

Subject:
Report on Outcomes of Litter Bins
Task and Finish Group

Status: For Publication

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 17th October 2007

Report of: Carole Todd – Head of Streetscene and Neighbourhood Services

Portfolio

Holder: Clean and Green Rossendale

Key Decision: Yes / No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the Cabinet of the findings of the Litter Bins Task and Finish Group in respect of litter and dog bins review.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.

- Delivering Quality Services to Customers (Customers, Improvement)
- Keeping Our Borough Clean and Green (Environment)

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Failure to agree the recommendations will result in no uniformity being achieved in bins across the borough to improve Rossendale's image
- There are health & safety implications for the Street Cleansing team should defective bins not be replaced
- If there is no increase in the number of bins the councils environmental performance may not improve
- The budget allocation may not be spent in the allocated time.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 BACKGROUND

There is no statutory requirement for local authorities to provide litter or dog bins. However, it has long been accepted that the provision is of value in reducing litter and dog fouling on highways and in public places and bins are used in all areas of the Borough to improve the street environment.

Litter and dog bins are always installed in areas of need following monitoring of the condition of the area in relation to litter/dog fouling accumulations and locations. Litter and dog bins are a visual reminder to the public to contain their waste and they increase public perception of the service and aid environmental improvement.

Litter and dog bins in the Borough are, in the main, well used by the public and are emptied by the Street Cleansing Team as part of normal cleansing schedules. All litter bins in town centres are emptied daily. Should any litter bin become filled between scheduled emptying, the Street Cleansing Team will empty it within 24 hours of notification. The Street Cleansing Team inspect litter bins as they travel around the Borough and should a bin require emptying they should stop and carry out this operation.

4.2 TASK AND FINISH GROUP

In July 2006 it was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that a review of litter bins in the Borough would take place.

The objectives of the group were to consider the varying styles, sizes and quantity of bins and to ensure that the approach was consistent and to :-

- i) Determine the criteria for provision of litter bins
- ii) Determine the most appropriate type of provision
- iii) Identify means of encouraging local businesses to take responsibility for litter generated as a result of their activities.

It was agreed that elected members would conduct a survey of litter bins across the Borough. 11 wards were completed identifying a total of 388 litter bins. The remaining 3 wards were surveyed by the NEAT team increasing the number of bins surveyed to 600.

During the survey a number of issues were highlighted:-

- i) Over 60% of litter bins provided across the Borough are pole mounted bins
- ii) Capacity of pole mounted bins is half that of free standing bins and therefore they require emptying at least twice as frequently
- iii) Bins vary in colour and size and that the visual appearance of bins needs to be improved
- iv) Amount of chewing gum visible on highways

- v) Criteria needs to be established for the placement of bins and that the NEAT team should lead on this
- vi) Dual litter recyclates bins be considered in town centres to improve recycling

Following this a number of recommendations were made and it was agreed that the chair of the Litter Bin Task and Finish Group would meet with officers to take forwards the recommendations.

A number of meetings were held with officers and the recommendations considered. The following information attempts to address the issues raised.

4.3 DESIGN OF LITTER BIN

There is a huge variety of litter bins and dog bins on the market. Different types of bins suit different sites and the characteristics and the needs of an area should be taken into consideration when choosing a bin. It is recommended that no more dog bins be provided in the Borough and that litter bins be provided to serve a dual purpose. The existing stock of dog bins should be used in parks and on open spaces.

The Borough of Rossendale can be divided into 3 different character areas:-

Area A – main town centre high streets

Area B – residential area

Area C – Parks or Open spaces

The recent audit of litter bin provision has shown that the capacity of bins needs to be increased across the Borough and that consideration should be given to implementing a standard model/style of bin across the Borough. The survey undertaken by elected members across 11 wards highlighted 388 bins. The remaining 3 wards (Whitewell, Greensclough and Hareholme) were surveyed by the Neat team increasing the number of litter bins to 600.

To help the Council determine what type of bin should be used the following information should be considered.

Design Option One – Broxap Derby

The Broxap Derby black coloured bin with gold vinyl bands and Rossendale logo has a 120ltr capacity, and fitted with a stubbier/gum plate and gold plaque containing details of any companies that sponsor a litter bin. Dog Waste permitted and anti littering messages to be included. These bins carry an 8 year guarantee and can withstand high levels of vandalism. They are constructed from cast iron, heavier and harder to push over and if struck by an object will not be as easily damaged. The cost is approximately £350.

Design Option Two - Glasdon Topsy Jubilee

The Glasdon Topsy Jubilee black coloured bin with gold vinyl band and Rossendale logo has 110ltr capacity, fitted with stubbier plate, fire expire and gold plaque containing details of any companies that sponsor a litter bin. Dog waste permitted and anti littering messages to be included. They are fixed with a fire expire but will not withstand being struck by an object. They are constructed of plastic and therefore lighter in design allowing anchorage. A stubbier plate can be fixed but they do not however cater for a gummy plate due to its design. They are cheaper (approx £250) but do not carry a guarantee.

Dog Waste Bins

Dog waste bins are only to be used in parks or on open spaces. Dog bins on highways will be phased out and replaced with litter bins that serve a dual purpose. Dog waste bins are considered to be unsightly and often people do not like touching them and therefore attract problems with dog waste bags being hung on them. It is acceptable for dog waste to be placed in a litter bin providing that it is sealed in a bag beforehand and often becomes disguised with other litter. There are less health & safety issues associated with using litter bins and they are emptied more frequently.

Replacement of existing provision

Following the litter bin survey a number of bins have been identified that are in need of replacement.

To help determine whether a bin should be replaced with one of the designs outline above the following policies are recommended:

1. **Condition** – the condition of the bin has to warrant replacement for either health and safety reasons, vandalism, disrepair or to fit in with a refurbishment of the area where the bin is sited.
2. **Location** – The bin will be sited in a location where siting and emptying is permitted (i.e. highway or Council Land). It needs to be one of the following locations:
 - Town Centre shopping area
 - Shop fronts
 - Parks
 - Bus stops
 - Schools
 - Tourist areas
 - Litter hotspots – determined by a BVPI 1999 score of B
 - Open spaces used for dog walking
 - Dog fouling hotspots – determined by site visit

3. **Operational Considerations** – It has to be in a location where operational considerations allow a bin to be placed in that location i.e. it does not obstruct the footpath, is accessible and on Council land.
4. **Existing Provision** – Consideration will be given to other bins located in the same location to determine optimum coverage.
5. **Resources** – There is sufficient budget available for replacement

4.4 **REQUEST FOR NEW BINS**

Any new request for litter bins will be dealt with by the Neat Team in consultation with the Street Cleansing Team, Elected Members and Portfolio Holder for Streetscene and Liveability. The Neat Team will conduct a survey to ensure that the following criteria are met and will undertake the necessary consultation with elected members and the community. To help determine whether a new bin should be provided in a particular location the following policies are recommended:

1. **Location** – Location should fit criteria 2 above
2. **Existing provision** – The proximity and location of existing provision should be evaluated to determine whether to provide a new bin or move an existing one.
3. **Resources** - There is sufficient budget available.
4. **Businesses** – Bin requests by businesses generating litter should be linked where possible to planning permission, a condition should stipulate that the business is required to provide a bin. Other opportunities for sponsorship from businesses should be explored where possible to attract additional funding to increase the capacity of bins across the Borough. Businesses who contribute to the cost of a bin will have their details displayed on a gold plaque on the bin.

4.4 **INSTALLATION DIFFICULTIES**

The high number of bins already provided must be maintained in good order to ensure efficient servicing and to prevent Health and Safety risks to the Street Cleansing Team. The liners used in the bins are biodegradable and must be lockable to prevent the contents being tipped out by vandals.

Any defective bin will be reported to the Street Cleansing Team who will assess the damage and take appropriate action to repair, maintenance or replacement of the bin. The cost of this programme is met from existing budget provision.

There is a high degree of vandalism associated with litter bins which have been installed after the need has been established. Repair, replacement or removal in these circumstances is given priority to prevent environmental deterioration. The 'closed top' bins prevent litter being blown from the bin and therefore provide better containment, however, the construction and design allows greater purchase and leverage to vandals wishing to damage these containers.

The request for litter bins in certain areas cause installation difficulties in respect of anchorage. Tarmac footways or grass verges mean bins must be fixed to flagstones which are then placed at the location to ensure stability these can then be moved or tipped over by vandals.

In some locations across the Borough it has been impossible to install a floor mounted litter bin and so litter bins on poles have been supplied. These often contain no lids and therefore do not secure the litter on windy days. Over time the weight of the bin can cause the straps to stretch and the bin usually slides to the bottom of the pole. It is recommended that pole mounted bins only be used where there is no alternative design of bin that can be supplied due to limitations in space i.e. narrow footpaths.

4.5 RESOURCES AND CURRENT PROGRAMME OF WORKS

The cost of litter bins varies between £250 and £350 and the price difference reflects the construction, design and durability of the bin.

In 2006/07 ward councillors conducted a litter bin survey which has identified the number of litter bins across the Borough, their location and condition. It is recommended that this be rationalised on a programme of repair basis over the next year using the current budget.

The allocated budget for 2007/2008 is £20,000 which will fund approximately 57 galvanised steel bins at £350 per bin or 80 bins at £250 each. Installation will be carried out by the supplier and included within this price. Out of the 600 bins there are 34 bin that are in immediate need of replacement.

5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

- 5.1 The 2007/08 Capital Programme includes the sum of £80,000 for various environmental projects. Amongst other things, the proposal specifically identified total amount of £20,000 for litter bins as a priority area for expenditure.

6. COMMENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of REGULATORY SERVICES

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this Report.

7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL

- 7.1 There are no Human Resources implications arising from this Report.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This report outlines the findings of the litter bin task and finish group and the criteria to be considered for allocating litter bins across the borough. It outlines the situation with the provision of existing bins and details increasing the provision using the allocated budget. It also highlights a number of recommendations to be considered by Cabinet.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

9.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the following recommendations of the Task and Finish Group

- 1) That Cabinet decide which Design Option they wish to proceed with as laid out in paragraph 4.3 above.
- 2) That the allocated budget of £20,000 be used to renew defective bins highlighted on the litter bins survey over the next year.
- 3) That a programme of replacing and re-siting bins will be developed throughout the Borough. All bins removed will, where possible, be refurbished and used elsewhere in the Borough where required
- 4) Where possible the sponsorship of litter bins should be explored, particularly in areas where businesses are causing litter problems
- 5) That the NEAT Team make contact with local businesses to encourage them to promote anti-littering messages and to reduce packaging, in addition to promoting the adoption of voluntary codes of practice that may assist them to maintain a cleaner and greener environment.
- 6) Bins will be installed using the criteria outlined before and in consultation with Members, Operations and the Portfolio Holder for Clean and Green Rossendale.
- 7) That Executive Director of Regulatory Services considers attaching relevant conditions to applications submitted by businesses that might generate litter, particularly the provision of a litter bin.
- 8) Dog bins to be phased out on highways and only provided in parks or on open spaces. Dog bins in need of repair will be replaced by litter bins that serve a dual purpose. Bins will be clearly marked with 'dog waste permitted' to raise awareness.
- 9) It is recommended that dual litter recycle bin not be implemented or pursued at this moment in time. We would encounter operational difficulties when emptying these types of bins at the moment as they are smaller in capacity and would require increased emptying and there we have no capacity for segregating the waste before tipping. We are reviewing our resources for emptying at the moment and hope to be able to introduce dual bins in the future. The cost of providing a coding system is prohibitive at this time.
- 10) That pole mounted bins be provided only in areas where it is not possible to site free standing bins for example, on narrow footpaths.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 Councillors Task and Finish Group, Portfolio Holder.

11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required No

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached No

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Task & Finish Group – Litter Bins Report	Committee and Members Services Team – Futures Park Offices.