

TITLE	Litter Bins Task & Finish Group
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Community & Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 19 December 2023
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Neil Carr – Scrutiny Officer

PURPOSE OF REPORT

At its meeting on 2 October 2023 the Committee agreed to establish a Task & Finish Group to scrutinise the provision and emptying of litter bins across the Borough and to submit any recommendations to the Council's Executive. The report sets out draft Terms of Reference for the proposed Task & Finish Group as amended at the Committee's meeting on 28 November 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 1) agree the final Terms of Reference for the Litter Bins Task & Finish Group;
- 2) determine which Members will sit on the Task & Finish Group, using the Council's proportionality rules;
- 3) note that the Task & Finish Group will convene in early 2024.

Background

At its meeting on 2 October 2023, the Committee considered a report which gave details of the outcome of a public consultation exercise relating to potential changes and associated savings relating to the Council's Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance services.

The 2 October report invited the Committee to debate and arrive at a recommendation on whether the litter bins (identified for removal) should be retained or removed. The report noted the level of public concern relating to this proposal. It also noted that, should the litter bins be retained, the required financial saving would be forgone and would become a financial pressure to resolve. Having considered the report, the Committee recommended to the Executive that a number of proposed service reductions be implemented. However, it was noted that there was most public concern about the potential removal and reduced emptying of litter bins. The Committee recommended to the Executive that the proposed reduction of litter bins and reduced frequency of emptying of some bins was not implemented.

The Committee agreed to establish a Task & Finish Group to scrutinise the provision and emptying of litter bins across the Borough and to submit any recommendations to the Executive in due course. Draft Terms of Reference for the proposed Task & Finish Group were considered at the Committee's meeting on 28 November. The Committee agreed to finalise the Terms of Reference at the meeting on 19 December 2023.

Litter Bins - Task and Finish Group - Terms of Reference

Purpose - to review the Council's existing policies and procedures relating to the provision and emptying of litter bins across the Borough and make recommendations for improvement.

1. To consider the Council's current approach to the provision and emptying of litter bins with the aim of streamlining activity between service areas such as Highways and Country Parks.
2. To consider the detailed evidence from the 2023 public consultation on changes and potential savings relating to Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance services.
3. To consider the views of local stakeholders – residents, community groups, Adopt A Street groups and Town and Parish Councils.
4. To consider evidence from the Council's contractors and specialist groups such as Keep Britain Tidy.
5. To consider opportunities for improved partnership working with Town and Parish Councils in areas such as the Countryside Service.
6. To consider examples of best practice in the UK and abroad, including the use of behavioural insights (nudges) to reduce littering.
7. To consider potential campaigns to support behaviour change to prevent litter, including fly-tipping in bins, and increasing Anti-Social Behaviour enforcement (e.g. fixed penalties for littering).
8. To consider opportunities for commercial sponsorship of litter bins, e.g. shops and food outlets and encouraging businesses to take more responsibility for litter linked to their operations.
9. To consider the planning implications relating to litter bins, such as the location of food outlets and associated bins in new developments.
10. To consider the scope for financial savings through greater streamlining of provision and more effective partnership working.
11. To produce a final report to the Executive with recommendations for improvement and associated financial savings.

Proposed Witnesses

- WBC Executive Members and Officers;
- Residents and community groups, including Adopt A Street groups;
- Town and Parish Councils;
- Business representatives, e.g. Chamber of Commerce
- Best practice examples from other local authorities and the private sector;
- WBC's contractors;
- Specialist groups e.g. Keep Britain Tidy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces unprecedented financial pressures as a result of; the longer term impact of the COVID-19 crisis, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the general economic climate of rising prices and the increasing cost of debt. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are optimised and are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Recommendations to the Executive	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	As above	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	As above	NA	NA

Other Financial Information

No specific financial implications relating to the Task & Finish Group. However, its recommendations may lead on to financial impacts

Public Sector Equality Duty

To be considered as part of the work of the Task & Finish Group

Climate Emergency

To be considered as part of the work of the Task & Finish Group

Reasons for considering the report in Closed Session

None

List of Background Papers

None

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