

MAIN REPORT

REFUSE COLLECTION (WHEELED BINS) REVIEW GROUP

FINAL REPORT

Introduction

1. This is the final report of the Refuse Collection (Wheeled Bins) Review Group, established by the Place Scrutiny Committee to examine the introduction of wheeled bins in the Borough.

Background Information

2. At a meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee held on 19 April 2012 consideration was given to a 'call-in' from the Cabinet held on 3 April 2012 (Minute C147(2)/Apr/12) in relation to its decisions in respect of the Refuse Collection. At that meeting it was agreed to establish a Review Group.
3. A wide number of issues have been considered and discussed at the meetings and these are referred to in the notes attached (**Appendix 1**). This report describes the outcome of the Review Group, it summarises the work undertaken, the findings from the processes and the subsequent recommendations.
4. A draft Terms of Reference (**Appendix 2**) in relation to this piece of work was developed and approved by Place Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 14 June 2012 and all Members of the Place Scrutiny Committee were invited to participate in the Review.
5. A wide number of issues were discussed and considered at the meetings and a visit was taken to a neighbouring authority to ascertain whether any problems were encountered during implementation of the wheeled bin system.
6. At its meeting held on 20 December 2012, Place Scrutiny Committee approved a number of interim recommendations of the Review Group for consideration by Cabinet. Cabinet subsequently accepted the twelve recommendations of the Group which have since been implemented.

Membership of the Review Group

7. All Members of Place Scrutiny Committee were invited to participate in the Review and the following Members attended meetings :-

Councillor Carson;
Councillor Cossins;
Councillor Grundy;
Councillor Harman;
Councillor L. Hughes;

Councillor Lawton;
Councillor Lewis;
Councillor Long;
Councillor E.A. Richmond;
Councillor Wright

The Group was led by Councillor Long.

8. The following Councillors also attended one or more meetings of the Review Group :-:-

Councillor Curry;
Councillor Francis;
Councillor L. Haszeldine;
Councillor Johnson;
Councillor B. Jones;
Councillor Kelley;
Councillor Lee;
Councillor McNab;
Councillor Wallis

Acknowledgements

9. The Review Group acknowledges the support and assistance provided in the course of their investigations and would like to place on record its thanks to the following :-

Ian Thompson, Assistant Director, Community Services;
Brian Graham, Head of Environmental Services;
Steve Petch, Head of Strategy and Commissioning;
John Herdman, Senior Enforcement Officer, Environmental Services;
Andrew Casey, Head of Highway Network Management;
Mike Smith, Area Team Leader Central Ward;
Officers representing Durham County Council;
Gordon Pybus, Darlington Association on Disability; and
Karen Graves, Democratic Officer

Methods of Investigation

10. The Review Group met on seven occasions between May 2012 and July 2013, and the notes containing the discussions held at those meetings are attached **(Appendix 1)**. Several Members of the Group also undertook a visit to Durham County Council's Chilton Depot and met Council Officers and the relevant portfolio holder.

Findings

11. Initial findings indicate that back lanes are now cleaner following the introduction of wheeled bins.
12. Wards with concentrated terraced properties did experience problems in the first few weeks but these issues have now been resolved and all lanes are now extremely clean.

13. Residents may purchase their own smaller bin which must meet the specification to fit onto the refuse collection vehicles. So far 25 residents have requested the specification required.
14. Residents have the option to choose whether to place rubbish into the wheeled bin bagged or unbagged.
15. The maintenance of wheeled bins is the responsibility of residents.
16. All crews are provided with a list of residents who require assistance and also of the properties which have been allowed to remain on a black bag system.
17. Crews are receiving on-going training with regard to the new operating system and regulations.
18. Assisted collection requests have risen from 1055 to 2705 since 17 June 2013.
19. There have been 1715 requests for larger bins which are allocated to households containing five or more residents. Not all requests have been granted.
20. It was envisaged that digital technology would be introduced which would assist crews on route, locations of black bag collections, assisted collections and residents wishing to take household waste to the Civic Amenity Site.

Recommendations

21. That it be recommended to the Place Scrutiny Committee that :-
 - (a) Cabinet be requested to consider the following recommendations of the Place Scrutiny Committee :-
 - (i) That the thanks of the Refuse Collection (Wheeled Bins) Review Group, for the successful wheeled bins introduction in the Borough, be conveyed to all employees;
 - (ii) Although the Review Group has concluded Place Scrutiny Committee would like to monitor progress in 2013 on the following :-
 - a) Recycling Rates;
 - b) Fly Tipping;
 - c) Replacement wheeled bin costs; and
 - d) General operational issues.
 - (iii) That Place Scrutiny Committee receives a detailed financial breakdown including savings on street cleansing.
 - (iv) That a visit for Members of Place Scrutiny Committee to John Wade Waste Management be arranged during the Autumn.

- (v) That the idea of engaging educational establishments on waste management be investigated.

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