

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

11 January 2018

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE FOOD BAG TRIAL IN HIGH PEAK

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek Cabinet Member approval for the extension of a six month trial issuing free compostable food bags to households to divert food waste to composting and reduce disposal costs.

(2) **Information and Analysis** In September 2016, the Cabinet Member - Highways, Transport and Infrastructure approved a contribution of £6,215 to part fund, in partnership with High Peak Borough Council (HPBC), a small scale six month trial to issue compostable food bags to households in the Borough to encourage more residents to divert food waste for composting through their garden/food waste bins.

The trial covered 7,000 households in large parts of Glossop and the surrounding areas. A total 2,900 households were provided with kitchen caddies, funded by HPBC, plus two free compostable food bags for each week of the trial. The remaining households were provided with the food bags only, two per week, to assess whether the kitchen caddies encouraged greater food waste diversion.

The trial commenced in September 2017 and this report provides details of the progress made to date.

In order for the trial to be cost effective, it was initially calculated that it would need to generate between 0.1kg – 0.5 kg of food waste per household per week. In the first 12 weeks (6 collections) of the trial, householders generated an average of 0.5kg of food per household per week. A sample of the material has been tested and it has been confirmed that it meets current quality control standards for a soil improver, notably PAS 100.

A cost/benefit analysis of the first three months of the trial has been completed (see table overleaf). By extrapolating the first three months results over the six month trial period, it identifies that the trial will have cost the County Council £6,053 (slightly less than the original allocation) whilst generating disposal savings of £8,914; a net saving of £2,861.

During this period, HPBC also contributed £5,306 to the trial. The majority of this cost was to purchase caddies in the pilot area. However, should the caddies not prove to be essential in motivating the public to separate food waste, then £2,116 of the HPBC costs will have been a one-off cost not required as part of any potential roll out of the scheme. The extra food bag cost by HPBC was considered necessary to motivate householders to participate in the trial but this needs to be further tested.

Initial 6 Month Trial Costs

Forecast Diversion of Food Waste (Tonnes)	59
Equivalent Disposal Savings to Derbyshire County Council (DCC)	£8,914
Scheme Implementation Costs to DCC:	
1 food bag per household per week	£3,468
Promotional materials	£2,385
Distribution of promotional materials (minimal as existing HPBC staff were used)	£200
Total DCC costs	£6,053
Scheme Implementation Costs to HPBC:	
Caddies	£2,116
Extra food bag per household	£3,190
Total HPBC costs	£5,306
Total Implementation Costs	£11,359

Analysis to date indicates that those premises issued with a caddy are presenting slightly more food waste than those just using food bags. However, the cost savings generated are not sufficient to offset the additional costs of purchasing the caddies. Those premises who were only issued with food bags were advised to place the bags in a suitable container (e.g. an empty ice cream tub) in their kitchens before transferring the waste to their garden waste bin.

HPBC had requested that all households in the trial be issued with two free compostable food bags per week rather than one which is more typical for such schemes. Both authorities consider that this will have positively contributed to the success of the food waste diversion as most households diverting food waste will use 2-3 bags per week.

HPBC has advised it is unable to fund the second bag for the proposed 6 month trial extension. However, in light of the success of the trial to date, it is proposed that the County Council funds both bags on the basis that it generates greater food waste diversion and should, therefore, deliver greater food waste disposal savings. Furthermore, an extension to the current trial will

enable officers to undertake surveys to assess the usage/viability of issuing two bags per household per week.

The table below details the forecast costs of a six month extension from March to September 2018.

Second 6 Month Trial Costs

Forecast Diversion of Food Waste (Tonnes)	59
Equivalent Disposal Savings to DCC	£8,914
Scheme Implementation Costs to DCC:	
1 food bag per household per week	£3,284
Extra food bag per household	£3,284
Promotional materials	£1,421
Total DCC costs	£7,989
Scheme Implementation Costs to HPBC:	
Distribution through contractor (no existing staff available for the period needed)	£3,960
Total HPBC costs	£3,960
Total Implementation Costs	£11,949

The County Council will incur costs of £7,989 whilst saving approximately £8,914 providing a net saving to the County Council of £925

It should be noted that HPBC has agreed to fund the distribution of the food bags and leaflets at a cost of approximately £3,960.

It is therefore proposed that the trial be extended for a further six months on the basis that it will provide opportunities for the following:

- Complete a full 12 month trial to assess seasonal variances on food waste presentation.
- Enable additional quality control testing to be undertaken.
- Enable householders to be surveyed e.g. on the use and benefits of bags and caddies, including quantities issued and the means of distribution.
- Identify future bag and leaflet distribution options that are cost effective within the limits of the scheme.
- Provide additional data and evidence to explore the potential roll out of the scheme both across HPBC and Derbyshire.

An analysis of the overall waste arisings from this area of High Peak during the initial three month trial period, compared to the same time last year, has indicated that the amount of recycling of paper, cans, glass and plastics has

increased by 28 tonnes (9.2%). This may be due to a greater level of commitment by the householders in the area on their overall waste management behaviour. This will be monitored to assess if this secondary benefit continues which may provide additional financial benefits to the councils.

(3) **Financial Considerations** As outlined in the report, a six month extension of the trial can be undertaken at a cost to the County Council of £7,989 compared to forecast disposal savings of £8,914. Generating a potential saving of £925. This can be met from within the current Waste Management budget.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The County Council has a duty to dispose of residual waste presented by households.

(5) **Environmental and Health Considerations** The County Council is committed to increasing sustainable waste management solutions across the whole County.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, property, social value and transport considerations.

(6) **Key Decision** No.

(7) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(8) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Neil Haslam, extension 39787.

(9) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That:

9.1 The Cabinet Member approves a six month extension of the food bag trial with an expenditure of £7,989 of County Council funds.

9.2 A further report be submitted to the Cabinet Member in summer 2018 on the progress of this trial.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment