

# Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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To: CABINET

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## Review of mixed recycling bring sites

### Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins from the district councils bring sites throughout the district.

### Purpose of report

1. For Cabinet to consider the results of the recent consultation with regards to removing the mixed recycling bulk bins at bring sites and confirm what course of action they wish officers to take.

### Corporate objectives

2. The proposal contributes to the corporate objectives of excellent delivery of key services and effective management of resources.

### Background

3. Bring sites have a mixture of bulk bins for mixed recycling and single stream containers for such items as textiles and small electrical items. In the past they played an important role in capturing recycling from residents. Since the introduction of the new waste collection service in 2009, residents are now able to recycle at the kerbside without having to travel to these sites. Residents can put out additional recycling in clear bags or cardboard boxes next to their bin on their collection day.
4. In late summer 2012, following continued fly-tipping and regular illegal disposal of trade waste, the mixed recycling bulk bins were removed from The Orchard Centre in Didcot

at the request of Hammerson, the leaseholder. We subsequently removed the bulk bins from the car park in Watlington in May 2013 at the request of the parish council who own the land. Hammerson has expressed its appreciation at the removal of the bins and has confirmed that since their removal, there has been very little fly tipping that it has had to deal with.

5. The removal of these bins took place without incident. After a three week grace period (during which Biffa continued to clean the sites), the responsibility transferred to the landowners who have been maintaining the sites ever since.
6. Around a year ago, Vale Council agreed to the removal of its mixed recycling bulk bins following public consultation. The removal caused no adverse reaction, reduced fly-tipping, and saved money.
7. We had negative press coverage this summer about misuse taking place at the district council's bring site in Grey's Road Car Park, Henley-on-Thames. The site was (and still is) being used as a dumping ground by residents and businesses.
8. In August 2014, Cabinet considered a paper on the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins from bring sites across the district. Appendix one lists the location of sites. Cabinet agreed to consult on the proposal to remove them.
9. The consultation attracted 31 responses, of which 21 were in favour of removing the bins. Those in favour of removal gave various reasons for their support, the most quoted reason was that their removal would help to keep the bring site areas tidier and reduce fly-tipping. They also welcomed the cost saving to the council. There were individual claims that removal of the bins would reduce the risk of vandalism, noise nuisance and deter companies using the sites for the disposal of commercial waste.
10. Eight respondents opposed the proposal. Their objections largely drew attention to the fact that mixed recycling bins at several bring bank sites are well used and to take the facility away would only add to the problem of fly-tipping elsewhere in the district. We have not seen increased fly-tipping when we have removed these bins in the past. Several respondents said that this problem would be better addressed by increasing the number of times the bins are emptied or introducing CCTV to deter people from misusing the sites.
11. Two respondents provided don't know responses but made comment on the proposal.
12. On the basis of the largely positive response to the consultation (albeit a very limited one); the evidence from previous removals in both South and Vale that there is no increase in fly-tipping; and the cost saving, officers recommend Cabinet to authorise the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins from all current locations. Where single stream bins are provided, such as for small electrical items, they will stay in place.

### Options

13. Continue with the service we currently provide - this would incur ongoing financial costs and the sites would continue to be abused.

## Financial implications

14. If the decision is taken to remove the mixed recycling bulk bins, Biffa will no longer need to visit all the sites, and they will only continue to service those sites with single stream containers. This will make a saving of £22,000 per annum.

## Legal Implications

15. There are no legal implications with the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins.

## Risks

16. There is a risk that some residents may be unhappy with the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins, and the consultation indicated a concern that more fly-tipping may occur in other areas. These concerns will be managed through educational and enforcement work carried out by the council's waste team, communications team, and the environmental protection team.

## Other implications

17. If Cabinet decides to remove the mixed recycling bulk bins, temporary signage will be put up on site in advance of their removal that will inform residents of the following:

- the date the removal will take place
- alternatives available including the fact they can leave additional recycling out for kerbside collection
- location of the nearest household recycling centre
- contact telephone number in case they have a practical problem resulting from the removal of the bins.

18. Press releases will be issued to inform residents of the action being taken and reminding them that additional recycling can be left alongside their green bin.

19. Where the sites are located on private land, officers will write to the landowners of the sites informing them of the proposal and agree the period during which the council will collect any fly-tipped material.

## Conclusion

20. Mixed recycling bulk bins have served their purpose and are no longer required. Anything that legitimately goes into these bins can now be recycled at the kerbside. They cost over £20,000 to empty and generate fly-tipping problems for which the council incurs additional expense. The public response to the consultation was very limited but raised no new issues that prompt officers to take a different view. Officers invite Cabinet to agree to their removal.

## Background papers

- Consultation response document

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