



## Environment and Climate Change Committee

6 September 2022

<b>Title</b>	<b>Community Skip Service</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Chair of Environment and Climate Change Committee
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	Non-key
<b>Enclosures</b>	Appendix A, Equalities Impact Assessment
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### Summary

This report details the outcome of an options appraisal for the reintroduction of a free community skips service to help tackle fly tipping. The recommendations propose a delivery model that facilitates the service going live in line with the new administration's commitment in Autumn 2022.

Experiences and learning points from the operation of a community skip service by the council approximately ten years ago, has informed the development of the service design.

The recommended model will ensure the commitment is delivered in a safe and efficient manner whilst providing a high-quality and convenient service to residents, and in addition, help to deter fly tipping which is one of the main principles behind the commitment.

The Community Skip Service would operate at pre-advertised locations throughout the borough, where skips and vehicles would be available for residents to deposit bulky waste items. Residents will be able to access this service near to where they live four times a year.

It is proposed that the service will go live on a pilot basis from Autumn 2022 to allow service monitoring and analysis to be undertaken to assess service effectiveness and identify any service amendments or development opportunities.

## **Officers Recommendations**

- 1) That the Committee notes the contents of the report.
- 2) That the Committee delegates authority to the Street Scene Director to implement a non-chargeable Community Skip Service on a pilot basis from Autumn 2022.
- 3) That the Committee delegates authority to the Street Scene Director to implement any service amendments or enhancements arising from the pilot in consultation with the Chair of the Environment & Climate Change Committee.
- 4) That the Committee request the Street Scene Director to present a service progress report back to the Environment & Climate Change Committee during the first quarter of 2023/24.

### **1. Why this report is needed**

- 1.1 The new administration has made a commitment to reintroduce a community skips service.
- 1.2 Experience and learning points taken from the previous operation of a Community Skip Service by the council approximately ten years ago have been used to inform the development of the recommended option. This information has helped produce a service design that will deliver the new administration's commitment in a safe and efficient way and one that will be convenient for residents to access in the community.
- 1.3 The proposed option is for a free domestic service where skips and a caged tipper vehicle are deployed to pre-determined locations throughout the borough, providing an opportunity for residents to dispose of bulky waste items.
- 1.4 The service would operate once per quarter in a given area. Two service locations would be open in each area on each day, which would allow a vehicle to transfer between the two locations to swap out skips once they become full, whilst the cage tipper would be used to accommodate large domestic electrical items. There will be a supervisory presence available at each site to minimise misuse and ensure safe working procedures are followed.
- 1.5 The proposed scope of materials to be accepted is in line with the materials collected through the existing chargeable bulky collection service:

Large domestic electrical items	Large non-electrical household items
Cooker	Armchair
Dishwasher	Bags of rubbish
Fridges and freezers	Bed base
Tumble dryer	Mattress
Washing machine	Chair
	Chest of drawers
	Christmas tree
	Small table/dismantled big table
	Small wooden bench
	Small wooden gate
	Sofa/Sofa bed
	Wall unit
	Wardrobe

- 1.6 Residents will be able to dispose of up to three items per household through the service, which will be available once per quarter within an area operating between 7am and 1pm. Hazardous, construction and textile waste will not be accepted in addition to commercial waste or domestic waste from other boroughs. Domestic refuse and recycling is also not permitted due to these waste streams being subject to weekly kerbside collections.
- 1.7 As part of service mobilisation, a range of locations will be looked at to assess the feasibility of moving to a new location each quarter to provide a broad service cover. The choice of location will depend on suitability, accessibility and safety in the first instance.
- 1.8 Prior to the launch of the service, residential addresses will receive communication about the service, explaining what will be offered and how to use it. Households will also be signposted to further information on when and where the service will operate.
- 1.9 The option offers a number of benefits compared to the previous service offer:
- Reduced risk of abuse by businesses and non-residents by seeking proof of residency.
  - The ability to accept and suitably dispose of large domestic electrical items, commonly known as white goods, by taking them away in a caged tipper.
  - Greater ability to develop links with third sector organisations for reuse of good quality items which could have a second life.
- 1.10 All options considered for this service carry some potential risks that will be monitored and assessed during the pilot period, namely:
- A possible reduction in income from the existing chargeable special collection service, which collects bulky waste.
  - Unknown waste yields presented for disposal meaning efficient and effective operational deployment may be difficult. It is possible that a higher than expected take up of the service could see additional resources being required to clear all items, or items being left until additional crews can “mop up” later in the week.
  - Items may be presented on-street after the scheduled service has ended, or in the surrounding area. This would require additional resources to clear items which have been fly tipped.

- Residents may present an item that cannot be accepted or bring additional items above the three-item limit, and this may cause resident dissatisfaction and increase the risk of conflict which staff will be required to manage.

The recommended option may present accessibility issues for residents who are less mobile, however it is noted that the scope of the commitment was to reflect the principles of the service offered previously in order to help reduce incidents of fly tipping. The service was not intended to enhance the existing bulky waste service offer. Service locations will be resourced and staff will be able to assist residents who have presented items at the skip to place items directly into the skip, where needed.

Communication and marketing material for the service will recommend that residents try seeking help from friends/family or neighbours, and will also signpost residents to charities which offer bulky waste collections from within the property.

- 1.11 Should Committee be minded to approve the recommendation option, officers will explore the feasibility of setting up a booking system once the new service is up and running, and assess opportunities to improve the efficiency of the operation.

## **2. Reasons for recommendations**

- 2.1 The council has a commitment to reintroduce a community skip service to help tackle fly tipping. The option set out above is recommended as the most practical and beneficial option that can be rolled out quickly on a pilot basis.
- 2.2 A pilot approach provides an opportunity to assess service delivery and receive feedback from both residents and members.

## **3. Alternative options considered and not recommended**

- 3.1 Alternative options were considered in the development of this proposal. These included using refuse collection vehicles instead of skips, which would have significantly increased costs.
- 3.2 The use of skips alone was also considered but this would not enable large domestic electrical items to be disposed of appropriately. This option was also believed to carry a higher risk of misuse or fly tipping and therefore is not recommended.
- 3.3 An alternative model was also explored which was a mobile service, similar to the existing chargeable bulky waste collection service, which would be deployed to collect items from property frontages. This option is attractive from a resident perspective due to convenience and ease of use, however there was a lower degree of confidence that sufficient resources could be provided within the available budget to ensure the service would be completed each day. This model of service has a higher risk of fly tipping/non collected items spread throughout a wider area which would then require additional resources to clear. In addition, this model of service most benefits residents with a frontage on the public highway and it would be difficult to provide a similar level of service to residents living in flats above commercial premises, in private estates or housing estates, where there are existing arrangements to deal with bulky waste items. This option is not recommended.

## 4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 If the proposed option is approved, officers will develop detailed operational plans for implementing a pilot, secure the necessary staff and vehicles, and prepare communication plans to inform residents of the service, which will include further work on how residents will be able to check the location of their nearest skip.
- 4.2 Suitable locations for the service will be assessed, which will need to consider traffic and parking constraints to ensure minimal impact on the area during service operation.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the new service will commence in Autumn 2022.

## 5. Implications of decision

### Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)
  - 5.1.1 Finance and value for money: a budget for the service of £600,000 per annum for four years starting from 2022/23 has been approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022. The recommended option is presented with a high-level estimated operational cost as shown in the table below. This cost excludes potential additional disposal costs payable to North London Waste Authority (NLWA) which would result from any increase in waste that is collected and managed by the council. In addition, it should be noted that there is a potential loss of income through the existing chargeable bulky waste service should the demand for this function reduce. This is not quantifiable at this stage, but will be monitored as part of the pilot.

The annual cost of the proposed model is set out below:

Item	Cost (approx. per annum)
Vehicle hire	£115k
Staffing	£303k
Marketing, support and administration	£167k
Miscellaneous/contingency	£15k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£600k</b>

- 5.1.2 Procurement: options to either purchase or hire assets/vehicles have been assessed. It is proposed to initially hire the required vehicles to support the roll out of the recommended option as vehicle procurement lead times are at least 9 months and the existing fleet vehicles are already fully deployed. The lead times for hire of vehicles will depend on exact specification and supplier availability. Any procurement requirements will be managed by the service in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 5.1.3 Staffing: initially it is planned to recruit agency workers to operate the service. There is likely to be some redeployment of existing staff to support the service, which will run alongside the existing chargeable bulky waste collections service. This is subject to detailed operational plans to be developed by officers.

- 5.1.4 IT: there is an IT systems and data requirement to enable the service to define the area within which the service is to be provided on each service day, this is also linked to the requirement to provide advance communications to the residents eligible for the service.
- 5.1.5 Property: the service locations will be sited on the public highway/public land and will be assessed as described in paragraphs 1.7 and 4.2
- 5.1.6 Sustainability: the introduction of a non-chargeable community skips service may affect the overall household recycling rate performance, and result in more waste overall being collected by the council. The council's vehicle fleet will increase to deliver this service. Alternative fuel powered vehicles have been considered but lead in times for these vehicles and costs are prohibitive at this stage. This position will be monitored through the pilot period and changes made to the fleet once these issues can be overcome.

## 5.2 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.2.1 Included in the Terms of Reference for the Committee in Article 7 of Barnet's Constitution is: "Responsibility for all borough-wide or cross-area matters relating to the local environment including: • Air Quality • Cycling, Walking and Healthy Streets • Biodiversity • Transport and Public Transport • Grounds Maintenance • Highways • On-Street and Off-Street Parking • Road Safety • Lighting • Street Cleaning • Environmental Crime (including littering, fly-tipping fly-posting, and graffiti) • The Council's Fleet • Waste and Recycling • Waterways • Parks and Open Spaces (including allotments and trees) • Cemeteries, Crematoria and Mortuary • Trading Standards and Environmental Health (except Environmental Health functions relating to housing and fire safety)"

## 5.3 Insight

- 5.3.1 In developing options as described in this paper, officers have researched similar services provided by other local authorities. Brent Council provides a "community skip" service which operates on a ward by ward basis, twice a year with an average of 74 roads and 1,483 households per ward. Residents are free to deposit items at any ward event across the borough. Initially Brent used traditional skips manned by staff but have now stopped using skips, and instead use a refuse truck with a crew of two for general waste, and a caged vehicle with crew of one or two for all reuse, recycling, repurposed items. A Neighbourhood Manager and Recycling Education Officer is also deployed. The refuse vehicle is static in the ward for a two hour period. There is a no van policy, no garden waste or rubble is accepted. Flyers are posted in nearby streets and events promoted through Brent's communications team, on their website, banners and social media.

## 5.4 Social Value

- 5.4.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. This report does not relate to the procurement of services contracts.

## 5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 The Council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. Risks are reviewed quarterly (as a minimum) and any high-level risks will be reported to the relevant Theme Committee and Policy and Resources Committee.

5.5.2 In accordance with this framework, Street Scene service risks are regularly reviewed at service level and reported to Directors as part of the risk review process. Risks for individual initiatives and action have been gathered, monitored and reported as part of the Council's risk management framework.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 Section 149 of the 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

5.6.2 Having due regards means the need to (a) remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it, (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

5.6.3 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

5.6.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in respect of the proposals which is attached at Appendix A and considers how the proposals may have an impact on persons with protected characteristics.

## **5.7 Corporate Parenting**

5.7.1 There are no implications.

## **5.8 Consultation and Engagement**

5.8.1 There are no consultation requirements associated with the proposed service offer, however it should be noted that a communications plan will form part of the wider service implementation and any resident feedback from the pilot will be considered as part of the future service offer.

## **5.9 Environmental Impact**

5.9.1 The introduction of a non-chargeable community skips service may lead to a reduction in the overall household recycling rate performance, and result in more waste overall being collected by the council, in addition to additional vehicle emissions being emitted.

5.9.2 The service is intended to assist the council's effort to reduce the incidence of fly tipping across Barnet.

## 6. Background papers

6.1 None

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