



Subject:	Belfast City Council Litter Bin Updates
Date:	7th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Stephen Leonard, Operational Director CNS
Contact Officer:	Edel Gowdy, Lead Officer OSS

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

☐

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained.
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.
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues																		
1.1	To update members on the various elements of our litter bin improvement programme, and to seek approval for its proposed next steps.																		
2.0	Recommendation																		
2.1	Members are asked to: <div><div>a.</div><div>Note the update on the SMART compactor litter bin pilot, and approve the recommended next steps;</div></div> <div><div>b.</div><div>Note and approve the proposed streets to be considered for additional litter bins as part of the coordinated approach to tackling dog fouling.</div></div> <div><div>c.</div><div>Note the outworkings of the litter bin audit and condition survey, and ongoing work to upgrade litter bin stock.</div></div>																		
3.0	Main Report																		
3.1	SMART compactor Litter Bin Pilot <p>In November 2024, 24 of our standard litter bins were replaced with 10 SMART compactor litter bins within the grounds of the City Hall, as part of a pilot. We subsequently extended the pilot to cover the busy summer months, when usage of the grounds at lunchtime, and generally throughout the day, is much higher. Therefore, putting a greater demand on the litter bin provision and collections.</p>																		
3.2	Table one below demonstrates the estimated labour time saved on servicing litter bins at City Hall, by installing SMART compactor bins. By reviewing bin fullness reports within the software, our operational team can adapt to reduce the number of collections required throughout the day and attend other priority cleansing operations.																		
3.3	Table One <table><tr><th colspan="3">Belfast City Hall</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Previous Standard Bins</th><th>BigBelly Bin Locations</th></tr><tr><td>No of bins</td><td>24</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Average Empties per day per bin</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Total Empties Per day</td><td>72</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Emptying time (no of mins)</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr></table>	Belfast City Hall				Previous Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations	No of bins	24	10	Average Empties per day per bin	3	1	Total Empties Per day	72	10	Emptying time (no of mins)	2	2
Belfast City Hall																			
	Previous Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations																	
No of bins	24	10																	
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Total Empties Per day	72	10																	
Emptying time (no of mins)	2	2																	

	Total mins per day attending bins	2hrs 24mins	20mins															
3.4	In addition to the labour time savings, the SMART bins technology provides useful insight into individual bin collection volumes over a six-month period. This provides the team with data that can be used to inform better bin placement. Making better use of our litter bin stock and operative time overall.																	
3.5	Our operational teams have noted that on occasion the compactor mechanism jammed, usually due to very large pizza boxes, meaning the bin is not usable until this is remedied. In these instances, the software will notify area teams when this occurs. There is also the option of installing a 'pizza belly' bin, which is designed to dispose of all sizes of pizza boxes specifically.																	
3.6	Officers are seeking approval from members to extend the SMART litter bin provision further into the City Centre and propose to install an additional 26 bins at various locations around Donegal Square, Donegal Avenue and Royal Avenue. This extension will also include locations within the BID areas, as agreed with partners.																	
3.7	In addition to this, officers are exploring the option of installing SMART litter bins at various 'hard to reach' locations within the neighbourhoods, as well within our parks and our playparks. For example, Cavehill car park, Upper Hightown road. And hopefully reducing unnecessary down time and fuel costs, when these bins are not approaching the required level of fullness to be emptied. This would be particularly helpful in the winter months when our playpark inspection programme reduces. Table two below provides an indication of the impact on the service in terms of a reduction in daily litter bin emptying time. This reduction means that operatives can be redeployed to other tasks including litter collection and bin maintenance etc.																	
3.8	Table Two <table><tr><th colspan="3">Belfast City Hall & Donegal Place/Sq to Royal Ave.</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Standard Bins</th><th>BigBelly Bin Locations</th></tr><tr><td>No of bins</td><td>50</td><td>26</td></tr><tr><td>Average Empties per day per bin</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Total Empties Per day</td><td>100</td><td>26</td></tr></table>			Belfast City Hall & Donegal Place/Sq to Royal Ave.				Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations	No of bins	50	26	Average Empties per day per bin	2	1	Total Empties Per day	100	26
Belfast City Hall & Donegal Place/Sq to Royal Ave.																		
	Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations																
No of bins	50	26																
Average Empties per day per bin	2	1																
Total Empties Per day	100	26																

Emptying time (no of mins)	2	2
Total mins per day attending bins	3 hrs 20 mins	52 mins

3.8

Dog Fouling Hot Spots – Enhanced Litter Bin Provision

Since January 2025 officers have been conducting a dog fouling reduction pilot within OSS North. A report will be brought back to members on the full outworkings of that pilot. Alongside this work an officers coordination group, aimed at tackling incidents of dog fouling across the City, has been established. As part of the action plan this group has extracted information from the customer hub on the streets with the highest number of dog fouling complaints during the period 01 April 2021 - 01 July 2025. Using this information together with data from our quality monitoring returns and OSS management insight, the streets listed at Appendix B would be the focus for the next phase of targeted interventions, including increased patrols by dog wardens as well as a review of litter bin provision, to include consideration of a mix of post mounted and standard litter bins, with dog fouling stickers affixed to the sides. All locations are subject to location suitability assessment. Members may have anecdotal information on other streets / areas to be considered, and officers are happy to engage on those areas to consider how provision could be improved.

3.9

Litter Bin Condition Survey Update

The following information is provided by way of update on the standard litter bin upgrade programme;

- Since the litter bin provision contract has been put in place a total of 200 bins have been replaced across the Council area. Members are reminded that those bins that required replacement or installation due to a health and safety issue have been prioritised. Following that litter bins in a very poor state of repair are replaced.
- We have a total of 463 bins requiring replacement across the city. These are bins which have a significant amount of rust, have been damaged irreparably and been removed or individual mechanisms have been broken (ash trays/locks etc). We are working with property maintenance unit on a programme of replacement.
- We have 518 litter bins which require general maintenance. This includes painting / graffiti removal. Operational teams are using this information to inform a regular programme of maintenance, which will work in tandem with the new sharps and bin maintenance team.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our ability to replace litter bins is dependant upon regular supply and capacity within the property maintenance unit to carry out replacements and or installations. There have been delays with supply due to an issue within the supply chain. This has now been resolved. Replacement and installation are carried out by the property maintenance unit, and is dependant upon capacity.
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no financial or resource implications within this report. All actions to date, and proposed actions regarding the SMART bin can be covered within existing service revenue budgets.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessments associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices
4.1	Appendix 1 - Area / Streets focus for Dog Fouling Litter Bin Provision