

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**NEIGHBOURHOOD, ENVIRONMENT AND
COMMUNITIES CABINET MEMBER**

BULKY ITEMS COLLECTION AND THE THIRD SECTOR

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

1.1 The object of this report is to seek approval to actively promote the services of a third sector organisation collecting furniture and electrical items for reuse.

1.2 The key points in this report are;

- In 2008/09 the council received 8,372 requests for a bulky items collection service.
- The current collection arrangements in place do not lend themselves to the reuse of these items once collected and, whilst a percentage of the material collected can be recycled, the remainder is landfilled.
- The British Heart Foundation (BHF) has an established collection service for the recovery of unwanted items of furniture etc that are repaired and sold to fund their charitable aims. They have asked the council to assist them in this task.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The council currently provides a collection service for bulky household items. Each property is entitled to one free collection of up to three items in any financial year. Additional collections can be provided for a charge of £14 for up to three further items.

2.2 Collections are completed from outside the property within 10 working days, subjecting the items to damage by the weather, vandals etc. This results in the items becoming unsuitable for reuse.

2.3 In 2008/09 the council received 8,372 requests for this service. It is estimated that 8,850 service requests will be received by the end of the year 2009/10.

- 2.4 All collected bulky waste is currently taken to one of the eight Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) and separated into the appropriate containers on site. Recycling facilities are available for some bulky items such as electrical appliances, wooden furniture etc but recycling facilities for soft furnishings, mattresses and carpets are not available and these will be sent to landfill. Accurate data is not available to confirm exactly how much of the material is recycled at the HRCs but the Furniture Recycling Network (FRN) suggests that 13% of collected bulky items are recycled on average. FRN data suggests that between 25% and 30% of bulky waste is reusable.
- 2.5 Data from the FRN also suggest that an average bulky collection will consist of 1.8 items and the material will weigh in the region of 61.2 kgs. Based on these figures and our number of service requests, the table below details the likely tonnages dealt with, recycled and potentially available for reuse via the bulky collection service in North Lincolnshire.

	Number of collections	Estimated total tonnage	Estimated tonnage recycled	Estimated tonnage available for reuse
2008/09	8,372	513	67	154
2009/10	8,850 est.	541	70	162

- 2.6 The third sector includes voluntary and community organisations (VCOs), charities and social enterprises. There are numerous, well established, third sector organisations (TSOs) across the UK who provide furniture and appliance reuse schemes and deal with nearly two million items of furniture and a quarter of a million domestic appliances per year. The third sector involvement in resource recovery/reuse activities focuses on the benefits of 'second life' materials to people who need them, and in the creation of jobs, training, volunteering and community development opportunities in making good use of these resources.
- 2.7 The Waste Management division of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services has in the past tried to establish and/or engage with locally based TSOs with a view to providing a furniture reuse scheme, but with very little success.
- 2.8 Officers from the division have now been contacted by and met with representatives from the charity, the British Heart Foundation (BHF). The BHF currently provides a free collection service for any good quality furniture and electrical items within the North Lincolnshire area. All soft furnishing and mattresses are required to have their original fire safety labels in order to be reused. Any electrical items are PAT tested before being resold. The BHF has a retail shop in Scunthorpe and the items are sold here and proceeds go towards preventing and fighting heart disease.

2.9 The promotion of a reuse scheme will positively contribute to a number of performance indicators including NI 191 - Residual household waste per household; NI 192 - Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and NI 7 - Environment for a thriving third sector.

2.10 The council is committed to assisting the third sector and these are outlined in the Joint Corporate Procurement Strategy 2009-12 and the VCO Compact agreement.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Option 1 - To actively promote the service offered by the BHF and signpost local residents with potentially reusable items to them.

3.2 Option 2 - To continue to provide the existing service.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option 1, the preferred option, will enable the recovery, for reuse, of bulky household items, many of which are currently landfilled. The BHF also guarantees collections within 72 hours.

4.2 Option 2 is not preferred as it will not align with the council's policies and obligations and will not contribute positively to the improvement of the council's performance indicators.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 The signposting of prospective customers for the BHF scheme will reduce the number of bulky item collections delivered by the council. This will enable the council to offer an improved level of service to its remaining customers with the resources currently deployed.

5.2 Additional costs will not be incurred by the council. A small saving in landfill tax may be achieved. The BHF will be eligible for third party recycling credit payments that are available to such organisations that divert household waste away from landfill. These are discretionary payments. A review of council policy on these awards is ongoing

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Any residents ringing the Customer Helpline to request a bulky collection service should be asked by Helpline staff if their items are suitable for reuse and if appropriate alert them to the BHF service.

- 6.2 The opportunity to donate items to the BHF for reuse could be communicated to residents via the council's Direct magazine and the council's website at no additional cost.
- 6.3 No contract between the council and the BHF is intended or implied. Any and all references to the BHF service will include an appropriate disclaimer to make it clear that the council accepts no liability for the service.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The relevant trade unions have been consulted and they have no objections to this proposal.
- 7.2 The Customer Contact Centre has been briefed on the proposal, but no overall increase in enquiries is expected. Amendments to existing scripts will be required.
- 7.3 The council's Strategic Procurement and VfM Manager and Legal Services have been consulted on this proposal. No concerns have been expressed.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the council actively promotes the bulky item collection and reuse service offered locally by the British Heart Foundation as described in this report.
- 8.2 The Waste Management Division will undertake all necessary publicity for the scheme in conjunction with the council's Public Relations section.

SERVICE DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD & ENVIRONMENT

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Third Sector: Investment for Growth - November 2009 (WRAP).