

## **DOMESTIC REFUSE & RECYCLING COLLECTION – POLICY & PROCEDURE STATEMENT**

**September 2010**

### **Introduction:**

The purpose of this document is to outline the Council's Refuse and Recycling Collection service and its associated policies.

The Council will be implementing and operating a weekly collection of food waste alongside a fortnightly collection of refuse for the majority of domestic households within the borough, whilst maintaining existing collection arrangements for the mixed dry recycling and garden waste services.

The following individual policies are covered by this document:

- 1 New Food Waste Collections – Containers
- 2 Fortnightly Refuse Collections
- 3 Collection Point
- 4 Assisted Collections
- 5 Side Waste
- 6 Additional or Different-Sized Containers
- 7 Property Suitability – Wheeled Bins
- 8 Damaged, Stolen or Dirty Containers
- 9 Recyclables – Acceptable Materials
- 10 Enforcement – Residual Waste
- 11 Enforcement – Contamination of Recyclable Waste
- 12 WRAP's Waste Collection Commitment

### **1 New Food Waste Collections - Containers**

- All households in the Borough which have individual refuse and recycling collections will receive a weekly collection of food waste. Households will be provided with a 5L silver kitchen caddy for use within the house and a 23L external black/orange caddy for presentation of waste for collection. The external caddy has a locking lid to prevent spillages.
- Households will also be provided with an initial supply of 13 compostable kitchen caddy liners. Householders will be required to purchase subsequent supplies of these compostable liners from local supermarkets or use newspaper to line their caddies.

- Food waste collections will occur on the same day as the refuse, recycling and garden waste collections. Households will present their external caddy out for collection at the boundary of their property by 7am on collection day.
- Households currently receiving a communal refuse and recycling collection will not be provided with individual caddies at the present time. Communal food waste collections will be investigated following the implementation of the individual household collections.

## **2 Fortnightly Refuse Collections**

- All households currently assessed as suitable for a wheeled bin refuse collection will receive fortnightly refuse collections alongside the weekly food waste collection.
- Households currently receiving a sack collection service for refuse will continue to receive sack collections and these households will remain on a weekly refuse collection; however will also receive a weekly food waste collection.
- Households currently receiving communal refuse collection services will retain these at the current emptying frequency.
- Fortnightly refuse collections will be on the alternate week to the mixed dry recycling collections.
- During the Christmas and New Year period, households will remain on fortnightly collections. Side waste will be collected only during this period.

### **Collection Point**

- The normal collection point for wheeled bins, caddies, boxes and sacks will be at the boundary of the property nearest to where the collection vehicles pass.
- The collection point will be located no further than 25 metres from where the vehicle passes. This brings Council policy in line with the most recent amendments (SI 2001/3335) to the Building Regulations 2000. This policy will be applied to all new developments, and may be applied to existing properties if risk assessments show the need for revised collection practices.
  - For example, in the instance of shared driveways, the presentation point of the container should be at the boundary of each individual property, so long as this point is not further than 25 metres from the road which the collection vehicle uses to service those properties.

- Where a variation from the normal collection point is applied (e.g. at the side/rear of property, at the end of a rear entry, at the nearest adopted highway) the occupants of the property concerned will be notified. The Council's decision as to where containers are to be presented for collection is final. Staff will be trained to use their discretion when determining this.
- Back alley collection will only be made in exceptional circumstances. A communal collection point will be considered in the first instance in such cases. Where this applies, containers will need to be labelled by the residents with their property name or number. The containers will need to be returned back to the properties by the residents as soon as possible after collection.

### **3 Assisted Collections**

- In situations where all occupiers are, through infirmity or disability, unable to take a 240 litre or 180 litre wheeled bin to the boundary, smaller (140 litre) wheeled bins may be considered more appropriate and will be offered. Reusable bags will also be offered as an alternative where this would help residents bring their own recyclable waste to the boundary.
- In situations where all occupiers are, for the same reasons, unable to place their own refuse or recycling containers at the boundary, assisted collections will be offered, where the containers will be collected from an agreed storage point. If an alternative container is not an adequate solution, the following procedure will be used to determine qualification for an assisted collection:
  - On taking a request from the resident, the Contact Centre procedure is to ask:
    - The reason for the request;
    - If a smaller bin (or boxes for recyclables) would be an appropriate solution;
    - If not, if there is anyone else in the household who can move the containers to the boundary and back;
    - If Contact Centre staff are satisfied that an assisted collection is required, this is logged onto the system for the contractor to action;
    - If necessary, however, a Council Officer will visit the property concerned to agree or determine the presentation point for the container(s). Following confirmation that an assisted collection service will be provided the collection crew will collect the appropriate container from the agreed location and put it back in the same place.
- Periodically the Council will review assisted collections to determine that they are still appropriate and required.

### **4 Side Waste**

- “Side Waste” means refuse or other waste materials from the household, left alongside the wheeled bin (or other container) or which prevent the lid from closing. (MBC Garden waste sacks are not classed as side waste and will be collected separately from refuse and recyclables.)
- No side waste will be collected when presented with the non-recyclable refuse bin, except for the two-week period containing the Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays in each year.
- Side waste of recyclable material will be collected with the recyclable waste container on the appropriate collection days, provided it is suitably contained in rigid containers (recycling box or cardboard box) and not in refuse sacks or plastic carrier bags.
- Due to the nature of the waste side waste should not be presented next to the external food waste caddy. Additional caddies will be provided where necessary.

## **5 Additional or different-sized containers**

- If a householder requests a larger or an additional recycling container because they are utilising the recycling container to its full capacity, a larger or additional container will be provided.
- If a householder requests a smaller bin for either refuse or recycling, this may be provided, so long as the resident is sure that they can manage with a smaller container.
- A “larger” household will receive a larger (240 litre) wheeled bin for non-recyclable refuse, on request. A “larger” household is defined as one where there are six or more people in permanent residence.
- Where a household of five or fewer people reports that they have insufficient capacity to store non-recyclable refuse in a standard (180 litre) grey wheeled bin, a visit may be made by a Council Officer to assess the situation.
- The Officer will seek to establish the extent to which the householder is currently recycling. If the householder is fully utilising the recycling facilities provided (either kerbside or bring sites) but can still demonstrate a shortfall in their bin capacity, a larger (240 litre) grey wheeled bin may be provided for refuse.
- Where the Officer deems that a household is not making full use of the recycling collection services they will not be given a larger residual waste wheeled bin.
- Additional food waste caddies will be provided where necessary to help alleviate problems with excessive refuse.

## 6 Property Suitability

- The criteria being used for assessing each property is similar to that adopted by the Health Committee in March 1999 for the introduction of the original wheeled bin service. Those criteria are:
  - The property should have access from its front to the rear.
  - If not, the property should have storage space at the front into which the bin would fit.
  - The bin should be capable of being moved by **the resident** from the storage position to the point of collection without the need to negotiate steps or loose gravel surfaces. However, if the resident wishes to have a bin and is willing to move the bin to the collection point over steps or gravel surfaces, a bin may be provided.
  - Narrow streets and parked cars may prevent the effective emptying of bins and properties on such streets may be excluded from the wheeled bin service.
  - For the purposes of the recycling collection scheme, it is considered that any frontage larger than four square metres is automatically suitable for storing two bins. Any properties with a frontage smaller than this may still be able to accommodate two bins, but if not, will be offered alternative containers for their recyclables.
  - Due to Health & Safety reasons wheeled bins will not be provided where **the collection crew** has to negotiate the bin over more than three steps between collection point and collection vehicle. In this case an Officer will visit to discuss alternative collection methods. Such properties will typically remain on sack collections for refuse and will be offered boxes for recycling.
  - The Council will provide a 180 litre container as the standard receptacle in which Council residents are asked to store their refuse, and a 240 litre container for their recyclables. However, there may be certain properties or other circumstances where a 180 litre bin for recyclables might be more appropriate and will be provided subject to an assessment with a Council Officer.
  - Where a weekly sack collection service continues to be provided the Council will provide 78 sacks per year in line with current policy. A householder can request a grey wheeled bin in which to store non-recyclable waste between collections, but must only present sacks for collection on the designated day at the correct collection point.

- Where weekly collection of residual waste continues, recyclables will be collected fortnightly, using a box or re-usable bag, as supplied by the Council.

## **7 Damaged, stolen or dirty containers**

- The Council will be responsible for the provision of replacement containers when damaged or stolen.
- Collection crews have a duty to report any damaged containers caused either through their activities or otherwise.
- The Council will not offer or provide a wheeled bin or caddy cleaning service during the implementation or operation of the new service; responsibility for cleaning containers provided will remain with the householder, should they chose to do so.

## **8 Recyclables – Acceptable Materials**

- Acceptable waste for the new weekly food waste collection scheme are:
  - All uncooked food;
  - All cooked food;
  - Meat (including bones);
  - Dairy products;
  - Fruit;
  - Vegetables;
  - Bread;
  - Compostable liners only;
  - Newspaper (for lining purposes only);

All food packaging must be removed prior to the waste being put into the internal or external caddy. Plastic bags must not be used to contain the food waste. Only compostable liners made from paper or potato starch are acceptable with the food waste.

- Acceptable recyclable materials for the mixed dry recycling scheme, which must all be empty, clean and dry, are:
  - Newspapers and magazines;
  - Cardboard and other papers;
  - Plastic bottles;
  - Plastic Yoghurt pots, margarine and ice cream tubs;
  - Steel cans;
  - Aluminium cans including aerosols;
  - Aluminium food trays and foil.
- Unacceptable materials for recycling collections are any not specified, specifically excluding:
  - Clinical waste including medicines, needles or syringes
  - Glass
  - Food waste
  - Plastic film, bags or sacks

- Scrap metal
- Expanded polystyrene foam
- Plastic wrapped items
- General household waste
- Wet materials
- LDPE (Cling film)
- PVC (sheets, paddling pools)
- Plastic toys, buckets, plant trays
- Hazardous materials
- Plastic foil laminated papers (drink cartons etc)
- Textiles
- Expanded polystyrene food trays

## **9 Enforcement – Residual Waste**

- Where a resident does not wish to participate in the service (for example, the resident finds the bin unsightly or they are not prepared to accept or use the containers provided) a number of steps will be taken to ensure that the householder is fully aware of how the service operates. These steps are set out below, the final step being to take enforcement action using powers given to the Council under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
  - If the resident fails to use the recycling or food waste collection service but instead stores all their waste in their grey refuse bin or sacks (if on sack collections) between refuse collections, then no enforcement action would be taken.
  - However, where a resident uses their recycling container for residual waste, the following steps will be taken:
    - (a) On the first occasion, the recycling container will not be collected by the recycling crew and a sticker placed on the bin by the crew explaining why the container hasn't been emptied, and that it will be emptied by the residual waste collection vehicle on the following week. Side waste arising from this incident will also be collected at that time.
    - (b) On the second occasion, the same procedure will be followed.
    - (c) On the third occasion within any rolling 6 month period, the Monitoring Officer will arrange to visit the resident to establish why the resident is failing to use the system correctly. An audit of the waste presented will be offered. This would entail sorting through the contents of the refuse container with the householder present. If recyclable material is found to be present, the resident will be given further advice on how to use the scheme.

- (d) If the resident then fails to use the system correctly, further enforcement action may be taken:
  - i. In accordance with Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council may serve a Statutory Notice to the householder to require waste to be placed within the containers specified. The authority is entitled to specify that separate containers are used for waste to be recycled and waste which is not recycled and to determine where such containers must be placed to facilitate the emptying of them.
  - ii. Any person that fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with the requirements of such a Notice they may be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100 in accordance with section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
  - iii. **However, any such action will only be taken as a last resort.**
- All households which are accessed as suitable for a wheeled bin for their refuse will be deemed suitable for fortnightly refuse collections. Whereby a resident presents their waste in sacks despite having a wheeled bin, a fortnightly collection will be maintained.

## **10 Enforcement - Contamination of recyclable materials**

- Recyclable materials for both the food waste collection and recycling collection must be of an appropriate quality (minimal contamination) to avoid loads being rejected at the Materials Recycling Facility or composting facility. Information about the correct materials for the food waste caddy and recycling container will be provided/made available to householders.
- Mixed Dry Recycling Contamination
  - Where a small amount of contamination is present in the mixed recycling the collection crew will collect the recyclables, but leave a sticker on the container informing the resident of what the contamination was.
  - Where a significant amount of contamination occurs, the container will not be emptied, and a sticker placed on the bin/box/bag. Householders will be advised to remove the contaminating material from the recycling container prior to the next scheduled collection.
  - Recycling collection crews will be instructed to lift lids of each recyclables bin to check for contamination prior to emptying.



- Where incidents of contamination are of a persistent nature (e.g. more than two collections), a letter may be sent to the householder and/or they may receive a visit from an Officer to reinforce what the householder should and should not be putting in their recycling container. The system of enforcement outlined in (9) above may also be used for persistent offenders, **but only once all other options for information and education have been exhausted.**
- Food Waste Contamination
  - Where any amount of contamination is present in the food waste caddy, the collection crew will not collect the waste and will place a sticker on the bin to advise the resident to remove the contaminant or bag the waste and put it in their refuse bin for collection.
  - Collections crews will be instructed to lift the lids of the external caddy and check for contamination prior to emptying
  - Where incidences of contamination are of a persistent nature (e.g. more than two collections) a letter may be sent to the householder and/or they may receive a visit from an Officer to reinforce what the householder should and should not be putting in their food waste caddy. The system of enforcement outlined in (9) above may also be used for persistent offenders, **but only once all other options for information and education have been exhausted.**