



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

RECYCLING IN COMMUNAL AREAS; WORKING GROUP

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & DEMOCRATIC
SERVICES.**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee with the response of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure & Heritage Services following the recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group, which was established to deal with 'Recycling in Communal Areas'

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2:1 It is recommended that Members acknowledge the Cabinet Member response following the recommendations of the 'Recycling in Communal Areas' Working Group, as set out at Appendix A.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At the meeting of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee held on the 27th of September 2018, Scrutiny received a [presentation](#) in respect of Communal Area Recycling from the Group Director- Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services, who outlined the barriers facing the service area, particularly when collecting from bin collection points (BCP's) across the County Borough.

3.2 The Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee **resolved** to set up a Working Group, tasked with improving communal area recycling across RCT.

3.3 The Working Group Members comprised of County Borough Councillors S. Bradwick (Chair), T. Williams (Vice Chair), D. Owen-Jones, G. Hughes, M. Weaver, W. Owen, W. Treeby, S. Pickering, G. Stacey and D. Grehan.

3.4 At its inaugural meeting on the 15th November 2018, the Scrutiny Working Group looked to establish two sub groups to oversee two specific programmes of work:-

- Recycling and the role of Social Landlords; and
- Recycling Enforcement issues

3.5 At that meeting, nominations were also sought for each sub group. It was agreed that a nominated chair, with the support of a lead officer, would organise the sub group's activities.

4. FINAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

4.1 The [final report](#) of the Scrutiny Working Group was submitted to the Cabinet on the 17th of October 2019.

4.2 The Cabinet **resolved** to approve the recommendations, subject to further deliberations in relation to recommendation xvi ([minute 63 refers](#))

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The review of the issues surrounding 'Recycling in Communal Areas' culminated in 16 recommendations from the Scrutiny Working Group.

5.2 The Cabinet subsequently agreed the recommendations, subject to further deliberations in relation to recommendation xvi.

5.3 It is hoped that this robust and comprehensive piece of work will improve communal area recycling in the County Borough for future generations.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Equality and diversity implications will be considered as part of any subsequent implementation arrangements.

7. CONSUTLATION

7.1 A consultation was undertaken in partnership with Newydd Housing Association.

8. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Financial and resource implications will be considered as part any subsequent implementation arrangements

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

9.1 The proposals in this report are consistent with the priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan, in particular "Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work".

9.2 The outputs of the Strategy will also assist the Council contribute to the Wellbeing goals that 'The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' has put in place:-

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972
as amended by
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL
List of Background Papers
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Item – Recycling in Communal Areas: Cabinet Response
Freestanding Matter

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Appendix A

Dear Councillor Bradwick,

Introduction

Thank you for your report of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee and the work undertaken by the working group in advising on the Council wide problem of excessive waste and contaminated recycling at communal bin collection points.

As a responsible Cabinet Member, I welcome the proposals that you, as a Committee have put forward and agree that in order for the Council to meet 2024/2025 recycling targets, proactive and creative recommendations are needed. It was most interesting to see just how important it is for the Council to consult with all stakeholders and how productive and efficient good team working is. This work has also demonstrated that building strong links with stakeholders is needed to remain sustainable particularly in times of austerity and changing external pressures.

It is pleasing to note that the Council have already implemented some of the recommendations with others being developed. I note from officers that the Council will be one of the first in the country to use technology to tackle such problems. The outcomes will result in a faster and more efficient service for all including customer services and of course, our residents.

Planning

The working group at its infancy identified a communication flaw between Planning and Waste on collection problems on new housing estates and developments. This has been quickly rectified with a simple procedure that allows Waste to comment on how communal bin collection points can be avoided or how they can be best designed (including signage and bin sizes) to allow for efficient collection and enforcement. Whilst this does not assist with current sites, it will certainly 'pave the way forward' for the future.

Technology

Waste are currently working with a company called WEBASPX in using technology to develop more efficient ways of reporting and communicating with stakeholders. Waste will soon be using these systems to implement a number of the recommendations as follows:

- To map out the properties assigned to a communal point so that communications and enforcement can be targeted. Data analysis software can then be used to identify low recycling activity against excessive black bags.
- With the use of technology and reporting software, the service can report 'Red/Amber/Green status' in 'live time' to enforcement and our external stakeholders such as housing providers and Fly Tipping Action for Wales.

- To measure and monitor performance that can be used to predict performance and areas that need significant improvement.
- To log the residents who require an assisted collection or may require an additional black bag allowance (for example for coal ash waste).
- To map where the flytipping is occurring in conjunction with Flytipping Action for Wales to identify patterns.

Schools

It is recognised that the school children of today will be tomorrow's recyclers and it is vital that recycling becomes part of their everyday life. Whilst learning should begin at home, forming healthy recycling habits can also be instilled at school, from infants through to further education students. Local schools should therefore be part of wider community projects as demonstrated by Scrutiny Committee when involving Heol Y Celyn Primary during the Rhyd Recycle Rescue project.

Since receiving the report I can report that Waste in conjunction with Education have submitted a bid for a Graduate Officer to research how schools can best use education to instil lifelong recycling habits. This will fully support recommendation 11 of the report.

Rhyd Recycle Rescue

The Rhyd Recycling Rescue initiative between RCT and Newydd Housing was well received by residents who commented that more initiatives like this were needed for the future. During the weeks following the initiative, the quality of recycling was improved and the number of black bags was reduced. It has however become evident that sites such as the trial site in upper Rhydfelin need a lot of monitoring as quality has fallen as our presence has reduced. However, with the introduction of re-designed communal bin collection points (in collaboration with Newydd Housing) as early as next month, and using WEBASPX to target poor performing residents our time will be more focused resulting in behaviour change.

It will be interesting to see similar work in another site to compare the results and sustainability.

Social Housing Providers and Flytipping Action for Wales

The work has highlighted how important it is to communicate with the six main social housing providers on a regular basis. There will be some common problems around communal bin collection points such as contaminated recycling, excessive black bag waste and fly tipped bulky items. The work also identified some 'quick wins' such as providing the main housing providers with recycling equipment and literature that can be issued to new and existing tenants.

The work has also highlighted the need to strengthen communications with Fly tipping Action for Wales as we benefit from the intelligence they hold and vice versa. Fly tipping Action for Wales are also knowledgeable of national initiatives and research campaigns that we and the social housing providers can learn from. Housing providers such as Newydd are keen to learn more on this major issue, particularly in Rhydfelin as their costs for removing fly tipping is increasing year on year. Newydd are considering offering e.g. 1 or 2 free collections a year as a cost saving exercise.

Legal Interventions

This area appears to be the most complicated, not helped by the fact that there is no similar work that has been carried out by another Council that we can learn from. There also appears to be GDPR challenges and privacy laws preventing the Council and housing providers from using CCTV at communal bin collection points.

The Council will be able to provide housing providers with performance data such as areas of concern and numbers of FPN's that have been issued. There is still a lot of potential to all in using performance data that will soon be readily available using the WEBASPX systems.

Enforcement

The service is not currently in a financial position to provide an extra two enforcement officers. However by using technology to target problem communal areas and improved collaborative working with stakeholders, we hope that behaviour change will negate the need for enforcement.

Conclusion

As the responsible Cabinet Member, can I again thank all of the Members for their involvement in this important piece of work; the officers who assisted you and the external stakeholders you engaged with. The strategy for changing communal bin collection points into areas that are sustainable and are of high quality will be a long term challenge requiring collaborative working from all.

I believe that taking forward the recommendations outlined within your review will contribute towards meeting future recycling targets and positively improve the Economic, Social and Environmental and Cultural well-being of the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf.