

3 October 2019		ITEM: 6
Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Linford Household Waste & Recycling Centre – Site Redevelopment update		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Daren Spring - Assistant Director of Street Scene and Leisure		
Accountable Director: Julie Rogers – Director of Environment and Highways		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

Thurrock Council operates a single Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Linford. The site is operating significantly over capacity with the layout and infrastructure not being in keeping with modern sites. This reduces the opportunities to encourage re-use and recycling. The site was bought back in-house in June 2017 after the incumbent contractor rejected the opportunity to renew the contract for operating the site. This presented the Council with an opportunity to improve the site and take measures to encourage recycling and prevent unauthorised waste disposal at the site.

Subject to planning approval the Committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet and Cabinet approved to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Environment and Place (now the Director of Environment and Highways) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment for the procurement of contracts up to a value of £2.6 million for the redevelopment of the Household Waste and Recycling Centre. An update report was presented to Cleaner, Greener, Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 October 2018. This report provides an update on progress as requested at that meeting.

1. Recommendation(s)

That Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the report.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Thurrock Council has a statutory obligation under section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to provide residents with a facility for the disposal of bulky household waste. Thurrock Council currently operates a

single site at Buckingham Hill Road in Linford Household Waste and Recycling Centre, which is situated on a former Essex County Council Landfill Site. The land that the site sits on is fully owned by Thurrock Council. In line with Environmental Permitting Regulations Linford Household Waste and Recycling Centre is operated under licence from the Environment Agency with regular inspections being undertaken to ensure that the site is being run in accordance with the law. The site licence governs the site operations and the waste types that the site can accept; it also imposes requirements for site competent persons. Failure to comply with the terms of the licence can lead to the Council being prosecuted under Environmental Legislation or the restriction or closure of the site.

3. Current status of the site

- 3.1 The current HWRC is not in keeping with modern facilities at other boroughs. The size of the site is struggling to meet current demand and will not be able to support the boroughs projected growth agenda. As it currently stands, the site would not be able to be re-configured to support charged commercial waste deposits, a greater range of recycling containers or a dedicated re-use facility. Changes that have been made to the site since it has come back in-house has improved the site significantly.
- 3.2 A permit scheme was introduced in April 2018 this was to deter commercial vehicles and residents from outside the borough illegally disposing of waste at the HWRC. In addition to the cost implications to Thurrock Council, there is also a legal obligation to take steps to ensure that only permitted waste is deposited on site.
- 3.3 The permit scheme continues to have a high demand with 879 twelve-month permits and 85 seven-day permits being issued since April 2019. The site has had 48,611 visits since January 2019, with Thurrock's residents disposing of approximately 3000 tonnes of waste and recycling.
- 3.4 The service continuously explores new innovations, in conjunction with our waste disposal contractor, to increase reuse and recycling, the most recent introduced includes the recycling of hard plastics, which have now been diverted from landfill, and mattresses are now recycled through MAT UK.
- 3.5 A partnership has been established with the Active Travel Cycling Team to provide unwanted bikes from the HWRC. The main purpose of the cycle hub is to help people get active, assist with affordability and support residents to get to and from their place of work, education or job interviews, whilst encouraging sustainable travel. This is a not for profit scheme with any income being reinvested in the scheme to replenishing stock of spare parts etc.

4. Current status of the redevelopment project

- 4.1 Planning permission was granted in February 2019 for the development of a new HWRC on the existing site.
- 4.2 Procurement of the site construction contract is currently being undertaken via a procurement framework. Several contractors have expressed an interest, in line with the processes required under EU Procurement Regulations. The construction procurement process is expected to be concluded by the end of this calendar year.
- 4.3 Planning consent has been granted for the new HWRC to be developed on the footprint of the existing site. Appendix 1 of this report provides a copy of the site plan for the future design of the site. The new layout will segregate customer vehicle movements within the site from lorry's coming into the site to remove any full containers. Therefore further improving the safety of the site.
- 4.4 Construction work is anticipated to take between 6 – 9 months to complete and as part of the procurement process developers have been asked to consider, how a reduced service offer can be provided safely, at the existing site, while the site is being constructed.
- 4.5 Early discussions have indicated that whilst this may be possible it could potentially increase the length of time required for the construction of the site and/or reduce the service provision drastically, if it can be provided at all.
- 4.6 In the event that the timescales become too long, or the existing site cannot remain open while the construction work is carried out, the service is considering alternative options to ensure a sufficient level of service can be maintained.
- 4.7 *Contingency options being explored*
 - 4.7.1 Two temporary sites very close to the existing site have been considered and due to various contributing factors, one of the sites is no longer a viable option.
 - 4.7.2 Advice has been sought, from the Environment Agency, on what would be an acceptable standard of provision for a temporary site, which does not fall far short of the standards on the existing site. Planning consent would be required and costs are currently being explored for the temporary development. For both temporary sites, there would be a requirement to return the land to previous condition, further adding to abortive costs.
 - 4.7.3 In order to minimise cost and disruption for our residents a further option of a potential land swap, on adjacent land, is being considered. This would provide an additional benefit of enabling the existing site to remain functional while the new development is built. Once the new site is completed, the old HWRC land would be left fallow, again planning consent would be required and again this could potentially delay construction and impact costs in removing what is on the existing land.

4.7.4 Should the new development remain on its existing site and developers are unable to find a solution to provide safe services for our residents a further option is being considered, which is to provide an enhanced bulky waste collection service, with reduced or removed charges, alongside the provision of a number of temporary bring sites throughout the borough.

4.7.5 All options are being explored and costed and a further update will be provided once the procurement discussions are complete and it is known whether these contingency plans are required.

4.8 *Highways Access Improvements*

4.8.1 As part of the new HWRC scheme a dedicated right turn lane to reduce the queuing traffic on Buckingham Hill Road has received consent. In addition, the increased site area will allow for additional 'on-site' stacking reducing queuing on the Public Highway. The exit for Commercial Vehicles and HGV's servicing the site will also be segregated from car access and egress, which will greatly improve site safety.

4.9 *Significant Increase in Recycling and Re-use Facilities On-site*

4.9.1 An increased range of recycling and re-use containers on-site will allow for a greater amount of waste items to be recycled or re-used instead of them being disposed of via methods that are more expensive. Increased space will allow for greater opportunities for partnership with local re-use community groups, which will allow a greater number of items such as furniture, electrical items and even items such as crutches to find new homes.

4.10 *Introduction of a dedicated Commercial Waste Disposal Facility On-site*

4.10.1 The site throughput data prior to the permitting scheme being implemented showed that a large amount of commercial waste was being disposed of at the site. An improved site layout and infrastructure will allow the site to apply for an environmental permit for commercial waste disposal on-site. This will include the introduction of an electronic weighbridge with a dedicated commercial waste lane. This will provide an avenue for income generation and will provide commercial waste producers with a further avenue to dispose of their waste legally and responsibly.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee October 2017 and July 2018 and Ward Members prior to that meeting.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

This report supports the Councils priority a clean environment that everyone has reason to take pride in.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant

Capital approved by Cabinet for site redevelopment is £2.6 Million.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Law and Governance

Under section 51 of the Environment Protection Act 1990 the Council has statutory obligation as a waste disposal authority to provide a facility for 'persons resident in its area' to dispose of household waste. Section 51(3) of the act makes provision for an authority to make changes for the deposit of Commercial or Industrial Waste.

The proposed value of the contracts for the redevelopment of the site was above the thresholds for the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and therefore a full and compliant EU Procurement process has been followed. In addition to the requirements of EU Procurement legislation the Procurement has met the Councils Contract Rules, which sit within the Councils Constitution.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Price**
Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities

The redevelopment site will result in improved access to the site for those with accessibility requirements. The removal of stepped access to container and dedicated parking bays will resolve significant impediments that currently severely restrict site access by disabled and elderly people. We will consider the temporary provision of the site once procurement discussions are complete. A full Community Equalities Impact Assessment will be required as part of any redevelopment.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder or Impact on Looked After Children)

Reduction in illegal waste disposal at Household Waste and Recycling Centre and the proposed Commercial Waste avenue at the redeveloped site has the potential to reduce fly-tipping and will therefore have a positive impact on crime and disorder in the Borough in line with our legal responsibilities towards Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports of 12 October 2017 and 4 October 2018

9. **Appendices to the report**

Appendix 1 – Future Site Plan

Report Author:

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