



Subject:	Secure Needle/Drug Waste Bin Delivery Update
Date:	Tuesday, 6 th October 2026
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan – Operational Director, City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Pól Hamilton – Lead Officer, Neighbourhood Services Katharine Browne – Safer City Coordinator

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	☐

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes ☒ No ☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on use of Belfast's first outdoor needle disposal bin, located in the Council's Little Donegal Street Car park.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	For Members to note the contents of the report.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Background and Context</u> A Notice of Motion was passed on 1st November, 2023 which committed Council to "working with relevant partners, including the Public Health Agency, Government Departments, PSNI, BIDs, businesses and organisations supporting the vulnerable in the City centre core, towards the installation of specific needle/drug waste bins in key locations that are known to have high incidences of needle finds."
3.2	Several meetings were scheduled with key partners to discuss feasibility, risks, costs and management of such needle disposal bins, and the Public Health Agency (PHA), as the body responsible for needle exchange services across NI, agreed to purchase one bin and work in partnership to deliver a pilot initiative.
3.3	Council Officers were tasked with reviewing data on areas with high incidences of needle finds, liaising with landowners about potential installation as well as monitoring and disposal of the needles once the bin became operational. Several sites were considered, and recommendations brought to the People and Communities Committee on 8 th April, 2025. At this meeting it was agreed at the bin would be located within Little Donegal Street car park.
3.4	The bin was installed in September 2025, with Community Safety staff inspecting the bin on a quarterly basis to ensure its integrity and to record figures for disposed needles. The bin showed low level usage during the initial first three quarterly inspections however following an inspection on the 22nd of September 2026, marking approximately one year of use, there was evidence of an increase in use and disposals. The annual itemised results included , 295 needles which were safely disposed of, with a breakdown as follows: • 170 loose needles (x169 0.5ml/1ml needles and x1 2ml needle) • 6 small, closed sharps bins containing between 3-5 needles each – totalling 25 needles • 1 medium-size sharps bin which could not be opened – contents unknown • 1 sealed plastic bag containing x100 needles plus syringes • Several open containers used to dispose needles within, total included within the loose needles above (bottles, bags and sharps boxes with no lids) • 1 bin bags worth of waste, both drugs related i.e. wrappers, spoons, wipes and water vials, and other general waste i.e. bottles and food containers
3.5	All of the items will be disposed of safely via Council's existing waste disposal processes.
3.6	The numbers disposed of represent a small percentage compared with those removed by teams across Council - Cleansing, Parks, Facilities and Community Safety staff all routinely remove discarded sharps from public spaces. However, the bin has shown that such a facility

	can play a part in reducing the harm and fear that can be caused by inappropriately discarded sharps.
3.7	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> The PHA purchased the needle disposal bin. Monitoring and disposing of any discarded sharps will be managed within existing budgets of operational teams involved in needle disposal for the Council.
3.8	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessments</u> There are no good relations or rural needs impacts associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
4.1	None