

Brighton & Hove City Council

City Environment, South Downs & The Sea Committee

Agenda Item 56

Subject: Re-procurement of textile contract

Date of meeting: 12 March 2024

Report of: Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 This report is seeking approval to re-procure a contract for the installation, maintenance and servicing of textile recycling containers across the city. The purpose of the contract is to enable textiles to be sold for reuse and recycling. The revenue raised contributes to previously agreed savings, and 40% is allocated to support community uses.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Committee agrees to the re-procurement of the contract for the installation, maintenance and servicing of textile recycling containers, with a contract term of three years, with the option of a two one-year extensions.

2.2 That Committee delegates authority to the Executive Director: Economy, Environment & Culture to award the contract for three years following the procurement process and to decide thereafter to extend the contract for up to two further one-year periods, subject to satisfactory performance of the provider in respect of the initial three-year period.

2.3 That Committee notes the contract will be awarded as soon as practicable, allowing for the procurement process.

3. Context and background information

3.1 Recycling points are locations across the city where residents can recycle waste which is not recycled through the regular household waste collection service. This includes recycling of textiles, cartons (Tetrapaks) and waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). Some recycling points have dry mixed and glass recycling containers. Work is being undertaken to improve the guidance at these sites to ensure members of the public are aware of what can and cannot be accepted into the bins.

- 3.2 Textile containers are heavily used across the city and provide residents with accessible means to ensure their unwanted, clothing, shoes, bags, belts, blankets and bedsheets are kept in use either in their current form or recycled into new products. This means that waste, material loss and emissions from energy recovery are prevented.
- 3.3 The council uses contractors to provide textile recycling containers at recycling points. These containers are installed, maintained and serviced / emptied by the contractor. The collected textiles are taken to facilities where they are sorted into different grades. Wearable and reusable items are sold on, either in the UK or abroad. The remainder of the textiles are sold for shredding. The industry can only legally export useable material, it is not legal to export waste for dumping abroad. We will build traceability and accountability into the qualitative assessment of any future tender process and require regular reporting as part of the contract management when awarded.
- 3.4 The existing contract is a concession contract, whereby the council receives an income from the textiles collected. The contractor pays the council based on the number of tonnes of textiles collected from the containers. The rate per tonne payable is based on the average monthly mid-rate for textiles when sold on the market. The existing income received to the council is split between Cityclean to contribute towards previously agreed budget savings (60%) and community uses (40%).
- 3.5 It is recommended that contract is awarded on a contract term of three years, with the option of a two one-year extensions (3+1+1) due to the ongoing national waste reforms. Whilst there are no current specific reforms to the textile sector, the Waste Prevention Plan refers to developing a textiles waste hierarchy to prevent material going to landfill or energy recovery. Consultation is due to open at some point this year and although the Plan does not refer to local authority obligations directly, implications for the council will not be known until the consultation is launched. Procuring a three-year contract, with the possibility of up to two one-year extensions, provides the council with the flexibility to adapt to any future reforms.

Textiles in Brighton & Hove

- 3.6 There are textile containers at 74 locations across the city; some locations have more than one container. A project within the Improvement Programme is reviewing and improving recycling point locations and it may be that, once the new contract is in place, more textile containers can be rolled out.
- 3.7 Since the contract was introduced, the following has been achieved:

Financial year	Average tonnage of textiles per month	Income
2017/18	24.20	£80,282.94
2018/19	26.07	£68,820.28
2019/20	27.87	£64,499.75
2020/21	29.28	£41,543.95

2021/22	28.75	£25,204.32
2022/23	30.91	£53,761.30
2023/24 (up to Dec 2023 ¹)	22.27	£34,605.04

- 3.8 The financial value of textiles, as well as the tonnage received, fluctuates each month so there is no guarantee what income will be achieved each year. After increasing gradually most years, there has been a reduction in the tonnage received in 2023/24. This may be the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, with people continuing to use their clothing, shoes, bags, belts, blankets and bedsheets, rather than sending for reuse or recycling. The table above also shows significant fluctuations in the value of textiles when sold.
- 3.9 The most recent figures from Brighton & Hove's composition analysis shows that:
- 2.96% of our residual household waste is textiles, and
 - 4.00% of the city's recycling is textiles.
- 3.10 These figures demonstrate there is still work to be done to inform residents on what to do with unwanted textiles. Therefore, alongside the re-procurement of the textile contract, further work relating to textiles will be completed as part of the drive to minimise the volume of waste produced across the city. This will link to the wider work the council is doing on reducing contamination, waste minimisation and improving recycling. For textiles, this includes:
- Updating the textile page of the website
 - Launching a campaign, with a focus on contamination (this is when the wrong item is put in the wrong bin). This will include communications on textiles being a contaminant in recycling bins. The campaign will also encourage residents to donate, swap, sell or recycle their unwanted textiles.
 - Improving the promotion and information on recycling points, which will include the information relating to textiles. A new map will be available on the website, indicating where all the recycling points are and filterable by material e.g. textiles, cartons, waste electrical.
 - Redesigning web pages to include separate information on reduce, reuse, repurpose and repair. This will include circular / sustainable economy organisations and initiatives across the city, including those related to textiles. This redesign will also include further information on what happens to your recycling and the environmental benefits of doing it. For textiles, for example, this will include the impact of the textile industry on the environment.
 - Delivering a rolling programme of communications and campaigns focusing on specific materials. This will include textiles and will focus on the global impacts of the fashion industry and what can be done locally and as individuals.

¹ Unfortunately, a number of textile containers were broken into during December 2023, resulting in many of the donated materials being stolen and some being contaminated and lowering the tonnage for that month.

- The chosen contractor will be monitored for reliability of collections, because overflowing bins can discourage their use and reduce the amount of textiles that are recycled.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 Committee could decide not to re-procure the contract and remove the textile recycling containers from recycling points. This would mean that residents would have to find alternative means to recycle their textiles. This presents a risk that many textiles end up in the residual waste stream or as a contaminant in the recycling stream, rather than being reused or recycled. It will also mean the council does not receive income to contribute to budget savings or community uses.
- 4.2 There are other ways residents can dispose of their unwanted textiles. This includes donating clothes to charity shops and selling at a car boot sale or online. There are also textile recycling containers in the car parks of large supermarkets. Textiles are also accepted at the two Household Waste Recycling Sites.
- 4.3 It is not possible to complete these collections in-house due to the lack of space to use as a tipping / storage point for these materials, and the permitting requirements to do so.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 No community engagement has taken place in relation to the recommendations in this report.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This report is seeking approval to re-procure a contract for the installation, maintenance and servicing of textile recycling containers across the city. Through the contract, clothing, shoes, bags, belts, blankets and bedsheets will be reused and recycled, with the revenue raised contributing to budget savings and local charities. It is recommended that the council procures a contract on a 3+1+1 basis to provide flexibility for any future waste reforms pertaining to textiles.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The proposed procurement process is subject to compliance with the council's Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- 7.2 Expenditure related to the proposed procurement of installations, maintenance and servicing textile collection banks is managed through the income share for the contractor. Officer time associated with the procurement process will be contained within existing budgets.
- 7.3 The current budget contains a net income target of £0.082m following savings agreed at budget council in 2016 and then increased in 2018

regarding the textiles collection contract and the effect of standard inflation on income targets over the years. Should the procurement not go ahead, and textile collections are stopped, income will not be achieved to meet the income targets. Any significant variation to budget will be reported as part of the council's monthly budget monitoring process.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack Date consulted: 15/02/2024

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The Council is required to comply with the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 [CCR2016] for the procurement and award of concession contracts with a value above the prescribed threshold. This contract will be below that threshold and therefore the CCR 2016 is not applicable.
- 8.2 The Council's Contract Standing Orders [CSOs] will apply to the procurement of this service.

Name of lawyer consulted: Eleanor Richards Date consulted: 15/02/2024

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 Continuing to contribute 40% of the income raised to community uses is likely to have positive equalities implications. This can support local community groups, voluntary organisations and not-for-profit social enterprise who are encouraged to undertake activities to improve wellbeing, build cohesion and promote fairness.

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 According to Textiles 2030, an industry initiative of WRAP, the textile industry accounts for up to 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions, with 93 billion cubic metres of water used each year. In the UK alone, 956,000 tonnes of clothing is discarded annually. Add to this the impacts of pollution from dyeing, bleaching and treating fabrics, international transportation (often multiple times during production), poor treatment of low paid workers and it is clear urgent changes to how clothing and textiles are made, purchased and disposed of are of paramount importance for the planet.
- 10.2 Providing opportunities for residents to reuse and recycle their unwanted textiles supports efforts in slowing fast fashion and extending the life of clothing and textiles through supporting reuse and repair and encouraging recycling.
- 10.3 Sustainability and circular economy principles will be key to the procurement specification. The requirements will emphasise the necessity to follow the waste hierarchy when managing the textiles from the containers, prioritising reuse, followed by recycling. There will be an expectation that minimal materials are sent for energy recovery and no waste is sent to landfill.

11. Other implications

Social value and procurement implications

- 11.1 The estimated value of this contract to the market on a 3+1+1-year basis is £1.25m. In line with the council's Contract Standing Order 5, the tender shall be advertised in at least one 'relevant local publication', at least one trade related journal, and the council website. Due to the potential value of the contract, the tender will be advertised in the FTS ('Find A Tender') and on Contracts Finder. The tender documents will be published on the Council's portal or through further competition on suitable framework. Each tender return will be scored on a combination of price and quality with a 60/40% split.