

Title of the review: Waste policy review

Date review completed: 23 August 2021

Date presented to Cabinet: 27 January 2022 (consultation) & 16 June 2022 (final adoption of policy)

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Peter Barnes (at time of review) – now Cllr Ron McCrossen

Chair of the review group: Councillor Liz Clunie

Officers supporting the review: Helen Lee/Alec Dubberley

Officers supporting the update: Mick Morley/Esther Storer

The working group for Waste Policy did not suggest recommendations in the traditional way so the usual implementation review mechanisms are not possible. We will however, be reviewing the success of the key elements that influenced the approved policy to ensure it is supportive of the key objectives of an efficient and effective waste service.

The elements originally proposed as key were below:

- Clarity of the responsibilities of householders in terms of “rules” for waste and recycling
- Consistent communication through all channels was vital
- Working with partners such as the County and District Councils and the contractor within the two-tier local government system was essential
- Focus on the big issues within policy and link to enforcement
- Clarity of the responsibilities of the Council in the delivery of the waste and recycling services
- Options for enforcement actions relating to all elements of the policy
- Commitment to the policy needs to be from the crews right through the layers of the organisation, with clear understanding
- Options was the critical element of enforcement to provide the opportunity to be consistent and proportionate:
  - o Educate and inform householders in simple clear messages containing the policy requirements in the first instance with clear communication
  - o Ongoing communication and reminders were essential for householders with fortnightly information across communication channels to reinforce policy
  - o Options to take action where householders are not compliant to be focussed on the key issues of contamination in particular
  - o Cease treating contaminated bins as missed bins

- If a Garden Waste bin replacement is required due to customer damage, it will attract a fee. This fee will only apply if replacement due to resident damage or loss
- A replacement black (residual) bin will also attract a fee if due to loss or damage by a resident
- Ability to take enforcement action for the issue of vehicles blocking access to streets for the bin lorries and preventing collection of waste for whole streets

Comments on the success and implementation of the policy have been provided by the Parks and Street Care team as below:

Following the introduction of the Council's new Waste & Recycling Policy, and the priority in the Corporate Plan to approve and implement a plan of action to increase levels of recycling and reduce contamination levels and levels of residual waste, the Waste & Recycling Policy was adopted in June 2022 and set out seven primary aims:

- A proportionate and considered approach to waste collection across the Borough
- Clarity and communication for residents to support GBC's recycling targets
- Reduction in black bin (residual) waste
- Increase in recycling rates
- Reduction in contamination of waste streams
- Clarity of measures that will be taken for those who continually contaminate or do not comply with this policy
- Minimisation of the carbon impact of the Waste Service, including fleet mileage and route optimisation

A new Waste and Fleet Manager was recruited in August 2022 and was tasked with helping to give the Waste and Recycling team fresh focus in targeting households that contaminate their recycling bins.

In September 2022 in conjunction with the communications team a small trial using 250 contaminated bin tags with QR codes printed on them was rolled out in the Netherfield and Colwick areas. Where the crew came across a contaminated bin, they tagged it and in doing so highlighted the contamination in the recycling bins to the resident concerned who was invited to scan the tag, which acknowledged the contamination direct to the Communications Team and gave the resident information on the contaminants and the requirement to remove them from the bin before presenting for collection again.

Considered a success, as residents used the tags, a larger scaled up trial will be required to cover a greater area in the Borough where contamination continues to be an issue throughout 2023/24. Advertising the bag tag through GBC website, local media, Facebook and other outlets will be key to its success.

The waste team also continue to identify through the in cab technology those residents that have contaminated their recycling bins allowing the admin team to write and notify those households to assist them in putting the correct items in their

recycling bins. We currently hold an accurate data base that can identify the regular households that do continually contaminate the recycling bins, and are using this data to building awareness using an educational approach to help residents understand their role, and assist with improving recycling and operating efficient services. Much work is also being undertaken with engagement / working closely with property managers and social landlords around collective bin stores for this reason also.

For example, the current long-term recycling contract between Nottinghamshire County Council and Veolia accepts some but not all types of plastics, with plastics being all plastic bottles; yoghurt pots and margarine tubs. Carrier bags, plastic films and plastic food trays are not recyclable at present. The Council will always seek to provide clearer guidance, advice and education as follows:

Non-compliance will result in a sticker or 'contaminated bin tag' being placed on the bin, and a note added to the Council system. A recurrence of that non-compliance results in a personal visit, or by provision of education information to ensure that the Policy is fully understood, and allows the resident time to address any issues or misunderstandings regarding the presentation of their waste and recycling for collection. In most situations, this education process resolves the issue.

However, if necessary, a Section 46 Notice is issued to inform the resident how they must present their bin correctly in order to avoid further action. Following this, now we have the resources in place a Fixed Penalty enforcement notice will be issued as required against habitual offenders.

### **Advances in Technology**

There was an identified need to employ extra staff resource in the waste department in the form of a 'Waste Projects Officer' to deliver to this agenda as the current 'in cab' reporting system is being migrated from Bartec which is in the process of being replaced by Abavus. They are working in support of the Waste manager on this project.

This system will be in place in June 2023 and as part of this process 'refuse rounds' data is being sense checked, routes optimised where necessary and updated and for the first time we are including Garden Waste and Trade Waste Rounds in the process. This will be linked in real time with customer services allowing residents instant access to report missed collections through a 'My Gedling App'. The new App combines incorporated fail safes to only incorporate genuine missed collections.

Where the crews are required to report contaminated bins, missed bins, missed streets or blocked access and skipped streets, the App will re-route the crews at the end of the shift to collect all genuine missed collections and skipped streets. Abavus will not permit the residents to report a bin contaminated bins or missed collections if the crew have reported them through Abavus on the collection day it will also notify them that the street has been skipped due to blocked access and the crew will return on the day of collection. This will cut down on calls to our Call centre, by filtering only those calls of a relevant nature through.

## **Summary**

We continue to consolidate and deliver the policy whilst implementing in new In Cab and CRM systems. Moving forward to 2023/24, the correct communication with bin tags and the integration of Abavus, the waste policy will be fully implemented. This should see a reduction in call handling requirements, missed bins, bin contamination and black bin (residual) waste. It will also hopefully mean an increase in recycling rates meaning all aims as set out in the policy are on target to be achieved.