

## CABINET MEETING 14 JUNE 2022

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

**Title of Report:**

Household Waste Collection Service – Side Waste Policy

**Author(s):**

Report of the Chief Executive

**Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to seek approval to adopt a No Side Waste Policy

**Description of Decision:**

Cabinet is recommended to approve a No Side Waste Policy for its Household Waste Collection Service

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?** \*Yes

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework - No**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

Having a No Side Waste Policy would improve environmental impact, health and safety and operational areas within the household waste collection service including the improvement of recycling rates and therefore a no side waste policy is seen as a positive approach for the future of the service

**Alternative options to be considered:**

The option of continuing with a policy of collecting side waste as part of the fortnightly household waste collection service was considered and rejected as the service would continue to face adverse environmental, health and safety and operational issues. It would also make the possibility of increasing the current recycling rates more difficult.

**Impacts analysed;**

Equality ☐ Privacy ☐ Sustainability ☐ Crime and Disorder ☐

**Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? Yes/**

**Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?** Yes

**Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?** Yes



**HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE – SIDE WASTE POLICY****Report of the Chief Executive****1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval to adopt a No Side Waste Policy

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve a No Side Waste Policy for its Household Waste Collection Service.

**3.0 Introduction**

- 3.1 The Council has in place refuse service arrangements where the Refuse Teams will collect Side Waste as part of the household refuse collection service. Side Waste is where residents leave black bags beside their household waste bin and these bags would be collected as part of their normal household waste collection. Examples of this are shown below:



- 3.2 The current collection of side waste arrangements is now having serious and negative impacts upon:

- The environment
- The health and safety of refuse collection employees
- The delivery of service operational collections
- The potential to increase recycling of household waste

- 3.3 Therefore due to these significant issues a review of the current collection of side waste arrangements has been undertaken

#### **4.0 Background and the regional picture**

- 4.1 Wheeled bins were introduced in the mid-1990s. These new wheeled bins gave residents extra capacity as Council's moved away from a 90L bin to a 240L bin. Residents presently have a 240L blue bin for recycling and a 240L Green bin for household waste. These are collected on a fortnightly basis. Residents with gardens can also participate in the garden waste collection service and have an additional 240L brown bin for garden waste. The garden waste service is a service paid for by residents who receive 17 collections a year.
- 4.2 When wheeled bins were introduced most Local Authorities stopped collecting side waste. The current regional picture is outlined below:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Do they collect Side Waste</b>
Durham	No
South Tyneside	No
North Tyneside	No
Gateshead	No
Newcastle	No
Northumberland	No
Stockton	No
Middlesbrough	No
Redcar and Cleveland	No
Hartlepool	No
Darlington	No
Sunderland	Yes

#### **5.0 Current position**

- 5.1 Not all residents place side waste for collection and most manage their waste in a responsible manner across the fortnightly collections for household and recyclable waste.
- 5.2 However, there are still many residents that do not manage their waste properly or responsibly and do place side waste, for collection, consistently and for some this can be excessive. Currently 70% of all waste is via the household waste collection bin and side waste, while only 30% is via recycling and the blue bin.
- 5.3 Comparing recycling rates within the South Tyne and Wear Waste Partnership, Gateshead are at 32.2% and South Tyneside 30.8%. For every 1% difference this equates to roughly £85,000 in disposal costs.
- 5.4 The current side waste arrangements in Sunderland are a growing concern. It is not uncommon to see 4/5 bags out for a property and the service has at times experienced between 10/20 bags for a property.
- 5.5 All refuse collection crews monitor and record the location and levels of side waste, so it is possible to track those households and areas that place side waste. This data can help the Council to target any future education, communications, and or, enforcement activity.

- From April 2019 – March 2020 there were 4,550 reports, made on the Bartec recoding system, by refuse collection crews to confirm they removed excess waste. It is not possible to identify the quantities collected on each occasion, whether it was 1 bag or 8 bags
- From April 2020 – March 2021 there were 8,475 reports made on Bartec by the crews to confirm they removed excess waste. This was an 86% increase from the previous year.

5.6 There have been a number of areas identified where properties placing side waste for collection are growing in number which is a cause for concern. As a Council, operational service and as an employer we must review the current side waste collection arrangements due to the impact the issue is now having.

#### 5.7 Health & Safety

5.8 Advice has been received from the Council's Health and Safety Team in relation to the current side waste collection arrangements. The advice is that the arrangements of collecting side waste should be changed to a "No Side Waste Policy" due to:

- Employees being at risk in handling side waste bags due to the potential issues of sharp objects, needles etc which are regularly found in bags.
- Manual handling risks to employees through the constant lifting of side waste which potentially could increase muscular skeletal injuries
- Health and Safety Inspection (HSE) guidance which recommends that Local Authorities deliver a no side waste policy

#### 5.9 Environmental impact

5.10 Side waste is creating additional weight on Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) which means refuse crews must make more trips to the transfer station for tipping. This additional time means that on some rounds it can be difficult to complete within normal operational hours without help and assistance by other refuse crews and vehicles.

5.11 This is placing additional time and cost on the collection rounds and upon the service and Council. Side waste levels are unknown factors from day to day and week to week so a daily operational monitoring and management process must take place which impacts on operational management resources.

5.12 Data from 2019-20 to 2020-21 shows an increase in waste of 8101 tonnes of extra waste, the assessment is that 80% is through side waste (6486.4 Tonnes). The impact is that this additional waste creates 772 extra loads per year or 14.9 loads per week which accounts for an additional 1.5 vehicles. This has not been accounted for in current structure provision and round allocations.

5.13 The additional extra loads per year is having a significant impact on the environment as the diesel RCVs are doing increasingly more miles through the year removing any opportunity of helping in the Carbon Reduction Strategy.

- 5.14 Additionally, the extra rounds are increasing service operational budgets as significant additional fuel consumption is required.
- 5.15 If the Council are going to meet its commitments to the Environment in reducing and moving to carbon neutral activity and processes it must start to reduce its use of diesel and also increase recycling rates across the City. The current collection of side waste is having a detrimental effect on the Council's wider environmental targets and moving away from collecting side waste will support wider Corporate Council Strategies.
- 5.16 Operational and service impact
- 5.17 The process of managing side waste in line with risk assessments is proving time consuming. Refuse crews must empty the wheeled bin into the RCV and then remove the bin from the RCV and then manually handle the side waste into the empty bin and then empty again the bin into the RCV. In essence emptying the bin twice. This increases collection times across rounds significantly.
- 5.18 It has been agreed with the Trade Unions and staff that a full round review is necessary to "Balance Up" the rounds so all crews are able to undertake rounds within a reasonable time and manageable manner.
- 5.19 This round review is a critical change to the future way refuse collections will be delivered across the City. Unfortunately, due to the unknown levels of side waste each day and week it is difficult to assess the collection rates and associated weights, so that the time for tipping at the transfer station cannot be fully accounted for. In essence whilst the Council has a side waste policy it will be impossible to address a significant service issue in the appropriate balancing of the collection rounds.
- 5.20 Bins for household waste and recyclable waste have been provided by the Council. In situations where there are large families or special circumstances additional bins can be provided. Therefore, every resident has enough bin capacity available to them if they manage their waste in an appropriate and responsible manner.
- 5.21 There should be no reason why a resident needs to place side waste. It is recognised that at Christmas time additional waste is generated and the service through this period would collect Side Waste.
- 5.22 The poor waste management by residents, is reflected in our low recycling rate and associated increased costs to the Council for disposal of waste.
- 5.23 A side waste policy is minimising the ability to increase recycling. If we can divert just 1% of household waste from the green bin to the blue bin it saves the Council c.£85,000 per year on disposal costs.
- 5.24 A further issue being reported and, on the increase, is that due to the side waste policy residents know the Council will just collect the waste presented. It has been found that many are placing their garden waste in their green bins to avoid paying for the brown bin service. They then place their household waste next to the bin in bags to be collected as side waste. This has further significant impact on RCV weights, tipping time and round collections.

## **6.0 Implementation of a No Side Waste Policy**

6.1 There is an appreciation that any change in policy to Side Waste collection would have to be delivered over several months as a comprehensive communication, education and advice process to residents would need to be implemented. The implementation of the arrangement would be applied City wide in line with collection round activities to ensure consistency of message and delivery operationally.

6.2 There would be a review of “hotspot” areas that would generate more intensive education and advice programmes as the policy of no side waste is implemented.

### **6.3 Implementation programme**

- **Month 1**

- Communications - to all residents, members, local residents' groups, Area Committees
- Social media
- Council Website
- Member information pack
- Residents' information pack

- **Month 2**

- Resident letter
- Video on waste management and recycling
- Assessment on who has not got a bin and who needs larger bin
- Continuation of communication messages
- Poster campaign – promote recycling
- Meet Area Committees

- **Month 3**

- Hotspot areas and properties targeted with letters and visits
- Continuation of communication messages
- Countdown announcement to Phase 1 of the implementations
- Undertake visit requests – to provide advice and education on waste management

- **Month 4**

- Phase 1 implementation - no more than 2 bags of side waste
- Education and enforcement officers to follow up all excessive side waste cases
- Interim LS support if required
- Continuation of communication messages - highlight implementation phasing and timescales
- Issue wider recycling messages

- **Month 5**

- Phase 2 implementation - no more than 1 bag of side waste
- Education and enforcement officers to follow up
- Interim LS support
- Continuation of communication messages - highlight implementation phasing and timescales
- Issue wider recycling messages

- Stickers on bins stating no side waste and promote recycling and good waste management practices
- **Month 6**
  - Full implementation of the No Side Waste policy
  - Communication messages providing advice
  - Education and enforcement Officers to follow up any incidents with letters and door knocking
  - Stickers to be issued on bins on No Side Waste if breaches
  - No Side Waste is collected by crews

## **7.0 Reasons for the Decision**

- 7.1 Having a No Side Waste Policy would improve environmental impact, health and safety and operational areas within the household waste collection service including the improvement of recycling rates and therefore a No Side Waste Policy is seen as a positive approach for the future of the service

## **8.0 Alternative options to be considered:**

- 8.1 The option of continuing with a policy of collecting side waste as part of the fortnightly household waste collection service was considered and rejected as the service would continue to face adverse environmental, health and safety and operational issues. It would also make the possibility of increasing the current recycling rates more difficult.

## **9.0 Impact Analysis**

- (a) **Equalities** – N/A
- (b) **Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)** – N/A
- (c) **Sustainability** – A No Side Waste Policy will encourage residents to increase recycling activity across the City
- (d) **Reduction of Crime and Disorder – Community Cohesion / Social Inclusion** – Through a No Side Waste Policy with a robust residents communication strategy and utilising education officers should see improved communities through less litter and rubbish and positively impact fly tipping

## **10. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations**

- (a) **Co-operative Values** – There are no implications
- (b) **Financial Implications.** – There are no financial implications to the Council with the introduction of a No Side Waste Policy. There would be potential financial benefits as the cost savings from increased recycling rates and lower fuel costs through less tipping requirements could be significant



- (c) **Legal Implications** – There is no legal requirement currently for Sunderland City Council as the waste collection authority to remove the side waste. The Council is not legally required to take household waste that is placed out for collection in contravention of instructions given by the Council as to how the waste is to be presented. Formal enforcement action could potentially be taken against the occupier(s) of any property if side waste continues to be presented at the property following the introduction of a No Side Waste Policy (if the Policy is approved).
- (d) **Health & Safety Considerations** – Health and Safety risks and guidance from the HSE have been assessed and evaluated and the introduction of a no side waste policy is supported
- (e) **Procurement** – There is no procurement implication
- (f) **Risk Analysis**- Health and Safety risks and guidance from the HSE have been assessed and evaluated and the introduction of a No Side Waste Policy is supported

