

13. ONYX KERBSIDE REFUSE & RECYCLABLE COLLECTION CONTRACT UPDATE

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The purpose of this report is to provide update information regarding the refuse/recyclables collection contract

BACKGROUND

Late in 2001 some concerns regarding the Onyx Kerbside Refuse and Recyclables Collection Contract were raised. The trigger to the concern was the introduction of the collection of additional recyclable materials (more paper and type 2 plastics) and some confusion amongst residents caused by the appearance of three separate kerbside collection vehicles (for refuse, for paper and for remaining recyclables). At the request of the City Manager, the City Water & Waste Manager (Mike Stockwell) prepared a report outlining operational aspects of the Onyx Kerbside Refuse and Recyclables Collection Contract. This report foreshadowed some pending actions to enhance the service and it was circulated to all Councillors, Community Board members in late December 2002.

PROGRESS UPDATE

An update on progress is as follows.

(a) Three Vehicle Change Back to Two Vehicle Collection:

There was considerable confusion amongst the public when an additional type of collection vehicle was introduced in November so that a total of three types of collection vehicle were on the streets:

- a paper collection vehicle
- a refuse vehicle
- and a remaining recyclables vehicle

Starting just after Christmas the paper trucks have been progressively phased out and there are now only two types of collection vehicle back in use again, (i.e. one for refuse and one for recyclables). Onyx will be introducing one new trial articulated recycling vehicle in May 2002. At least one more (i.e. a second) will be built subsequently. These new additional trucks have twice as much capacity as the current vehicles and are expected to significantly reduce the pressure that the Onyx collectors are under.

(b) Advertise Second Free Crate Availability

Attachment A is a sample of the flyer being used to advertise that a second free crate can be obtained from Service Centres. The flyers are being put into all recyclable crates that are full. The idea has been to target advertising at those that need the additional crate rather than blanket advertising to the whole City. The problem with more extensive advertising is demand from those who simply want a free fishing box which is likely to cause a budget blowout.

(c) Better Advertising of Recyclables

Attachment B is a sample of the pamphlet that is now left with each crate where unsuitable items have been left out for recycling. This pamphlet is also to be included with all packs of refuse bags issued in April 2002. This pamphlet clearly depicts what can and cannot be put into the recycling crate. The text is being translated and the pamphlet will shortly be published in Chinese, Maori, and Korean.

It is also intended that the recycling trucks are to have additional new signage applied to their sides with a single simple recycling message per truck.

(d) Review Contract Bonus/Penalty System

The system was reviewed in 2001 and process improvements in conjunction with the Council Request For Service systems have been made to ensure better capture of complaints. See Attachment C for a report sample. A further recent enhancement has been made to the complaint/bonus system so that a second legitimate complaint from the same complainant incurs a stiff penalty and counts as 10 complaints.

(e) Review/Clarify Responsibilities Within Partner Organisations – Onyx, CCC, RMF

This item is on hold pending appointment of Recovered Materials Foundations new CEO.

(f) Review Contract Between Council and Onyx to Identify Improvement Opportunities

Meetings between management of the Council and Onyx are implemented on an ongoing basis to address issues and solve problems as they arise.

(g) Carry Out Regular Surveys

A first survey on recycling and composting participation was carried out in December 2001. Key findings relevant to this report are:

- 97% of people considered the kerbside recycling service to be very good or good.
- 87% of households claimed to participate in kerbside recycling, but only 62% recycled all the items possible, with paper, metal and cardboard commonly thrown out with their refuse.
- Potentially 46,000 homes need an additional recycling crate. This will be addressed through more pro-active advertising, see (b) above and (i) below.
- Almost half of the people not recycling (or composting) do not do so because they have a commercial waste collector.
- 25% of people not recycling do so because they do not know what to recycle. This will be addressed by more advertising and education, see (i) below.
- Most people (84%) felt they knew how to reduce their waste and why recycling is important but only 40% know what happens to the recycled materials. The latter gap in knowledge will be addressed by an enhanced education programme, see (i) below.
- Concern for the environment was the main driver for recycling.
- Residents would like to recycle more. This will be discussed at the Sustainable Transport & Utilities Workshop on Future Kerbside Collection Strategy (Wednesday 15 May).

Attending to these gaps in the public's knowledge has been incorporated in the Kerbside Promotions Teams reviewed KPIs, see (i) below.

The next survey will be carried out in June 2002.

(h) Implement Discussions with Onyx Regarding Staff Turnover

Staff turnover is still an issue with Onyx. It is considered that the single most effective action in reducing high staff turnover will be the introduction of the additional (new design) recycling trucks (13th and 14th). Additional trucks will reduce the size of all the current collection rounds and thereby reduce the weight to be collected by each existing 'small' truck. Furthermore the new trucks have been designed to be a lot more "collector friendly".

Onyx is also proposing to introduce NZQA based training to collecting staff specifically in waste collection services and public interaction. It is expected that these initiatives will help reduce staff turnover.

(i) Implement Improvements to Operation of Kerbside Promotion Team

Ground rules for management of meetings, and processes for development of promotional material have been reviewed and agreed. New objectives and KPIs for the team have been developed, see Attachment D.

GENERAL

It is widely recognised both here and overseas that kerbside collections are a potentially significant source of litter. Inevitably the addition of kerbside recycling three years ago has increased the potential for the Council's kerbside services to generate litter. This is prevalent in certain City streets, for example Brockworth Place with its predominance of student flats and migrants etc. Technically the contract with Onyx is to collect kerbside refuse bags and recyclables only and not to clean up litter in the street, (the latter is carried out by Metallic Sweeping Ltd). However in the spirit of partnering, Onyx do operate a clean street policy in these difficult areas and do remove non-regulation refuse bags, spilt refuse and non-regulation recyclables.

SUMMARY

This report provides follow-up information on enhancements to the Onyx Kerbside Refuse Recycling Collection Contract that was foreshadowed in the December 2001 Stockwell report. As stated in that report there will always be some operational difficulties associated with a high profile public service such as this. It is to be noted that 97% of the people surveyed in late 2001 consider this service to be either good or very good. This is a really excellent result.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE AUDIT

	Condition	Meets Condition	How it Helps Meet Condition
The Natural Step			
N1	Reduce non-renewable resource use	✓✓	Promotes recycling
N2	Eliminate emission of harmful substances		
N3	Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems	✓✓	Reduces waste
N4	People needs met fairly and efficiently		
The People Step			
P1	Basic needs met	✓✓	Waste Collection Service
P2	Full potential developed		
P3	Social capital enhanced		
P4	Culture and identity protected		
P5	Governance and participatory democracy strengthened		
The Economic Step			
E1	Effective and efficient use of all resources	✓✓	Promotes recycling
E2	Job rich local economy	✓✓	Creates jobs
E3	Financial sustainability		
✓✓	Significant positive impact (Project aiming to have positive impact in area)	- Neutral	x Negative impact
✓	Positive impact		xx Significant negative impact (project aiming opposite direction to condition)
Some initiatives could have a tick and a cross in the rating box and would then need an explanation of each in the comments box.			

Recommendation: That City Water & Waste Unit continue to keep this Committee informed about enhancements to the Onyx Kerbside Refuse and Recycling Collection Contract.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.