

Item no.

Report to: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**
Date: **20/11/2007**
Report of: **Environmental Health and Licensing Manager**
Subject: **Progress Report on the Introduction of New Policies for Refuse Collection**
Ward: **All**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide information on the introduction of new policies for the refuse collection service.

2. Consultation

2.1 Scrutiny Committee and residents panels were involved in the development of the new policies.

2.2 A wide range of Councils who had introduced these policies were consulted on the lessons learned and this was used to draft a communication strategy and enforcement procedure which involved warnings and education prior to enforcement action being used.

3. Background

3.1 The Council adopted new policies for the refuse collection service which are being phased in. The new policies prohibit side waste, restrict the use of second bins and require bins to be brought in after refuse collection.

3.2 The policy prohibiting side waste became effective on the 1/10/2007 following widespread publicity.

3.3 The introduction of the policy for restricting second bins has commenced by publicising an amnesty where residents may phone in and ask for any extra bins to be removed.

4. Position Statement

4.1 From early September a publicity campaign was run which involved the distribution of leaflets, press releases, radio interviews, posters in community centres and shops and notices on buses.

4.2 From mid September Wardens accompanied refuse collection crews posting leaflets and knocking on doors in areas where side waste had been put out and refuse crews placed advisory stickers on bins. At this stage notices advised of the introduction of the policy on 1/10/2007 and advice was given on waste minimisation.

4.3 From 1/10/2007 refuse crews have continued to remove any side waste and have placed a yellow warning sticker for a first infringement and red warning stickers for a

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second infringement. A total of 465 advisory notes have been given since 1/10/2007 and 254,466 collections have occurred since that time showing the level of infringements to be low at only 0.18%.

- 4.4 The policy is that on a third occasion the refuse will not be removed and enforcement action will be taken which may involve a spot fine. To date this has not been necessary.
- 4.5 Envirocall have handled a large number of enquires from residents during this period and given advice on the best way to manage their waste. The Environmental Co-ordinator (Waste Management) has made home visits in some cases and on the whole the process has met with little objection from residents.
- 4.6 The attached photographs are actual occurrences showing a worst case scenario prior to the policy being introduced and an occurrence in October where residents in a street have followed the policy.
- 4.7 Recycling statistics show that in October, recycling rates have increased by nearly 18% as compared to the previous month and the same month last year. Whilst there are always monthly variations in tonnages collected this is a significant increase and these early signs are very promising that the policy is encouraging more people to recycle. Since the publicity campaign started, there have been 909 requests for kerb-it boxes to the end of October. This is a 58% increase on the same period last year.
- 4.8 The BVPI 199 autumn survey of the cleanliness of the streets is currently being carried out and early signs are that this year's result will show a fifth year of continuing improvement although the final results will not be known until the end of the year.
- 4.9 Programmes are now being drafted for wardens to tackle areas where residents persist in leaving bins out all week, as these areas experience higher degrees of theft and arson of bins, increasing the replacement costs to the council and adding to littering and environmental degradation. This process will again involve warnings and enforcement action where warnings are ignored.
- 4.10 Publicity is currently underway encouraging residents with two or more bins to contact the council so that extra bins can be removed where not required and in the new year a programme will be drawn up to remove any extra bins that have been agreed.
- 4.11 Although there has been a slight increase in the overall number of fly tipping incidents reported since the implementation of the scheme, the number identified as originating from households has shown a slight decrease. An action plan is being prepared to address this trend.

Summary

Caution should be exercised in the interpretation of these results as they are only based on 6 weeks of operation. The early signs are however that there has been almost

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universal compliance with the new policy, and this is already resulting in increased recycling and reduced waste. The challenge will be to sustain this progress in the future.

Further reports will be provided for Members after the new arrangements have fully settled into operation.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members views are welcomed on the contents of the report.

Keith Parkinson; Environmental Health and Licensing Manager