

OXFORDSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

26 March 2010

Cash for Trash recycling incentive/reward scheme

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out proposals for a recycling incentive/reward scheme: Cash for Trash.

2 Background

- 2.1 Oxfordshire is a relatively high performing recycling area. Last year we recycled and composted 43% of our waste. However, as a growing county with tough government targets to reduce waste, more needs to be done. In order to further increase participation in district council's kerbside recycling schemes and to raise awareness of recycling in general, it is proposed that an innovative recycling incentive scheme is introduced to engage and reward residents. Under the name "Cash for Trash", households will be encouraged to recycle through the possibility of winning a cash prize and rewarded for their recycling efforts.

A prize will be available each fortnight (as appropriate for the district council) for a period of six months. It is proposed that the prize fund comes from donations/sponsorship and not partner authorities. The only cost to partners (OWP) would be for promotion of the scheme and officer time to administrate it. Cash for Trash does not reward for the amount of recyclables put out, but for participation in a recycling scheme. This way all households are encouraged whether large families of single occupants.

- 2.2 A similar scheme was carried out by Milton Keynes Council in 2007. Other educational/promotional activities were undertaken in the year, but Cash for Trash took the lead role. At the start of the scheme recycling tonnages increased by 26%. This leveled out to an improvement of around 20% in recycling tonnages, with no new materials added to the collection scheme. Milton Keynes Council was able to collect recycling data by housing estate and a trial area that had a recycling rate of 21% (constant over previous quarter) increased up to 25% following introduction of the incentive scheme.
- 2.3 A year after the introduction of the Milton Keynes scheme a survey was undertaken. Of those that had heard about and understood Cash for Trash, 31% were encouraged to recycle (51% already recycled).
- 2.4 Within Oxfordshire, it is proposed that recycling participation monitoring be carried out in one area in a participating district prior to launching the scheme. This area would then be revisited to establish the impact of the scheme.
- 2.5 A small trial was carried out in West Oxfordshire in December 2009. This was funded by WODC directly.
- 2.6 It is proposed that an Oxfordshire scheme would be based on the Milton Keynes one and a draft set of rules for the scheme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

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3 Financial, Risk and Staff Implications

- 3.1 Sponsorship is to be obtained for the prize fund. (£100 per fortnight can be provided to Cherwell and Oxford City from contractors processing recycling. Sponsorship in West will be pursued once announcements are made over the new contract.) OWP budget is required for promotion. This will include securing a media partner and using paid for advertising space with complementary editorial, web features on OWP and partner council's websites and regular pieces in council magazines. Up to £15,000 has been allocated within the OWP Communications Plan to promote a Cash for Trash scheme during 2010/11.
- 3.2 The recent trial scheme within West Oxfordshire received positive coverage in the local media. The Milton Keynes scheme was positively received and continues to run some three years since it launched. Therefore, the risk of negative publicity from local media or a negative response from residents is considered to be low.
- 3.3 A limitation of the current proposal is that flats and communal properties cannot easily be included. The Waste Reduction Projects Group will continue work to develop a scheme that rewards recycling in flats.
- 3.4 Staff time is required to implement and run the scheme. This will be delivered by the OWP Communications Officer working with district council officers. Regular reports will be provided to the OWP Waste Reduction Projects group and Officer Strategy Group. An end of project report will be presented to OWP.

4 Areas Affected

- 4.1 All district councils that choose to be involved in the scheme.

5 Effect on Strategic Policies

- 5.1 Cash for Trash will help meet policies within the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy relating to increased recycling and composting and landfill diversion. Specifically that 'Oxfordshire Waste Partnership will encourage householders and businesses to separate waste for recycling collections by providing targeted information and awareness raising campaigns.'

6 Options or Alternatives

- 6.1 Amendments to the proposed scheme rules set out in appendix 1 may be proposed.
- 6.2 If a Cash for Trash scheme is introduced, members may additionally choose to implement a 'rollover' style scheme to increase payments, as Milton Keynes scheme but with the prize money building up each week/fortnight until a winner is found.
- 6.3 Alternatively, members may choose not to support a "Cash for Trash" scheme.

