



**Prosperous Communities
Committee**

Tuesday, 30 January 2024

Subject: Response to Motion at Council re: Litter and Dog Bins

Report by:

Director of Commercial & Operational Services

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To respond to and update on work on Motion 1
from Council on 6 November 2023

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. Prosperous Communities Committee accept the Motion as presented to Council on 6 November 2023; and**
- 2. Prosperous Communities Committee approve the ongoing work to affix asset numbers and QR codes to litter and dog bins in the District.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None from this report

Financial : FIN/125/24/SSc

No financial implications arising from this report.

Staffing : Operatives will affix QR codes and asset number to bins as part of their normal duties. There are no new demands on the Systems Development Team as the work is already programmed in.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : None from this report

Data Protection Implications : All data collected through this proposal will be processed in line with the Council's Data Protection policies and procedures

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: None from this report

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: None from this report

Health Implications: None from this report

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

Wherever possible please provide a hyperlink to the background paper/s
If a document is confidential and not for public viewing it should not be listed.

Risk Assessment : The main risks are failure of the system or residents not embracing the new regime. Full testing and ongoing maintenance of the system will mitigate against system failure. The Comms Team will ensure the new procedure is effectively communicated.

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

x

Executive Summary

At Full Council on 6 November 2023 the following Motion was raised under Motions Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No. 10 by Councillor Fleetwood;

“Many members of this Council will have in recent weeks been walking round their local communities. Some will have met other people walking for health benefits or exercising their dogs, which many people have added to their households in the last couple of years.

During April, it was brought to my attention that some litter and dog bins were filling up very rapidly and that some were very full. While it might appear very easy to request that any particular bin is emptied, this can become a lot more cumbersome and complicated when trying to explain the location of that bin to the District Council who own and look after so many across the District. After a little research I discovered that some other Councils put an asset number onto each bin and this seems a good idea to me, if for no other reason than trying to manage any particular bin that might need a repair or replacement.

But with a little more thought, if a bin had an asset number on it, say DB1 or LB1, then a further two stickers could be added. The first would be to put a simple notice on saying ‘if this bin is full or in need of repair, please ring the District Council with the phone number for the right department’ to enable it to be actioned quickly, and the second would be to put a QR code (quick response digital image) on the relevant bin so in these times of digital technology the entire process could become automated and offer a 24/7 service to the residents.

Environmentally this would help to keep the area more beautiful, from a health perspective it would keep the area cleaner and from a management angle the entire system would become easier to maintain.

As Opposition Group Leader, I therefore call on this Council to support me in requesting that the Prosperous Communities Committee explores the feasibility and financial implications of introducing asset numbers on all District Council litter and dog bins; plus an information sticker detailing how to report a full or damaged bin to the Council for collection, and a QR code on each bin as an automated alternative for contacting the Council to report a full or damaged bin.”

The Chairman thanked Councillor Fleetwood and drew Members attention to Council Procedure Rule 10.4 “*if the subject of a motion comes within the remit of any committee(s), it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee(s) for consideration and determination.*”

The Chairman indicated, whilst he had some discretion, he would on this occasion be applying Rule 10.4. As such a seconder for the motion was sought and received and on that basis the Chairman advised the matter would stand referred for determination, with no requirement for a vote.

The Motion submitter was advised he would be invited to Prosperous Communities Committee, when the motion was considered and determined,

and the Chairman indicated he trusted Officers would bring this forward in as timely manner as feasible.

This report provides a response and update on work undertaken by Officers in this area.

1. Current Reality

- 1.1 Currently, there are 1,749 litter and dog bins in the District. Operational Services have a full list of these assets and they are plotted on internal mapping systems and included in Route Round Risk Assessments for operational staff.
- 1.2 Residents who wish to report full or damaged bins can do so by completing an online form or calling the Customer Contact Centre. It can be difficult to report the exact locations of these bins as there are often more than one located in the relevant street or postcode, or bins may be located in an area which doesn't have a postcode.
- 1.3 Reports of full or damaged bins are passed on to operational staff who work to resolve the issue as soon as possible. There is currently no feedback mechanism, the only way for residents to find out if work has been completed is to call the Customer Contact Centre, this increases the demand in that area.
- 1.4 The Council has recently procured a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. This system is gradually being implemented into service areas and making positive changes to the customer experience.
- 1.5 One example of this would be the new fly-tipping reporting regime. Anyone wishing to report fly-tipping can see the status of all current reports via an online map. This reduces repeat reports and follow up calls to the Contact Centre. For new incidents, reports can be submitted on a variety of devices and can easily define location and attach photos. If they choose to leave their contact details, reportees are then informed via e-mail (and in future via text message) when the work has been completed.

2. Motion Response

- 2.1 It is proposed to bring a similar approach to reporting issues with dog and litter bins as currently in place for fly-tipping.
- 2.2 The Systems Development Team have been working on a process where each litter and dog bin would have a unique identifying Quick Response (QR) code fitted on to it.
- 2.3 The QR code would be affixed to the bin using a sticker, each sticker will also contain the phone number of the Council and a unique asset number to enable residents to report full bins through traditional means.

- 2.4 People can use their smart phones to scan the code and report the bin as full or damaged.
- 2.5 Reports would immediately be sent to mobile devices used by street cleansing staff, who will then endeavour to empty or repair the bin in a timely manner.
- 2.6 There will be an option to leave contact details, so progress with the work request could be sent to the customer.

3. Timeline

- 3.1 In order to avoid new costs, it is proposed that street cleansing operatives will affix QR code stickers to bins as part of their normal working routine. Given the high number of these assets in the District, this will take a number of weeks.
- 3.2 Concurrently, the Systems Development Team will continue to work on the process, this means it should be ready to go live during April 2024.
- 3.3 The Comms Team will ensure the new process is publicised in order that residents and visitors are aware of it.

4. Finance

- 4.1 The Systems development work on the CRM system is programmed in already so no new costs are forecast. Also, as stickers will be affixed by operatives as part of their normal work, no new costs are forecast.
- 4.2 The only new cost will be for the QR code stickers which will include an asset number for each bin and traditional reporting procedure details. Officer research has identified that the cost of these stickers is minimal and can be underwritten by current service budgets.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The recommendations resulting from this report are that;
 - Prosperous Communities Committee accept the Motion as presented to Council on 6 November 2023; and
 - Prosperous Communities Committee approve the ongoing work to affix asset numbers and QR codes to litter and dog bins in the district