

Review of on street small waste electrical electronic equipment (SWEEE) banks Dec 2020

1. Introduction

1.1 This report considers options for the future provision of 'on street' WEEE banks which have been provided to boroughs as part of the WEEE contract since 2010.

2. Background

2.1 WEEE banks for small electrical and electronic equipment (SWEEE) were first provided to NLWA boroughs in 2010 as an optional extra in the DHL contract at that time. They have continued to be part of subsequent contracts as a legacy arrangement, including the current one with European Recycling Platform (ERP). The WEEE contract with ERP began in January 2019 and is a two-year contract with an option to extend for up to two years, potentially taking it until the end of December 2022

2.2 The SWEEE banks are available to all Boroughs at no cost and the contractor is responsible for undertaking collections from the banks as often as necessary, ensuring the containers are in a good and safe condition and providing monthly tonnage data. There is a small budget for the banks which includes maintenance, removals, and repairs but as the banks are getting older and becoming more dilapidated this is no longer sufficient for their upkeep.

2.3 The current number of banks in November 2020 is 37 and they are distributed across the NLWA Boroughs as follows in table 1 below:

Table 1: Distribution and performance of SWEEE recycling banks 2019/20

Borough	No. of banks	Tonnes 2019/20	Comments
Barnet	0	0	All on street recycling sites removed in 2018/19
Camden	3	4.05	
Enfield	5	0.63	
Hackney	16	8.1	
Haringey	4	2.38	
Islington	4	4.26	
Waltham Forest	5	3.53	

2.4 These facilities generated a total of 22.60 tonnes in 2018/19 and 22.94 tonnes in 2019/20.

3. Benefits of the SWEEE banks

3.1 SWEEE banks are popular with residents as they are more accessible than the reuse and recycling centres in areas where a kerbside service for these items does not exist.

4. Disadvantages

4.1 Although these banks are popular for users, operationally they attract a wide range of challenges. They are often broken into for their contents and to repair them is expensive depending on the extent of the damage. The cost of a new bank is in the region of £xx and to repair a vandalised bank is over £xx (day rate) and doesn't always include parts such as replacing a door or bullet locks which are more resistant to being broken than standard locks.

4.2 Some examples of vandalised banks can be seen in the photos below.

1. Door broken off



2. Bank tipped on its side



3. Lock sawn through



4.3 The banks are often contaminated and attract fly tips and so do not generate much tonnage and if a SWEEE bank needs to be moved or removed completely this can only be done by a specialist HIAB vehicle that needs to be booked in advance and is charged for. Although this is a small element of the WEEE contract with ERP, it takes up a disproportionate amount of officer time to manage this service.

5. Proposed service options

5.1 Three options for this service have been reviewed below including any advantages and disadvantages, as well as potential implications for Boroughs.

6. Option 1 – Agree a budget for managing the bring banks

6.1 The current budget for managing the SWEEE banks within ERP is very small at around £xx and not sufficient to sustain the ongoing maintenance of the current stock of recycling banks or removal and replacement of banks. This is because of the legacy situation of continuing to provide this service since it was first introduced in 2010.

6.2 This option proposes that Boroughs agree a sum for managing the SWEEE banks based on the number of banks each Borough has. For example, this could be £xx per bank per year so that for a Borough with no banks such as Barnet, they pay £0 and Hackney with 16 banks pays £xx. This would be a total of £xx for the 37 banks currently in the NLWA area. This figure could be reviewed six monthly or annually and amended if it proves not reflective of the real costs incurred.

6.3 If all banks were to be replaced with new the cost including transport would be around £xx.

6.4 Alternatively, if Members decide not to continue with the kerbside WEEE service, this budget could come from the levy payments paid towards that.

7. Option 2 - Boroughs take ownership of the banks with free collections provided by the contractor

7.1 Due to the WEEE banks being a legacy service, they are no longer an ERP asset. If preferred, Boroughs can take ownership of the banks and responsibility for their maintenance. NLWA would still assume responsibility for the collections of the materials will still be provided free of charge to the Boroughs. The Boroughs will have the flexibility of moving banks without having to go through the Authority, using their own branding and messaging to promote the banks as well as using their existing contracts and resources to replace or repair the banks. Details of the current contractor for these services can also be provided if preferable.

8. Option 3 – leave the service as it is

8.1 The final option is the leave the service as it is but agree that there may be costs charged back to Boroughs for anything outside of the contract as outlined in section 4.1 above.

9. Recommendation

9.1 NLWA recommends option 2. This would allow the Boroughs to have direct control of the banks and any costs incurred which provide a valued frontline service. There would be more flexibility for the Boroughs to use the banks where they are most effective and integrate this facility and the associated promotion of them with the other recycling services and campaigns the Council provides.

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