

<p><b>COUNCILLOR PHILL BRIGHTMORE CABINET MEMBER - ENVIRONMENT</b></p>	<p><b>CABINET MEMBER REPORT 18 SEPTEMBER 2017  DOMESTIC REFUSE COLLECTION POLICY</b></p>
--	--

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

Wirral Council is responsible for collecting all domestic refuse generated across the Borough. The Council has long standing arrangements for collecting over 120,000 tonnes of domestic refuse each year from Wirral's 146,000 properties.

The Council also has a statutory responsibility to collect materials for recycling and has recycling targets to achieve. Therefore the Council has provided households with several bins for different types of refuse, which are collected separately.

Domestic refuse collections are carried out on the Council's behalf by Biffa Waste Services Ltd., through a contract that has been in place for over ten years. The collection service provided by Biffa on the Council's behalf is highly regarded by Wirral's residents. However the Council is committed to continuously improving the domestic refuse collection service and improving recycling performance.

In order to maximise opportunities to access services and set out collection arrangements and expectations, the Council's existing Domestic Refuse Collection Policy has been updated and developed to cover all aspects of service provision. The policy was first introduced in 2008 and updated in 2012; it is therefore well established and provides a concise explanation of the Council's domestic refuse collection service. However over time the policy has become outdated and requires refresh and update in order to capture service arrangements going forward.

This report provides an overview of the Domestic Refuse Collection Policy and highlights new requirements and changes. The report also sets out how the policy is administered and where applicable, enforced.

This report is not a Key Decision but applies to residents in all wards.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet Member is requested to:

- (1) Note the contents of this report and the revisions made to the Domestic Refuse Collection Policy (attached as **Appendix 1**).
- (2) Approve the updated Domestic Refuse Collection Policy and its implementation with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Domestic Refuse Collection Policy sets out the details and arrangements for all aspects of the Council's domestic refuse collection service. There is an existing policy, but this was established some years ago and has since become outdated and in need of refresh. The policy is an outward facing document with full details set out on the Council's website. The updated Domestic Refuse Collection Policy supports the Council's commitment to 'create an attractive local environment for Wirral residents' as set out within the Wirral Plan. The policy will do this by helping to improve the Council's recycling performance and by reducing the overall amount of refuse generated by residents, as well as reducing fly tipped domestic refuse.

The updated policy reflects the Council's emerging new relationship with residents; with people being better informed, encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and being more aware of their local environment. However, the updated policy is principally concerned with improving access to the domestic refuse collection service. The Council is committed to addressing service access issues and ensuring equality of access for all residents, supporting them where required to do this.

Through the updated policy, the Council will provide more support to residents for the management of their waste and effective use of the refuse bins provided. More emphasis will be placed on meeting residents face to face at their homes to conduct 'waste audits' to identify residents' requirements.

As part of the review of the Council's Domestic Refuse Collection Policy, officers have researched the approaches and policies adopted by other local authorities across the United Kingdom, to identify transferable best practice and good customer experience. As a result, the updated policy has been improved with workable best practice incorporated to promote excellent standards of service.

The updated policy enables the Council to take the domestic refuse collection service forward and paves the way for any future service change. The updated policy also fits well with the conclusions of the recently completed review of the City Region's waste management arrangements and in particular the recommendation to standardise service provision policies across the region.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Council could continue with the existing version of the policy; however it is widely accepted that the policy has become outdated, having been previously updated over four years ago and particularly when compared to best practice from across the country. The Council is committed to improving recycling performance; however the current version of policy hinders this.

The Council could dissolve the policy; however this would cause major problems for the management of domestic refuse and provide significant confusion for residents about service provision.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Council's current Domestic Refuse Collection Policy was established in 2008 and amended following a review in 2012. Residents can access the policy online via the Council's website where it is presented under series of key subject headings. The policy is administered by the Waste & Environment Team with support from colleagues in Streetscene and Strategic Hub.

There is a recognition that the policy has become outdated in the five years since its previous review and in need of an overhaul to make it fit to reflect service provision in the future. Waste & Environment officers have carried out an extensive review of the current policy in preparation for potential service changes in the future. Officers have also identified best practice from across the United Kingdom and where appropriate included this within the updated policy.

The updated Policy reflects some clarifications on provision and adjustment to provision. The biggest change to existing arrangements being put forward within the updated policy is the introduction of 'waste audits' to be conducted by officers with residents at their home (**see section 18 of the updated policy attached**). It is proposed that in future any resident making a request for additional non-recycled (green) bin capacity will receive a waste audit at their home. This will consist of an onsite review of the utilisation of allocated bins and the residents' management of their waste.

Waste audits and on-site advice will be offered to all residents making enquiries about the domestic refuse collection service, as part of the Council's drive to improve recycling performance.

The other change set out within the updated policy is the introduction of a charge for wheelie bin repairs (**see Section 14 of the updated policy attached**). The decision to establish a charge for bin repairs was taken at the start of the municipal year.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost of administering the updated service provision policy will be met within existing resources.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The E.U. Waste Framework Directive 2008 provides the legislative framework for the collection, transport, recovery and disposal of waste. The directive requires all member states of the EU to take the necessary measures to ensure waste is recovered or disposed of without endangering human health or causing harm to the environment and includes permitting, registration and inspection requirements. The Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 were laid before Parliament on 19 July 2012 and came into force on 1 October 2012.

### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

The administration of the updated policy will be delivered internally by a number of Council functions, with the lead to be taken by Waste & Environment. Such coordination will be met within existing resources in a similar way that the existing policy is administered.

The on-site waste audits will be carried out by appointment by Waste & Environment officers, who will have the delegated authority to make decisions about additional provision if required and to provide advice to residents about their waste management.

There will be some initial increase in the level of enquiries received from residents as a result of the updated policy being introduced. However this will be managed between the Waste & Environment and Streetscene teams.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

Risk – residents report that they remain unclear about domestic refuse collection service and how to access it.

Control – the updated policy has been written in an easy to read way and will be made accessible in a range of ways including online via the Council's website.

Risk – the Council does not have the capacity to appropriately administer the updated policy and provide the necessary support to residents.

Control – The Council has capacity to deliver the existing policy and resourcing plans will be put in place to address new aspects of the policy such as on-site waste audits.

Risk - the Council does not have the capacity to effectively enforce the updated service provision policy.

Control – the Council will work with its partner Kingdom to resource the policy's enforcement.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

The Council conducted a significant public consultation exercise last year (nine weeks in duration) regarding future domestic refuse collections, which attracted over 9000 responses. The consultation responses were summarised and have been used to inform the policy update.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

Has the potential impact of the revised policy been reviewed with regard to equality?

Yes and the impact review can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-april-2014/eias-regeneration-envir>

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Mike Cockburn  
Lead Commissioner – Environment  
Strategic Hub

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1** – Wirral Council’s Domestic Refuse Collection Policy – September 2017

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Study of best practice was carried out as part of the Waste Management Options Appraisal exercise 2016.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet - Service Provision Policy for Domestic Refuse Containers	November 2012