

Sustainable Bishopston

Reports to Bristol Green Capital Community Challenge fund

1. Legislative and regulatory factors affecting business collections of food wastes – Resource Futures Report

Introduction

There are a number of legislative and regulatory factors affecting collections of food waste from businesses. There are also some issues which BCC could consider to facilitate and promote separate collections from business premises. It is important to recognise that the Council itself does not offer business waste or recycling collections and that all businesses are free to choose their collector. Businesses that are part of national or international chains often have collection systems which are procured centrally by their head office. The room to influence these businesses in Bristol can therefore be limited. There is however some scope to make a difference to local businesses and the environment and we offer some recommendations below on ways in which the council can assist them in becoming more resource efficient.

The issues we cover are:

- WRAP Business waste recycling and waste services commitment – aimed at local authorities;
- Local guidelines/regulation relating to street scene, restrictions on the number and type of bins;
- The waste hierarchy;
- Waste Regulations
- Scottish Waste Regulations - coming changes.

1. WRAP Business recycling and waste services commitment – launched October 2011

This is a voluntary commitment aimed at local authorities to help businesses, particularly SMEs, by identifying the range of services and businesses available to business customers. The core element is for local Authorities to commit to providing and encouraging better access to recycling and waste services for SMEs.

The commitment details best practice guidance in the form of 12 plain English principles which should underlie a business recycling and waste service. Signing up to the commitment offers service providers a way of demonstrating to their customers that they are committed to:

- Making recycling easy;
- Providing value for money;
- Consulting on and clearly communicating their services;
- Reduced mis-use of household services; and
- Reducing waste to landfill.

The principles are about:

- Reliable and regular collections;
- Collection services tailored to meet the needs of customers;
- Clear information about the recycling service;
- Providing access to household waste and recycling centres for businesses;
- Contracts managed by following the principles of best practice;
- Reasonable and clear fees;

- Guidance for businesses on responsibilities for waste management;
- Providing a directory of local waste and recycling services;
- Helping businesses to donate unwanted items for reuse or buying quality second-hand products;
- Sensible approaches to enforcement;
- Providing easy ways to gather feedback; and
- A commitment to continuous improvement.

Companies and organisations are free to sign up to some or all of the commitments, editing each to fit local circumstances.

- A resource pack is available to assist local authorities who are planning service changes as well as fully funded training and one to one advisory support
- There are no charges for signing up – the agreement is voluntary and at services level, the decision on how principals are met is at a local level.
- There is also **no auditing** procedure to monitor how the commitments have been met.
- The commitment was drawn up by a steering group including representatives from:
 - Local authorities with waste collection and disposal responsibilities
 - Local government association
 - National consumers federation
 - WRAP
 - Defra

Following consultation, contributions were also made by:

- Federation of small Businesses
- Confederation of British industry

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/business-recycling-and-waste-services-commitment-faqs>

Recommendation 1

Bristol City Council should sign up to the Business Waste Commitment and at the very least improve and update the key messages and information available on business waste collections on its website. There should be an emphasis on the benefits of removing food waste from the residual waste stream and guidance on who offers food waste collections. There are a number of local authorities who provide clear and concise information that could be used as a template eg Somerset Waste Partnership.

2. Local guidelines/regulation re street scene

The council has been discussing enforcement of a bin-free-streets policy with groups of traders and through Neighbourhood Partnerships. It is aimed at removing householders' and traders' bins from high streets. Pressures from the community and town centre groups vary across the city, and enforcement is usually seen as a last resort. However the threat can be used where problems arise, such as illegal waste storage practices or abuse of litter bins and domestic facilities by traders. There is a tension between the aspiration for clear bin-free pavements and the Mayor's zero waste city goal. A pragmatic approach is therefore recommended.

Not all traders have rear or private storage areas. Much of the available space is in use as public seating outside cafes, for instance, which is vital to business. Where there are initiatives to encourage traders to store all waste on their premises this should therefore be linked to new arrangements such as more segregation and recycling which may require additional bins. A constructive approach needs to be taken to storing food waste and compostables, such as through the Green Capital's CCF-funded food waste and recycling initiative underway (see April 2013 progress report, below). Where this is the approach then it will be easier to press for dry recyclables to be taken into traders' front café areas at the same time as more problematic food wastes are being segregated and stored somewhere suitable nearby. Finding the right locations depends on co-operation between traders, cleansing officers, highway officers, planners, and project teams, plus the collection companies. It will be easier to encourage less offensive materials (with no wasp problems for customers, for example) to be taken

onto sites near customers. Thus a partnership approach rather than strict enforcement of a single solution is most likely to achieve the many goals of clearer pavements, better recycling, reduction in vermin (when food waste is better stored), and greener business practices. This will enable longer term benefits including reduced waste and less exposure to landfill tax for businesses. Sites do need to be found for better segregation of wastes where loading and collections are practical. A collaborative approach is needed that takes account of the types of collections being used and the facilities that increase resource efficiency which can include private and public land agreements.

Recommendation 2

There should be a partnership approach to street scene issues as they relate to waste storage with Neighbourhood Partnerships, Cleansing Teams, Planners, Highway officers, Sustainability groups, Town Teams, and Business Improvement Districts engaged in promoting better waste segregation, storage and recycling by local traders.

3. Waste hierarchy and businesses

Defra has put together guidance on applying the waste hierarchy, particularly on what SMEs need to do to meet their obligations.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13530-waste-hierarchy-guidance.pdf>

WRAP Waste hierarchy toolkit

WRAP have put together an e-Publications guide where businesses can specify their core business type, sector and waste type they require information on, each guide is tailored to these parameters and provides guidance on what organisations and businesses should do to meet their legal obligations in meeting the hierarchy. (See saved document) In this instant a number of measures on how waste prevention can best be achieved are included. <http://wastehierarchy.wrap.org.uk/>

Irrespective of any exemptions, by law all businesses producing waste have a legal duty and:

“...need to take all such measures as are reasonable in the circumstances to apply the waste hierarchy to prevent waste, and to apply the hierarchy as a priority order when you transfer your waste to another person.”

Hierarchy guidance based on current research suggests that, following prevention as the most desirable option, anaerobic digestion of food waste is then the next most environmentally preferable option in terms of disposal, with composting being less favourable.

Further research from WRAP

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/collecting-food-waste-small-businesses-and-schools-1>

“Collecting food waste from small businesses and schools”

Mentions mostly considerations for local authorities in setting food waste collections up. Lots of other relevant points on practicalities, costs and logistics however.

Report from FSB (Federation of Small Businesses)

<http://www.fsb.org.uk/policy/assets/waste%20report%20final.pdf>

“The waste review – the small business case”

Useful considerations with a perspective of the issues often faced by SMEs in accessing recycling collections at reasonable costs from both private sector and local authority. Includes suggestions on what could be done in each case to allow SMEs to improve their recycling.

4. Waste regulations (England and Wales)

Below is a resume of waste regulations a full list of which can be found on the Environment Agency's website: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/142643.aspx>;

Environment agency – Duty of Care regulations under the Environmental Protection Act 1990

Legal Duty of Care applies to all involved in the handling of waste, from those producing it to those disposing of the waste. The Duty of care information is one of the main ways of preventing fly tipping.

Initially it is the producers responsibility is to make sure that the waste is contained so that is cannot leak or blow away.

On the involvement of a contractor in removing the waste, producers must:

- Obtain proof that the carrier is authorised by the Environment Agency to carry waste. From the end of 2013 any business which carries its own waste as part of its business will be required to register as a 'lower tier' carrier unless it is construction and demolition waste. Businesses who carry any construction and demolition waste already have to register as carriers and this will continue;
- Ensure the waste goes to a proper site – licensed or exempt;
- Give the person a transfer note - this must include a description of the waste and be signed by both of you. Keep copies of your transfer notes for a minimum of two years;
- From September 2011 there has been a requirement for the transfer note to include a signed declaration that the waste management hierarchy of options has been applied.
- Transfer notes from 28 September 2011 must also include the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code of the business transferring the waste.

There are 2 types of waste transfer note:

- a single waste transfer note
- a season ticket waste transfer note - covers multiple transfers over a 12 month period for a single waste stream (providing, waste type, site of production, producer, carrier and waste facility all remain the same)

In England and Wales under Duty of Care, to produce, store, treat or dispose of waste, businesses are required to:

- Obtain an environmental permit
- If businesses hold or require an environmental permit for an operation that generates waste from September 2011 they will have had to comply with a permit condition concerning the application of the waste hierarchy. The new condition applies to new permits and will be added to existing permits when they are reviewed.

In Scotland to produce, store, treat or dispose of waste, businesses need:

- A Waste management license
- And/or a pollution prevention and control permit

It is proposed to roll out a national electronic duty of care (edoc) programme during 2014.

End of waste criteria - current

Amongst other waste materials, 'End of waste' criteria are presently being developed for Biodegradable waste (MSW and other) (ie biodegradable garden and park waste, food and kitchen waste from households, restaurants, caterers and retail premises, and comparable waste from food processing plants" suitable for composting/anaerobic digestion/MBT). The present status as regards biodegradable waste is that a technical report was produced by the EU on the end of waste criteria as it applies to this waste stream in August 2012.

A technical work tends to precede the development of a regulation which enables the resource to be deregulated once it has been collected and reprocessed to an agreed standard.

Our opinion is that since the Biowaste Directive has been floating around for many years and impacts so many we expect the regulation to be slow in coming.

When/if it comes, it should stimulate the wider market, but will not mandate food waste collection from businesses.

Animal by products legislation 2009

Under the Animal by products legislation catering waste (including all waste food, including cooking oils from catering facilities, restaurants, cafes including vegetarian restaurants and kitchens) is subject to the following controls.

- Catering waste may be disposed of to landfill or incineration along with other general wastes and is not subject to special transportation arrangements provided that it is handled in a way that ensures that animals and birds do not have access to it;
- If it is destined for use in a biogas plant or for composting plants themselves must be approved under the Regulations).

England and Wales – Coming changes

Any person who collects any of four waste streams – paper, metal, plastic or glass – must, from 1 January 2015, take practical measures to ensure separate collection of these wastes. Before 2015, it would be advisable for waste producers to consider any measures they might need to take to ensure that their wastes can be collected separately.

5. Scotland – new waste regulations applying to businesses

Waste (Scotland) regulations were passed on 9 May 2012. By 2025 Scotland has a target of recycling rate of 70% for waste produced by both businesses and households.

Key aspects of the regulations are:

- A ban on municipal biodegradable waste going to landfill; the first of its kind in the UK (from 01 January 2021.)
- A ban on material collected for recycling going to landfill or incineration
- A new requirement to remove key recyclables from residual waste prior to incineration
- A requirement for all businesses to separate all dry recyclables (paper, cardboard, metal, glass and plastic) for recycling by the 1st of January 2014.
- Businesses that produce more than 50kg of food waste per week will also need to separate their food waste for collection from January 2014. From January 2016, this will be extended to businesses producing more than 5kg of food waste per week.

<http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/waste-scotland-regulations>

Recommendation 3

To consider whether the Mayor would wish to explore with Defra options for introducing local targets based on the Scottish regulations. It should be noted that this would be likely to be met with resistance from the Industry. However this might be something that the Green Capital could explore.

2. Second progress on the Sustainable Bishopston Traders' Food Waste and Recycling service. April 2013 Martin Fodor

New scheme launched

April saw the launch of the new Food Waste and Recycling service for traders and businesses in Stokes Croft. This group scheme is the model for the CCF-funded project elsewhere and it secures a special deal for a cluster of local businesses in and around the Stokes Croft area. This delivers an enhanced recycling service with a special emphasis on unavoidable food waste and compostables – often the most problematic part of the waste for smaller hospitality and food businesses.

Rationale.

It's important to get this compostable waste out of landfill due to its very high greenhouse gas potential from the production of methane when it rots. It's also tricky to deal with as food waste will almost invariably require attention to the Animal By-products legislation, which ensures such materials do not contaminate the food chain eg during handling or if products with untreated residues are used as compost. This affects all premises except vegan food businesses (even greengrocers may have eggs and cheese in their waste when they diversify).

Special group deal

The special deal was secured by a process of development work with traders and the community in and around Stokes Croft, by the author working with the traders' group and potential collection businesses, also taking account of street scene issues like bins and litter, and the number of different collection vehicles currently servicing the street. The service developed thus helps secure cost, environmental and community benefits plus enhance the reputation of traders in this destination. An initial 3 month trial was also agreed to meet traders' requests to see how the scheme works and affects them.

Piloting

The service has been piloted by local Café Kino, and traders are now signing up, with sustainable restaurant Poco being the first to commit. The enhanced recycling service is also of interest to other businesses, being able to take compostables like hairdressers' waste, offcuts of materials from a picture framer and wastes that would otherwise have gone to landfill. Thus a comprehensive service has been developed though working collectively, in an area where there are many common needs but also pressure on individual businesses who are not able to focus on additional, complex issues and processes.

Many traders are interested but the number of early signatories is unclear at the time of writing. Businesses asking for details include: Café Kino (piloting); Poco (starting in May); Hooper House (delayed by contract); At the Well (asking for a site visit); Niche Frames (interested); Canteen (looking for larger scale service); Full Moon (also looking for larger scale service); Biblos (interested); No 51 (interested); and others. A promotional push is planned at the time of writing to visit many more traders now the scheme is underway.

Reduction and waste avoidance

In addition to the comprehensive collection service tips about reducing and avoiding wastes and case studies are also being drawn up. These should be helpful as they ensure peer examples of what works, eg negotiations with suppliers for less packaging, tips on offering coffee grounds to customers for garden use.

Site visit

There's also an informative visit planned to see the treatment of the food waste and compostables at GenEco, the local anaerobic digestion plant which produces energy and a soil conditioner. Other residues will go for energy recovery so the service by local recycling business CollectEco does eliminate landfill. Taking staff to see what happens to the waste was raised at an early stage by stakeholders as this can explain what's underway and bring the service to life. This should increase participation and answer questions that come up. It is also supported by partners Go Green as it helps explain and increase resource efficiency.

Guidance and Reporting

Instructions for staff and troubleshooting should help the service get well-established. There's also

attention to the overall picture of what's being achieved by the area, with data promised for quarterly reporting to traders and customers to show the global benefits of the scheme. Reporting will be quarterly in arrears and it may take time for the statistics to build up, but it's been agreed these are to be provided to both businesses (lifts per site) and for the cluster as a whole – ie to show project outcomes. The data have effectively been negotiated as if the scheme is a multi-site business, and this can be replicated as the project extends elsewhere so local achievements can be tracked for each.

New developments

Interest in the service has grown rapidly, with work starting with Gloucester Road Traders Association, following preliminary surveys of several sites. The traders' group endorsed the project and asked for work to progress along the whole high street. New issues have arisen in this area as there has been a push by council officers and the Neighbourhood Partnership to improve the street scene and remove bins from pavements. Not all traders have rear storage and some use front areas for café seating. A collaborative approach has been needed as excluding bins without offering a service that takes food waste out of bins could lead to disagreement from traders who might have to store offensive wastes (with wasps) in areas adjacent to customers in cafes. A pragmatic approach is under discussion so that suitable storage areas can be found for food waste bins which can ensure better acceptance of the need to keep other wastes on the premises (indoors or outdoors depending on the potential). The project is offering a positive option for businesses under pressure to rethink waste storage. Thus resource efficiency can also mean positive changes for the local community. Rethinking the street scene needs to take account of better recycling arrangements which means dealing with several council departments.

A larger scale service in Harbourside

Also underway, following an initial meeting with Harbourside Forum, are contacts in the city centre. First detailed discussions have been held with Bordeaux Quay, and interest being followed up with At Bristol, M shed, Watershed, No1 Harbourside, Spike Island, and Aardman Animation. The larger sites have their own needs as has been identified in development workshops with traders. This means a different contractor may be trialled who can offer a more industrial scale service. The same emphasis on waste reduction is planned, however. Work on agreeing a trial suiting larger scale premises and appropriate arrangements for more mechanized services is now underway, with initial trials planned for Stokes Croft businesses and then offered to Harbourside traders.

New areas

Further inquiries have come in from other trader groups as well, following the launch in Stokes Croft. These include the Bedminster Business Improvement District (recently agreed to begin its work), who are hoping to use local suppliers rather than follow national offers of cost savings by consultants. This is understood to help them to achieve more in the way of recycling and reduced waste rather than purely seek lower cost contracts in the short term.

An initial approach also came from the Whiteladies Road traders and market project, run by Sustainable Redland. Thus the interest is growing city-wide.

Promotion

While it's early days for the project the potential is very clear and work with the traders and other stakeholders has been an excellent partnership and very worthwhile, which presents a good story to tell as well. A video is now in production to explain the service with filming complete and editing underway. This should offer a podcast to promote the project locally and beyond, thus helping traders' aspirations to promote their area as a destination with responsible businesses and innovative approaches of interest to customers. In store displays are planned in the early adopters, Café Kino and Poco, and a window poster is being designed to promote participants' involvement to customers as they visit.

The project has been documented in Bristol Local Food Update¹. Go Green (Business West) have also asked for a record tailored to their needs and funders.

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¹ See Bristol Local Food Update newsletter: the initial assessment of the issues in May 2012, through subsequent articles in November 2012, January 2013, and then March this year. Latest news is planned in the May 2013 issue

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see also

<http://visitbristol.co.uk/destinationbristol/information/news/2013/4/8/launch-of-the-stokes-croft-traders-food-waste-and-recycling-scheme-a2157>

and

<http://bristolfoodpolicycouncil.org/category/latest-news/>