

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Date:	29 October 2018
Title:	Household Waste Recycling Centres Cross Border Charging and Permit System Update
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: Sam Horne

Tel: 01962 832268

Email: sam.horne@hants.gov.uk

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. That the Executive Member for Environment and Transport approves the introduction of an electronic residents' permit system to manage the cross border usage of Hampshire Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).
- 1.2. That a charge is levied, from January 2020 onwards, on non Hampshire residents of £5 per visit as a contribution towards the costs associated with the material they bring in.
- 1.3. That a detailed communications plan is developed, focused on the sites close to the Hampshire border, to encourage Hampshire residents to sign up for a permit.
- 1.4. That the transitional arrangements with West Berkshire are maintained until the new cross border system is implemented.
- 1.5. That an administration fee of £15 is levied for the provision of a waste permit for vans and trailers, taking effect from the 1 April 2019. In addition that the time period for which permits are valid will be reduced to be 12 months.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The purpose of this paper is to outline both the options and the proposed solution for managing cross border usage of the HWRC service in Hampshire. It also sets out the proposed charge for waste permits for vans and trailers at the HWRCs.
- 2.2. It sets out the rationale for and financial implications of introducing a charge for residents from outside of the County to access the Hampshire sites.
- 2.3. The report considers the transitional arrangements in place with West Berkshire Council and proposes a short term continuation of those arrangements while a permanent solution is delivered.

3. Contextual information

- 3.1. At the Executive Member for Environment and Transport Decision Day in October 2016, approval was given to enter into a transitional solution to enable Hampshire residents to retain a level of access to West Berkshire's HWRC at Newtown Road whilst longer term solutions were considered.
- 3.2. A Hampshire resident permit was issued to Hampshire residents who lived more than 10 miles from a Hampshire HWRC and closer to the Newtown Road site in West Berkshire.
- 3.3. Just over 5,000 permits have been issued, using information provided by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, enabling all of those residents free access to the Newtown Road site to recycle and dispose of their waste. This costs the County Council £160,000 per annum.
- 3.4. Work has been on going with all neighbouring waste disposal authorities to try to establish a consistent approach to cross border usage but it has become clear that this is not possible.

4. Proposed Cross Border System

- 4.1. Two broad options were considered for the cross border system, a manual one and a digital one with each evaluated for its cost, management and effectiveness.
- 4.2. The manual option involves making it a requirement that all site users bring with them a suitable piece of identification to prove that they are a Hampshire resident. In most cases this is a council tax bill or drivers licence. This option has been implemented by a number of other authorities, most recently Wiltshire in early 2018¹.
- 4.3. Whilst the manual system appears very low cost in terms of roll out there are some costs that have to be met such as:
 - Communications to residents of the new requirement;
 - Cost of HWRC site staff checking documents of every site user; and
 - Cost of managing and responding to complaints.
- 4.4. There are currently about 4 million visits to Hampshire's sites each year, which is an average of over 400 visits per day per site. Even if it is assumed that documents will be ready to be viewed it is likely that this process will slow down the throughput at the site and lead to increased queuing. This would be particularly true at peak times.
- 4.5. Alternatively, a physical permit or sticker could be issued to all Hampshire addresses so that these can be presented when entering the HWRC. There is, however, a significant cost in producing and distributing these to almost 800,000 households, as well as the ongoing cost of replacing damaged and lost permits.

¹ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/household-recycling-centres-id-faq>

- 4.6 The digital option involves all Hampshire residents registering for an e-permit that would be used to identify those non Hampshire residents using the sites and focus on them rather than on checking everyone who enters the sites.
- 4.7 As part of the HWRC management contract that commenced in April 2016, a new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system was introduced by the contractor to enable effective management of trade waste abuse at the site but also to monitor site usage and visitor numbers. Whilst the sites now offer a service for small and medium sized businesses to dispose of their waste, there is still a need to monitor illegal trade waste, and this system is a key part of that deterrent.
- 4.8 The proposal is to place a link on the County Council's waste webpage that will take residents to a web form to register as a Hampshire resident. They will be required to enter their name, address, phone number and email address and up to three vehicle registrations. Assuming a valid Hampshire address is entered, an e-permit record will be created and this will populate a database that is shared with the ANPR system.
- 4.9 The only data that will be shared are the actual vehicle registrations. When a vehicle comes into an HWRC that isn't on the list it will be flagged to site staff who can then approach the customer and manage it from there. This means that once registered Hampshire residents will be able to freely enter the sites without any delays or further checks being required.
- 4.10 There are set up costs in terms of the webpages and online forms, but these will be one off. Beyond this, there is only minimal maintenance cost associated with the webpages.
- 4.11 Registration for a permit should take a maximum of two minutes and assuming the address is valid the information will be uploaded to the ANPR system very quickly enabling access. It is intended to make the transfer almost instantaneous, but more work is required before this is confirmed.
- 4.12 Whilst sign up will be primarily a 'self service' activity we will make provision for those residents that are not able to access the internet to support in signing up for the permit.
- 4.13 Having considered all factors associated with the manual and digital solutions it was determined that the flexibility, reduced impact on Hampshire residents, minimal administration, and low delivery cost of the digital solution is the preferred approach.

5 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 In reviewing how to manage cross border usage there are two broad options in terms of the restriction that is applied: one, to ban all those not resident within the local authority area; or two, to levy a charge to offset the costs incurred in dealing with the waste deposited.
- 5.2 It is recognised that sometimes facilities located in another authority's area can be more convenient to access than those within their own local authority's area. However, whilst there is a need for this service provision it

does not come without a cost, which should not be borne solely by Hampshire tax payers.

- 5.3 In considering the charge that should be levied, a number of factors need to be considered. As it is not possible to be certain of what material will be brought in or practical to weigh or assess material as it comes in, a flat fee per visit is the logical answer. It is proposed that it be £5 per visit. It should be noted that charges for non domestic waste at the site will be in addition to the flat rate charged for access if out of county users wish to dispose of these waste types.
- 5.4 The fee has been developed using the cost of both delivering the service and dealing with the waste that is being presented. Clearly, this is an estimate based on the uncertainty of the amounts that will actually arise.
- 5.5 This figure is in line with charges made by other authorities, although there are authorities that do charge more such as: Greenwich Council, who levy a charge of £10 per visit to residents from outside of the Borough wishing to use the HWRC.²
- 5.6 The charge is meant to act as an incentive for those non-Hampshire residents accessing Hampshire's HWRCs to maximise the use of each trip to the sites rather than making multiple journeys to sites with small amounts of material. It is hoped that it might also incentivise users to consider other disposal options such as home composting and furniture donation and reuse.
- 5.7 The charge has been set to reflect a reasonable level of cost recovery whilst at the same time seeking to encourage the behaviours outlined in 5.6.

6 West Berkshire Arrangements

- 6.1 The County Council has transitional arrangements in place with West Berkshire Council to provide free access to its site at Newtown Road to Hampshire residents.
- 6.2 A permit was issued to Hampshire residents who lived more than 10 miles from a Hampshire HWRC and closer to the Newtown Road site in West Berkshire.
- 6.3 Just over 5,000 permits were issued, using information provided by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, enabling all of those residents free access to the Newtown Road site to recycle and dispose of their waste.
- 6.4 Discussions are on going with West Berkshire Council with regards to long term options on cross border usage, but as these are not complete there is a need to extend these arrangements until the new cross border system is fully implemented at a cost up to around £14,000 per month (£170,000 per annum).

7 Consultation and Equalities

- 7.1 Having completed an equalities impact assessment it has been determined that there is one area where there is a low impact on people with protected characteristics as a result of this proposal. The text from the assessment is set out below:

Poverty – Low Impact

Levying a charge on both non Hampshire users and for waste van and trailers permits would have an impact however the service can still be accessed for free in a non commercial vehicle and so there is adequate access to the service without any charge.

With regards to non Hampshire users the HWRCs within their own local authority areas are accessible for free albeit that the distance to travel may be greater.

8 Waste Permits for vans and trailers

- 8.1 The County Council operates a waste permit system for vans and large trailers as part of the controls in place at the HWRCs to prevent trade waste abuse at the sites.
- 8.2 Any resident wishing to use a commercial type vehicle (van, pick-up, or light goods vehicle) or trailer over 1.8m in length needs to apply for a permit to gain access to the HWRCs. The permit allows the user to visit the site up to 12 times per permit. A permit remains valid for a maximum of 3 years . All other site and waste acceptance rules apply.
- 8.3 Since the permit scheme was introduced in 2008 on average 16,000 – 20,000 permits have been issued each year, with just over 13,200 issued by 1 January 2018. This requires resources to undertake the validation, production, distribution and ongoing management of the system and comes at a considerable cost.
- 8.4 The costs associated with the staff delivering this service and the other costs of printing and distribution equate to just under £15 per permit based on a set number of permits.
- 8.5 Currently these permits are provided free of charge. However, there is a significant cost in the production, distribution and management of the system. The HWRCs are provided for residents to dispose of household waste, and there is a need to ensure that commercial waste is not deposited illegally at the sites.
- 8.6 It is proposed to introduce a flat rate fee of £15 per permit for anyone who wishes to use a commercial type vehicle to dispose of their waste at the

HWRCs. This is comparable with permit charges from other authorities that range from £5 per visit to £49 for 6 visits.³

- 8.7 Under the proposed new approach for permits each permit will continue to provide for 12 visits but will only be valid for a 12 month period, effectively one visit per month, with the remaining permit rules in place.
- 8.8 External legal advice has been sought with regards to the legal status of the charges that are proposed and this advice stated that:

‘The WDA may only charge an administration fee for the implementation of the permit, this may be used to cover the costs of issuing and/or maintaining the permit.’
- 8.9 This is on the basis that the County Council has made provision for residents to access the sites free of charge in their domestic vehicles and that the waste permits are a mechanism to prevent illegal deposit of trade waste to the network, both of which are true in the case of these proposals.
- 8.10 The charge would commence on the 1 April 2019.

³ <https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/RubbishAndRecycling/Householdwaste-disposalsites/Van-Permit-Scheme.aspx>
<https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/resident/bins-waste-and-recycling/waste-sites/Pages/Vehicle-Permits.aspx>

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes/no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes/no
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes/no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes/no

OR

This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:

It supports the delivery of service efficiencies in order to meet the County Councils transformation targets.

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Cross Border Household Waste Recycling Centre Access – 7801	12 October 2016
Progress report on Household Waste Recycling Centre Cross Border Charging	14 November 2017
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

- 1.1 The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2 Equalities Impact Assessment:

An equalities impact assessment has been completed and no disproportionate impacts have been identified for people with protected characteristics. The proposals will introduce a robust system to manage cross border usage of Hampshire's HWRCs and will secure a contribution to the cost associated with material from outside of Hampshire, thus helping to sustain the service to the benefit off all Hampshire residents.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1 It is recognised that there is significant focus at present on fly tipping and possible links to changes in service provision at Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- 2.2 All of the data and anecdotal evidence shows that there is no relationship between the two, and indeed the tonnage of fly tipped material in Hampshire is on a downward trend overall.

2.3 Hampshire County Council has developed and is leading on a fly tipping strategy and action plan to combat fly tipping across the County.⁴

3. Climate Change:

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

It is not anticipated that there will be an impact on the County Council's carbon footprint or energy consumption.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The HWRC service has been the subject of a review that considered the impact of climate change and potential mitigation and this will be reviewed as part of the next service review.

⁴ <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/waste-prevention/fly-tipping-strategy.pdf>