

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee
9 November 2022

Public Litter Bins

Portfolio Holders:	Cllr Colin Dougan, Environment & Health Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans, Leisure, Culture & Community
Strategic Director:	Nick Steevens, Strategic Director, Environment & Community
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Key Decision:	No
Wards Affected:	All

Summary and purpose

Following concerns expressed at the September Performance & Finance Scrutiny Committee about the frequency with which litter and waste bins were being emptied officers were requested to prepare a report to the November Committee meeting. This report sets out the contractual arrangements for waste collection from public litter bins within the borough, performance against those contracts and the improvements which are being conducted in relation to the emptying and reporting of issues with litter bins.

Recommendation

The Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment upon the contents of the report.

1. Background and Supporting Information

- 1.1 The Council is responsible for the emptying of 836 public litter bins (including dog waste bins) within the borough.
- 1.2 Of these 355 are located within parks and open spaces consisting of 155 dog waste and 200 general waste bins. These are the responsibility of the Council's grounds maintenance contractor, Glendale and fall within the portfolio of Leisure, Culture & Community.
- 1.3 The other 481 bins are considered as street litter bins which are managed by Amey under supervision of Joint Waste Services (JWS) under the portfolio of Environment & Health.
- 1.4 Litter bins in the borough were mapped by the JWS team in 2021. This included recording the type and condition of the bin. An example of the GIS map is shown in Annex 1 with parks/open spaces bins denoted as either green (playground or park general waste bin) or red (dog waste bins). Bins showing as black circles are street litter bins that Amey service with contractual oversight falling to JWS. For ease of identification contractors use different colour bin liners so teams know who is responsible for the emptying. Black liners are used by Glendale and beige liners are

Amey.

- 1.5 There are many other public litter bins within Surrey Heath which the Council is aware of and are in the process of uploading this information onto our GIS mapping. These bins are owned and managed by third-party organisations including Accent, the Ministry of Defence and Surrey Wildlife Trust. As part of the proposed improvements for the reporting of bin issues officers will be looking to include details of these bins and their owners onto the Council's website.
- 1.6 The Council has committed to replacing 10 open-topped bins per annum to prevent wind dispersal and animal attacks on the waste bins which is prevalent with the open top type bin. The annual quantity is to ensure the replacement is met from within existing budgets and staffing resources. There are approximately 50 open-topped bins remaining so at the current rate of replacement the programme will be completed within 5 years.
- 1.7 It is important to understand the implication of installing new bins, the cost to install a bin is dependent on the type of bin but is typically £650 per bin to purchase and install. The cost to empty a general waste bin is around £160 a year and the cost of maintenance and subsequent replacement also needs to be factored in to decisions around increasing the number of bins in the borough.

2. Street Litter Bins

- 2.1 The current waste collection and street cleaning contract runs to June 2027. Amey took over the services in Surrey Heath in February 2018, as part of the Joint Contract which also sees them deliver services in Woking, Elmbridge and Mole Valley.
- 2.2 Amey are required to empty street litter bins as part of the street cleaning element of the contract with the Council. All of the 481 street litter bins are categorised according to their location or priority zone, which is a category which is reflective of the type of area they are located in and the levels of footfall and usage they are expected to see. Higher priority zones receive more frequent collections and subsequently attract a higher annual charge for emptying.
- 2.3 The current breakdown in bins by priority zone is in the table below:

Priority Zone	Number
Town Centres and Local Shopping Areas Priority Zone	217
High Visibility Through Routes and Low Usage Village Centres Priority Zone	32
Main Through Routes, Spine Roads and High Need Residential Priority Zone	159
General Residential Priority Zone	73
Low Use Rural Priority Zone	0

- 2.4 The priority zone classification is designed to ensure the contract operates in line with guidance set out in the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR).

- 2.5 The street cleaning contract with Amey does not prescribe how often a litter bin should be emptied. Instead of specifying a frequency, Amey are required to ensure that no litter bin reaches more than 75% capacity. This approach is designed to ensure that bins are visited on a frequency that best suits the rate at which it is usually filled, while allowing Amey to have flexibility in its resourcing of the service, and scope to adapt this according to changing needs (such as seasonal fluctuations in use).
- 2.6 There are Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that apply to the street cleaning elements of the services provided by Amey. The specific measure which applies in the case of litter bins is KPI 11 – Street Cleaning Performance Failure Not Rectified.
- 2.7 Should a litter bin be found to be full or overflowing, Amey are required to empty this within a prescribed time period. A full or overflowing litter bin does not automatically result in a penalty being applied – but if the report is not responded to and completed with the required timeframe then it counts as a failure and a penalty can then be applied. Details of the number of failures recorded for this KPI in recent years are included in the table below

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
KPI 11	15	7	53	4

- 2.8 The response time is again set according to the priority zone, with those in heavier footfall areas needing to be actioned more quickly than those in lower footfall areas.

Priority Zone	Response Time to empty Litter Bins that are full to over 75% capacity.
Town Centres and Local Shopping Areas Priority Zone	2 hrs
High Visibility Through Routes and Low Usage Village Centres Priority Zone	6 hrs
Main Through Routes, Spine Roads and High Need Residential Priority Zone	By end of next Working Day
General Residential Priority Zone	By end of next Working Day
Low Use Rural Priority Zone	By end of next Working Day

N.B. In whitespace town centres SLA is set to 2 hours, but High Vis routes is set as 'By end of next working day' as with other zones. This is due to the way hours/days are calculated in the system currently. This is likely to change as part of ongoing development in the system and once available the SLA will be set back to as per contract.

- 2.9 Litter and detritus surveys are a further KPI measure where problems with litter bins would contribute to penalties. During these quarterly surveys, a sample of 300 sections of street are assessed for levels of litter and detritus (again using standards set out in COPLAR). The target for Amey is that no more than 4% of transects can fall below a grade B for litter, and no more than 8% roads can fall below a grade B for detritus. The results table below shows the percentage of transects which have failed (found to be below a grade B) for the last 6 rounds of surveys.

	2021-22				2022-23	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Litter (%)	1	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.2
Detritus (%)	6.3	5.5	13.5	6.2	8.7	8.5

- 2.10 Issues with litter bins are reported by both officers and members of the public. They are treated in the same way for the purposes of performance measures. The web forms used by residents (or the Amey contact centre if reported by phone) ensure that the depot receives the job as soon as it is logged, and this is why reporting via webforms or directly to the Amey contact centre should be encouraged. Emailing reports can introduce a delay to the job to attend to the bin being raised in the system.
- 2.11 JWS operations officers aim to spend around 50% of their time out in the contract area undertaking inspections and visits across the week. As a result they are often reporting issues they've directly observed, as well as monitoring locations where repeat problems have been identified. Where the same bins are found to be regularly causing problems then these will be highlighted in weekly meetings with the depot manager, and inspected periodically to identify the underlying cause, whether this is related to the emptying frequency, or other issues. For example this might be inappropriate use by nearby businesses or householders to dispose of their waste.
- 2.12 Reporting ability is straightforward thanks to online forms, but we know that residents don't always know which department or organisation is responsible for a particular bin. We are working together across the council to consolidate our mapping data so that this can be used online to ensure residents are directed to the correct route to report the litter bin to the right team first time. Amey's new IT system (Whitespace), introduced in April 2022, gives them greater ability to make use of the data on reports of problem litter bins, and have greater flexibility in updating collection rounds.

3 Parks & Open Spaces Litter Bins

- 3.1 The Parks and Grounds Maintenance Contract was awarded to Glendale for a five year period with an option to extend for a further 2 years at the end of the five year period. The contract commenced on 1st November 2020.
- 3.2 Under the terms of the contract, Glendale are responsible for the following activities relating to litter bins:
- 3.2.1 Ensuring all sites remain litter free and presentable at all times and are able to demonstrate a regular inspection and litter picking regime.
 - 3.2.2 Preparing and implementing a schedule based on site use and known littering.
 - 3.2.3 Inspecting and emptying all bins regularly enough to ensure they do not overflow, do not smell and always provide sufficient capacity.
 - 3.2.4 Informing the public as to the use of dog bins and dog fouling and any related byelaws. This may include the gathering of photo evidence of persistent offenders to allow the Council to prosecute if required.
 - 3.2.5 Replenishment of dog poo bags at the 43 Tikspak stations located around the borough.
 - 3.2.6 Supporting and contributing to any campaigns or initiatives that are aimed at reducing dog fouling, littering, graffiti and general anti-social behaviour in parks.
 - 3.2.7 Inspecting litter bin for structural damage, undertaking repairs or removing those beyond repair with the Council responsible for supplying replacements

- 3.2.8 Inspecting the bins at the premier parks, Watchetts, London Road, Frimley Green Recreation Ground 7 days a week and appropriate action taken.
- 3.2.9 Undertaking a higher frequency of litter pick at Heatherside Recreation Ground, Frimley Green Recreation Ground, Old Dean Recreation Ground and Camberley Town Park on weekends.
- 3.3 The contract with Glendale has a number of monitoring and performance mechanisms incorporated. This includes performance indicators which are scored monthly and linked to the annual contractual value. The contractor must ensure they achieve the specified performance indicators to obtain the full annual contract value. The value of the performance indicators is set out in Annex 2 and is linked to key areas of the contract.
- 3.3 Performance against the contract is monitored by the Senior Contract Officer (the Client Officer) and the Recreation & Leisure Services Manager. Under the contract, there are detailed implications for poor, non-performance of contractual obligations that can be applied.
- 3.4 The Client Officer is responsible for investigation of cases where the contractor appears to have failed to meet with the provisions of the contract. Where there has been a failure to perform the services satisfactorily the Council can:
 - 3.4.1 Instruct the Contractor to remedy the failure within a reasonable period. Where an instruction is issued the contract permits the council to recover monies in respect each instruction or notice of failure issued.
 - 3.4.2 Require the contractor to pay liquidated damages and monies for each notice of failure. Liquidated damages are set out as a percentage of the total contract annual price per day for each day.
 - 3.4.3 Terminate the Contract
- 3.5 Where a Default Notice is served for a failure to perform, liquidated damages in accordance with the table set out in Annex 2.
- 3.6 Defaults are issued at the discretion of the Client Officer and will reflect the nature and severity of the services not performed. Year 1 of the contract 9 defaults were issued for non-performance. In year 2 of the contract the Client Officer will have issued 16 defaults for non- performance.

4 Planned Improvements

- 4.1 Whilst it is relatively straightforward to report problems through the Council's online forms and via the contact centre, often residents are unsure who is responsible for a particular bin. Officers are working collaboratively to consolidate the mapping data and develop a public map for the Council website. The map will allow residents to identify the ownership of specific bins in the borough and provide details of the most direct route to report problems such as damaged or overflowing bins. Clicking on the interactive map to report the bin to the correct organisation will allow for closer monitoring of those bins where the collection frequency is no longer sufficient or are suffering from fly-tipping. This solution will also assist in providing a useful mechanism for the monitoring of contractor performance.
- 4.2 To compliment the mapping solution, a project team has been convened to establish the resources required to place stickers on all bins managed by the Council. The stickers are intended to include a QR code which will direct residents straight to the mapping and reporting page on the Council's website. This will assist residents in

identifying them as a borough bin and will assist the contact centre in directing customers to the correct service and also Client Officers in monitoring the level of fault reporting.

- 4.3 As part of the project to inform residents of which bins are owned by the Council there will also be an increased drive to ensure that the correct reporting mechanisms are followed to ensure there is minimal delay in the Council's contractors being informed of a bin-related issue.
- 4.4 Officers in JWS are due to carry out a review of the location and priority zone classification of all bins to ensure they meet the needs of the area, balancing reasonable capacity and requirements for emptying frequency. This adheres to WRAPs guidance on 'Right Bin, Right Place' in order to ensure that the ongoing revenue costs of litter bin emptying are providing value for money.
- 4.5 An additional element of work which officers wish to pursue is the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for replacing street litter bins. Utilising CIL would reduce the cost of replacement to the Council and form part of a longer term improvement plan.
- 4.6 Both Recreation & Leisure and JWS are reviewing the provision of dog waste bins in the borough. All waste bins are able to take dog waste as all waste collection for street and park bins is disposed of at energy recovery sites for incineration. Conventional dog waste bins are smaller than palisade bins and therefore require more frequent emptying which is inefficient. Additionally the location of dog waste bins in many locations is immediately adjacent or close to a litter bin. Whilst the frequency of emptying needs to be balanced against other potential issues such as odour, the presence of dedicated dog waste bins is no longer deemed to be cost effective.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Example GIS bin layer

Annex 2 – Confidential Annex relating to Glendale contract

Background Papers

None

Annex 1 – Example GIS bin layer

