

REPORT TITLE: TRADE WASTE INITIATIVE

CABINET

12 SEPTEMBER 2017

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

20 SEPTEMBER 2017

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr Jan Warwick, Portfolio Holder for Environment

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WARD(S): ST MICHAEL

PURPOSE

In 2012, a report to Winchester Town Forum set out a number of measures to improve the presentation of the commercial centre of Winchester ([WTF176](#) – Streetscene in the Retail Centre, 12 September 2012 refers). This was in response to concerns raised by Members at that time about poor maintenance of commercial properties, pigeon nuisance and empty shops.

A public realm team consisting of the Council and the BID has facilitated a whole-council approach, drawing on additional funding from the Winchester Town Account to help progress project work in this area by the Historic Environment Team. Most recently, Members will be aware that efforts have been made to reduce the number of individual A boards in the centre of Winchester by replacing them with a series of three, strategically-positioned composite A boards and removing any others that appear ([Question 14](#), Full Council papers – 19 July 2017 refers)

Members have become increasingly concerned in recent times about the prolonged, unsightly and potentially dangerous presence of trade waste on the shopping streets of Winchester City Centre. Following a Member briefing session in February 2017, an initiative has been developed to tackle this problem: details are set out in this report for Member approval. The report complements CAB2958 elsewhere on this agenda (Enhancing St Maurice's Covert: Update) in demonstrating the Council's ongoing commitment to enhancing the vibrancy and presentation of Winchester's central shopping streets.

RECOMMENDATIONS:To Cabinet:That:

1. the proposal for an initiative to tackle unsightly trade waste bins in Winchester City Centre set out in paragraphs 10.10 – 10.12 of the report be endorsed;
and
2. a further report setting out options for improved bin stores be prepared, to include additional budgetary requirements.

To Winchester Town Forum:

1. That the recommendations to Cabinet above be noted, and that Cabinet's role in taking forward this initiative which is of significant interest to the Members of Winchester Town Forum be welcomed.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

1.1 Improvements to the commercial heart of Winchester support the following outcomes:

a) 'Winchester will be a premier business destination'

Prioritise support for the ... tourism sector(s) – a well presented city is an attractive one for visitors, and encourages them to spend time and money in local shops and eateries.

Utilise our environment to drive business growth – the quality and appeal of Winchester's historic streetscene are important factors in attracting customers to local businesses.

b) 'Improving the quality of the District's environment'

By working with our partners and by using powers available to us, make Winchester a safe and pleasant place to live, work and visit – the City and County Councils have complementary powers to require improvements to commercial premises in order to enhance the experience of visitors/shoppers.

Work to change attitudes to waste, fly-tipping and littering and improve recycling levels – a combination of collaborative approaches and enforcement is undertaken to encourage behaviour by businesses that will bring about an improved environment in the City Centre

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 The proposed scheme for improved management of trade waste has three main cost implications, as follows:

a) Procurement of ad-hoc specialist advice to support businesses seeking to improve their on-site storage for waste;

- *Maximum £10,000, to be covered by environment commissioning budget.*

b) Development of new transit bin store for St Maurice's Covert, as a model solution for other parts of the City and District;

- *Estimated at £9,700, and included in overall project budget for Covert enhancements (see section 2 of CAB2958 – Enhancing St Maurice's Covert: Update elsewhere on this agenda).*

c) Consideration of the provision of further transit and longer-term bin stores, based on a strategic approach and learning from the experience of St Maurice's Covert, around the commercial centre of Winchester.

- Currently being investigated, and subject to a further report and potential request for growth funding.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Procurement of goods (i.e. bin stores) and services (i.e. specialist advice to help businesses plan for better storage facilities) would be subject to relevant procurement procedures.
- 3.2 Improvement of the management of trade waste in the city centre may require the use of legal powers by the City and County Councils. Officers are drawing up a matrix of these statutory powers at the time of writing this report to be integrated with a policy on trade waste management which will be brought back to Members for approval prior to the launch of the project.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The initiative will be treated as a 'mini project' to ensure best results. This project is being sponsored by the Corporate Director (Service Delivery) with support from a cross-Council working group of officers and the County Council, as well as Winchester Business Improvement District. There will be a requirement for a limited amount capacity once the project goes live, as well as support from the Corporate Communications Team.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The trade waste management project may have some implications for the Council if it is to ensure that bins are removed long term from inappropriate locations, but these will probably not be substantial. This will be reflected in the next report to Members.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The success of any initiative requiring an attitudinal and cultural change lies in effective and consistent communications. A programme of engagement with the business community at large, and more specifically with the 'target' businesses that are leaving their waste on the streets for long periods, is already being developed. This began with a briefing to the Board of the Business improvement District at the end of July 2017, and will encompass a range of activities such as:

- A briefing to a dedicated meeting of the BID Forum which is open to all BID members
- Updates via the BID e-newsletter to all BID members
- Items in the Council's Entrepreneur e-zine
- Updates to Town Forum Members, including this report

- One to one visits from Neighbourhood Services and other officers to target businesses
- Press releases launching the initiative, and also celebrating key successes along the way
- A complementary panel explaining the concept of the new bin stores as part of the St Maurice's Covert exhibition in September.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Paragraph 1.1b sets out the ways in which the project contributes to an improved environment in the City Centre. The outcomes will range from better accessibility and pedestrian flow in the shopping streets to reducing the potential for health hazards, pests and fire.
- 7.2 One of the [Twelve Actions for a Low Carbon Council](#) adopted by the Council states, "We encourage other organisations, both public and business, to reduce their carbon footprint and shift from fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy". In encouraging businesses to give greater consideration to reducing waste and encouraging recycling as part of this initiative, the Council is working towards its goal of building a lower carbon economy and driving an improvement in recycling rates in alignment with the Council Strategy performance measures.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 This initiative should have the effect of reducing street clutter which will be beneficial for those with visual or mobility impairments, and for those pushing prams and wheelchairs. It should also create less visual confusion for those with certain mental health conditions and dementia.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<p><i>Timescales</i></p> <p>This initiative is tied to the enhancement project for St Maurice's Covert (see update elsewhere on this agenda), in terms of the provision of a new transit bin store to demonstrate the Council's community leadership role in the area of trade waste.</p>	<p>Decision-making timescales currently synchronised (September Cabinet), in order to ensure timings and funding for both the Covert and trade waste projects are aligned.</p>	<p>St Maurice's Covert will be a showcase for the Council's work in this area – public consultation activity to explain integration of the two projects.</p>
<i>Financial / VfM</i>		

<p>Creation of new permanent bin stores (outside St Maurice's Covert scheme) will require new budget</p>	<p>Additional report setting out costs and justifications to be brought to Members for consideration.</p>	
<p><i>Legal</i></p> <p>Use of legal powers by HCC and WCC for trade waste project could be challenged</p>	<p>Work with Legal Teams to ensure complete clarity about powers, and articulate these in new policy document to be adopted by the Council</p>	
<p><i>Reputation</i></p> <p>Businesses targeted by the trade waste initiative likely to be resistant, even if wider community is supportive – could be seen as 'anti business'</p> <p>If the Council's own market bins are not removed from the Covert early on during the trade waste project the Council will be accused of failing to act in accordance with its own policies</p>	<p>Active programme of communications planned to inform/educate</p> <p>'Partnership' approach to working with targeted businesses – eg providing technical support to increase create on-site storage</p> <p>Careful dovetailing of St Maurice's Covert and trade waste initiative in hand via officers and Portfolio Holders</p> <p>Communications will explain that the Council is putting its own house in order as part of the same pilot</p>	<p>Potential to champion businesses that respond early through positive PR etc</p>

10 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 10.1 Background: In 2012, a report to Winchester Town Forum set out a number of measures to improve the presentation of the commercial centre of Winchester ([WTF176](#) – Streetscene in the Retail Centre, 12 September 2012 refers). This was in response to concerns raised by Members at that time about poor maintenance, pigeon nuisance and empty shops. Report CAB2958 (Enhancing St Maurice's Covert: Update) elsewhere on this agenda sets out a

number of the measures taken to address these and subsequent presentational issues.

- 10.2 With the advent of more food- based businesses in particular, in recent years, Member attention has focussed increasingly on the presence of trade waste on the central shopping streets of Winchester. The waste bins and bags in Winchester are visually and physically intrusive, and can be a fire and security hazard.
- 10.3 The Council has received complaints from visitors and residents about the proliferation of trade waste bins left for long periods or even permanently on some streets in Winchester City Centre. The subject has also come up routinely during the development of plans for St Maurice's Covert, and inspired a Member briefing on waste in February 2017 which included a helpful presentation by officers of Westminster City Council responsible for the very successful in-house trade waste scheme operating there.
- 10.4 It is therefore proposed to begin a process which will reduce to a minimum level the number of trade waste bins which need to be put out onto the highway for collection, and to minimise the period of time for this to happen. This will require changes to the way in which businesses manage their waste so that they no longer use the highway as an ad hoc bin or waste store and make better arrangements for waste management. It is proposed to work cooperatively with businesses to achieve this, with enforcement powers being highlighted but held in reserve for use if businesses fail to make improvements. It is recognised that the Council itself has bins which it must manage better and this forms part of the process.
- 10.5 It is possible that one of the measures which may emerge is the creation of additional bin storage areas in suitable locations which may require some modest investment by the City Council.
- 10.6 Officers have developed a trade waste initiative for the City Centre, approved in principal by the Portfolio Holders, would benefit from:
 - A three way partnership between the City Council, County Council and the BID;
 - A dynamic communications plan
 - A new joint County Council and City Council policy to underpin action and enforcement
 - High level Member backing, already expressed at the Member Briefing in February 2017
 - Learning from the Westminster City Council model, but adapted for the Winchester community
 - Rigorous enforcement if the problem persists after businesses have been given help and advice to manage trade waste properly
 - A review after the first year to consider more stringent measures if they are needed.

- 10.7 The approach would, in practical terms, consist of the following steps:
- i) Introductory letter to each target business (local manager and head office, where relevant):
 - Sets out WCC expectations and statutory powers
 - Offers technical advice to support improvements which the City Council would help provide.
 - Requires action within an agreed timescale
 - ii) First follow up
 - Sets out approach proposed by the business and agreed with the Council, including a mutually agreed timescale
 - iii) Second follow up
 - Notes status of agreed improvements (completed, in hand, not implemented)
 - Triggers formal enforcement action where no improvement has been made
- 10.8 The initial timescale would run as follows:
- Approval of commercial waste initiative by Cabinet – Sept 2017
 - Preliminary communications, including BID Forum – Sept/Oct 2017
 - Letters to targeted businesses – Oct/Nov 2017
 - Written agreements in place by February 2018
 - Work on Covert (including bin store) start March 2018 (project subject to Listed Building Consent)
 - Grace period for works/improvements to May 2018
 - Enforcement action triggered for non compliance – end May 2018
- 10.9 Members are asked to endorse this initiative, and to support the proposal of a further report setting out options for additional and/or improved bin stores around the City Centre if these are needed

11 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 11.1 At the Member Briefing on trade waste which took place in February 2017, there was a strong desire expressed that the Council should develop and deliver an initiative to tackle the problem. This report seeks approval for a scheme considered appropriate and proportionate for the City Centre, having taken into account other models – such as Westminster City Council – which have required greater investment but also rely on greater scale. The report gives Members the option not to progress the initiative, or indeed to request for it to be modified. The presentation to the BID Board in July 2017 did not give rise to any different options, but officers have proposed that a BID Forum be convened in September at which the initiative will be explained and from which any helpful modifications or improvements can be taken into account before any action is taken.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

None

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

None