
REFUSE AND RECYCLING, SOROBA

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 As part of Service Choices the Council made a policy decision to collect general waste on a 3 weekly cycle and co-mingled recyclable material on a 2 weekly cycle for domestic households. This policy decision supports increasing the volume of material going to recycling and reducing material going to landfill. Three weekly collections were introduced in the latter part of 2016 with the 4 administration areas being phased-in one at a time over a short period of time rather than rolling out all 4 areas at once.
- 1.2 The new policy for 3 weekly collections has been rolled out to approximately 48,000 households. By and large the roll out has been smooth with only a small number of operational issues arising. These operational issues have been speedily dealt with when they occurred. The one exception being in the Soroba area of Oban. Soroba consists of a number of houses and a number of high rise tenement blocks. In general the collections from the houses works well but the tenement blocks have insufficient space around the blocks to accommodate both general waste and recycle bins. The majority of the houses are privately owned whilst the majority of the units within the tenement blocks are owned and managed by ACHA.
- 1.3 The houses have garden ground which allows most households to store their general waste (green) and co-mingled recycle (blue) bin within the grounds of the property. In the tenement area there are no individual garden areas to store bins and this is compounded by limited car parking which results in numerous cars parking on the carriageway in addition to the designated car parks, which are generally full outside the working day. This limits where recycle and general waste bins can be stored and larger 1100L (standard household bins are 240L) domestic bins have been provided as communal bins.
- 1.4 There is an over provision of general waste capacity in terms of the volume of bin capacity. However, given the limited storage opportunity around the tenement blocks there is no additional space to accommodate the required volume of recycle bins. There has been an issue with fly tipping waste material at or near to the communal recycle bins. Often fly tipping has been carried out adjacent to full bins when there has been capacity in other communal bins nearby.

- 1.5 Elected Members, residents, ACHA and Council officers met on 20th January 2017, and a further meeting took place on 9th February 2017 which also included residents. It was proposed that ACHA would explore the possibility of utilising the former bin storage areas within the closes of the tenement blocks for individual recycle bins which the residents would be responsible for presenting on the street on collection days. This was agreed on the basis that the council would provide individual recycle bins for each household, as it has done across the council area.
- 1.6 Unfortunately, when this option has been worked up it was found not to be deliverable. ACHA and Council officers have subsequently met and have agreed that new locations can be established on land that ACHA have control over. These locations to be used for positioning recycle bins which will be used as a community resource.
- 1.7 It is understood that ACHA have funding available which was secured for managing waste disposal on the Soroba development. ACHA have offered to make this funding available to enable areas of land that ACHA have control of to be converted to storage locations for recycle bins. The council would provide additional 1100L recycle bins to be used on a communal basis for residents of the tenement blocks.
- 1.8 Once the additional storage areas are in place, ACHA officers would lead on work, with support from the council's team, to ensure that the general waste and recycling is being correctly disposed of. ACHA tenancy agreements make provision to ensure that residents correctly dispose of refuse and the council have powers available to issue fixed penalty fines and make referrals to the Procurator Fiscal for fly tipping contraventions.
- 1.9 It is recommended that members note this report.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Since the introduction of three weekly refuse collections, there have been issues adjusting to the less frequent collections in the Soroba area of Oban. The Council agreed to provide a temporary additional uplifts until the issues around bin storage and space were resolved.
- 2.2 Land has now been proposed for use as a bin storage area to enable larger capacity bins to be located at Soroba which will enable three weekly collections to resume.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 Three weekly refuse collections were introduced across Argyll and Bute on a phased basis, with Oban, Lorn and the Isles rolled out in November 2016.
- 4.2 The area of Soroba in Oban is densely populated with tenement buildings utilising communal bins. The majority of residents are tenants of Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA). The communal bins were regularly overflowing which led to increased fly tipping and dumping in the area.
- 4.3 Elected Members, residents, ACHA and Council officers met on 20th January 2017, and a further meeting took place on 9th February 2017 which also included residents. At the meetings it was established that the properties to the front of the development are largely fine in that they have sufficient garden ground to accommodate both green general waste and blue recycling bins. Each property having individual bins for recycling and general waste.
- 4.4 The properties to the rear of the development are multi-storey tenement buildings with the density of development being very high. There is limited space outside these properties to allow individual bins. Large 1100L bins have been provided a

number of years ago, the actual capacity for general waste exceeds the Council's normal allocation (the total volume of the large general waste bin capacity per household exceeds the volume of storage provided to households who use a standard green bin). These bins are generally stored either on the street or just off the street and can be difficult to load onto bin vehicles due to the number of park cars preventing access from those areas.

- 4.5 Whilst there is over capacity for the general waste bins there is under capacity in the provision of recycling bins. There is physically no space to put additional bins on the street without compromising safety from blocking footways etc. When the tenements were built they included internal bin storage within the close areas. These spaces have not been utilised for bins for several years. ACHA had suggested that the close storage areas could be reintroduced. However, ACHA have now confirmed that this option is not viable. ACHA have now identified land within the Soroba area to provide additional space for bin storage. ACHA have confirmed funding to implement this initiative and develop the ground to a usable condition. This proposal will also improve access for the refuse collection vehicles. Discussions are ongoing between ACHA and Council officers with a view to progressing works on the ground and also developing a joint communication strategy for residents which will explain the changes proposed. It is anticipated that these changes will be in place by early summer. Ad hoc additional general waste collections will continue until the additional facilities are in place.
- 4.6 Currently additional collections have been taking place over and above the agreed policy position of three weekly collections for general waste. This position is not sustainable as there is no budget provision to manage this on a long term basis. Introducing additional capacity for recycle bins and also providing support, through ACHA and Council staff, it is anticipated that the Soroba area will be able to align with the rest of Argyll and Bute in terms of collection frequencies and the amount of material recycled.
- 4.7 There is also an issue with how the large communal bins are currently used with an element of fly tipping taking place. It is not clear if individuals from outside the area are fly tipping or if this is taking place directly by residents. Responsible disposal of waste is the responsibility of tenants and residents. ACHA tenancy agreements make provision to ensure that residents correctly dispose of refuse and the council have powers available to issue fixed penalty fines and make referrals to the Procurator Fiscal for fly tipping contraventions.
- 4.8 Once the additional storage areas are in place, ACHA officers would lead on work, with support from the council's team, to ensure that the general waste and recycling is being correctly disposed of. ACHA tenancy agreements make provision to ensure that residents correctly dispose of refuse and the council have powers available to issue fixed penalty fines and make referrals to the Procurator Fiscal for fly tipping contraventions.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report provides an update on the issues around refuse and recycling collections in the Soroba area of Oban.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1	Policy	Argyll and Bute's policy on refuse collection in Oban is for 3 weekly collections for general waste and 2 weekly collections for co-mingled recycled materials. Safe and appropriate disposal of waste is the responsibility of residents. The Council's responsibility is to collect waste that has been presented in receptacles provided to the residents.
6.2	Financial	From existing budgets
6.3	Legal	None Known
6.4	HR	None Known
6.5	Equalities	None Known
6.6	Risk	None Known
6.7	Customer Services	None Known

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