

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Record

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| Decision Maker: | Director of Economy, Transport and Environment |
| Date: | 25 November 2021 |
| Title: | Household Waste Recycling Centres pedestrian access trial |
| Report From: | Waste Contracts and Programmes Manager |

Contact name: Paul Laughlin

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1. The decision:

- 1.1 That the current trial is reduced to two mornings per week (Thursday and Saturday) at New Alresford HWRC with immediate effect, releasing the period between 9-10am on Tuesday mornings to be booked by vehicle users.
- 1.2 That targeted local communications are developed to reiterate the conditions behind the pilot, and deter vehicle users from attempting to enter the site during pedestrian periods to circumnavigate the booking system.
- 1.3 That the current trial is reduced to one morning per week (Thursday) at Hedge End HWRC with immediate effect, releasing the period between 9-10am on Tuesday and Saturday mornings to be booked by vehicle users.
- 1.4 That approval is given to withdraw the trial entirely at Waterlooville HWRC with immediate effect due to the extremely low usage, or at least reflecting the new arrangements at Hedge End.
- 1.5 That further monitoring of the situation at Alresford and Hedge End to be conducted with regard to the safety of pedestrians inside and outside of the site.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1 The pedestrian access trial at three Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) is an important initiative which is piloting the provision of a dedicated pedestrian period within the confines of the booking system, allowing householders without access to a vehicle to visit the HWRC at an allotted time. Safety of all site users is a critical consideration, as is monitoring the impact on other site operations and site users, therefore delegated provision was made to amend the trial for appropriate reasons if it was found to not be working in the manner anticipated. The experience from

the first 10 weeks of the trial as detailed in this report provides some cause for concern which it is felt should be addressed immediately.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1 Do nothing. The lack of usage, particularly at Waterlooville HWRC, makes continuation of the trial in its current form difficult to justify.
- 3.2 Full withdrawal of the trial at all sites is not recommended at this point as the pilot has demonstrated an element of public interest to date, notably in New Alresford.

4. Conflicts of interest:

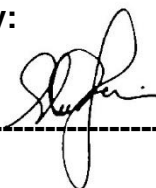
- 4.1 Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:



Date:

02 December 2021

**Director of Economy, Transport and Environment
Stuart Jarvis**

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Purpose of this Report

2. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the pedestrian access trial that has been in place at three Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) since July 2021, and to propose some changes to the trial in line with the participation observed.

Recommendations

3. That the current trial is reduced to two mornings per week (Thursday and Saturday) at New Alresford with immediate effect, releasing the period between 9-10am on Tuesday mornings to be booked by vehicle users.
4. That targeted local communications are developed to reiterate the conditions behind the pilot, and deter vehicle users from attempting to enter the site during pedestrian periods to circumnavigate the booking system.
5. That the current trial is reduced to one morning per week (Thursday) at Hedge End with immediate effect, releasing the period between 9-10am on Tuesday and Saturday mornings to be booked by vehicle users.
6. That approval is given to withdraw the trial entirely at Waterlooville with immediate effect due to the extremely low usage, or at least reflecting the new arrangements at Hedge End.
7. That further monitoring of the situation at Alresford and Hedge End to be conducted with regard to the safety of pedestrians inside and outside of the site.

Executive Summary

8. This report seeks to provide an update on the pedestrian access trial that has been in place at three Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

since July 2021, and proposes some changes to the trial in line with the experience and participation observed.

Contextual Information

9. The Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) approved a decision on 17 June 2021 to instigate a trial at three HWRCs (Hedge End, New Alresford and Waterlooville) to allow controlled access to pedestrians on three mornings per week. The trial proposed to use the booking system to block out an hour from 9-10am on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays when vehicles would be prevented from entering to allow local residents to walk in safely. Delegated power was given to the Director of ETE to amend the scheme at short notice if any safety or other critical issues occurred.
10. The trial commenced on 19 July 2021. Information was placed on Hantsweb setting out the rules associated with the trial: [Household waste recycling centre pedestrian access trial | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/household-waste-recycling-centre-pedestrian-access-trial). Of particular note was a specific directive that the trial was open only to pedestrians from properties within walking distance, and not for vehicle users parking up outside, or close to the site entrance, and attempting to get around the booking system.
11. Since the start of the trial (up to 2211/21), the following usage rates have been observed.

| Site | Customers | 'Lost' vehicle bookings | Proportional loss |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hedge End | 41 | 1,620 | 97.5% |
| New Alresford | 225 | 972 | 76.9% |
| Waterlooville | 6 | 3,780 | 99.8% |

As can be seen by the data above, a significant number of potential booking slots have been lost during the trial which could have been booked by customers using vehicles.

12. The most common waste types brought are green and 'black bag', which accounts for more than 81% of users. This suggests that, for some residents at least, it is not the desire to recycle that motivates them to walk to an HWRC, but instead just to dispose of excess waste which arguably goes against the Council's waste prevention ambitions.
13. While the trial has seen steady use at Alresford (approx. 2-3 customers per session), it has been severely under-utilised at the other sites. This is particularly noticeable at Waterlooville where almost 4,000 booking slots have been lost during the same period, and only one customer has made use of this opportunity since September. Site staff have reported that their income from recyclable items and reusable materials is down; now that the Winter opening hours are in operation, this effectively represents a 14% reduction in time that these sites are actually open to vehicles (11% in the

summer). It is worth noting however that there is increased booking availability each day as demand reduces into the autumn months (this is seen more acutely in the afternoon as morning slots remain popular). Veolia have indicated that they are preparing an evidenced compensation claim for 'lost' revenue from reduced material throughput and sales.

14. The practicality of the trial has experienced some issues with advice about customers not using vehicles to drive up and park outside going unheeded. In recent weeks there has been a concerning escalation in attempts to walk into the Alresford HWRC by pedestrians parking outside, both within and outside the published 'pedestrian period', resulting in eight instances where site staff were verbally abused when these customers are turned away. Some near misses have also been recorded with pedestrians negotiating the highway as they carry their waste to the site, with nine reports of customers putting themselves or others at risk due to their behaviour (e.g. walking in the road and/or blocking the highway with their vehicle).

Proposed next steps

15. The data collected from the first 10 weeks of the trial clearly demonstrates differing levels of interest and patronage in the scheme. While Alresford has seen a steady flow of customers presenting as pedestrians, the volumes observed at Hedge End and Waterlooville are considerably less. In light of this evidence, it is proposed that delegated authority is used to amend the trial at all three sites to reflect the usage and ensure the sites are maximising service provision for all users. While the usage at Hedge End is very low, a steady patronage has been observed and it is considered beneficial to retain the trial on one day per week to continue to evaluate the impact for those properties that are immediately adjacent and for which using a car for such a short distance may be unnecessary.
16. As such, the following amendments are recommended.
 - The trial is reduced to two days per week at New Alresford HWRC.
 - The trial is reduced to one day per week at Hedge End HWRC.
 - The trial is withdrawn with immediate effect at Waterlooville HWRC.
17. It is strongly recommended that, for consistency of message, the same weekday is retained at the two remaining trial sites. It is proposed that this is Thursday as data indicates this is marginally the most popular day so far. A Saturday would also remain available at Alresford where evidence has indicated that local residents appreciate the option of either a weekday or a weekend to facilitate flexibility.
18. In addition, it is recommended that targeted communications are developed to remind Alresford customers of the conditions behind the trial, and to make it clear that anyone parking outside and attempting to circumnavigate the booking system will be turned away. The local Member, Councillor Jackie Porter, is supportive of this approach to ensure the trial is available

to those genuine householders who do not have access to a vehicle for whatever reason.

19. The safety of all customers and site staff remains the absolute paramount consideration, and further monitoring will therefore be undertaken to determine the impact of the proposed amendments. Additional recommendations will be proposed if public safety continues to be compromised.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

20. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

Climate Change Adaptation

19. The adaptation project screening tool considers vulnerability of proposals to the effects of climate change and whether any adaptations are required. A full assessment of climate change vulnerability was not completed in this instance as the initial vulnerability assessment indicated that the project is at minimal risk from climate vulnerabilities as the overall statutory service would continue to be required to be provided.

Carbon Mitigation

20. The carbon mitigation decision-making tool considers the impact of carbon emissions and whether any mitigations are required. There is a carbon benefit to encouraging more sustainable travel options such as walking and cycling, however this could be to the detriment of recycling performance as bulkier/heavier items could possibly be less likely to be delivered. Recycling produces less carbon emissions than waste disposal, so maximising recycling has carbon benefits. The overall aim of the HWRC service is to minimise landfill where possible and therefore reuse, recycling and recovery actions will always be prioritised in line with the waste hierarchy. In addition, retention of the booking system could contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions by reducing queuing with idling engines outside HWRCs and spreading customer demand across the day/week.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

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|---|------------|
| Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity: | yes |
| People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives: | yes |
| People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment: | yes |
| People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities: | yes |

Other Significant Links

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| Links to previous Member decisions: | |
| <u>Title</u> Household Waste Recycling Centre Operations HWRC Operations-2021-06-17-EMETE Decision Day (hants.gov.uk) | <u>Date</u> 17 June 2021 |
| Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives | |
| <u>Title</u> | <u>Date</u> |

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|---|-----------------|
| Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents | |
| <p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p> | |
| <u>Document</u> | <u>Location</u> |
| None | |