

RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE



DATE	22/9/2021
PORTFOLIO	Community & Environmental Services
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PURPOSE

1. To report back to the Executive on the progress made to the recycling services since 2019.
2. To seek Executive approval for the introduction of a further phase of the rollout of the recycling wheeled bins.
3. To seek approval to consult with residents who are not on wheeled bin service

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is recommended to:

4. approve the changes to include an additional 617 (approx) properties onto the wheeled recycling bin service as edged in Green in Appendix 1.
5. approve a process of further consultation with designated residents to ascertain the feasibility of approximately 802 additional properties to be considered for the wheeled bin recycling service as edged in Amber in Appendix 1.
6. approve the introduction of a chargeable large recycling wheeled bin policy.
7. approve the spend of £50,000 from the waste contingency budget to rollout the proposed changes and for the purchase of recycling equipment.
8. delegate authority to the Head of Streetscene in consultation with the Executive Member of Community and Environmental Services to undertake the procurement of recycling equipment, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders procedures.
9. delegate authority to the Head of Streetscene in consultation with the Executive Member for Community and Environmental Services to undertake the final selection of the properties to be included in the programme following the resident consultation of those properties edged in Amber in Appendix 1.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

10. Executive approval was granted in July 2019 for the initial rollout of the recycling wheeled bin programme. An Executive decision was also made at this time to undertake a further review of the areas that were not selected in 2019 for 'Phase One' rollout.
11. The properties highlighted in Green in Appendix 1, have similar characteristics to the properties already moved onto the recycling wheeled bins in phase 1, so should allow a simple transition.
12. Those properties highlighted in Amber in Appendix 2, don't fully meet the original criteria however could potentially be added to the wheeled bins service. By undertaking further / detailed consultation the Council will ensure that the recycling service provided continues to meet the recycling needs of all its residents within the local area. The detailed consultation will take on board the views of all residents from the selected areas; in order to determine future collection methods and wider strategies for the Recycling Service.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Background:

13. The Executive on the 18th of June 2019 approved the implementation of changes to the Recycling services for the introduction of a wheeled bin recycling service for 22,000 properties across the Borough. These changes were successfully implemented from October 2019. As part of the Executive decision in June 2019, it was also agreed;

*'That a further review be carried by the Executive ...'.
(Item 5, Decision 7, 2019).*

This Review has been delayed whilst the focus for waste and cleansing service delivery was primarily on dealing with the issues presented with the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Current Services:

14. The initial rollout of wheeled bins for recycling services was based upon properties that presented efficient collection rounds, whilst also ensuring that the properties could accommodate the additional space required to sufficiently store two additional wheeled bins. The rollout in 2019 has been very successful and provided approximately 22,000 properties across the borough (out of approx. 42,000 properties) wheeled bin provision and these are now embedded in the Council's collection rounds methodology on a 4-weekly cycle.
15. The remainder of the borough where properties do not have extensive storage capacity for wheeled bins remain on a fortnightly recycling collection service with collections being made from a 55l container for glass, cans and plastics and paper and card being collected from a sealable weighted white sack.
16. The refuse and garden waste collections have remained fortnightly collections and have remained unaffected. There are no plans to change the current refuse and garden waste services.

17. The changes to the recycling service also led to changes being implemented to the street cleaning service. The areas that moved to a wheeled bin collection system for recycling receive a cleanse every 2 weeks following their refuse collections. The areas that remained on a box/sack collection system continued on a weekly street cleaning service following both their refuse collection and their recycling collection.

Review of the 2019 Service Changes

18. The rollout and implementation of the service change was extremely effective. The service change was implemented in October 2019 and concluded in March 2020 following a period of consolidation. The approach taken by the team was to modify the service in a pragmatic way, based on ongoing resident dialogue throughout the rollout. This ensured that issues which occurred were dealt with 'on the doorstep' as part of the rollout. This avoided any residents having to wait for a response and allowed any issues to be tackled as they were encountered. The following is a summary of changes that were incorporated during the rollout;

- Dealt with Councillor requests to review service options at the outset of the project which amended the proposed service delivery for 393 properties
- Delivered over 300 smaller bins at the request of residents as an alternative to the larger bins
- Sourced and delivered alternative containers to approx. 150 properties where storage was an issue for wheeled bins
- Issued 26 can crushers to properties that were experiencing storage capacity issues within their bins

19. As part of the 'phase 1 rollout', a new and improved white sack was delivered to each property that didn't move onto wheeled bins. The white sack is sealable and weighted at the bottom. The aim was to provide a more suitable container that didn't go missing after collections had taken place and aimed to reduce the spillage. Although, its acknowledged that these items aren't perfect, the feedback from crews and residents are that this service adjustment has been much better and helps to tackle the previous issues encountered.

20. One of the issues faced with the service change, has been several complaints relating to capacity of the standard 240L wheeled bins. This has been heightened as people have spent more time at home. In response, the Council has issued can crushers as a trial to a limited number of residents. The feedback received has been positive, however in most cases this hasn't alleviated the capacity issue entirely. Therefore, it is recommended that larger 360L recycling bins be offered and charged at £31.30 for those properties that wish to access larger bins. This charge is in accordance with the Council's existing bin charging policy for larger refuse (claret) bins and would be a cost neutral initiative.

21. The rollout of the service change commenced directly before the Covid 19 pandemic started. Therefore, it is difficult to measure the success of this project alone in terms of recycling performance. During the months of October 2018 to March 2019 (prior to the changes) approximately 2681 tonnes of recycling was collected, compared to over 3657 tonnes collected during the same period in 2020 to 2021. This represents approximately a 36% increase in recycling tonnages. Comparing the same periods, general waste collected also increased, however general waste only increased by approximately 13%. These

comparisons highlight that the service changes made have the improved recycling service and will have led to some of the increase in tonnage collected, however it should be noted the tonnages will have also increased as a result of residents having spent longer at home as the Country has spent several months in lockdown.

Review of the areas that remained on Box / Sack Collections

- 22.** As agreed by the Executive in June 2019, officers have started a review of the recycling service for those properties which have remained on a fortnightly collection system and remained on the box/sacks methodology.
- 23.** The review started late 2020, expressions of interest were sought from residents that remained on the box/sack fortnightly recycling collections system. Residents were asked to register an interest if they wished to be considered for a move to a wheeled bin monthly recycling collection service. Over the 6 month period from November 2020, the Council have received 205 requests from approximately 20,000 properties.
- 24.** An initial review has been undertaken of these requests with Urbaser colleagues to determine the feasibility of adding these areas onto the wheeled bin collection rounds. The review has taken into consideration a range of factors such as operational viability, whether it's likely a joint consensus could be reached from all neighbouring properties and whether it would be practical to switch the properties onto a monthly collection service.

Programme Proposal

- 25.** The feasibility study undertaken identified 617 properties which had similar characteristics to those properties that had already moved onto the recycling wheeled bin collection rounds during 'phase 1'. These requests were from a range of new build properties and ad hoc properties which met the original suitability criteria, therefore will be added to the wheeled bin recycling collection rounds. The map attached in Appendix 1, shows a breakdown of these 617 properties highlighted in green. The rollout of these properties isn't expected to cause any issues and will follow the same approach that was undertaken in September 2019, with any ad hoc requests being dealt with on the door step as they arise.
- 26.** The feasibility study identified an additional 802 properties which were deemed potentially suitable to move onto the wheeled bin recycling service. Although these properties didn't entirely meet the original suitability criteria, it is felt they could potentially move onto a wheeled bin service following a detailed consultation exercise. These properties are marked in Amber within Appendix 1.
- 27.** The 'Amber List' properties present potential operational and / or storage issues that are not prevalent in the properties highlighted in Appendix 1 'Green List'. It is therefore recommended that a thorough targeted consultation exercise be undertaken. The consultation will focus upon ascertaining that each property has the storage provision for 2 additional wheeled bins and that the household agrees to keep the bins within the vicinity of their premises except for collection day, and that all the residents in the area are happy for the bins to be collected every 4 weeks. The collection system offered in each of these separate areas must be consistent and requires full buy in from the whole street / area. It is not practical to operate a 'mix and match' service, as this would cause significant operational difficulties.
- 28.** Out of the 205 requests received, 127 have been deemed unsuitable at this stage. The

reasons for these properties being deemed unsuitable at this stage, in the main relates to; a lack of storage space for the extra wheeled bins, significant operational issues presented such as no access for the current recycling vehicles to drive down the back streets or due to the additional amount of time that it would take to service these properties on a wheeled bin solution. These properties will be notified of this outcome in due course.

- 29.** One of the current issues faced with rolling out a boroughwide wheeled bin recycling service is linked to the current fleet of vehicles. The current recycling vehicles are split bodied vehicles that collect paper and card in one side and glass, cans, plastics in the other side. As a result, these vehicles are much wider than the refuse collection vehicles. As such, this impedes access to many of the back streets in the terraced areas. Therefore, the additional adverse impacts on collection rounds would negate the implementation of wheeled bins as a viable option at this stage.
- 30.** Should there be a desire for a one system solution in the future, a full feasibility study will need to be undertaken. Services would need to be re-designed, fully costed and would need consideration at the point of the next waste and cleansing contract procurement. It is suggested that this could be considered and discussed prior to the procurement of the next waste and cleansing contract which is due to start in 2025. In addition, any requirements from the Environment Bill which is currently passing through parliament would also need to be incorporated into any future collection arrangements. This could potentially include a statutory requirement to collect food waste separately for recycling.
- 31.** It should also be noted that in specific areas of the Country where wheeled bins have been rolled out as a one system fits all solution to recycling, that this has had a detrimental effect on the recycling service, often resulting in wheeled bins full of contaminated items which cannot be recycled and a negative impact on front and back streets that become utilised for bin storage. These factors should be fully considered as part of any future recommendations for a one system approach.

Programme Timescales and Next Steps

- 32.** An indicative timetable of key dates for the rollout of these additional changes to the recycling scheme have been identified below;

Activity	Date
Executive Decision	Sept 21
Notify unsuccessful EOI for wheeled bins	Oct 21
'Green List' Roll Out	
Initial leaflet delivered explaining wheeled bins are coming to this area	Early Oct 21
Obtain any feedback and make tweaks which are required	During Oct 21
Deliver wheeled bins and start new service	Nov 2021
'Amber List' Roll Out	
Extensive Consultation with all properties	Nov 21 - Jan 22
Decision reached on future service for each area	Feb 22
Implement required changes	Spring 22

- 33.** The rollout would reflect the positive approach undertaken back in 2019 and will be reviewed throughout implementation. Periodical updates will be provided to Members via the Council's Strategic Reporting Process. The 'Green List' properties present similar challenges to the initial rollout in 2019 and will follow the same pragmatic approach. The 'Amber List' would require a consultative approach which would include door knocking, specific consultative site visits and targeted communications to enter into dialogue with the resident in the local area.
- 34.** It should be noted that the map provided within Appendix 1, is an initial high-level overview and is for illustrative / draft implementation purposes only. The finalised details will be made available to residents via targeted communications to those residents affected.
- 35.** Officers have undertaken a full community impact assessment to ensure the proposed round collection changes maintain existing accessibility and that recycling participation does not adversely impact those that currently benefit from an assisted collection. The assisted collections allow continue to allow those residents that can't move their waste containers to receive support from our collection crews.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION

- 36.** There will be a capital requirement of £35,000 for the purchase of the additional wheeled bins required for this project. There will be a project delivery costs associated with this project in the region of £15,000 to recruit temporary workers to deliver the bins and undertake the consultation exercise. The total cost of £50,000 can be funded from the waste Contingency pot. This will cover the key activities associated with delivering this project and will include communications, targeted door knocking, and any costs associated with delivering the new wheeled bins.
- 37.** It is not anticipated that there will be any additional ongoing revenue costs from the proposed roll-out.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 38.** The proposal supports the commitment in the strategic plan to "*implement a range of initiatives to maintain a clean, safe, attractive and environmentally friendly borough*".

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

- 39.** Scrutiny committee – 16th September 2021

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix One - Proposed changes to recycling wheeled bins 2021

FURTHER INFORMATION

PLEASE CONTACT: Joanne Swift / Tom Ormerod