

Appendix A - Streetscene Scrutiny Panel comments on the Resource and Waste Strategy Consultation.

Core Set of Materials

Concerns about whether the collection is going to be kerbside or collected in one bin.

Need to be sure that the materials being collected are genuinely recyclable and are not being shipped elsewhere as this has an environmental impact which counteracts the benefits of recycling.

Textiles should be included in the core materials – we have clothes banks across the Borough, but people don't realise that they can be used for recycling all textiles and not just usable clothing e.g. – rags, bedding, broken shoes etc.

There must be a market for anything that is collected, we don't want to be stockpiling materials that are classed as recyclable but are unable to dispose of them without there being a knock on environmental impact.

Separate Collection of Materials

It's clearly possible as several Authorities do it.

There are significant health and safety issues in respect of manual handling a variety of different collection systems.

Separate boxes at the kerbside will deter people from recycling and they won't bother to do it.

Much of the population – particularly flats and terraced houses, won't have storage space for all the different receptacles that would be needed. Any scheme that is developed needs to accommodate all residents.

There is potential to cause planning issues for new properties/developments with the need to ensure that provision is made for the various receptacles to be stored.

Need to be careful with regard to possible strain that could be put on residents from having to move several boxes and bins - possibly through their houses in the case of terraced properties.

Food Waste Collection

Concerns raised about the type of receptacle to be used – the possibility that it will encourage flies and maggots and that the smell would be bad.

Weekly collection is not frequent enough. It would need to be every couple of days- although it was noted that at the moment food waste is only collected every 2 weeks.

Concerns that wild animals might be able to access the food waste storage receptacles which would encourage vermin.

Concerns whether there is a market for food waste to be disposed of and even if there is, would there be interest in taking the volume that is created.

There was a suggestion that it would be useful to know how other Local Authorities deal with this type of waste collection and how they manage the challenges it brings before deciding whether to adopt it.

There are health & safety issues in respect of combined food waste that would need to be considered very carefully before deciding to proceed with this type of waste collection.

Government should make sure that if it proceeds with this proposal, any scheme that is implemented needs to be in line with best practice being operated by market leaders.

Free Garden Waste Collection

When the Council implemented its garden waste collection service it opted for sacks rather than bins as it was considered that sacks would be less of a nuisance than bins in terms of bad smells from rotting vegetation. Newer bins however do have holes in the bottom so that slurry doesn't form. The sack system has its own problems – mainly for operators. Any new system that is implemented needs to be the best solution for residents and for Council staff.

The current level of free collection provided by the Council is one 90 litre sack per fortnight. The capacity being proposed in the consultation is 240 litres which is the capacity of one wheelie bin and would be the equivalent of 2.5 sacks.

Waste Container Colours

Standard colours for different materials will help increase understanding nationwide and reduce contamination.

Costs of educating and encouraging people to recycle could be reduced as it would be possible to run nationwide campaigns if the colour scheme was standardised.

The colour should relate to the top of the bins only to avoid impacting on world resources by replacing entire bins unnecessarily.

Additional points discussed

The excessive number of questions in the consultation might deter people from taking part.

Frequency of Residual Waste collections– currently it is every 2 weeks which works well as there is a bin collection every week and people only need to remember which bin to put out rather than whether or not it's a week where there will be a collection.

A weekly collection would be preferable but it is not economically viable. Collection frequency could be affected by the time of year – weekly in the summer when it is hotter – although it would depend on what is in the bin as it wouldn't be so much of an issue if it was dry goods only and no food.

Some disappointment in the consultation – it steers views too heavily. There is no point recycling for the sake of it if there is no end market. Need to think outside the box and think of new solutions – for example, there are some companies in the UK that are converting plastics that can't be recycled back into oil.