

RUBBISH: Leader defends decision saying increase is backed by residents

Fear that hiking DIY waste fees will see flytipping rise

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INCREASED charges to dump some waste at recycling centres – including Dix Pit in Stanton Harcourt – could see ‘lorry loads’ of flytipped waste blight the countryside, it has been claimed.

On October 1, when Oxfordshire County Council begins a new contract with W&S Recycling, it will cost £1.50 to dispose of most non-household waste items – and up to £10 for some.

At the moment it is free to dispose the first three items of DIY waste at the county’s seven tips and people can get rid of another 10 for £1 each in any four-week period.

The county council said the increased charges, which were backed by residents after a consultation aimed at staving off recycling centre closures, would not lead to an increase in flytipping.

But arable farmer Jeff Powell, who owns a farm in West Hagbourne, near Didcot, and is the chairman of the National Farmers’ Union in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, said he was ‘horrified’ by the increase and called for the decision to be reversed.

He said: “This is guaranteed to cause an increase in flytipping and farmers’ fields will be targeted because flytippers are less easily detected there. Farmers have already seen an increase in flytipping over the past five years and this is bound to make the situation worse.

“Every farmer I know in South Oxfordshire has experienced a



problem – we have had lorry-loads of tyres dumped, plasterboard and builders’ waste.

“The penalties for flytipping are not high enough and I am astonished by this decision.”

The county council stressed that its existing scheme has been in place for 15 years and charges of £1 per item have not risen during this period. It will still remain free to dispose of household waste.

Cowley county councillor John Sanders, who represents Labour, also said the increases should be scrapped because they would lead to more flytipping.

Mr Sanders added: “I think a significant minority will dump their DIY waste alongside the county’s roads as a result of this increase and the cost of cleaning up the extra flytipped waste will fall on the district councils.

“You will get places where flytippers chuck waste out of the car window on to the side of the road and then that will become a spot where rubbish accumulates.

“Flytippers will find a quiet nook and before you know it it will be full of waste – tyres will

now cost £5 each to dispose of and a piece of plasterboard will cost £10.”

County council leader Ian Hudspeth said: “I don’t think this increase will lead to more flytipping.

“If someone is spending thousands on renovating their bathroom and they dispose of a toilet, bath and basin that will cost them a total of £4.50.

“I don’t think they are likely to break the law by flytipping and risk a £5,000 fine.

“Most people will think this service is good value and the new contract means all seven recycling centres are staying open.”

In April an investigation was launched after more than 50 tyres were dumped in a field near Banbury – it would cost £250 to dump them under the new charges.

The illegal flytipping was reported to Cherwell District Council after 56 car tyres were found off the A422 Stratford Road near Wroxton.

Tyres had been thrown over a wall into a ditch, near a layby containing glass bottle banks.

FLASHBACK: Cllr Colin Dingwall pictured at Dix Pit, Stanton Harcourt, in 2015, suggesting that everyone who uses it pays 50p or even £1 to help keep it open after it was threatened with closure

Contract secures the medium-term future of centres

WHILE DIY waste charges are going up, a new contract between Oxfordshire County Council and Dorset firm W&S Recycling means all seven of the county's recycling centres will stay open 'in the medium term'.

The £27m contract, confirmed in June, is for a seven-year period with an option to extend for up to a further three years.

The announcement followed a consultation last year on the possible closure of some of the centres, which are Dix Pit near Stanton Harcourt, Alkerton near Banbury, Ardley near Bicester, Drayton near Abingdon, Oakley Wood near Wallingford, Redbridge, Oxford, and Stanford in the Vale near Wantage, due to budget constraints.

In a public consultation last summer 91 per cent of residents said they favoured charges for non-household waste over centre closures. There will be no changes to opening hours.

The seven centres accept about 50,000 tonnes of household waste and recyclables every year with an average recycling rate of 60 per cent.

Residents make more than 1.25 visits to the site every year.

In West Oxfordshire there were 532 flytipping incidents in 2014/2015, 450 in 2015/2016 and 471 in 2016/2017.

Oxford City Council dealt with 1,771 flytipping offences last year and so far this year there have been 671.

In South Oxfordshire there were 469 reported flytipping incidents in 2014/2015, 497 in 2015/2016 and 480 in 2016/2017.

In the Vale of White Horse District Council area there were 320 incidents in 2014/2015, 255 in 2015/2016 and 288 in 2016/2017.

In Cherwell there were 121 incidents in 2014/2015, 137 in 2015/2016 and 144 in 2016/2017.

SEPT. 6th 2017

HOW IT WORKS & HOW MUCH YOU PAY

THE new charging scheme will be introduced from October 1 with the existing 1,2,3 for free scheme being replaced with a fee per item of £1.50 for most items.

Staff at each centre will check what people are dumping and charge them accordingly.

Visitors to recycling centres can pay by cash, by debit card or credit card.

As a general rule, non-household or DIY waste are materials created in the construction, demolition, alteration or repair of a home or garden.

The same charges will apply at all seven household waste recycling centres.

However, plasterboard will only be accepted at Redbridge in Oxford, Dix Pit in Stanton Harcourt and Ardley Fields near

Bicester. Customers will not be charged for asbestos but asbestos will only be accepted at Redbridge, Dix Pit and Ardley Fields.

The council said DIY items including soil and plasterboard are classified as construction waste not household waste and are expensive to dispose of so the new charges have been introduced to cover costs.

The costs are:

- Soil, rubble and ceramic tiles per bag* £1.50
- Bath £1.50
- Toilet pan £1.50
- Cistern £1.50
- Wash basin or kitchen sink £1.50
- Shower door or shower tray £1.50
- Radiator £1.50
- Water tank £1.50
- Kitchen work top £1.50

- Kitchen unit (wall or floor) £1.50
- Standard door £1.50
- Window frame (no glass) £1.50
- Fence/shed panel £1.50
- 3m of guttering or drain pipe £1.50
- Roof felt tiles or sections of roof felt – smaller than 1.5m x 1.5m £1.50
- Roll of roof felt up to 3mm x 5mm £1.50
- Plaster/plasterboard per bag £2.50
- Car tyre £5
- Plasterboard sheet up to 2m x 1m £10

Disposing of household waste will remain a free service. To find out more visit oxfordshire.gov.uk/chargeablewaste

*A bag is £25kg or equivalent volume of loose material. Part bags will be charged as whole.

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