

## **Appendix 1: South West Ward Waste Collection Assessment and Engagement**

### **1.0 Introduction and Brief**

West Lindsey District Council is keen to identify ways to improve the area by using the most suitable and effective waste collection methodology. By doing this we hope to improve customer satisfaction and prevent waste collection and related street scene issues from having a negative impact on the local environment. The South West Ward (SWW) area has long been identified as a priority neighbourhood in which environmental improvements are to be delivered, in the context of wider proposals for the area. These include Gainsborough South West Ward Strategy 2018 which was recently presented to Members. This is because the SWW area has been identified as a neighbourhood exhibiting particularly significant problems.

This waste collection assessment is being carried out firstly, in order to understand residents' satisfaction levels with the service, then to gain a sense of what improvements they might like to see and finally to allow us to look to develop a range of positive interventions that would have a positive effect in the area. These would be developed and worked up alongside stakeholders such as community residents groups, landlords and local businesses to be delivered alongside existing strategies and actions that are being taken to improve the neighbourhood.

In a 2018 report to Members, West Lindsey District Council's vision for the area is set out again as being; 'to make the South West Ward a proud and vibrant neighbourhood where people choose to be.'

This assessment and subsequent engagement will examine ways that the council's waste collection service can contribute to this aim.

### **1.1 Project outline**

The key elements of the work are set out as follows:

1. **Community Engagement** – the undertaking of extensive and wide ranging engagement with all sections of the community. This element is central to successfully undertaking this work as it is important that local communities and stakeholders are properly and genuinely engaged and have their voices heard in the process. It is important to understand perceptions and feelings about the service as it is now before diving into 'top down' solutions so that we can understand what residents like and don't like about the service. In this way, any proposals and solutions for an area that are put forwards as a result can claim to have been properly and genuinely shaped by the local community.
2. **Analysis of local Environmental and Amenity Survey** – review of pre-existing conditions in the area before and after collections and at given times during the week. Survey of individual streets with information about types of waste and supplementary materials recorded over an 8 week period in order to provide a comprehensive assessment of environmental conditions and collection issues.
3. **Waste Collection Assessment** – Drivers and trends in waste collections. An overview assessment using a combination of 'desk top' research, plus officers' existing knowledge and that which can be gleaned from liaising with other local authorities, APSE, LARAC etc. Officers will examine trends and to link in with local and national waste agenda.
4. **Enforcement Assessment** – assessment of the impact and significance of a range of actions that are somewhat related to waste collections, with work to identify those that have a strong positive impact on the area

5. **Option Generation, Development and Appraisal** – the compilation and high level assessment of a wide range of potential options undertaken in a manner consistent with existing work. Depending on the outcome, these may then be subject to consultation.
6. **Equality Impact Assessment** – an overview style assessment designed to identify the potential impact and ‘accessibility’ of any proposed interventions and actions on the community.
7. **Strategy & Action Plan** – the production of a strategy, accompanied by a detailed schedule of actions, with target dates and responsibilities.

## **1.2 Project Management**

It is recommended that the progress of the assessment and consultation should be overseen by a small steering group comprised of Council Members with a particular interest in the project and detailed knowledge of issues and challenges faced by local area. The Operational Services Team Manager and members of staff from this department, business improvement and the council’s enforcement team will form a project group and take the work forwards.

## **1.3 Assessment and Engagement Approach**

The assessment and engagement will be carried out in a series of logical steps so as to ensure waste collection options are thoroughly examined and appraised when considering alternative actions for the area. Amongst the first of those steps will be an engagement exercise with residents to examine current attitudes towards the service and participation. This iterative approach is in line with best practice and will enable us to ensure appropriate resources are directed at each stage. Officers do not believe that it would not be appropriate to spend large amounts of time developing solutions without first gaining a better understanding of the baseline satisfaction levels and taking proper consideration of the views of the community.

To this end, it is important to understand what has gone before. A wide ranging consultation and engagement project was carried out in 2010 with the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA) study of the area, including the SWW area, was commissioned in order to develop a range of positive interventions for the area, to be delivered through a regeneration strategy and action plan.

No satisfaction survey focusing exclusively on waste collections has been carried out in this area since that time. Whilst residents in the SWW area were previously described as ‘consultation fatigued,’ (a good deal of consultation had taken place in the area but it could be argued there had been little action taken) officers feel it is now appropriate to look to measure satisfaction levels again and look for suggestions for how things could be improved. Elements 1 -4 of this project will be done in combination before moving onto the latter steps.

This approach broadly reflects the key elements of the motion submitted to Council in July 2018. However, officers will offer constructive challenge to this motion where it is felt appropriate and will offer their own thoughts and suggestions as to how the Council’s overall objectives can be met – all with an eye on achieving best results for residents at minimum cost. A starting point will be an assessment of current collection methods and environmental conditions before and after collections, with a baseline review of satisfaction levels.

## **Context & Boundary Setting**

The work will identify measures within the SWW area which are already in progress or which are in the planning stages. Officers will visit the area regularly and according to a schedule in carrying out environmental assessments and also compare with areas of similar deprivation that are serviced in the district using wheeled bins. The environment would be looked at comprehensively within the assessments. This is to look at whether it can be judged that it is

the “collection system [that] results in poor environmental health issues and poor living conditions” as the motion to Council in July 2018 contended.

## **Community Engagement**

Waste Officers believe that consultation and engagement with the community is central to designing waste collection improvements and delivering changes. The service has a history of doing this with a move to chargeable garden waste collections and before that, alternate weekly collections. Officers are passionate about ensuring that local communities and stakeholders are properly and genuinely consulted and engaged in designing services. It is only in this way that proposals and solutions for an area can claim to have been genuinely shaped by the local community.

For this reason, and because of particular sensitivities in the SWW area, officers will ensure that this assessment and any subsequent consultation has been filtered through national guidance and WLDC best practice procedures before being launched. The author of this report has met with WLDC’s consultation specialist and following these discussions, officers do not feel it is appropriate to consult on possible waste collection options until the initial work has been carried out. Officers are wary of raising expectations in a community where promises have been unfulfilled before.

Instead of this, officers feel that the following initial engagement and assessment processes are most appropriate in order to produce a bespoke piece of work which meets the particular needs and requirements of this area.

Looking at the motion, we have produced a strategy which will deliver on establishing:

- The views and concerns of residents, landlords and business owners about the area
- Positive and negative views about the waste collections in the area
- Aspirations for waste collections for householders in the area
- Aspirations of businesses and other stakeholders about collections in the area
- Priorities for improvement to collections and the general environment.

In order to meet these specific requirements officers are proposing:

### Newsletter delivered with a new bespoke calendar

A simple, full colour 4 page newsletter to be sent out at the beginning of the study period. The information will be simple and presented in a visually appealing way. Delivery will be undertaken by our own staff posted in conjunction with previously scheduled delivery of waste collection calendars to minimise postage costs.

Officers would also work with our housing department to deliver information known property owners (including businesses) within the study area, together with a wide range of potential stakeholders as a means of launching the study, explaining the work going on in the area and keeping people informed. Further news releases on the progress and outcomes of the project would be delivered according to a communication plan that is being developed. The launch newsletter would succinctly summarise items such as the background to the study, the reasons for asking residents for their views how people can get involved, the timescale of the project, and the potential outcomes. Subsequent communications would focus on early feedback, project progress and potential options.

### Resident Survey

Officers are wary of the aforementioned 'consultation fatigue' within the area and a review of recent communications and consultation is being done. Officers feel that particular care needs to be taken when the views of the community are being sought and an initial satisfaction survey is being proposed with opportunities for residents to put forwards any suggested improvements to waste collection services. If it is felt necessary by Management Team / Members to secure a higher response rate, then a postal questionnaire and free post reply envelope could be sent with the launch newsletter to all households in the SWW area. Officers recommended approach would be an online survey with hard copies available at local community venues and the Guildhall. It is proposed that respondents would be entered into a free prize draw.

### Drop in sessions

Qualitative feedback would be sought from drop in sessions at the Guildhall and community venues such as Trinity Arts Centre, X church and Benjamin Adlard School. Times will be arranged in advance and publicised in the newsletter. They will be conducted in times that give maximum opportunity for stakeholders to get their views heard, including some evenings and weekends.

**Other potential engagement options are included below alongside officers' recommended approach (highlighted)**

**Options for residents' consultation on the waste collections in the SW Ward of Gainsborough.**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>	<b>Estimated cost</b>
1) Placing newsletter leaflet through the doors of residents in SWW study area seeking views.	A focused approach to those directly involved. Could be combined with delivery of collection calendars or sacks to minimise costs & staff time.  Responses can be incentivised with offer of prize draw.	Traditionally low response rate. Possible that in a small sample, responses be biased views and not representative of the area as a whole.	£800 to print leaflets.  + 8 hours staff time to design +10 hours delivery time  Total £1016
2) As per option 1) above but including a printed questionnaire & reply paid envelope.	Reply paid questionnaire may gather a higher response rate	Increased staff time and cost.  Criticism of waste of paper and resources in an exercise that is designed to promote waste minimisation.	As per 1) + £2500 + 12 hours staff time designing questionnaire and receiving and inputting responses.  Total £2644
3) In conjunction with 1) above, seek views from all residents through an on-line survey. Web links and QR code provided in newsletter. Hard copies of questionnaire at Trinity Arts Centre and Guildhall.	Likely to be convenient for many residents. Seeks the views of the whole of the SWW and gives everyone an opportunity to respond through their preferred method.	Electronic responses only most convenient for those with access to internet. Survey needs to be carefully designed to prevent multiple entries.	As per 1) + 16 hours staff time to design web survey, hard copy and analyse results.  Total £192
4) Drop in sessions alongside 1)	Venues & times can be publicised in newsletter delivered to all homes.  Allows qualitative responses from residents and better understanding of issues from residents & WLDC staff perspective.	Should be staged at a range of times for convenience. Officers must be available for all of them. Time demand is unknown (though officers can carry out other work between enquiries) Historically, drop in sessions only attract a small number of people who generally have strong	Unlikely to be a direct cost for venue. Up to 14 hours of staff time would need to be committed.  Total £168

	WLDC venues can be used for no direct cost.	views.	
5) An article on the West Lindsey website and Gainsborough Standard asking for comments.	Repeating communications messages seen as good practice. Seeks the views of the whole of the district and gives everyone an opportunity to respond.	The views of the small number of residents directly involved can be swamped by the wider community.  Unstructured responses and comments.	£ Free to operational services + 4 hours staff time  Total £48
6) Social Media Campaign	Another communication channel with different engagement demographic.  Low cost through existing WLDC channels.  Can be targeted at local facebook groups & targeted advertising used.	Unstructured responses, risk of 'herd' mentality and group bias rather than obtaining more honest individual responses.  Despite targeting efforts, likely to get a view from those wider community who may not have knowledge of the area.	Facebook advertising around £200 + 4 hours staff time to develop campaign.  Total £248
7) Seek the views of Citizens Panel Members in SWW area.	Likely to get a view from those wider community if sent to all panel members, possibly reflecting that SWW receives an enhanced collection & clearance service.	Only minimal involvement from those directly involved. Some respondents would be unfamiliar with SWW. Number of panel members in SWW unknown  Those in SWW targeted would likely hear about consultation from other sources.	£200 + 4 hours staff time  Total £248
8) Direct canvassing of the households in the affected area	A focused approach to those directly involved.  Likely to achieve a higher participation rate than simply writing or leafleting	Likely to be less bias and not a 'self-selecting view' view and more representative of the area as a whole.	2 days staff time (including design of representative survey)  Total £192

## **Residents Questionnaire**

### 1.1 Aim and objectives

- To undertake research into the opinions of GSW residents in relation to Waste Service Provision.
- To measure overall perceptions of the council's performance and the perceived improvements that could be made.
- To benchmark the perceptions of GSW residents, where possible, against local / national data.
- To understand the perceptions of different customer segments and build a comprehensive area assessment to better target improvement measures.
- To understand any differences between key demographic subgroups for equalities purposes.
- To have an evidence base from which specific research and improvement needs might be identified.
- To analyse specific question areas and look to make improvements where possible.

### 1.2. Methodology

A questionnaire will be devised to meet the objectives above in consultation with operational staff, those working in the SW area. Questionnaire themes and rationale will then signed off by the Project Sponsor and working group. Identified best practice will be used and a web survey publicised on a dedicated page on the WLDC website. The newsletter mailing to households in SWW will include a covering information, a link to the consultation web pages and a prize draw offering to encourage participation. Residents will be directed to where they can fill in hard copies of the questionnaire (Trinity Art Centre and Guildhall) and given times and dates when they can come and talk to officers.

To maintain a targeted sample the online survey will only be made available to those with a GSW address receiving waste collections via a sack service.

### 1.3 Questionnaire structure

- Satisfaction levels
- Recycling and waste minimisation
- Waste Issues, Street cleansing and bulky waste
- Keeping you informed
- About you

## **Draft Survey for Residents of Gainsborough South West Ward**

West Lindsey District Council would like to know what you would like from your waste and recycling collections in the future.

Please complete the questionnaire below to tell us your thoughts on waste and recycling in your area, what would encourage you and others to recycle more and how we can help our residents to be more waste conscious.

Because of the narrow streets and lack of storage space for bins, residents in your area previously told us they preferred to receive an enhanced weekly sack collection service. This is instead of the fortnightly refuse and recycling collections in the rest of the district. We'd like to know if you feel this is still right for you? Or if you have any other ideas or suggestions?

Your feedback will help us develop measures to improve the way we manage waste in your area.

### **Why are we running this asking for your views?**

We aim to improve the visual appearance of the area -before and after collections – as well as our customer satisfaction rates. We also want to find ways to promote reuse, recycling and reduce the amount of waste thrown away. Not only will this have a positive environmental impact, but it can also save money. The more we recycle, the less we need to landfill and incinerate - which are much more expensive options.

Recycling rates are currently lower in the Gainsborough South West Ward area, so we want to work with you to increase this. But we also want to find ways to tackle the illegal dumping which we know takes place in your area and contributes to this.

Fly tipping and early presentation of waste are issues that spoil the appearance of our local streets and is something that residents who take pride in the area they live have told us that they feel strongly about. At the tax-payers expense, our street cleansing teams remove bags of rubbish and discarded items every day in some parts of Gainsborough. Rather than just carrying on, we're now taking strong action against offenders. We want to know if you support this and what you might like to see the Council try to do next?

We have a number of questions for you to consider. Thank you in advance for your help.

### **Section 1: Satisfaction Levels**

Every week our collection crews empty refuse and recycling sacks and clean the streets

Q1) Thinking about general waste and recycling collections from your home, please answer whether or not you agree with the following statement for each part.

“I am satisfied with the service the council provides in my area”

Please rate: Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree

OR Thinking about general waste and recycling collections from your home, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following:

- Frequency of refuse collection (weekly)
- Frequency of recycling collection (weekly)
- Collection Reliability
- Collection Staff attitude and appearance
- Cleanliness of your street after collection
- Cleanliness of your street between collections
- Responding to and resolving waste collection issues
- Communicating waste and recycling information with residents

If you could suggest any improvements in any of these areas what would they be?

Either a box after each element or ask residents to select a top 3