

**Extract Summary of the report sent to the Environment Policy Development Scrutiny Panel  
Revision of Operating Practices at Household Waste Recycling Centres  
Report by the Head of Operational Services, Jim Jack**

The Council Executive on 6th February 2018 agreed that a proposal for closing **three** of the **five** Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) should be replaced by an alternative reduction measure to reduce the costs required. This was agreed by the Council on 13th February to maintain all of the locations left but review the opening hours to deliver the agreed saving required.

This followed on from changes and efficiency savings already implemented previously which had resulted in the closure of the Deans site in April 2018 and the subsequent reduction in the staffing and working hours at each of the remaining sites.

A summary of the site performance for the six sites shows that there has been a steady increase in the number of visitors to the sites from 2014/15, (545,954 visits) to 2017/18, (688,328 visits) which was attributed to an increase in population and change of policy in other authorities! An increase in tonnage was also reported but it was not inversely proportional to the increase in visitors. This was due to changes in the recycling and collection methods where the tonnage has fluctuated but generally increased overall.

Deans was closed in 2018 so the proposal to reduce the services at the remaining 5 sites was based it seems on the operational capacity and not on the numbers of visitors or tonnage (figures are not provided for the types or tonnage per centre, only numbers of visits) for each of these sites.

The proposal is that Oakbank and Whitburn would remain open 24.8 hrs/week and Blackburn Linlithgow and Broxburn will have 20.8 hours/week. A reduction in the total hours from 280 hrs to 112 hrs over the 5 sites.

On the councils own figures of increased usage at these sites from 2014 to 2018 from 545,954 visits to 688,328 visits/year the question must be asked.

Where are the visits and tonnage to go due to these reduced hours of opening?

688,328 visits in a week of 280 hrs at the 5 HWRC centres to fit into 112 hrs in the new proposal at the 5 centres. Check with councillors but this is due for implementation 1st April 2019.

This equates to a 40% reduction in opening hours, 280 hrs to 112 hrs at the 5 centres and a resultant 40% increase in visits from 2458/hr to 6145/hr at the 5 centres.

Questions :

How can this be sustained or even managed?

What happens if the resultant increase in visit numbers and expected over demand for the services takes place?

Where is the risk register and resultant recommendations to mitigate risk?

The Community Council would like a meeting with the officers concerned to discuss the public concern for Linlithgow and other areas of West Lothian who will be impacted with this change to the service provided at the 5 HWRC sites.

Des Martin