

BRIEFING REPORT

Environment and Regeneration overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 12 November 2018

Report Title: Review of Household waste recycling centre developments

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Don Stockton – Portfolio Holder - Environment

Author: Ralph Kemp

Senior Officer: Executive Director - Place

1. Introduction and Policy Context

1.1. During 2017 and 2018 the authority implemented a number of changes to the household waste recycling centre provision in line with the authority's waste strategy and following extensive consultation. This report to the Environment and Regeneration overview and Scrutiny Committee sets out the delivery of these proposals

1.2. The proposals that were introduced included:

- Closure of Arclid household waste recycling centre in September 2017 – the closure of our smallest and least used site. This proposal has been delivered with very few incidents of waste being abandoned at the closed site and no queueing issues at other sites
- Introduction of rubble/construction waste charging – rolled out in January 2018, the amount of material through this waste stream has dropped significantly (over 80%) with no measured impact on rubble fly tipping rates.
- Reduction of opening hours at all sites – introduced in November 2017, this proposal has seen our sites open from 8.30-4pm in the winter and 8.30-5pm in the summer.
- Enabling rubble trade waste to be accepted – this provided a new outlet for very small scale rubble trade waste, one of the sources of rural fly tipping.

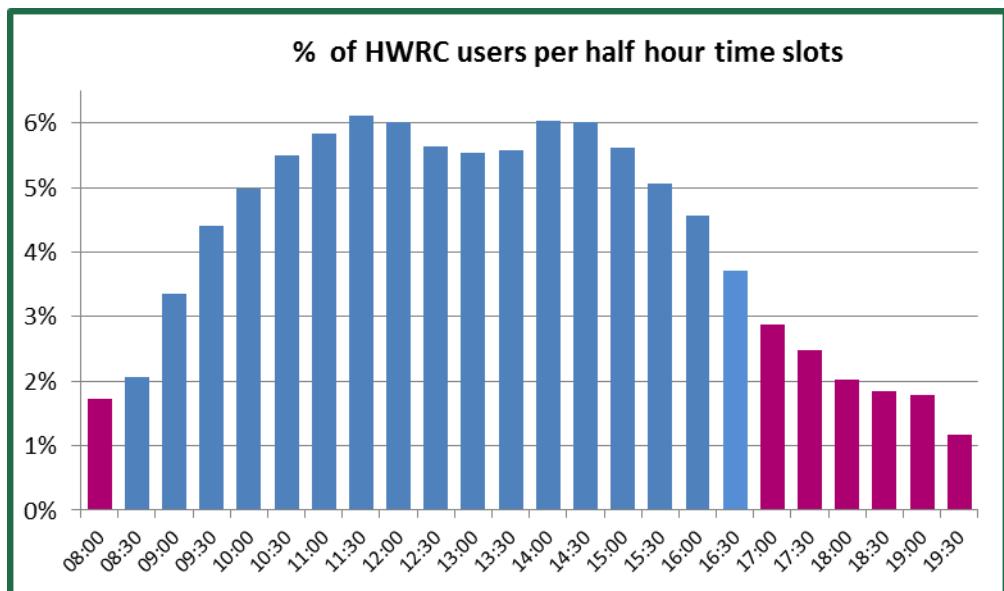
2. Background

- 2.1.** One aspect of the Council's Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2030, was to review the household waste recycling centre provision across the borough. This detailed review provided a range of options that, if the authority chose to adopt, would ensure that the service was fit for purpose, efficient and delivered industry best practice.
- 2.2.** A borough wide consultation was carried out (Nov 2016 - Jan 2017) that resulted in over 2,300 responses. A brief summary of results, overall, show a majority of respondents supported each of the 4 proposals within the council's preferred option:
 - 60% supported the closure of Arclid HWRC, 28% objected to it
 - 55% supported the introduction of charges for disposal of rubble, 31% objected
 - 63% supported a reduction of opening hours at all sites, 25% objected
 - 68% supported opening sites to trade waste, 15% objected.
- 2.3.** The consultation report and recommendations were taken to Full Council for discussion (see minute items no.88 and no.86 3 & 4). Council agreed to implement the proposals, as laid out within the consultation material, with the exception of the closure of the Arclid HWRC. The decision on whether to close Arclid was deferred, following representation from Sandbach Town Council. Following the pause to discuss the Sandbach Town Council proposals it was concluded that there were no viable alternatives to closure and this was taken to Cabinet for approval on July 11th 2017.

3. Briefing Information

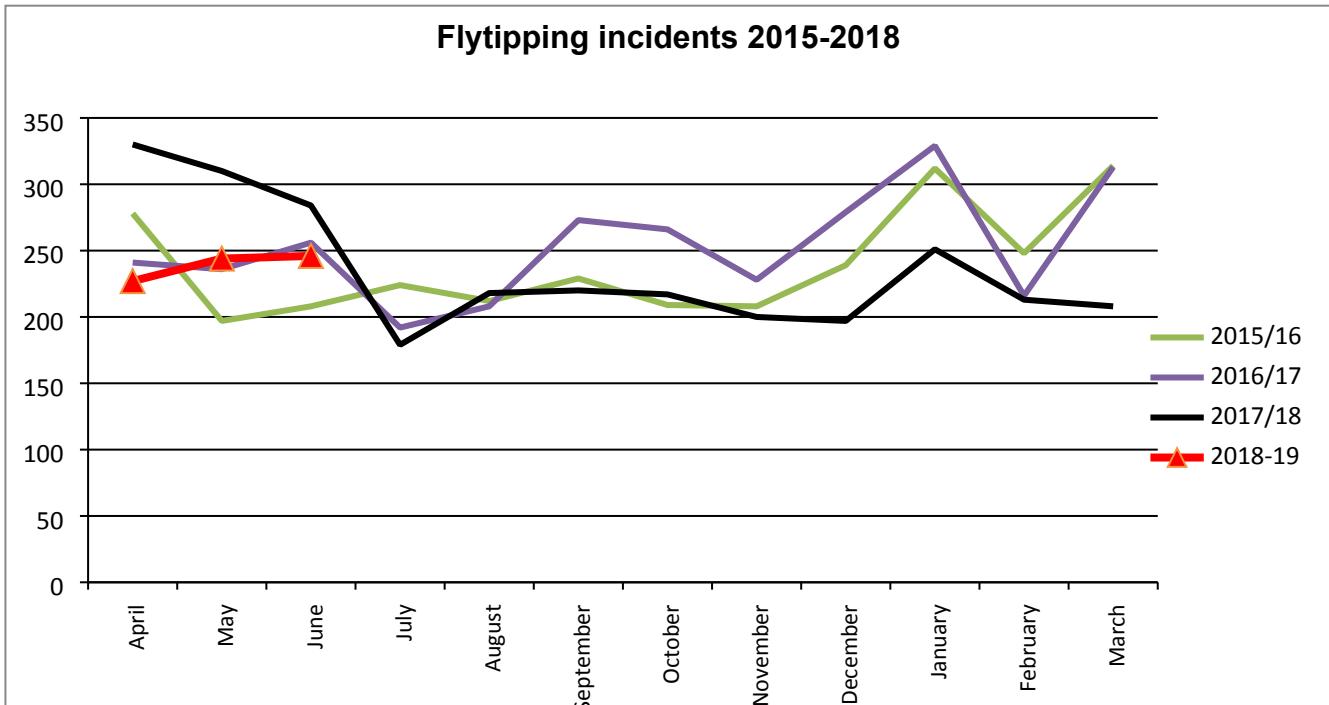
- 3.1.** Closure of Arclid: Whilst there were initial complaints, following the closure, this soon ceased and residents have now adjusted to using other sites. There were fewer than 10 incidents of waste being left at the closed site and now there are none.
- 3.2.** Reduced hours: Our careful analysis of site usage showed that there were occasions during the day when the number of users was very low. During the spring opening hours from 8am – 6pm in March and April 2016, only 3% of all site visits took place after 5pm, and only 4% of all site visits occurred before 9am. Traffic surveys in June indicated that during summer opening hours, across all days and all sites, 84% of visits took place between 9am and 5pm, and around 12% of visits during summer opening hours took place between the hours of 5pm and 8pm. As the chart below shows In order to run our sites more efficiently it was clear that the opening hours could be reduced to deliver this.

Figure 1 - Site visit timings



- 3.3. The levels of complaints concerning the reduced hours has been minimal and the incidents of waste being left at shut sites, whilst increasing initially, as residents learned of the new times, have now decreased.
- 3.4. Charging for rubble/construction waste: The proposal to charge for rubble/construction waste has delivered significant positive change to the household waste recycling centres. As anticipated by our specialists, the amount of material that is managed through this waste stream has dropped drastically, by over 80%. During an average month 800 tonnes of rubble used to be handled, this is now nearer to 120 tonnes.
- 3.5. This material may be being used by residents in their own gardens or managed through the use of skips. There was concern that the incidents of fly-tipping would increase greatly as a result of this charge, this has not been the case in the first quarters of operation as can be seen in the graph below (Figure 2).

Figure 2



- 3.6.** Additional benefits. The anticipated decrease in rubble tonnages has delivered the added benefit of there being fewer users of the site and therefore easier movement around them. Few journeys and less material means there are fewer vehicles on the road as the material is managed more locally. It would also seem that since the charging introduction the levels of residual waste have also decreased, though we are not sure if this is linked to the introduction of the rubble charge.
- 3.7.** Local business waste: Welcoming local businesses to dispose of their rubble/construction waste through our sites has also provided an outlet for very small traders to dispose of small quantities of waste which would otherwise have incurred a much greater charge at commercial sites.

4. Implications

4.1. Legal Implications

- 4.1.1. The Council is under a duty under s.51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to arrange for the disposal of controlled waste collected in its area and for places to be provided at which persons resident in its area may deposit their household waste.
- 4.1.2. Final decisions on permanent changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centre services have been subject to public consultation and the responses to the consultation have been conscientiously taken into account in making any decisions in accordance with established principles of consultation.

4.2. Financial Implications

- 4.2.1. The Council's MTFs set out savings targets for this project based on external consultancy estimates of what could be achieved. Against a savings target of £150,000 for the closure of Arclid household waste recycling centre the Council has achieved £100,000 permanent saving.
- 4.2.2. The Council's MTFS required a further £576,000 from 2018-19 relating to the other measures introduced. It is too early to confirm in year what the final savings on this element will be, however the Council has made assumptions in its 2019-20 budget proposals based on very early data for the permanent saving to be £260,000 for this element.
- 4.2.3. This would mean combined permanent savings from this project would be in the order of £360,000 per annum. This is subject to change however based on usage over the year.

4.3. Human Resources Implications

- 4.3.1. None