

## **OPERATION OF THE KERB IT RECYCLING SCHEME**

### **Report of the Director of Community and Cultural Services**

#### **1. Why has the report come to the Committee**

1.1 The review Committee has earlier requested that an item be included on the agenda of the Committee as follows:-

1.2 "Could the Head of Environmental Services present a report to the Environment & Planning Review Committee on the Kerb-it recycling scheme detailing:

1. An update on the progress made to date in identifying a replacement for the Black Box currently used for the kerb-it scheme, including timescales.
2. Details of how many black boxes have been replaced, and at what cost, since the scheme was introduced split by financial year, the replacement reason and by Ward (or postcode sector if Ward is not available). This should include the most recent year to date figures that are available for the current financial year
3. Details of why some streets only seem to be having black boxes collected from some of the houses and not all (e.g. Barmston Centre in Barmston)
4. Details of why some streets do not seem to have their black boxes returned to the door from which they are collected (e.g. Barmston Centre in Barmston)
5. Details of what the correct practice for returning a black box to it's collection point are, because they seem to be getting thrown back onto some resident's drives resulting in the boxes becoming damaged and requiring replacement
6. An explanation of why Councillors seem to be receiving preferential treatment when it comes to receiving replacement black boxes. Both Cllr Ivan Richardson and Cllr Angela Cuthbert have received completely differing levels of service recently when they have called to request replacement black boxes. Their initial call was made as if they were simply a member of the public and they were given a string of excuses why a replacement might take a significant time to be delivered. And a subsequent call made asking for it to be escalated to the area manager using their Councillor title resulted in a black box being delivered almost immediately. Councillors should be receiving the same service as any other resident of the city and this apparent two tier service level is unacceptable.

I would like to arrange for Cllr Ivan Richardson to be called to give evidence on items 3, 4 and 6".

1.3 The Committee agreed to the inclusion of the item on the agenda of its next meeting.

1.4 This report arises from that decision.

## 2. Current Position/ Response

### 1) Review of the Kerb-It scheme (Question 1)

Officers have undertaken research and modelling of options in respect of container types, collection systems and vehicles; the implications for infrastructure to deal with the collected material and how that fits with the municipal waste strategy. Other factors taken into consideration have included changing demographics, health and safety matters; maximising value from those materials and how to manage the transition. Officers of partner councils have been consulted in the development of proposals. It has been previously identified that as the current contractual arrangements for Kerb-It come to an end in March 2010 this would present the opportunity to change systems. Any transition, however, would need to be phased.

Future recycling collection arrangements will be considered as part of the Council's medium-term financial strategy and capital programme.

### 2) Replacement of black-boxes (Question 2)

Administrative and recording systems used in the refuse and recycling collection services are only able to provide reports by Regeneration area. To provide the information in the form requested would place a significant demand on staff resources to manually interrogate all records. A summary for the years in question is set out below with details provided at Appendix 1.

Total number of boxes replaced

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09 (8months)
Damaged	319	455	677	426
Stolen	5653	6144	6153	2931
New property or resident	2145	1630	1587	932
<b>Total</b>	<b>8117</b>	<b>8229</b>	<b>8417</b>	<b>4289</b>
Cost	£18425	£18679	£19106	£10422
2 <sup>nd</sup> box requested	461	696	1145	660
Cost	£1046	£1579	£2599	£1604

The current unit cost of a box delivered to the Council is £2.43, having previously been £2.27, and a delivery of 5,800 was received in November 2008.

122,280 households are covered by the Kerb-It scheme (98.7%). The replacement rate (based on 2007/08) is 6.88%. A provision for the replacement of 9% of boxes per annum was made when assessing the benefits of taking the collection element of the service in-house.

### **3. Collection Arrangements Questions (3, 4 and 5)**

As previously identified 98.7% of households in the City are covered by the Kerb-It scheme. Those not covered are largely made up of apartments or residential complexes where access or storage arrangements are limited or have yet to be explored.

Barmston Village Centre is serviced by two vehicles because of operational and health and safety considerations; and there may be a difference of between 2 – 3 hours between the visits of each vehicle.

The first vehicle is loaded in the car park adjacent to the former flats with the boxes from Nos 1 – 8 and 20 – 24. The second is loaded in the car park adjacent Waskerely Road with the boxes from Nos 9 – 19.

All Kerb-It crews operate under the instruction to return the boxes to the point at which they were placed by the householder (including where assisted collections are provided). That is reinforced by written guidelines and increased levels of supervision, since the transfer, as part of measures to improve the service.

Since April 2005 there have been 8 complaints from the residents of Nos 1 – 24 Barmston Centre regarding the emptying or return of boxes 3 of which have been received since 1 April 2008.

### **4. Response to requests**

There is no policy or instruction either explicit or implicit whereby staff are expected or required to afford Councillors a different level of service to customers.

### **3. Recommendation**

3.1 The Review Committee is asked to consider the response.

#### **Background Papers**

Council's Constitution  
Overview & Scrutiny Handbook

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**Contact Officer:** **Jim Diamond (0191 553 1396)**  
[james.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:james.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk)  
**Peter High (0191 561 4501)**  
[peter.high@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:peter.high@sunderland.gov.uk)

**APPENDIX 1**

**Kerb-it Box Replacements 2005 – 2006**

	<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>	<b>Washington</b>
<b>Damaged</b>	62	96	29	35	54	43
<b>Stolen</b>	1211	955	716	657	1129	985
<b>New Prop/ resident</b>	409	315	333	317	417	354
<b>Request for 2<sup>nd</sup> box</b>	88	65	55	60	83	110

**Kerb-it Box Replacements 2006 – 2007**

	<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>	<b>Washington</b>
<b>Damaged</b>	75	147	28	55	80	70
<b>Stolen</b>	1157	1028	627	704	922	1706
<b>New Prop/ resident</b>	282	292	213	278	255	310
<b>Request for 2<sup>nd</sup> box</b>	106	114	81	73	138	184

**Kerb-it Box Replacements 2007 – 2008**

	<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>	<b>Washington</b>
<b>Damaged</b>	132	207	46	82	124	86
<b>Stolen</b>	1230	1259	609	717	1144	1194
<b>New Prop/ resident</b>	304	221	245	219	328	270
<b>Request for 2<sup>nd</sup> box</b>	199	226	118	137	210	255

**Kerb It Box Replacements - 01/04/08 to 30/11/08**

	<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>	<b>Washington</b>
<b>Damaged</b>	67	123	34	45	90	67
<b>Stolen</b>	642	527	316	383	519	544
<b>New Prop/ resident</b>	132	131	150	156	216	147
<b>Request for 2<sup>nd</sup> box</b>	114	128	90	80	123	125

