste, vans and trailers at HWRCs is:
- 3.3.1 Commercial, trade or business waste is not allowed.
 - 3.3.2 Only Edinburgh residents in domestic vehicles can use the recycling centres.

3.3.3 Cars or single axle trailers carrying household waste ONLY are allowed at all sites.

3.3.4 Vans and double axle trailers carrying household waste ONLY are only allowed in at Sighthill and Seafield Household Waste Recycling Centres subject to the following:

- No vans are allowed at Craigmillar.
- Livered vans are not allowed at any centre. Vans with no branding are only allowed if you bring two forms of identification, such as your utility bill and your driving licence or passport.
- If you're using a hire van you must bring the hire documents and two forms of identification, such as your utility bill and your driving licence or passport.
- Staff can refuse access to anyone who fails to produce the correct documents.

3.4 Many Local Authorities have taken steps to prevent trade abuse / misuse of their recycling centres, leading to significant financial savings and fewer queues on site. Waste and Cleansing seeks to introduce the same in Edinburgh by initially strengthening the current policy and closing the loopholes and, in the longer term, introducing a more automated system of permitting vans carrying household waste.

4 Main report

4.1 To strengthen the current policy the service proposes to make the following changes:

Insert

- Council staff have the right to refuse entry or deny tipping to any person they suspect of trying to deposit commercial waste, whether for disposal or recycling.
- Council staff have the right to require suspected traders / carriers of commercial waste to complete a 'Household Waste Declaration form' to state that the waste is from their own domestic property. Appropriate photographic identification may be required to be shown to site staff when completing this form.
- Council staff have the right to inspect the contents of any load.
- Council staff have the right to visit any customers address, if they are suspected of bringing in commercial waste, to establish the origin of the waste.
- Council staff have the right to ban, from all sites, any vehicle or customer suspected of ongoing illegal deposit of commercial waste.

Edit

- Replace: *'If you're using a hire van you must bring the hire documents and two forms of identification, such as your utility bill and your driving licence or passport'.*

With:

'Hire vans are only permitted on site if they are hired for a period not exceeding 5 days. The hire documentation must be shown, along with two forms of identification (one Photographic) both showing the driver's home address (must be a CEC resident). Appropriate forms of Identification will be listed on the Council's website. Vehicles hired for longer than 5 days will not be permitted on site.

- Replace: Cars or single axle trailers carrying household waste ONLY are allowed at all sites; and Vans and double axle trailers carrying household waste ONLY are only allowed in at Sighthill and Seafield Household Waste Recycling Centres subject to the following:

With:

*Trailers are only permitted on **any** site if they measure less than 6 feet *4 feet, (excluding the frame / tow hitches etc)*

- 4.2 In revising the existing policy it is recognised there is an inherent risk of driving commercial waste away from the HWRCs towards fly tipping. In order to manage this risk the Service will work closely with the revised Enforcement Service to monitor instances of fly tipping, taking enforcement action where possible.
- 4.3 Acknowledging how busy the recycling centres have been in recent months, the time taken by vans to unload and the contribution this has on queues on sites, the service proposes that during the 2020-2021 financial year, officers will investigate the feasibility and costs of reopening Braehead HWRC in the 2021-2022 financial year. This site would open on similar lines to Craigmillar (i.e. a cars only, no vans site) and will decrease pressure on and queues at Sighthill HWRC.
- 4.4 There are capital and revenue implications of reopening the site and these will be investigated by officers.
- 4.5 It is acknowledged that whilst strengthening the current policy is useful in the short term, in the medium term a different approach will be required.
- 4.6 Distinguishing traders and trade waste from members of the public with household waste is not always as simple as it sounds. Some van drivers (often in the building trades, or 'white van men') will state that 'the waste is from my house'. This may be building waste or waste from a 'house clearance' or similar activity. It is not always easy for site staff to distinguish the source of the waste, particularly when under pressure to move customers through the site as quickly as possible.

- 4.7 Rather than try to distinguish the source of the waste, many local authorities have chosen to restrict the numbers of visits of the kind of vehicles usually associated with trade waste, or large volumes of waste; i.e. vans, pick-ups, large trailers and certain other vehicles, through the introduction of a permit system.
- 4.8 A permit system acknowledges that some household's only vehicle may be the van / pick-up associated with their business, and this is their only (or most convenient) method of bringing materials to a recycling centre. A permit system allows these householders to access the recycling centre in their van, with their Household Waste for a limited number of visits per year. By limiting the number of visits the businesses are thus forced to take their trade waste elsewhere.
- 4.9 It should be noted that where a household has two vehicles, for example a car for private use and a van for trade use, it is only the van which would have to be permitted, the car would have unlimited visits, as would all cars.
- 4.10 Waste and Cleansing Services propose to allocate a permit to certain vehicles including:
- 4.10.1 Vans
 - 4.10.2 Trailers under 6*4 feet (excluding frames / tow hitches)
 - 4.10.3 Pick ups
- 4.11 The service proposes to ban certain vehicles including:
- 4.11.1 anything over 3.5t;
 - 4.11.2 trailers over 6*4 feet (excluding the frames / tow hitches). This includes horse boxes;
 - 4.11.3 luton vans;
 - 4.11.4 liveried vehicles (currently not allowed on sites); and
 - 4.11.5 flat bed tipper vehicles / 'Flat bed transit style' vehicles.
- 4.12 The permitted vehicles would be permitted for 12 visits per year (estimated to allow up to 24 tonnes of waste to be deposited by householders with a van with a 2-tonne capacity).
- 4.13 Permits would be:
- 4.13.1 free of charge;
 - 4.13.2 residents would require to register and provide evidence of vehicle ownership (V5 logbook);
 - 4.13.3 useable at any time within the 12 month period following issue;
 - 4.13.4 only one set of permits will be issued to each house in each 12 month period (unless home ownership / tenancy changes in this period and the new owner / tenant applies); and
 - 4.13.5 limited to one set of permits / household, even if they have two vans.

- 4.14 Introduction of the permits would coincide with the introduction of Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) at the Recycling Centres allowing vans on site (Bankhead and Seafield). ANPR would be used to log the visits of the permitted vehicles, providing a check on the numbers of the visits allowed under the permit scheme. When the vehicle is approaching its limit, this would be flagged to the driver, and to site staff to remind the driver, and once the permitted number of visits reached, it would also be flagged to the driver and to site staff and tipping would be refused.
- 4.15 The introduction of ANPR to the sites provides a number of other benefits to the Council and to Edinburgh residents. It would be used to gather data on how busy the site is and relay this in real time to residents to allow them to plan their visits and decrease time spent visiting the centres. It would also allow the service to better understand the average time a customer spends on site and look at ways as to how this may be reduced.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 To communicate the policy changes to existing van users on the site with a view to implementation of the new policy in the first quarter of 2020/21.
- 5.2 Officers to investigate the feasibility of re-opening Braehead HWRC during 2021-22, and report back to committee during 2020-21.

6 Financial impact

- 6.1 Revenue and Capital implications of reopening Braehead HWRC will be investigated and reported to Committee.
- 6.2 No costs are associated with revising the current policy on commercial waste at HWRCs. Potential to have a positive impact on the budget by reducing the amount spent on disposal.

7 Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 It is anticipated that the re-opening of the Braehead HWRC will have a positive community impact. It provides each of the Councils Locality areas with a HWRC and should relieve traffic issues for remaining customers of Sighthill HWRC.

8 Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Not applicable.

9 Appendices

9.1 No appendices are required for this report.