

|                                                                |           |                                                                                   |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>REPORT TO:</b>                                              |           | Cabinet                                                                           |  |
| <b>DATE:</b>                                                   |           | 21 June 2023                                                                      |  |
| <b>PORTFOLIO:</b>                                              |           | Councillor Steven Smithson - Deputy Leader of the Council, Environmental Services |  |
| <b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>                                          |           | Craig Haraben (Head of Environmental Services)                                    |  |
| <b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>                                        |           | New regulations for the collection of bulky waste items                           |  |
| <b>EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)</b> | <b>No</b> | Not applicable                                                                    |  |
|                                                                |           |                                                                                   |  |
| <b>KEY DECISION:</b>                                           | <b>No</b> | If yes, date of publication:                                                      |  |

## 1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet about the effect new regulations relating to the collection of bulky waste items containing persistent organic pollutants (POPs) are having on the Council's ability to collect bulky waste items.

## 2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the report
- 2.2 That the portfolio holder work with officers to assess the situation and bring a report back to Cabinet with proposals as to how to deal with this issue

## 3. **Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

- 3.1 Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) remain intact in the environment for long periods, and if not disposed of properly become widely distributed geographically. They accumulate in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife and have harmful impacts on human health and on the environment.
- 3.2 The Environment Agency has undertaken an investigation and confirmed the widespread presence of very large quantities of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and other hazardous chemicals in both the textiles and foam of waste upholstered domestic seating. These chemicals were used as flame retardants and are now banned.

- 3.3 New legislation from the Environment Agency came into effect on 1 January 2023 and this legislation no longer permits POPs waste to be sent to landfill, this is to prevent lasting environmental harm and impacts on the food chain. This means waste containing POPs must be incinerated and must not be re-used, recycled, or landfilled.
- 3.4 Waste upholstered domestic seating is defined as any item of upholstered seating of a household type from households or businesses that is waste. For example sofas, sofa beds, armchairs, kitchen and dining room chairs, stools and foot stools, home office chairs, futons, bean bags, floor, and sofa cushions. Upholstery includes any foam and fabric, for example textiles, leathers and synthetic leathers.
- 3.5 In December 2022 as a consequence of the Environment Agency legislation, Lancashire County Council as waste disposal authority in Lancashire informed the Council (as collection authority in Lancashire) that as from 1 January 2023 bulky waste items containing POPs must be collected separately to all other bulky waste items and could no longer be taken to Whinney Hill tip. POPs items must be taken directly to a waste transfer facility in Darwen.
- 3.5 Previously the Council collected two types of bulky waste items, those being recyclable (such as fridges, timber, mattresses) and non-recyclable (such as sofas or carpets) via two collection rounds. The collection of most non-recyclable bulky waste would be collected on bin day via a refuse collection vehicle collecting domestic residual waste (grey bin) and a separate round collecting recyclable bulky items.
- 3.6 The introduction of this new legislation (with less than a months notice) has meant that waste services have had to collect POPs items by sharing resources allocated to the recyclable bulky items waste round (as you have to segregate POPS items from other waste streams) and take this waste directly to a waste transfer facility in Darwen.
- 3.7 Having to split the round and segregate an additional waste stream has led to a backlog in relation to the collection of bulky waste items (both POPs and recyclable bulky waste items) which is unsustainable.
- 3.8 The portfolio holder will work with officers to establish a new way of working to reduce the back log and improve waiting times in relation to the collection of bulky waste items
- 3.9 Waste officers throughout the UK did hold numerous discussions with colleagues from the Environment Agency to seek a delay to the implementation of the new legislation, and to seek clarification as to whether local authorities could collect POPs and non-POPs items together or collect POPs items, store overnight and tip off the following day to facilitate more collections. However none of these proposals were acceptable to the Environment Agency.

#### **4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 One option is to do nothing. Officers do not recommend that this approach is taken as the waiting times for the collection of bulky waste items are too long currently, which is creating a back log, and this is unsustainable in the long term.

## 5. Consultations

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with Waste Services staff, the portfolio holder, Lancashire County Council and the Environment Agency.

## 6. Implications

|                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)</b>                                                                                                              | Not known at this stage but will need to be considered in connection with any proposed new working methods, and will be report back to a future Cabinet. |
| <b>Legal and human rights implications</b>                                                                                                                                                              | The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants which the UK signed up to aims to eliminate or restrict the production and use of POPs.        |
| <b>Assessment of risk</b>                                                                                                                                                                               | N/A for this report but will be completed for a future Cabinet report with proposals as to how to deal with this issue                                   |
| <b>Equality and diversity implications</b><br><i>A <a href="#">Customer First Analysis</a> should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i> | N/A for this report but a Customer First Analysis will be completed for a future Cabinet report with proposals as to how to deal with this issue         |

## 7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: List of Background Papers

- 7.1 There are no back ground papers to this report

## 8. Freedom of Information

- 8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.