



Weekly Collection Support Scheme

Frequently asked questions





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Introduction

This FAQ document has been compiled to help local authorities that are interested in bidding for funding as part of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme. It responds to issues raised during the expression of interest process and at the recent LGA led workshops and provides technical advice on completing the bidding form. It covers the following key sections:

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General

1. What are the objectives of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme?

The Weekly Collection Support Scheme is a challenge fund designed to support local authorities to introduce, retain or reinstate a weekly collection of residual waste and/or recycling (for example food waste).

Examples of the type of projects the Scheme might support include; recycling schemes that divert more waste from landfill; reward schemes for householders that recycle more; equipment to increase collection capacity; investment in technologies like Mechanical Biological Treatment facilities, Materials Recovery Facilities, Composting or Anaerobic Digestion; and awareness raising campaigns.

2. What are the criteria of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme?

Through this challenge fund approach, innovative bids will be invited from local authorities that:

- Guarantee to introduce, retain or reinstate weekly collections of residual waste for five years; and
- Provide environmental benefits or improvements on current environmental performance; and
- Demonstrate value for money.

In addition, and in recognition that some councils are locked into long term contractual arrangements tying them to fortnightly collections, the Scheme will also accept bids from councils with a fortnightly refuse collection that do not currently offer a weekly food waste collection. The addition of a weekly food waste collection for five years in this circumstance is considered to offer an increase in the service offered to householders.

Key to any bid under this Scheme is that a project can demonstrate additionality against these criteria.

3. What projects will be eligible for funding under the Weekly Collection Support Scheme?

Projects that meet the objectives and criteria of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme are eligible for funding. As a challenge fund, bids will be assessed as to how well they score against the criteria and how they compare relative to other bids.

4. What is Weekly Collection Support Scheme funding timescale?

The Weekly Collection Support Scheme is a three year fund from 2012/13 to 2014/15. The spend profile is up to £250m over three years: £50m in year one, and £100m in each of years two and three. Outline and final bids should clearly profile requested funding, which could be either in a single

year sum or spread over the one, two and/or three years of the Scheme. Local authorities should provide a profile of expenditure as part of their bid. Where possible the Department will try to accommodate the funding profile requested by successful bidders, but the budget is limited to a fixed amount in each year so until all bids have been assessed no guarantees can be made that a specific profile can definitely be met. In order to maximise the positive impact of the fund, the revised outline bid form asks local authorities about whether or not they can be flexible about the year in which they receive funding.

5. What is the timetable for the bidding process?

- Expressions of interest were requested by 16 March 2012.
- Outline bids should be submitted by 11 May 2012.
- Feedback to local authorities on outline bids by 22 June 2012.
- Final bids should be submitted by 17 August 2012.
- The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will announce successful bids in October 2012.

6. Why is the funding for three years but the commitment for five years?

This scheme is designed to invest in better weekly collections. Making a five year commitment to weekly waste collections, demonstrates that local authorities are committed to putting customer service and residents' needs first when configuring local waste services. Helpfully, it also enables councils to profile over the medium term the positive impact this funding can have in terms of delivering better cost-effectiveness and environmental outcomes.

Eligibility

7. Who can bid?

Any local authority in England can lead a bid – whether they are a collection or disposal authority. We also encourage joint bids from groups of local authorities or consortiums (including businesses/third parties). For grant allocation purposes however the lead bidder in all instances must be an English local authority¹.

8. Will bids from local authorities with contracted out waste services be treated differently from those that operate in house waste collection services?

No.

¹ Please note: This Scheme is limited to English local authorities, and the fund will not support bids from the rest of the United Kingdom.

9. Does the bid have to cover the local authority area as a whole or can it apply to a particular part of the area?

A local authority can submit a bid to improve weekly waste collection in the entirety of their locality, or a bid to improve a particular part of it (for example improving weekly collection and recycling facilities for flats in an inner city area of the local authority). Bids should make very clear the coverage of the project for which they want funding (i.e. the number of households). There is no minimum number of residents that must benefit from the bid. However, the scoring system will take this into account. This is why we ask for information about the percentage and total number of households in the bid form.

Similarly, where there is a joint bid with a disposal authority, for scoring purposes, the number of households benefiting from the funding will only include those in participating districts that have a weekly collection (within the terms of this Scheme).

10. Can a local authority bid for funding for communal waste collection facilities?

For many flatted properties it would be artificial to try to distinguish between individual household collections and communal facilities. Whether proposals that involve communal bins (or bring sites for recyclables) are within the scope of the scheme will be a question of fact and degree. However, local authorities will need to explain the link and benefits to residents of communal or bring sites that are over and above what is practicable at the household level.

11. How much will each area be able to bid for?

There is no minimum or maximum amount for which a local authority can bid for through the Weekly Collection Support Scheme fund. It is possible to bid for up to 100% of the costs of a project. There are no extra points for bidding for less than is needed to successfully run a project (and nor do we want to create pressure on other budgets). If the Technical Advisory Group considers that costs are unreasonable relative to industry standards at outline bid stage, this will be fed that back to local authorities and they will have the opportunity to review their costs before submitting a final bid.

12. Is there a limit to the number of bids a local authority can make?

No. Councils can make as many applications, for as many projects, as they like either individually or as part of a group/consortium. Authorities need to make a choice between submitting a number of individual bids or one overall bid, but they should not submit both an overall bid and individual bids where these are covering the same project. Under that scenario, the WCSS Team will only assess the summary bid. The Weekly Collection Support Scheme is a challenge fund and all bids are in competition with one another. We recommend focussing effort on bids

that fully meet the fund objectives and criteria and on quality rather than quantity. In addition, bidders should consider the impact of the state aid de minimis threshold in relation to an accumulation of all their bids. Where an authority submits individual bids, they need to ensure that they don't duplicate elements of another bid, e.g. claiming the same benefits twice, as that would impact on how those bids score. All bids will be assessed independently, based on their own merits.

13. Can a local authority bid to reduce the number of recycling containers used by residents?

A local authority can bid to reduce the number of containers used by residents for their waste and recycling collections if a local authority can demonstrate that this change will enable them to fulfil the criteria of the Scheme.

14. If a local authority has received or is continuing to receive PFI credits for their waste collection and/or disposal services, can they still apply under the fund?

Yes. Bids should however identify what linkages, if any, there are with other Government funding for related waste and recycling services or infrastructure and the Council's Waste Management Strategy (where one is in place).

15. Can waste partnerships (of more than one local authority) bid for funding from the Weekly Collection Support Scheme?

Yes, we especially welcome partnership bids between local authorities where this can improve efficiency and lead to greater financial savings. However, in all partnership bids one local authority should nominate themselves as the lead bidder and accountable body.

16. Can public-private consortiums make a joint bid?

Yes, we are encouraging joint bids between local authorities and the private sector where this streamlines waste services and enables better value for money. However, the local authority must be the lead bidder as funding will be administered through the local authority and must relate to expenditure of that authority.

17. We have started on our project but have seen that Weekly Collection Support Scheme funding might have been available, can we apply retrospectively?

Funding cannot be provided retrospectively, however, funding can be provided to continue a project where it can be demonstrated that it would otherwise be abandoned due to a lack of funding.

18. Can bids seek funding to accelerate projects?

Bids for funding to accelerate the implementation of a project are possible but the benefits will only be assessed as those occurring in the period between delivery and when the project would in any case have gone ahead. All projects must meet the objectives and criteria of the fund.

Finance

19. Can local authorities bid for revenue or capital funding?

Local authorities will receive revenue funding, however subject to the usual public finance rules, this can be used to support revenue or capital expenditure. There is no preference towards either revenue or capital bids.

20. How do Public Sector Procurement rules apply to projects funded by the Weekly Collection Support Scheme?

We will be asking bidding authorities to set out how they intend to procure goods and services and assurances that UK and European procurement rules have been adhered to.

21. Whose responsibility is it to ensure that a bid meets due diligence requirements?

It is the responsibility of the Section 151 Officer (usually the Chief Executive) in the local authority to sign off and confirm that the bid meets due diligence requirements. The cost of this should be borne by the bidder. We are seeking S151 Officer sign off at both outline bid and final bid stage.

Where a local authority has an election in May 2012 it is fine for the outline bid not to have such sign off, however it is a requirement for all local authorities at final bid stage. S151 Officer sign off can come in the form of an electronic signature, by the bid being submitted from the S151 Officer's email account, or by inclusion of an e-mail from the S151 Officer's e-mail alongside the bid confirming their sign off.

22. Does the local authority have to monitor the delivery and outcomes of waste services provided by funding from the Weekly Collection Support Scheme? Does it have to complete an impact assessment?

We will not be asking for any specific monitoring of the delivery of waste services. We expect local authorities to be accountable to their residents and a local authority that secures funding from the Weekly Collection Support Scheme will need to make a public commitment to provide weekly waste collections for five years.

Councils already complete Waste Data Flow, and we would expect that councils in receipt of funding would continue to publish this information

and use this to aid any in-house monitoring required to ensure their service is meeting the needs of their residents. An impact assessment is not a requirement on the bidding form and we do not want councils to submit one as part of their bid.

23. Will there be a reserve list or a second round?

We will be looking to announce successful bids in the autumn. We have not ruled out the possibility of a second round, but it is unlikely.

24. When will the funding be made available?

The money for projects receiving funding within year one will be made available within two months of the announcement of successful bids. Funding allocations for future years will depend on the needs of local authorities, and exact payment dates will be agreed between them and central Government on an individual basis.

Administration of funding

25. How will funding be administered and will it be ring-fenced?

Payments will be in the form of a Section 31 grant payment which is not ring-fenced. This kind of grant payment allows local authorities greater flexibility in how they go about providing services to their residents. DCLG will not clawback funding awarded under this Scheme in-year. However, in order to minimise risk, funding will only be paid one year at a time.

The profile of payments and whether funds are paid in advance or arrears (within the financial year) will be agreed once successful bids have been identified. In a few cases, where appropriate, e.g. for some larger projects still requiring planning permission, DCLG will set out a staged payment process linked to milestones and payment made following an authority meeting those milestones (e.g. securing planning permission). The Section 151 Officer in the lead bidding authority will be personally accountable for ensuring that funding is spent responsibly.

26. Is there financial flexibility in the spend profile of the funding?

One of the questions in the outline bid form asks local authorities to identify whether there is flexibility in their bid in terms of the year when they receive the funding. Some local authorities will be unable to offer flexibility in terms of their proposed spend, but the form provides space for those councils that are able to work flexibly to provide quality waste collection services to make this known. In terms of the flexibility of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme spend profile of £50m in year one and £100m in each of years two and three, there is no room for this to be rolled over into subsequent years.

27. Does a local authority have to spend their funding allocation in the financial year in which they receive it?

A local authority should set out in their bid when they expect to spend funding should they receive it. A bid should make clear in which year a local authority anticipates spending the funding. A local authority might find it helpful to discuss with their in-house finance team how non ring-fenced grants are administered.

28. Do state aid rules apply?

Local authorities need to ensure that there will be no breach of state aid rules and we will ask for an assurance that this is the case as part of the due diligence check. The state aid rules (which are set out in Articles 107 to 109 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union) apply to all public funding within the European Union.

Feasibility

29. What is the membership of the Technical Advisory Group?

The Technical Advisory Group will be chaired by Shehla Husain (DCLG) and is made up of representatives from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Local Government Association (LGA), the Environmental Services Association (ESA), Local Partnerships (LP) and WRAP.

30. The prospectus states that the Technical Advisory Group will assess the feasibility of a bid, what does this mean?

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will review each bid in terms of the evidence and information presented against the criteria. As part of that, they will review the bids to ensure that they can be delivered, are achievable and realistic and that sufficient governance and/or infrastructure is in place (or being prepared) to support the proposed project. Where the Technical Advisory Group consider that a bid does not sufficiently demonstrate the feasibility of the bid then they will advise the policy team, who may in turn request more information. All local authorities should ensure that any submitted bids follow the standard processes and procedures for spending public money.

31. If planning permission is required in order for a project (e.g. infrastructure) to go ahead, does this need to be secured in advance of submitting a bid?

Planning permission does not need to be in place in advance of bidding. However if planning permission is not in place, the bid should include: detail on the risks of not obtaining this permission, if permission fits in with the local authority's planning strategy, and if planning permission has

previously been rejected for the same or similar project. Furthermore, projects must be in the position to be underway within the three years of the fund's spending profile. Where planning permission will delay the project beyond these three years funding will not be granted.

32. What if planning permission is required for infrastructure to support the scheme but the proposal is refused or significantly delayed?

The letter for successful bidders will make it clear that provision of funding will be dependent on the project receiving the necessary planning permission. Where planning permission for the proposal has been significantly delayed we would expect the local authority to contact us to discuss the timing issue. It will not be possible to pay any money after 31 March 2015.

33. Does a local authority need to hold a public consultation before submitting a bid?

No, however the application form will require local authorities to confirm that residents' needs have been considered in the configuration of waste services being funded by this Scheme.

Where an authority intends to consult or canvass opinion to shape the delivery of a bid this should be detailed in the application, especially if some / all of the funding being bid for will support the activity being consulted on.

Submitting a bid

34. How should a local authority submit their outline bid?

Bids should be submitted no later than midnight, 11 May 2012 to; weeklycollectionsupportscheme@communities.qsi.gov.uk

Please start the subject line of the email with 'WCSS OUTLINE BID <INSERT NAME OF LEAD BIDDING AUTHORITY>'.

35. Can a local authority submit an outline bid even if they haven't made an 'expression of interest'?

Yes.

36. Can a local authority submit a final bid if they don't submit an outline bid?

No, a local authority must submit an outline bid by 11 May 2012. Only local authorities who have submitted an outline bid are eligible to submit a final bid.

37. Can the outline bid deadline of 11 May be extended?

No. The deadline for outline bids is midnight on 11 May. The timetable has been designed to enable DCLG to announce successful bids in Autumn 2012, to provide early certainty for authorities. This timetable does not provide any room for the extension of outline bid or final bid deadlines. This remains the case where a local authority does not require funding in year one, or where a local authority has an election this year, or where a local authority is affected by the Olympics.

38. Will any lee way be given for late bids?

Bids must be received according to the timetable laid out in the prospectus. Should any council have unforeseen and exceptional difficulties in achieving the outline bid deadline they must contact the project team ahead of the deadline to discuss. It will be possible to submit an incomplete bid; however we strongly encourage bids to be as complete as possible otherwise DCLG may not be able to provide bespoke feedback.

39. Will any bids be rejected at outline bid stage?

No. Bids will not be rejected until the final bid stage. At the outline bid stage feedback will be provided that will identify areas of a bid that a local authority can improve before the final bid deadline.

40. When will local authorities receive feedback after outline bids?

Local authorities will receive this feedback by 22 June 2012. This feedback will be in writing and emailed to the relevant local authority by DCLG.

41. How much detail should be included in an outline and then final bid?

The outline bid form should be completed as fully as possible so that DCLG can provide the best possible feedback to local authorities in advance of the submission of their final bid.

42. Does a local authority have to pursue the same project throughout all the stages of bidding?

No, we recognise the need for some flexibility. However, we strongly encourage local authorities to submit viable outline bids that they intend to develop to final bid stage as this will ensure they receive relevant feedback.

43. What support is available to help bidders?

The Local Government Association and DCLG recently ran a series of Waste Workshops across the country for officers preparing bids in order to provide them with more information and advice. Queries can also be

directed to weeklycollectionsupportscheme@communities.gsi.gov.uk. We will also continue to update this FAQ list based on the questions received.

If a council chooses to employ the services of external experts to help in the preparation and presentation of a bid then these costs must be met by the bidding authority.

44. Will it be acceptable to submit an outline bid as “subject to consultation feedback” and thus including the options which would be consulted on rather than a single detailed solution?

Yes. If possible, the outline bid should focus on the preferred option / the option that is expected to be successful. The final bid will however need to include the final, settled proposal for which funding is being sought for.

45. Will it be acceptable to modify a final bid in light of the outcome of a consultation and if so to what extent?

No, it is not possible to amend any final bid submitted by 17 August as DCLG will be taking decisions about what projects to fund. If money has been awarded but the project is no longer being pursued then we would expect the local authority to notify us and return any amount of grant that had not so far been disbursed.

Assessing bids

46. What are the ‘weightings’ of the different criteria and when will they be published?

The weightings for each of the criteria can only be set once all the final bids have been received. As set out in the Prospectus, the weightings will be set following sensitivity analysis, with the aim of ensuring that the scheme as a whole offers value for money and delivers environmental benefits, and provides a reasonable spread of successful bids. For example, by type of bid, geographical spread, and the number of households and local authorities benefiting. Successful bids are likely to be those that score best against the range of criteria. The final scoring system will be published following the announcement of successful bids.

47. Is the information submitted by a local authority treated confidentially?

Detailed information contained in individual application forms will be treated as commercially sensitive and confidential but could be aggregated to form a public picture of the number, value and location of bids received. The actual bids (and supporting materials) and assessment scores will not be disclosed. Bid information will be seen by Ministers, the Project Board (chaired by Patrick White Director of Local Government Policy at DCLG), the Technical Advisory Group (chaired by Shehla Husain, Deputy Director

of Local Government Accountability and Transparency at DCLG), and the core policy team members within DCLG, Defra and HMT.

Additionality

48. What is 'additionality' and how important is it?

At both outline and final stage bids there will need to be a clear statement of what would happen if the bid was not successful. We refer to this as "the counterfactual". This is essential in assessing what environmental or efficiency improvements would arise directly from a decision to award funding. Clearly, if a local authority submitted more than one bid, we would expect the counterfactual basis to be the same for each bid.

For any bid where expenditure has been committed prior to the announcement of the scheme then that element cannot be genuinely additional. S151 officers will need to formally sign off that the "counterfactual" is a true reflection of the local authority's intentions in the short-medium term (although we recognise that it may be difficult for this to be done formally at outline bid stage given local government elections in some areas and more generally the process that individual local authorities will need to go through to get S151 Officer sign off).

49. How can a local authority retaining a weekly collection demonstrate additionality?

If an authority is bidding to fund a residual collection that might have been abandoned (for example, because of planned budget cuts) or where an authority is extending the coverage of their residual collection to more households within their area, this would constitute an 'additional' service. Authorities could bid for up to three years of revenue support to retain a weekly residual collection, but to avoid subsidising inefficient services, local authorities have been asked to report against key cost elements which we will then compare with industry benchmarks. Where a decision has been taken to move to fortnightly collections but this has not yet been implemented, and a local authority is bidding to retain weekly residual collection, then proof of this decision would establish the 'additionality'.

Alternatively, for authorities that would still be able to offer a residual collection without the support of the Scheme, additionality can be demonstrated by improving the service level in some other way. For example; by improving recycling rates, affordability or sustainability of the weekly service for local council tax payers.

50. How do local authorities that currently offer a high quality, comprehensive service demonstrate additionality?

A local authority in this position should highlight their high starting point. They still need to demonstrate some form of additionality under the Scheme.

51. Can the Fund cover whole costs (eg for vehicles) or only proportion of costs?

A local authority is encouraged to bid for the amount of funding required for the scheme to be successful and meet residents' needs. It is acceptable for local authorities to bid for the entirety of the costs for the project proposed in the bid, this is to ensure that a local authority does not simply shift costs from one frontline service to another. During the assessment process, DCLG will be looking at evidence of 'additionality' and not simply at the total cost of the proposal.

Commitment to weekly collections

52. Is there an option for an 'other' weekly collection type beyond the eight on the form (Section 3) which were provided by WRAP?

No, a large amount of research by WRAP has concluded that most local authorities operate a waste collection pattern for residual and/or food waste that fits into one of these eight categories. Where a local authority believes that it operates a pattern outside of these eight they should contact WRAP to discuss this further.

53. Is the frequency of recycling collections important?

Yes, as outlined in the Prospectus, a local authority must operate recycling collections at least fortnightly to be eligible to bid for funding from the Scheme.

54. Is a weekly food waste collection a 'weekly collection'?

Primarily, a weekly collection is a weekly collection of residual waste with additional recycling of food waste or dry recycling at least once a fortnight. Authorities that have worked hard to preserve weekly residual collections can also bid into the Scheme if they want to add a new recycling component such as weekly food waste. In addition, if a local authority is already operating a fortnightly collection of residual waste, then they may bid to reinstate weekly collections or to add an extra collection of food waste once a week.

55. Why can a local authority with a fortnightly collection that adds a weekly food waste collection bid for funding but an authority with a weekly collection moving to a fortnightly collection with weekly food waste cannot?

This scheme is about offering more comprehensive, better front line services. It would be perverse to fund what would amount to a withdrawal or reduction in the level of service currently offered.

56. Can a local authority with a residual waste collection that is more frequent than once a week bid for funding from the Scheme?

A local authority that collects residual waste more frequently than once per week fulfils the definition of one of the three core criteria (offering a weekly waste collection) and as such is eligible to bid for the Scheme where it can demonstrate that it meets the other core criteria which are; delivering cost-effective service and delivering environmental benefit.

57. Would it count as a five year commitment to a weekly collection if a local authority commits to a weekly waste collection for flats / a small area, but the rest of the authority's area moves to fortnightly residual collection within the five years?

No. The commitment relates to retaining a weekly collection for five years for those households already receiving a weekly collection and any additional households. Where authorities are reinstating weekly collections, the commitment relates to the number of households identified in the bid as receiving a reinstated collection.

58. Is there a preference for food waste?

The hierarchy against which bids will be judged is outlined in the Prospectus as:

- i) a weekly residual collection alongside a weekly recyclables collection;**
- ii) a weekly residual collection with fortnightly recyclables collection;
- iii) adding a weekly food waste (or organic) collection to a fortnightly collection of residual household waste.

59. What does the Prospectus mean by 'local support' required for bids to add a weekly collection of food waste to a fortnightly residual collection?

The Prospectus requires that bids evidence "credible local support" where they plan to introduce a weekly food waste collection against the background of a fortnightly residual collection. Our intention isn't to put local authorities through extra hoops or to unnecessary expense.

However national level data or general satisfaction levels with waste services as a whole would not be sufficient. Ministers have been clear that scheme support for food waste collections depends on demonstrating that they are the genuine choice of the local people affected.

Although a formal survey would certainly provide this assurance, other things might also suffice, for example:

- A consultation, possibly informal, with local people. That could be via a website, a forum or a neighbourhood meeting for example;

- A winning party's election campaign making reference to bringing in food waste collections;
- Evidence of customer satisfaction on a pilot scheme; or
- Some other similar indication from local surveys.

60. When does the five year commitment start?

Our expectation is that bids demonstrate a five year commitment to deliver weekly waste schemes from the point that new schemes (new food waste schemes or weekly collections being reinstated) begin being implemented, or where weekly schemes are already in place that there is a commitment to maintain them for five years from the date of any offer letter for a successful bid.

61. If a local authority currently operates a weekly residual collection and a weekly food waste collection, which aspect of this service does the five year commitment to retain the service relate to?

The principle objective of the Weekly Collection Support Scheme is to deliver 'weekly collections' to residents. As such, a local authority with this collection pattern would have to pledge to retain at least a weekly residual collection for five years. Local authorities currently operating a fortnightly waste collection, who bid to add a weekly food waste collection, need to commit to retaining the food waste collection for 5 years.

Cost effectiveness

62. How will cost effectiveness be scored?

The cost effectiveness scoring will include two parts. The first part will assess the cost efficiency of the bid against existing industry benchmarks and standards or against similar local authorities operating similar services. This is likely to form the majority of the overall cost effectiveness score. This will capture a range of cost related issues local authorities may explore as part of their bids. For example, the effects of improved procurement and the impact of better management.

A second smaller element will test the economy of the bid by considering the costs of the proposed project relative to the number of households affected.

63. How do local authorities separate out costs, for example for comms, which might overlap between multiple bids?

It is up to local authorities to decide how to separate potentially overlapping costs between bids. The important thing is to ensure that information is provided in a clear and well evidenced manner, that they do not bid for the same costs twice and that each bid meets the core criteria.

64. Do bids for increased collection costs need to be shown net of any savings on disposal costs?

Bids can be from collection or disposal authorities, or both. That means that not all local authorities would be able to use a reduction in disposal costs to offset an increase in collection costs. There is no requirement for savings in disposal costs to be offset against collection costs or the size of the bid. However, it is important, to aid assessment, that the bid explains the likely savings generated by the investment.

65. How will bids be appraised where project costs exceed five years?

Projects will be appraised against the published objectives and criteria. As a competitive bidding process the government will want to ensure that projects meet the criteria, deliver the required outcomes and offer value for money. Costs and benefits should normally be presented for five years. In the case of major infrastructure projects (e.g. building a MRF or MBT) it may be more appropriate to present the costs over the lifetime of the project and the form allows for this.

66. What financial figures should be used? Net Present Value? Actual values?

Actual values.

67. Where a local authority contracts out their waste services and so does not hold details of the breakdown of individual costs of each element (e.g. lorries, staff) are they still required to provide it?

An authority should provide as much disaggregated information as is necessary to explain the rationale of their bid and demonstrate that a bid meets the core criteria. Information about contracts will be treated as commercially sensitive and confidential.

68. Can a local authority front load a bid?

In line with CIPFA guidance, a local authority can front load a bid within a financial year however DCLG cannot make payments to local authorities in advance of need.

69. Can a local authority bid for revenue funding for years four and five?

No.

70. What will landfill tax be after the next Spending Review?

DCLG recognises that the future cost of landfill tax is an important factor in the calculation and prediction of waste services costs. As it will affect future cost estimates, we are encouraging all local authorities to use the figures in the Budget of £64 per tonne in 12/13, £72 per tonne in 13/14.

For 14/15 and subsequent years, we ask that a value of £80 per tonne is used for modelling purposes.

Carbon tool

71. How will the environmental benefit part of the bid be assessed?

Local authorities are being asked to calculate for themselves the carbon impact of the changes in waste arisings and treatment associated with their proposal. We are making available a tool that will be used to calculate carbon savings.

We are asking all local authorities to use the [DECC/Defra 2011 Greenhouse Gas Conversion Factors](#) tool in the interests of consistency, transparency and fairness. We have also amended the outline bid form to enable local authorities to report estimated carbon savings using this model. A local authority should also attach their workings on a separate spreadsheet. We will be checking these calculations.

In outlining environmental benefits, reductions of emissions from vehicles can greatly improve local air quality. However, in carbon terms potential reductions in emissions from vehicles are typically much lower than the effects of diverting residual waste from landfill or incineration. Accordingly, local authorities need to be aware that they may score less on the environmental benefit criterion simply through reducing fuel consumption or by moving to electric or other green vehicles. We have added an additional section to the bid form so that local authorities can identify 'other environmental impacts' and assessors can take these into account when scoring bids.

72. Is use of the tool mandatory?

All local authorities must provide a carbon impact figure in their bid form, even if it is zero. We recognise that there are other similar tools available to do this, however we require all local authorities to use the DECC/Defra tool highlighted in order to ensure consistency across bids. This tool is also free to use (many others that are available need to be paid for) and it is easier to use than many of the others on the market. Where a local authority has questions about using the tool they should contact Michael Sigsworth at Defra (telephone: 02072384450, or email michael.sigsworth@defra.gsi.gov.uk) to discuss this. We recognise that some bids may generate other types of environmental benefits, so there is room on the form to reflect that.

73. When does 'year one' begin for environmental benefits?

'Year one' begins in the year that a local authority first requests funding from the Weekly Collection Support Scheme.

74. Over how many years should a local authority calculate their net impact on kgCO₂ emissions?

This figure needs to be cumulative over five years. Where a local authority hopes to use a longer timeframe for this calculation they should contact the DCLG policy team to discuss this and subsequently make it clear in the form.

75. Does the tool take into account changes in tonnages over time?

As this is a cumulative figure, where a local authority believes that recycling tonnages will increase alongside, for example, an increase in resident participation over time, this can be encapsulated by a local authority inputting tonnages that reflect these predicted changes during the five years of the scheme.

76. Where a local authority plans to operate their scheme for more than five years, should they mention this?

Yes, this information should be included in the free text box. However, predicting future waste arisings for more than the upcoming five years is not encouraged because it becomes increasingly difficult to ensure accuracy when looking ahead that far. Bids will only be scored for their environmental benefits over 5 years.

77. Does the environmental tool only cover waste arisings or can it include collection related environmental impacts too (eg the movement of waste from a household to a waste facility)?

The carbon tool provided only accounts for emissions related to waste arisings, however where a local authority believes the collection related environmental impacts to be of significance they could use another aspect of the carbon tool which can be found at annex 1 (fuel conversion factors). This tool can be used to calculate carbon emissions from refuse vehicles. The results should be included as part of the net impact on kgCO₂ emissions figure in the form.

78. Does the DECC/Defra carbon tool make allowances for energy recovery?

Yes, the tool allows for energy recovery through energy from waste combustion, or anaerobic digestion. However, it does not cover all possible energy recovery options. If a local authority would like to include information about an alternative energy recovery option that is not included in the tool they should do so in the 'other environmental impacts not accounted for above'.

79. Should bids include recycling data from bring sites as well as kerbside collections when filling in the Defra environmental tool?

Only where this is relevant to the management of household waste in their bid.

80. Should future waste arising estimates consider economic or household growth?

Waste arisings are typically affected by an increase in number of households in an area and an increase in waste output per household (which is usually linked to economic growth). Local authorities should include their own assumptions about increases in the projected number of households where this is relevant, but exclude an estimate for economic growth, when making predictions about future waste tonnages and recycling rates.

81. Is there a difference between the baseline and the counterfactual?

Yes. Baseline data refers to current waste service configuration and the associated costs and environmental impact of that. The counterfactual is a prediction of the waste service configuration that would go ahead over 5 years without funding from the Weekly Collection Support Scheme.

Where no change to waste service configuration is planned the baseline and counterfactual will be the same, however in local authorities that will be forced to reduce the level of service they can afford without funding from the Scheme, the baseline and counterfactual may be significantly different.

82. Should Waste Data Flow figures be used for baseline data? Is it a problem if the data a year out of date?

DCLG are asking local authorities to use the figures they are most confident in as their baseline data. Where they have internal up to date information this can be used, where they believe greater reliability to be found in Waste Data Flow figures, even if this is from the year 10/11, these can be used.

83. If a bid only affects a proportion of the households in a local authority, then should they use waste and recycling tonnages related to just this proportion or to all households in the local authority when completing the carbon tool?

The environmental benefits section should relate solely to the households affected by the bid therefore the figures inputted into the carbon tool should relate only to the households within the scope of the bid.

84. Do local authorities need to attach the ‘workings’ from the environmental tool spreadsheet as an appendix?

Yes. Local authorities should only attach the one spreadsheet from the tool, not the entire tool.

85. If a local authority is bidding for a recycling promotion do they input estimated changes in waste and recycling tonnages into the tool?

Yes, every bid is relying on estimated future figures for changes to waste and recycling tonnages.

86. When reinstating a weekly collection of residual waste, how can a local authority demonstrate an environmental benefit?

A local authority is required to demonstrate a minimum environmental benefit, by demonstrating an improvement in at least one aspect over current environmental performance against the following criteria:

- Making a positive impact to overall greenhouse gas emissions from the management of waste; or
- The trajectory to meet the EU Waste Framework Directive target to have 50% of households recycled by 2020; or
- The trajectory to meet the EU Landfill Directive target of reducing biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill to 35% (of 1995 levels) by 2020.

An authority will then be scored on their net impact on carbon emissions. Authorities reinstating a weekly collection may also want to add an additional recycling service to improve their net carbon impact.

87. Will DCLG check the predicted figures inputted by local authorities for future changes to waste service configuration?

WRAP / the Technical Advisory Group will sense check the waste and recycling tonnages that local authorities are predicting will arise as a result of their proposed scheme. This sense check will include comparing the estimations with actual figures from local authorities that already operate similar schemes. Where figures and projects appear disparate comparatively the Technical Advisory Group will request further information from a local authority

88. How will the difference between waste that is disposed of through EfW compared with landfill be taken into account?

The carbon tool has space to account for local authorities that are diverting materials from incineration rather than landfill for recycling. This can also be taken into account by experts on the Technical Advisory Group.

Innovation

89. Where two neighbouring local authorities have two separate bids with synergies, where does this fit? Is this joint or innovative?

Innovative. They would need to provide brief evidence of the synergies and how they would be exploited in their respective bids.

Feasibility

90. What is feasibility?

The prospectus and other documentation have been clear that the feasibility of bids will be taken into account. In addition to issues like planning and environmental permitting, assessment will also be made as to whether bids may be vulnerable to legal challenge for being in some way unlawful - in particular, where proposals overstep the limits on local authority enforcement powers, charging or restricting access to residual waste services. Whilst of course only a court could decide whether particular proposals are lawful or not, DCLG is likely to adopt a cautious approach in assessing such bids as having low feasibility, and preferring bids which are not, in its view, likely to be in a legal "grey area".

91. How much detail does a bid need to contain about the project plan, project board and milestones within it?

Proportionality is key. A bid needs to contain sufficient evidence that the project has been well thought through and that this will continue throughout its operation. Only brief detail is required on the form for the majority of projects. For a few larger projects, an authority may find it necessary to add some detail about their project board or specific milestones to demonstrate the deliverability of their bid.

Further information

92. Where a bid comes from a two tier authority, what does support from the disposal authority look like?

This can take the form of a supporting letter from the disposal authority, a signature from a representative of that authority or simply the name of someone in the disposal authority who can be contacted to confirm that they support the bid.

Additional information

93. The outline bid form says 'there's no requirement to attach additional information', should local authorities include some?

Local authorities should not submit additional information unless it is necessary to explain their bid. Proportionality is key – it is unlikely to be necessary except for some larger, complex bids. Any additional information should be well referenced in the bid form. It should not be simply attached to the form simply to add extra bulk to the bid.

94. Does DCLG need proof of variation clauses in waste contracts or is a reference to it enough?

DCLG does not need to see evidence of a variation clause in a local authority's waste contract. It is sufficient for a local authority to refer to this clause in the bid form and provided this is signed by the S151 Officer DCLG will be content.