



Waste Services – Proposed application for external funding to facilitate the introduction of kerbside collections of textiles and small electrical appliances

Report by Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i. note the content of this report in conjunction with the proposed application to the Scottish Government / Zero Waste Scotland's Recycling Improvement Fund, and to
- ii. approve submission of the funding application in Appendix B as attached.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for members approval to submit a funding application to the Recycling Improvement Fund for the capital costs associated with the proposed introduction of a kerbside collection of textiles, small electrical appliances and batteries.

Date: 15 May 2023

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3. Background

3.1 The Scottish Government announced in September 2020 a £70 million fund to improve local authority waste and recycling collection infrastructure. The Recycling Improvement Fund (RIF) has been administered by Zero Waste Scotland since April 2021.

3.2 Midlothian Council has already successfully secured £150k funding from this source as £30k was awarded in 2022 to allow Waste Services to introduce “in-cab” technology to improve both the efficiency of running the service and improve the service provided to customers. To operate the hardware funded, a cloud based software solution is required to provide the required functionality. Consultants from SOCITM (society for innovation, technology and modernisation) are looking at digital delivery. The delay in implementing that project may be viewed unfavourably during the evaluation and Zero Waste Scotland may seek reassurances that this is moving forward before agreeing additional funding.

3.3 £120k was awarded in 2023/24 for an additional food waste collection vehicle and kerbside caddies to allow all households in Midlothian to receive a weekly collection of food waste. This service, currently expected to be operational from Q2 2023/24, will allow a further 2,600 households, predominantly in rural areas, to recycle their food waste and is predicted to divert an additional 96 tonnes per annum for recycling.

3.4 As Zero Waste Scotland are keen to support new opportunities for the collection of problematic materials and identified high carbon impact materials, such as waste electronic equipment and textiles, Waste Services propose to make a further application to the Recycling Improvement Fund for the capital costs associated with introducing kerbside collections of textiles, small electrical appliances and batteries.

4. Proposed new service

4.1 Households will be asked to present textiles and small electrical appliances in a plastic crate/box next to their food waste caddy. Their existing kerbside glass box can be used for this purpose.

4.2 The storage compartment behind the crew-cab on our six food waste collection vehicles will be retrofitted to accommodate a half-pallet box into which materials will be collected by existing collection crews. On return to the depot, the pallet box will be removed using a forklift truck, by existing members of staff, and the material bulked in the adjoining Household Waste Recycling Centre’s Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) skip for small appliances for onward movement by our Producer Compliance Scheme.

Textiles will be removed from the pallet box and bulked for contractor collection.

4.3 If the funding application is successful, it is proposed the service is introduced to all households from October 2023.

4.4 Recycling Performance improvement in each year as the proposed new service is expected to divert from the residual waste stream:

- Between 76 and 110 tonnes of small electrical appliances
- Between 280 and 660 tonnes of textiles
- Around 3 tonnes of batteries

5 Report Implications

5.1 Resource

Capital

£96,992.90 will be requested from the Recycling Improvement Fund for:

- a forklift with a 360-degree fork rotator
- retrofitting the existing storage space
- pallet boxes
- battery collection boxes
- kerbside boxes

Revenue

£22,030 has been requested from the Material Focus Electrical Recycling Fund to assist with the cost of promoting the service.

Communication plan delivery costs including lamppost banner advertising, teaser postcards and an informational leaflet for householders.

Internal staff time in procurement and tendering exercises, route planning, design and delivery of communication activities, staff training, staffing of vehicle, vehicle servicing, maintenance and fuel, financial administration, waste data collection and reporting, customer liaison etc are expected to be funded from existing Council staff and revenue resources.

An income of between £20,300 and £66,000 may be achieved from the sale of textiles.

A saving of between £31,860 and £69,840 in residual waste disposal costs could be achieved as “black bag” waste is instead diverted for recycling.

5.2 Risk

Failure to transform recycling collection services could expose the Council to reputational and financial risk.

5.3 Digital

The implementation of new recycling collection services is expected to be supported by the introduction of a Digital Depot system and the use of “in-cab” digital devices.

5.4 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- Community safety
- Adult health, care and housing
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- Sustainable growth
- Business transformation and Best Value
- None of the above

5.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Introducing new recycling collection services is intended to improve the resource efficiency of the waste service.

5.6 Ensuring Equalities

Waste collection services affect all households in Midlothian. As such the subject of this report does not have a significant detrimental impact on equality. There is a positive impact on the environment and economy.

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Background information/Links

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The report does not directly impact on Delivering Best Value

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

In a customer consultation held in 2021, when asked “What additional materials would you like us to collect at the kerbside?”, 57% of respondents said textiles, 58% of respondents said household batteries and 63% of respondents said small electrical items.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Introducing new recycling services is expected to have a positive impact on recycling diversion.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The proposed new recycling collection services prioritise resource use, fuel and fleet efficiency and an associated reduction in carbon.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

An increase in material collected for reuse and recycling is expected to be achieved by the scheme.

APPENDIX B

Zero Waste Scotland Recycling Improvement Fund (RIF) Application Form – Proposed kerbside collection of textiles and small electrical appliances.