

WINCHESTER TOWN FORM

23 MARCH 2010

REFUSE COLLECTION AND STREETSCENE ISSUES

REPORT OF HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report has been produced at the request of Councillor Maynard, Chairman of Town Forum, in order to discuss some of the issues relating to the interaction between refuse and recycling bins within the town centre and possible impact on the Streetscene appearance.

The report also deals with some of the practical challenges of ensuring adequate refuse and recycling collections within the town centre particularly in areas where space is limited and compromises have to be reached in order to maintain collections.

The report described the approach adopted to try and resolve possible conflicts between Streetscene issues and waste collection arrangements.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Town Forum

- 1 notes the current approach adopted in relation to resolving any issues in relation to Streetscene and waste collection arrangements within the town centre.
- 2 Considers whether they wish to recommend to the Portfolio for the Environment any other measures that they feel appropriate to deal with this issue.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

1.1 This report has been produced at the request of the Chair of Town Forum in order to discuss some of the issues relating to the interaction between refuse and recycling bins within the town centre and possible impact on the street-scene appearance.

1.2 The report also deals with some of the practical challenges of ensuring adequate refuse and recycling collections within the town centre, particularly in areas where space is limited and compromises have to be reached in order to maintain collections

2. The Issues

2.1 The refuse and recycling collection services are vitally important to residents across the District and is one of the few services that every resident receives. In many ways it is usually the service by which many individuals judge their Council's overall performance. Public expectation of the service is high and in order to make it work there is a need for co-operation between those presenting their waste for collection and those delivering the service. Where problems occur, there is a need to adopt a sensible and pragmatic approach in order to win hearts and minds and only use draconian enforcement based approaches as a last resort where advice is not heeded or adhered to.

2.2 Insofar as street-scene issues are concerned there have been some campaigns run by national newspapers regarding what they perceive as street clutter resulting from the plethora of bins and receptacles provided for refuse and recycling services and in particular the problem this causes in town centre locations, where storage space can often be limited. As a result bins are left out in view when the preference would be to have them out of sight as is possible in less urban environments.

2.3 Whilst much of this can be very subjective, in the experience of officers within the waste management team there are a number of specific issues that arise in relation to possible 'conflicts' between street-scene issues and waste collection arrangement as follows:

1 Bins stored in front gardens

- 2 Bins left out on pavements and causing an obstruction after the collection has been completed
- 3 Lack of proper management of communal storage areas in areas like blocks of flats
- 4 Problems with presenting the bin to the correct location for collection
- 5 Black sacks left out for collection overnight and attacked by vermin or other animals
- 6 Garden waste sacks blowing away after emptying
- 7 Damaged refuse containers still being used when lids are missing or bins are cracked.

2.4 Appendix 1 examines each of these issues in more detail and describes the issues relating to each problem, the root cause and the solution adopted by the City Council to try and address it. Whilst this is a useful summary of the approach adopted it must be emphasised that officers apply flexibility and look to develop a solution in conjunction with residents as it is felt that this provides a more sustainable outcome.

2.5 Insofar as enforcement is concerned it has not been necessary to resort to this to date although it would be an option if required. The approach adopted with all issues would typically be as follows once a complaint had been received.

- **Stage 1** – Visit made to house and advice given. Practical solution agreed on site with householder
- **Stage 2** – Revisit made and legal implications of non compliance confirmed with householder
- **Stage 3** – enforcement visit made and proceedings followed or matter referred to appropriate enforcement agency (e.g. highways)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN (RELEVANCE TO):

3.1 The current Corporate Strategy contains a number of relevant areas within its High Quality Environment outcome. These are highlighted in bold text below.

What do we want Winchester to be like?

We are proud of our natural and built environment:

- ***neighbourhoods are clean and green***
- *resources are used efficiently, pollution levels are low and we are responding to the challenges of climate change*
- *wildlife species are thriving*
- ***the historic environment is preserved and enhanced***

- *local distinctiveness is protected and the public realm is well designed, built and maintained.*

To help achieve this, over the next five years the City Council will:

- **Ensure that streets and open spaces are clean, attractive and accessible**
- **Reduce the volume of waste produced locally and increase levels of recycling**
- Encourage biodiversity
- Improve air quality in Winchester town centre
- Improve access to town and village centres
- Ensure that the historic environment of the District is preserved and enhanced
- Use the planning system to promote the building of new homes to both meet local needs and Government set targets while protecting local character through sensitive, high quality design and appropriate densities
- Reduce our emissions of 'greenhouse' gases and assist others to do the same

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 There are no specific resource allocations arising from this report. Any additional budget requirements for the provision of communal storage areas would be developed on a case by case basis.
- 4.2 There is already budget provision in place to fund the 50% subsidy the City Council provides for bin replacements.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 5.1 It is considered that there are no specific risk management issues associated with this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Table of Solutions

Issue	Root Cause (s)	Solution Adopted (if appropriate)
Bins stored in front gardens	Lack of storage space elsewhere or no rear access to property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer of smaller bins if householder willing • Consider communal storage areas if possible
Bins left out on pavements and causing an obstruction after the collection has been completed	Householder has not returned bin or decide easier to leave it where it is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit made and advice given • Issue referred to highways for enforcement
Lack of proper management of communal storage areas in areas like blocks of flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of ownership of problem amongst households • Confusion of allocation of bins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits made and advice given • Solutions develops with residents as a group • May provide shared bulk bins to replace individual bins and proper compound
Problems with presenting the bin to the correct location for collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Householder not prepared to take to correct place • Householder new to area and not aware of arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit made and advice given • Bin will not be emptied and householder advised
Black sacks left out for collection overnight and attacked by vermin or other animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of space for refuse bin storage arrangements • Easier for householder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit made and advice given to leave out on the day of collection if possible • Consider communal storage arrangement if possible
Garden waste sacks blowing away after emptying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crew not returning sack to correct location or no means of securing • Lightness of bags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crews reminded to take more care on windy days • Sacks replaced free of charge if lost
Damaged refuse containers still being used when lids are missing or bins are cracked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Householder not willing to pay for replacement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit made and advice given • Bin replacement costs subsidised by 50% • Bin will not be emptied