


Report of	Assistant Director Environment	Author	Richard Block
Title	Review of Refuse and Recycling Collections from Flats		 286825
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the refuse and recycling collection service currently provided to residents of flats. It identifies the challenges associated with providing all residents of flats with the same service as residents living in other types of dwelling and provides information on how these may be overcome in the future.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Panel should:
- Consider the current recycling collection service provided to residents in flats and the potential for increasing the range of materials that can be collected.
 - Make recommendations as to whether the recycling collections provided to flats should be increased.

3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 To ensure all residents can recycle as much material as possible regardless of where they live to reduce the amount of residual waste produced in the Borough.

4. Background Information

Introduction

- 4.1 Changes to the Refuse and Recycling service implemented in June 2017 were reviewed at the Scrutiny Panel Meeting in December 2017. It was always planned to look at the potential for providing residents of flats the same recycling collections as other residents.
- 4.2 Since January a review has been undertaken of the current service provided to residents of flats and the potential opportunities to provide them with the same recycling service as other residents.

Current Service Provision

- 4.3 Flats are currently provided with a range of services which have evolved because of several factors including:
- Available storage space for refuse and recycling inside flats and in communal areas
 - Number and location of flats in each block
 - The policy of the management company towards providing recycling storage equipment and space

Previously, whenever there has been storage space available for recycling and the management company have cooperated, dry recycling collections have been provided to flats. To a large extent, this has excluded plastics.

- 4.4 The table below provides a breakdown of the different types of service currently provided to residents of flats.

Refuse		Recycling	
Large communal bin	W	3 x 360ltr Glass/Paper/Cans	W
Large communal bin	W	Kerbside Glass/ Cans, Paper/Plastic	F
Large communal bin	F	3 x 360ltr Glass/Paper/Cans	W
Kerbside sack collection	W	Kerbside Glass/ Cans, Paper/Plastic	F
Kerbside sack collection	F	Kerbside Glass/ Cans, Paper/Plastic	F
Large communal bin	W	3 x 360ltr Glass/Paper/Cans (W) Kerbside Plastic (F)	W / F

Key: W represents weekly collection and F represents fortnightly collection

- 4.5 The table shows that flats are currently provided with a range of dry recycling services and frequencies of refuse collection. This mixture reflects local factors and barriers as described previously. 6661 flats across 432 locations are

provided with recycling collections of paper, cans and glass from 3 large communal bins. The remaining locations either have kerbside collections or no recycling collections due to the barriers described previously.

General issues with increasing future recycling collections from flats

- 4.6 The constraints mentioned in 4.1 are beyond this Council's control. For example, if a management company is not prepared to make facilities available for residents in a block of flats to store recycling in a communal area the potential for then providing a full range of recycling collection services is not possible.
- 4.7 Providing any additional collections of recycling from flats would also require additional vehicles, bins and staff. There is no current spare capacity on recycling rounds due to the significant increases in recycling now being collected from other dwellings. Due to limits in storage space some blocks would need weekly collections of all refuse and recycling. For the same reason it is also difficult to create capacity on existing vehicles by moving flats to fortnightly refuse collections.

Specific issues associated with recycled plastic collections

- 4.8 Most residents of flats cannot currently recycle plastics, and this represents the biggest challenge in terms of providing a full dry recycling collection service. In those developments that can recycle other materials in large communal wheeled bins, if a fourth Plastic bin was introduced, a minimum of 553 x 360ltr bins would need to be provided to enhance the current recycling stations with an estimated capital cost of £13,000.
- 4.9 Work is currently being undertaken on a business case for an extra waste/recycling collection vehicle to provide refuse and recycling collections to new properties in the Borough. If an extra vehicle was purchased this would create sufficient extra capacity to also provide plastic collections to flats where this is feasible. Additional revenue would be required to purchase extra clear recycling sacks, but this would be offset by additional recycling credit income.

Specific issues associated with food waste collections

- 4.10 Very few flats are currently provided with a separate weekly food waste collection service. Where flats are provided with this it is because the front door leads onto a street where refuse and recycling crews servicing other types of dwellings pass.
- 4.11 The main barrier to providing other flats with this service is space for storage of food waste whilst awaiting collection and the potential smell of larger quantities of food waste being stored prior to collection. If there is space in communal areas for a communal bin, then the management company would also need to be prepared to clean the bin and deal with any problems of odour.
- 4.12 If the issues relating to storage of food waste can be overcome, then collections could be made from flats although additional resources would be required. An initial £88,000 capital would be required to purchase bins and an additional food waste collection vehicle. £54,000 growth in the Waste revenue budget would be required to cover staff and running costs for the vehicle.

5. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 5.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken prior to the changes to the Refuse and Recycling Collection Service in June 2017. If residents of flats are provided with a collection service for extra materials this assessment will be reviewed.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 Further increasing the amount of waste that is recycled will contribute to the responsibility theme of the [Strategic Plan 2018-21](#) in that it will encourage recycling and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 If a decision was made to provide residents of flats with collections of additional recyclable material, consultation will be undertaken with the managing agents of each development to determine if they are prepared to provide appropriate storage space in a communal area for that material.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 It will be essential to publicise any additional recycling collection services provided to flats so that residents know what material to recycle and how to store this whilst awaiting collection.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 As stated previously, a business case for an extra waste/recycling collection vehicle to provide refuse and recycling collections to new properties in the Borough is currently being prepared. If approved this vehicle would also have capacity to facilitate collections of plastic from the flats where feasible to do so. There would be an additional one-off capital cost of £13,000 to purchase bins.
- 9.2 To provide a separate food waste collection service, an additional one-off capital sum of £88,000 would be required to purchase a vehicle and bins with an additional £54,000 annual revenue being required to cover staff and operating costs.

10. Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 There are no implications.

11. Health and Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no health and safety implications, over and above the existing implications for providing the refuse and recycling collection service to flats which are well managed through an established health and safety management system.

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 The proposals considered above are based on current property levels in the Borough. There is a risk that as further flats are built additional resources would be required to provide all forms of recycling collections to those locations.