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Mrs S Hawker
Parish Clerk, West Wittering Parish Council
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5 August 2019

Dear Mrs Hawker

Mobile Household Recycling Site – Selsey and the Witterings

You may be aware that Deborah Urquhart, Cabinet Member for Environment at the County Council, is along with her Cabinet colleagues, reluctantly considering a range of savings measures to try and meet the Council's projected budget deficit for 2020/21 and beyond.

One of the options considered at the Cabinet meeting on 11th July is the withdrawal of the mobile Household Recycling Site serving Selsey and the Witterings.

This would follow the withdrawal of similar service in four other parts of the county in October 2016. Prior to any decision being taken, the Cabinet Member has asked me to contact Town and Parish Councils with households in the catchment to give you the opportunity to explore covering the cost of the service either in whole or a reduced offering as an alternative to withdrawal.

The cost of providing the mobile service to the two communities on alternate weeks is approximately £54,000 per year based on the current year. The contract price is subject to annual indexation based on published inflation figures.

The service is provided by Viridor at a contractual hourly rate and the cost equates to around £1,000 per week. As the service forms part of a wider contract with Viridor, it is unlikely the current level service could be provided in another way as cost effectively. To illustrate this; the staff provided are moved from other sites on Thursdays (and backfilled with agency staff) and the lorries used to move skips around are part of the fleet used for haulage across the county.

Our proposal would be that West Sussex County Council continue to hold the contract with Viridor for the service and continue to ensure that it meets standards. WSCC would continue to respond to any complaints, health and safety and/or Environment Agency issues.

The County Council would remain responsible for arranging and paying for the disposal or composting of the waste and retain any income derived from the sale of recyclable material. The latter is a very small proportion of the former and is

offset against the full cost of disposal. We would propose to share data with the relevant councils. There would be no commitment to continue the service indefinitely; we suggest a six-month period of notice to terminate funding would be appropriate.

A lower cost option would be to just offer the service in the summer months (ie 1st April to 30th September) at the hourly rate.

I regret that in view of WSCC's financial position, we cannot offer to share the cost. Similarly, if only one of the two communities (ie Selsey TC or the Group of PCs who are closest to the Wittering Site) agree to fund the continued scheme we would not consider this to be viable. It would be arguable that residents in the other area could "freeride" on the remaining service in one location and the service could be overwhelmed to the detriment of the community paying.

The Council is aware, from previous consultations and experience, of the concerns and objections that will be raised if the service is withdrawn.

I attached a FAQ sheet which addresses the points commonly raised.

We would be grateful if your Council could give this proposal your careful consideration and advise us of your response by Friday 6th September. If you would like any further information at this stage, or to arrange a meeting, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

I would like to stress that we appreciate this is a significant ask of the TC and PCs concerned and the purpose of this approach is to provide an opportunity to discuss the proposal. If this is not something all the TC/ PCs can support, responsibility and accountability for the decision remains with the County Council and we would make that clear.

Yours sincerely



Steve Read
Director of Environment and Public Protection

Cc Carol Purnell, County Councillor for Selsey
Pieter Montyn, County Councillor for The Witterings

Identical letters sent to clerks of:
Earnley Parish Council
East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish Council
Selsey Town Council
Sidlesham Parish Council
West Itchenor Parish Council
West Wittering Parish Council

FAQs regarding potential withdrawal of the mobile HWRS service

Won't withdrawing the service increase flytipping?

Flytipping is both criminal and antisocial and there is no excuse for it, particularly while a good network of fixed Household Waste Recycling Sites is provided, the nearest being Westhampnett. Those who flytip risk large fines or imprisonment if convicted.

Flytipping, while unsightly and damaging, constitutes much less than one percent of waste managed in the County.

Most large-scale flytipping is perpetrated by rogue traders who are not permitted to use sites provided by local authorities for householders anyway.

While reducing convenience to current users of the service, it is unlikely that law abiding members of the community would revert to illegal activity if the service was withdrawn.

Flytipping while unsightly and damaging constitutes much less than 1 percent of waste managed in the County.

What about Midhurst which, although a permanent site, serves a town with a lower population than Selsey?

While the Population of Midhurst is smaller than Selsey, the site serves a wider catchment area, particularly to the North of Chichester District. With Hampshire and Surrey restricting or preventing access to their sites from non-residents, Midhurst provides those residents a much closer option to the alternative West Sussex Sites.

Doesn't the Council have a statutory duty to provide such sites to residents?

The Council has a duty under s51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA'90) to provide "sites" for members of the public to dispose of recycling and household waste. The main purpose is to handle household waste that is not suitable for collection.

There is no stipulation in the EPA'90, or other legislation or case law as to the number of sites to be provided by a waste Disposal Authority. The County's network of 11 fixed sites compares well to other counties in terms of ratio of sites to households and average distance to travel.

What about the impact of more private vehicle miles as residents would have to drive to another site?

While the closure of the site would reduce heavy vehicle movements, it will increase the number of private vehicle miles. However, this can be mitigated in various ways. We always recommend that residents consider combining a trip to a HWRS with a shopping or other trip and to take larger loads less frequently.

What are alternative outlets for the material?

Recyclable items such as cardboard, if properly presented, will be taken as part of the fortnightly recyclable kerbside collection. We encourage home composting of garden waste or to use the green waste collection service, provided locally by Chichester District Council, albeit there is a charge for this.

The nearest Household Waste Recycling Site is at Westhampnett. The site is open seven days per week in summer and six in Winter. Westhampnett provides a much wider range of services than the mobile service and achieves a higher recycling rate as a result.

Will this move result in less material being recycled?

With the extensive range of material collected at kerbside, and the prevalence of textile banks there is no reason why this move would reduce the recycling rate. It may even be positive due to the greater segregation of materials at the fixed sites, although this is not the main driver for the proposal.