



<b>Subject:</b>	Update Report on Overfilled Bins and Bin liners
<b>Date:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen Leonard, Director Resources, Fleet and Open Spaces and Streetscene
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	John McConnell, City Services Manager (Resources and Fleet)

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</b>	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Information relating to any individual</li><li>2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual</li><li>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)</li><li>4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter</li><li>5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained</li><li>6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction</li><li>7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</li></ul>	
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
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1.1	To provide an update to members on the work being carried out in relation to the overfilled bins and bin liner collection issues.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>Key Issues</b></p> <p>Members will recall this matter was discussed in June and members requested that updates were presented to P&amp;C Committee at the August and September meetings. This report provides an update to members on progress to date.</p>
3.2	It should be noted that Corporate Communications have supported and continue to provide resource to Resources and Fleet through the communications and awareness raising elements of the plan. A summary of that activity is in Appendix A.
3.3	The Project Teams and their Resource Advisor colleagues within Waste Management have produced an engagement plan (Appendix B) based on the Implementation and Communications Plan approved by Council. Key Dates to be noted are as follows:
3.4	<p><b><u>Monday 4 August</u></b> – the beginning of <b>Amber tagging</b> bedding in period for 8 weeks. Collections continue as normal (i.e. overfilled bins and bins with liners still collected) with warning tag placed on bins and reporting by crews. Enhanced Resource Advisor Teams on ground raising awareness and messaging. Report it App data will be used to inform the engagement and targeting of resources on the ground. It will also be used to measure the impact of the programme during both the amber and red collecting to policy stages.</p>
3.4	<p><b><u>September P&amp;C Committee</u></b> – Further update report to members on the impact of the amber phase and the comms and engagement plan. This update will include a summary of the reporting data and highlight problem areas.</p>
3.5	<p><b><u>Monday 29 September</u></b> – planned start date for the beginning of <b>Red tagging</b> collecting strictly to policy phase. Overfilled containers will be tagged and will not be collected, and instances reported. Temporary additional clear up teams to be engaged Resource Teams, OSS and Enforcement Teams will be deployed to targeting remaining hot spot areas.</p> <p>Project Team progress as at time of writing of this update report:</p>
3.6	<p><b><u>Overfilled Bins – Domestic Waste</u></b></p> <p>The following actions are ongoing or are on schedule to be carried out as detailed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to strengthen the presence of educational and communications on the ground, additional Agency Resource Advisors have been recruited. Staff have received their full day of induction and training and advised on the work required, campaign details and timeframes around communications and engagement..</li> <li>• The Additional Resource Advisor Staff have been deployed and began operating in Urban Belfast from Monday 21st July. It is envisaged that this early messaging and later engagement will soften the landing of the bedding in and collecting to policy periods.</li> </ul>

- Briefing information and FAQs have been prepared and issued to internal stakeholders w/c 21st July. For example, this includes a 2-page collection crew brief with graphics and scenarios.
- Customer Hub have been made aware of timings, comms and sequencing around the campaign and have agreed a bank of FAQs to support any customer engagement around the proposed changes.
- Corporate Comms are preparing a member briefing pack with FAQs supplied. It is planned that these are to be issued on Tuesday 29 July alongside the main press release.
- The Project team have held briefings with operations managers and assistant managers and their crews.
- Community Outreach team are involved and have compiled a list of locations, areas and activity (e.g. Fresher's week) to support the campaign messaging w/c 21st July. Corp Comms have been included in this and will align their social media messaging to these events and amplify as appropriate. Campaign material has been provided to the Outreach Team to support their engagement.
- Campaign materials, letters, leaflets and posters have been printed and issued to the Resource Advisor Team to support resident engagement.. Example letter included in Appendix C. Engagement will be refined into the hotspot areas where overfilled bins are problematic based on reporting in the amber and red periods. Posters have also been delivered to all community centres and Household Recycling Centres to support the campaign.
- Trade Unions have been updated at the recent Resources and Fleet TU and Resources and Fleet Health and Safety fora. Messaging sent via Firetext to all teams on the ground w/c 21st July to align with other internal messaging and briefings.
- Internal Communications are running an Interlink piece in August and some messaging in community centre screens to inform staff of the campaign, many of whom are residents of Belfast themselves.
- Recent Summer City Matters had a 2-page piece around good bin behaviour and better recycling. The Autumn/Winter edition will also include a piece around the campaign and collecting to policy approach planned from 29th September. The project team have supplied this to Corporate Communications to include in the Autumn/Winter edition.
- Amber and Red Notification tags. An initial order of 40,000 amber tags has been placed, following a procurement exercise, which were circulated to crews and internal stakeholders w/c 21st July. This aligns with crew briefings etc planned for the bedding in period starting 4th August. Red tags will be ordered at end of August in time for Red Tag/Collecting to policy briefings with Waste Collection Operations Management.
- It is recognised that an additional hot spot area response team will be required from when we collect to policy. Planning has commenced to ensure that these posts will be in situ for the collecting to policy phase.
- The Resources Officer and team have been charged with compiling a distribution list of all agents, housing associations and management companies to advise on campaign and the application of the collection policies relating to all containers, including euro bins which are common at apartment blocks. This communication is based on campaign materials and letter to households and it is planned this will be issued w/c 28th July. The team have also arranged for some of the new campaign materials to be translated into alternative language formats to support households

whose first language may not be English. The Corporate contract for this service has expired and requires renewal, so the team have went out to quotation for this which may delay the arrival of the translations which ideally would have be in place in advance of 4th August.

- Waste Management Operations have increased stock levels of recycling containers in anticipation of increased demand as a result of the campaign. As the focus is on Urban Belfast, recycling box stock, in particular, has been increased to meet demand for additional or replacement containers. The project team will monitor the impact on orders and work with WM operations to ensure container supply is able to meet demand.

3.7

### **Overfilled Bins – Commercial Waste**

Ongoing and future activities are as follows

- A dedicated data gathering exercise is currently being conducted by the Project Officer with crews/rounds and customers to determine an average % of commercial customers presenting overfilled bins. This is due to be completed by **31st July** and will inform any additional resource requirements needed for Support Services to support the Commercial Waste team.
- A4 sized Amber and red stickers will be introduced as majority of customers use large euro bins and tags would be missed. These will reflect the same domestic messaging adapted for commercial customers. These have been designed and ordered to align with crew briefings. Commercial Waste timings will align with domestic actions.
- Support Services have been provided with a template letter to issue to all customers (approximately 3000) advising them of the campaign, the timelines involved and how to avoid overfilled bins. This letter was issued on the 25th July so customers will receive this info w/c 28 July onwards.
- Further work to refine a reporting procedure for commercial crews when collecting to policy i.e. no report it app use for commercial crews due to no integration with CREST so an alternative will be required to photograph and report Overfilled Bins from 29th September. The Project Team continue to work with Support Services and Comwaste Operations to resolve this issue.

3.8

### **Bin Liners – Domestic Waste**

Activities in relation to Bin Liners are as follows:

- All public messaging around bin liners has been incorporated into the wider messaging around the campaign and aligned to the same timeframes for overfilled bin policy.
- In terms of engagement with cleaning providers, all companies that could be identified as operating in Belfast in April 2025 were contacted. Only one provider, based in Newtownabbey replied with queries. All others were content with the information and approach and didn't think the policy would negatively impact their operations.
- A future generic update email has been drafted to update these providers and will be issued week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> July. Within the email there will be an offer to receive

	<p>physical or digital campaign materials, should they feel that this will be of assistance to their client base.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Project Officer will continue to engage with the individual company around their outstanding queries.</li> </ul>
3.9	<p><b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>There are no financial implications associated with this report. All costs will be covered from within existing revenue estimates.</p>
3.10	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessments</u></b></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications associated with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	<p>Appendix A – Corporate Comms timeline</p> <p>Appendix B – Engagement Plan</p>