

Report Reference Number: E/21/14

To: Executive
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Ward(s) Affected: All
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Lead Executive Member: Cllr T Grogan, Lead Executive Member for Health and Culture
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Title: Report on the Outcomes of the Change to Wheeled Bins for Recycling

Summary:

In April 2020, following significant capital investment and a complex mobilisation, the Council launched a new wheeled bin recycling service which replaced the kerbside box service that had been in place for over 10 years. Combined with the Covid-19 pandemic this change had a significant impact on waste tonnages in the district.

The purpose of this report is to appraise the Executive of the positive outcomes of the changes.

Recommendations:

That the Executive notes the contents of the report and the success of the new service.

Reasons for recommendation

For the Executive to understand the positive outcomes of the decision in September 2019 to implement a wheeled bin recycling service from April 2020.

1. Introduction and background

1.1 Selby District Council (SDC) is a Waste Collection Authority (WCA) with responsibility for household waste and recycling collections across the district.

1.2 At a meeting of the Executive on 5 September 2019, the Council approved a change from a kerbside sort recycling service to a wheeled bin recycling service with one bin for paper/card and one for mixed glass/cans/plastic. This followed a public

consultation which attracted over 6,700 responses and which was overwhelmingly in support of wheeled bin collections.

1.3 Procurements were undertaken in 2019 for a new fleet and the purchase of 80,000 wheeled bins. In January 2020 the distribution of new bins to almost 40,000 properties began. The distribution continued throughout March when the UK went into the first national lockdown. Despite the increasing pressure on staff and services caused by the pandemic, the new collection service commenced as scheduled at the start of April 2020.

1.4 The new wheeled bins service saw an increase in recycling capacity of 150 litres per household per month from 330 litres to 480 litres. There was an expectation that recycling tonnages and the overall recycling rate would increase but the main driver for change was to provide an improved recycling service for residents.

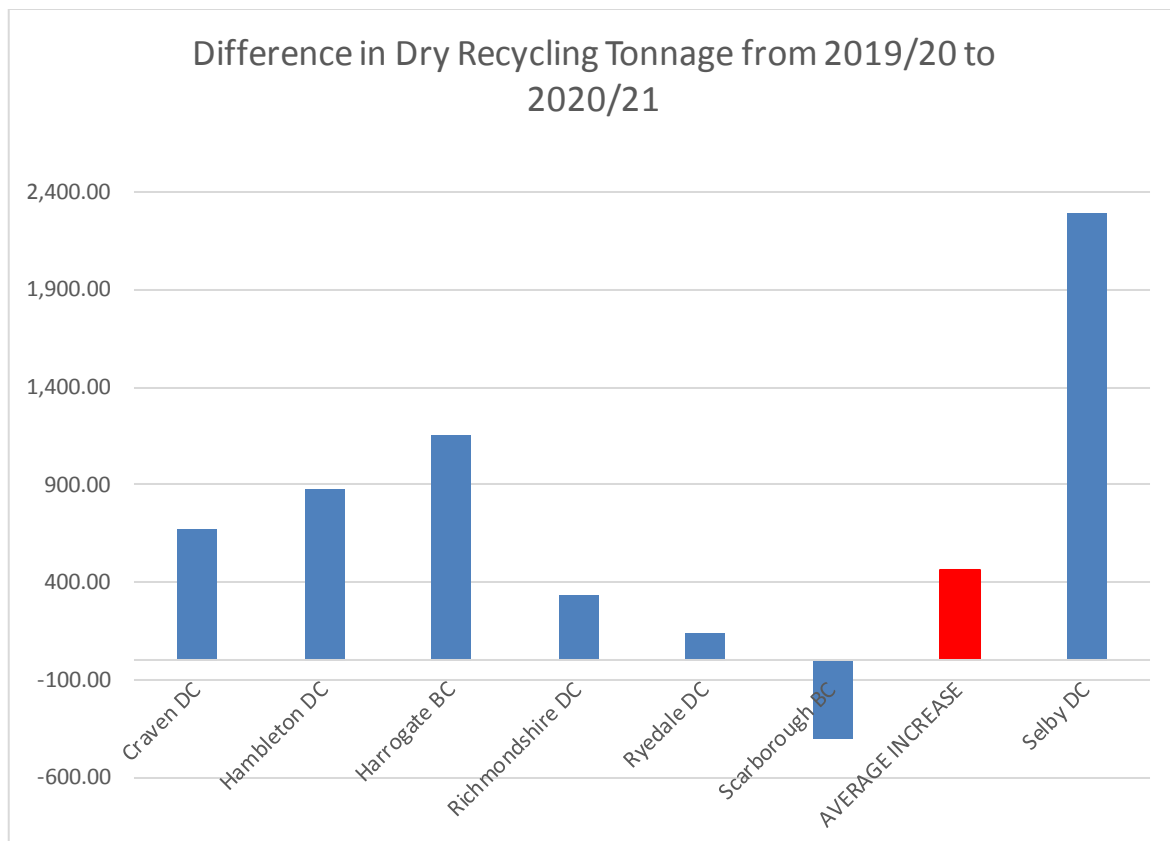
2.1 Performance Analysis

2.1.1 The start of the service coincided with the first Covid-19 lockdown which led to the temporary closure of the HWRC's, homeworking, and home schooling for many residents. This in turn led to a significant increase in both residual and recycling tonnages. A benchmarking exercise has been carried out with the other North Yorkshire District and Borough Councils to try and ascertain how much of the increase in tonnage was due to the new service and increased recycling capacity, and how much was due to the impact of Covid-19.

2.1.2 The benchmarking just looked at the increase in dry recycling and residual waste tonnage between 2019/20 and 2020/21. We are not aware that any of the other District or Borough Councils made any changes to their waste services during this time, other than those necessitated by the impact of Covid-19.

2.1.3 The existing kerbside box service had been in place in the Selby district since 2009 and dry recycling tonnages had begun to plateau. During the first year of the new service tonnages increased by almost 30% from 160.24Kg to 206.76Kg per household. The average tonnage per household across the other LA's in 2020/21 was 199.38Kg.

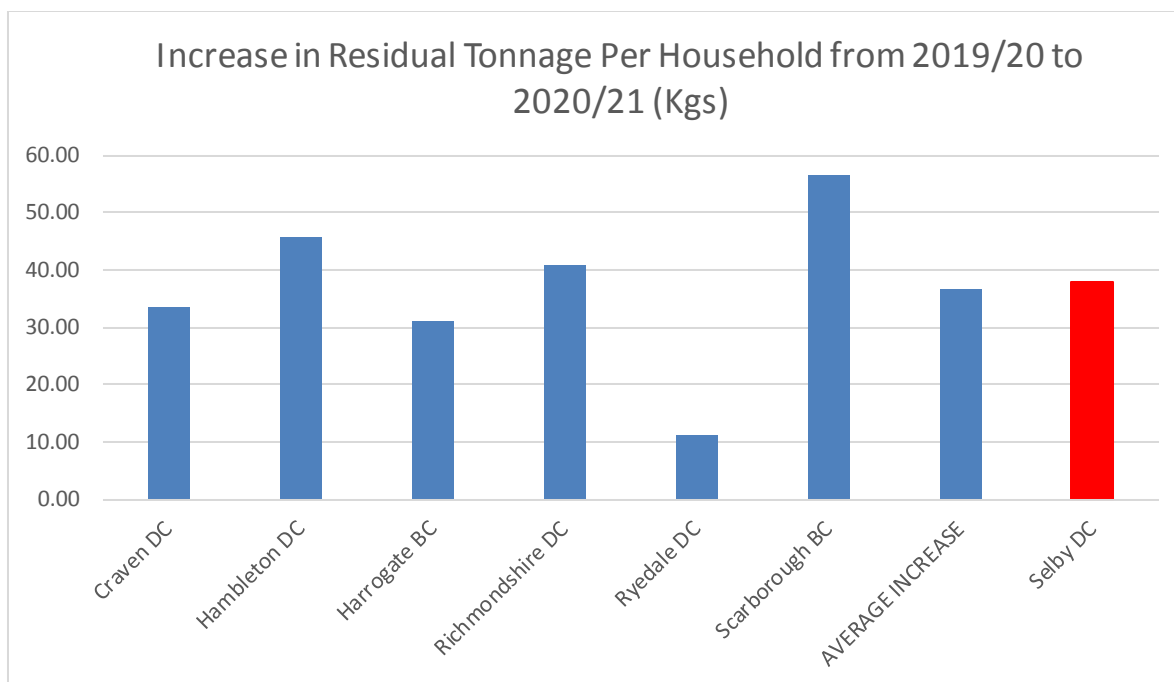
2.1.4 The six other Local Authorities (LAs) in North Yorkshire, saw an overall average increase in dry recycling tonnage of 6.66% or 465 tonnes from 2019/20 to 2020/21. During this same period SDC saw an increase of 37.97% or 2,295 tonnes. The chart below shows the breakdown per LA along with the average for the other six authorities, excluding Selby.



2.1.5 As stated above, as well as impacting on dry recycling tonnages, Covid-19 also had an impact on residual waste as more people worked from home and home schooled.

2.1.6 Residual waste tonnages had been reducing year on year but the impact of Covid resulted in an increase of 8.8% or 1,900 tonnes from 2019/20. The average increase in tonnage across the other LAs in 2020/21 was 1,769 tonnes.

2.1.7 Residual waste increased per household in the Selby district by 6.92% or 37.76Kg. The other six LAs all saw an increase in residual waste tonnage of an average of 8.28% or 36.6Kgs per household. The chart below shows the breakdown per LA along with the average for the other six authorities, excluding SDC. This shows that the increase in residual waste per household in the Selby district was just slightly higher than the average for the rest of North Yorkshire.



2.1.8 The final analysis undertaken was on dry recycling rates and overall recycling rates. Again prior to the service change the recycling rate in the Selby district had reached a plateau. The table below shows dry and total recycling rates for SDC per year from 2015/16.

	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Total Recycling Rate	44.7%	42.7%	41.2%	41.6%	42.6%	42.6%
Dry Recycling Rate	19.6%	16.0%	16.5%	16.7%	17.0%	17.0%

2.1.9 The implementation of the new service saw the dry recycling rate increase by 3.6% whilst the overall recycling rate increased by 2%. The lower increase in overall recycling rate is due to the impact of green waste tonnages and increased residual waste. We would expect the overall recycling rate to increase again during 2021/22 as residual waste tonnages return to pre-Covid levels.

2.1.10 Across North Yorkshire the other LA's saw on average a reduction of 0.4% in dry recycling rate and 0.2% in overall recycling rate. This is likely to be as a result of increase in residual waste tonnages. The table below shows a summary of the percentage change in recycling rates per LA between 2019/20 and 2020/21, along with an average of the first six LAs excluding Selby.

	Change to Dry Recycling Rate	Change to Total Recycling Rate
Craven DC	0.8%	0.7%
Hambleton DC	0.2%	-1.1%
Harrogate BC	0.0%	0.2%
Richmondshire DC	-0.5%	0.9%
Ryedale DC	-0.2%	2.5%
Scarborough BC	-2.7%	-4.3%
AVERAGE CHANGE	-0.4%	-0.2%
Selby DC	3.6%	2.0%

2.2 Other Service Outcomes

2.2.1 One of the other key drivers for service change at this time was the need to replace the waste collection fleet which had reached the end of its life. As well as allowing the Council to review the type of container provided for recycling collection, it also allowed for a full review of the collection service. Headline service improvements included: -

- a change to four-day working from Tuesday to Friday, allowing crews to have bank holidays off and also providing additional flexibility at Christmas and New Year,
- a full round rebalancing exercise that builds in capacity for future property growth and
- more efficient zoned collections across the district providing additional resilience for crews

2.2.2 These service improvements have created a robust and flexible service which has been able to cope with the additional demands of the pandemic and has meant there have only been around 15 working days since the start of the first lockdown where we have been unable to deploy a crew/s due to sickness or isolation. All of the suspended rounds were green waste as residual and dry recycling are the priority services as supported by Government best practise. Many Councils have had to stand green waste rounds for some months during this time.

3. Alternative Options Considered

N/A

4. Implications

4.1 Legal Implications

N/A

4.2 Financial Implications

N/A

4.3 Policy and Risk Implications

The service has been carried out in line with the newly adopted suite of waste and recycling policies.

4.4 Corporate Plan Implications

The new service helps the Council to deliver great value by ensuring that we are providing high quality, effective and efficient waste and recycling collection services.

4.5 Resource Implications

N/A

4.6 Other Implications

N/A

4.7 Equalities Impact Assessment

A full equalities impact assessment was carried out as part of the project mobilisation.

5. Conclusion

The decision taken by the Executive and Full Council to change the service and invest in a new fleet, has resulted in an increased recycling rate and the capacity to accommodate a 13% increase in waste arisings during the pandemic, whilst also maintaining collection services during a prolonged period of disruption, complying with Covid-19 legislation and best practise.

6. Background Documents

None

7. Appendices

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