

22. 7. 98

REPORT OF THE WASTE MANAGER

1. RECYCLING OLD TELEPHONE BOOKS

RR 8120

Officer responsible Waste Manager	Author Mike Stockwell, Waste Manager
Corporate Plan Output: Solid Waste Recycling and Recovered Materials Foundation	

The purpose of this report is to seek additional funding from the Council to assist in recycling this years old telephone books.

BACKGROUND

Over recent years the public have been encouraged to recycle their old telephone books by putting them out for collection at the kerbside, or to drop them off direct to Resource Recovery Centres. The financial returns have tended to be low owing to the low recyclable value of the books due to the glossy covers, non-soluble glue and high ink content.

This year the financial viability is worse due to the low market value for recyclable paper. However, in terms of sending a positive recycling message to the public it seems advisable to facilitate recycling this years old books through the kerbside recycling scheme.

CURRENT SITUATION

The current estimate for recycling this years old telephone books (approximately 300 tonnes) via the kerbside system is as follows:

	Worst Case	Best Case
• Collection by Onyx, sorting and containerisation by Onyx at Parkhouse site	\$43,700	\$43,700
• Delivery to Lyttelton	\$3,000	\$3,000
• Shipping overseas to point of sale	\$13,500	\$13,500
• Less sales revenue	\$0	(\$15,000)
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Total	\$60,200	\$45,200
	=====	=====

FUTURE SCENARIO AND DISCUSSION WITH TELECOM

Discussions between the Council, Recovered Materials Foundation and Telecom to improve the situation have taken place with the following proposed action plan:

- Telecom acting as the Council's agent could bill each telephone customer once each year a sum (around \$0.60) to cover the costs of recycling the old books (via a line item on a routine monthly bill). Note: There are about 100,000 total residential telephone customers in Christchurch.
- Telecom will work with the Council and the Recovered Materials Foundation to make their books more recycling friendly in the future – for example with recycled cardboard covers, soluble glue etc.

These steps will result in a win/win situation. For the Council by keeping the books out of the landfill, making them more recyclable in the future and producing more feedstock for the Recovered Materials Foundation to foster industry and jobs in Christchurch. For Telecom acting as a market leader by giving them an opportunity to enhance their environmentally friendly image.

Discussions with Telecom have occurred with Mr Craig Marsh, General Manager, and Ellen O'Connor, Southern Regional Manager both from Telecom Directories (a subsidiary of Telecom). They will need to consult with their colleagues before these initiatives can be finally agreed to.

LEGAL POSITION

The legalities of Telecom (and other telephone companies) acting as the Council's agent to collect a recycling fee are being checked out by the Council's Legal Services Manager Peter Mitchell.

Note: The Local Government Amendment Act No. 4 provides for the Council under its Waste Management Plan to establish incentives and disincentives to implement its plan – such as establishing a recycling fee for old telephone books.

OTHER TELEPHONE COMPANIES

Subject to Telecom's agreement of the above recycling fee collection method, the other telephone companies will be approached to do the same things.

SUMMARY

In terms of sending a positive message to the public it is considered desirable that old telephone books are recycled via the Council's kerbside recycling system. The Waste Management Unit and the Recovered Materials Foundation are working with Telecom to set up a financial system to cover the costs of recycling and make the telephone books more recycling friendly in the future. As discussed above this is a win/win situation for the Council and Telecom.

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In the meantime around \$60,000 is needed to fund the recycling of this years books. It is recommended that this money is financed by the Council's contingency fund. Note: It is quite possible that this money will be offset this year by revenue from a new Telecom customer (user) billing system discussed above.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council provide \$60,000 from its contingency fund to recycle this year's old telephone books.
 2. That discussions be pursued with Telecom and the other telephone companies to set up a customer billing system to cover the cost of recycling old telephone books together with making them more recyclable friendly in the future.
 3. That if these discussions are successful, the Council adopt an incentive charge under Local Government Amendment Act No.4 (which will probably be around \$0.60 per customer).

CONSIDERED THIS 22ND DAY OF JULY 1998

MAYOR