

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS (EqIAA)

COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

Date of EqIAA:- May - September 2014

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Community Composting Service was transferred to StreetCare from Resource Futures in 2008. It originally operated 4 community sites at Hawkesbury Upton, Patchway, Shire Way in Yate and Thornbury, together with 1 depot sites at Broad Lane where the actual composting took place.

Sites receive and compost garden waste delivered, primarily, by local residents, whereas the depot sites are provided for composting waste generated by StreetCare, maintenance of parks and open spaces.

The community sites are run on a day to day basis by local volunteer groups although sites have varying degrees of commitment from the community. StreetCare manage the sites over and above the levels delivered by the community.

In 2013 Patchway was closed down due to constant abuse with fly tipping and the lack of a community group managing the site

The Council processing of the green waste at Broad Lane ceased during 2013 when the depot was redeveloped and the composting area was removed. Once this happened the green waste generated by SGC and from the composting sites was taken to a third party via SITA for processing. In spring 2014, the Council proposed to close down the 3 remaining composting sites due to budget pressures.

The proposal is included with the corporate savings plan and the decision is to be taken to the Communities Committee once public consultation is complete. This EqIA informs the decision-making process.

The Council employs 4 members of staff (1 FTE, .5 FTE, .2 FTE, 0.2 FTE) as part of the composting process. These posts would be deleted if the service is removed.

SECTION 2 –RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION

The Council has handled around 8,300 tonne of green waste between April and June 2014. Of this 62% is from green bins, 33% is from sort it centres and 5% is from Compost sites

There is no data showing that any particular protected characteristic group is more or less likely to regular use the composting sites.

The Council carried out public consultation between 19th June and 1st August 2014 and welcomed comments from all residents of South Gloucestershire, Councillors, town and parish councils, MPs, voluntary community groups, site operators and specific volunteer groups for each site.

There were 60 responses to the consultation. Of all respondents, 45 (75%) stated a preference for retaining the current facilities.

Only 10% expressed a specific option; either keeping open with support for community groups (option 1) or keeping open with savings from elsewhere (option 2/3).

10% of those responding did so without a preference for or reference to any of the options available but made comments about the council as a whole, the consultation process or on the anticipated impact of the closures.

10% of respondents asked for further information.

42 respondents (70%) mentioned a specific site in their comments.

A full list of consultation feedback together with officer comment can be found in appendix 1.

It is recognised that home composting of organic waste is the best environmental option, with the smallest carbon footprint.

SECTION 3 - IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF EQUALITIES ISSUES AND IMPACTS

- Residents can visit Sort It!* Centres at no cost, however, access to vehicles and ability to load/unload can be greatly reduced due to disability and age. Upon visiting a Sort It!* centre, residents can request assistance with unloading where needed.
- Residents who are unable to visit Sort It!* centres have the option of applying for an assisted collection from home. They would still need to pay for a green bin collection.
- Impact has also been identified in respect of educational benefit of the service, particularly impacting on young people through some school usage of a site as part of student learning programmes.
- The composting sites offer 24 hour access giving opportunities those wishing to compost material accessibility outside of the times that perhaps a 'Sort it' centre would.

SECTION 4 - EqIAA OUTCOME

Should the closure of composting site be introduced there is clear potential for the following groups to be disproportionately negatively impacted when compared to other groups within society:

- Disabled people
- Older people
- Younger people (school students)

This is because:-

- Visiting Sort It!* Centres requires the use of a vehicle and the ability to load materials into the vehicle. This has the potential to disproportionately disadvantage disabled people and older people. This however is no different to visiting a community composting site and assistance is always available at all Sort it centres.
- An alternative option available is to use the green bin service, however, this carries a charge and disabled people and older people are proportionately more likely to have lower incomes and therefore, ability to pay.
- Some young people have had the opportunity, through school programmes to access composting sites as part of student learning programmes. This practical opportunity would no longer be available.

Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
Outcome 1: No major change required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In particular older people, younger people, and disabled people have been identified as being impacted negatively should the sites be closed. However, the actions listed in section 5 of this EqIA identify mitigating actions and options. Furthermore there is potential for some level of financial support to enable groups to become independently sustainable.
Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 5 - ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AS A RESULT OF THIS EqIAA

The following mitigating actions have been identified:-

- Promotion of the availability of assisted collections.
- Promotion of the availability of assistance when visiting Sort It!* centres.
- Provision of information to residents/users in respect of changes to services, taking into account individual communication needs.

The above can include advertising on site, communication through consultees, councillors, parishes and through the website and social media.

SECTION 6 - EVIDENCE INFORMING THIS EqIAA

- Tonnage of waste from SITA data returns for waste
- Consultation feedback received.
- Waste Management EqIA 2012
- HR data
- Historical service information