



## Report to Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 30 Sep 15

**Report of:** Mick Crofts, Director of Business Strategy and Regulation

**Subject:** Assisted Collection Policy review

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### Summary:

The information in this paper has been requested by the Committee to inform and steer, potential changes to Sheffield's assisted collection eligibility criteria.

In Sheffield, households are required to present their black bin, blue bin and box to the kerbside for collection.

Where, for reason of age or mobility there is no-one in a household able to move the bins/box, an application can be made for an assisted collection. Once receiving this service, the household is not required to present their black bin, blue bin and box for collection.

A number of limitations have been identified with the current approach to providing assisted collections. This paper sets out the current approach, limitations, and changes proposed to address these limitations.

This paper also sets out details of the consultation exercise currently underway.

**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Informing the development of new policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Statutory consultation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance / budget monitoring report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cabinet request for scrutiny	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full Council request for scrutiny	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	<input type="checkbox"/>
Call-in of Cabinet decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:**

- Provide their views and comment on the changes proposed to Sheffield's assisted collection eligibility criteria.
- Identify any additional groups the Committee feels should be directly approached with the consultation

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**Background Papers:** N/A

**Category of Report:** OPEN

# **Report of the Director of Business Strategy and Regulation**

## **Assisted Collection Policy review**

### **1. Introduction/Context**

- 1.1. This paper has been produced on request of the Committee.
- 1.2. This paper sets out the approach and limitations associated with Sheffield's current assisted collection policy.
- 1.3. Following a review of services provided by other Local Authorities, proposals have been put forward to change the assisted collection eligibility criteria to address these limitations.
- 1.4. This paper seeks comments and input from the Scrutiny Committee on the changes proposed for the assisted collection service, and the consultation exercise currently underway.

### **2. Assisted Collection Policy review**

#### **2.1. Background Information**

- 2.1.1. In Sheffield, households that do not share their waste and recycling containers with other households are required to present their black bin, blue bin and box to the kerbside for collection.
- 2.1.2. Where, for reason of age or mobility there is no-one in a household able to move the bins/box, an assisted collection service will be provided. The collection crew will then collect and return the black bin, blue bin and box after emptying to their usual point of storage. The household is no longer required to move their bins/box.
- 2.1.3. The provision of the assisted collection service ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010, enabling residents who are unable to move their waste and recycling containers to be able to use the the services provided.
- 2.1.4. Circa 10,500 households receive the assisted collection service across the city.

#### **2.2. Current service criteria**

- 2.2.1. Assisted collections are provided following an application, and will be granted where the applicant is aged:
  - 65 or over, or
  - under 65 but has a medical condition that prevents them from being able to present their bins for collection

- and only where there is no person living within the household aged 16 or over, or a carer, that can help
- 2.2.2. The eligibility criteria has not been reviewed in the past 10 years, and a number of limitations have been identified with the existing approach:
- There is a lack of clarity on the type and severity of medical conditions requiring an assisted collection. This means there is a risk of the criteria being applied in an inconsistent manner.
  - Many residents older than 65 are able to present their bins for collection
  - The information provided by the applicant is not subjected to any checks, and therefore can mean that people are granted the service who do not need it
- 2.2.3. Recognising these limitations a review of other Local Authority Assisted Collection services has been undertaken. The purpose of this exercise was to understand how other authorities assess applications for assisted collections, and to identify potential changes to address the limitations identified with Sheffield's current approach.
- 2.2.4. The review identified three broad approaches:
- Approach 1: Applications are assessed on a trust basis with no checks taking place to ensure the information provided is correct. This reflects Sheffield's current position.
  - Approach 2: An application is followed up by a visit from a Waste Management Officer to verify the need for the service.
  - Approach 3: Applicants are required to provide evidence to support their application. This can be a doctors certificate, proof of age, receipt of benefits.
  - The minimum age limit in place to automatically approve an application varies for all three approaches, up to the age of 80.
- 2.2.5. Recognising that Sheffield currently uses approach 1, consideration has been given to adopting approach 2. Whilst the introduction of home visits from a Waste Management would in all likelihood help to remove some requests from residents not in need of the service, the lack of medical expertise needed to accurately assess an ailment would not remove the risk of inconsistency in deciding which applications to approve or reject. Further, the amount of officer time needed to undertake these visits means that this option is not viable using the existing staffing resource.

2.2.6. Approach 3 is seen as the most viable option, as it will provide set parameters around how assisted collections should be awarded, allow for verification to take place of the information provided.

### 2.3. Proposed Changes:

2.3.1. A series of changes have been proposed, based on Approach 3.

2.3.2. The requirement of a doctor's certificate has been disregarded, due to the increased resource pressure this would put on the NHS.

2.3.3. The proposed changes mean that a **permanent** assisted collection will be provided where an application is received from a resident aged 75 or over, **or** where the resident is under 75 and meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Is registered blind or partially sighted
- Holds a blue badge for parking
- Receives the higher rate of care component of Disability Living Allowance or enhanced daily living component of Personal Independence Payment
- Receives the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or enhanced mobility component of Personal Independence Payment
- Receives the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement

2.3.4. The criteria identified for assessing applications from residents under the age of 75, have been identified as they are tested and demonstrate ailments highly likely to affect a persons' ability to move their waste and recycling containers.

2.3.5. Residents who apply and do not meet the above criteria may be granted a **temporary** assisted collection if there is a need for this service for a set period of no more than six months. This may be due to an illness, or recovery from an operation or injury. A repeat application can be made at the end of each agreed period.

2.3.6. Permanent and temporary assisted collections will only be provided where there is no-one living within the household aged 16 or over, or a carer that can help.

2.3.7. Residents receiving the permanent assisted collection service will be contacted every three years to confirm they still live at the address and need the service.

### 2.4. Finance

2.4.1. The cost associated with providing an assisted collection is £10.36 per household per year per 240 litre bin (15/16) above that of the non-assisted service. Whilst the proposed changes may lead

to a small reduction in costs, the driver behind the proposed changes is not cost, and there has been no saving target identified under the proposed changes.

## 2.5. Equalities

- 2.5.1. An Equality Impact Assessment will be circulated at the Scrutiny Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

## 2.6. Public Consultation

- 2.6.1. A six week public consultation exercise is taking place to get feedback from Sheffield residents about the proposed changes. The consultation began on 15<sup>th</sup> September and will run until 23<sup>rd</sup> October.
- 2.6.2. A copy of the consultation questions is provided as background paper, 'Consultation questions.'
- 2.6.3. Residents can complete the consultation online using the Council's Consultation management system at <https://sheffield.citizenspace.com/>, over the phone by contacting Waste Management on 0114 2037621 or they can request a paper copy on this number or by email.
- 2.6.4. Details of the consultation have been publicised in a press release, and links have been added to Veolia's website, as well as the Council's waste management web page.
- 2.6.5. Details of the consultation have been sent to the following groups:
  - Equalities Hub Network
  - Sheffield Pensioners Action Group
  - Sheffield Young Carers
  - Sheffield 50 Plus
  - Disability Sheffield
  - Access Liaison Group
  - Sheffield Carers
  - Royal National Institute of the Blind
  - Help the Aged
  - Age UK
  - Age Concern

## 2.7. Post Consultation

- 2.7.1. Once the public consultation has been completed, the responses will be considered, and adjustments to the proposed changes may be made depending on this feedback.
- 2.7.2. An Independent Cabinet Member report will be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to formally adopt any policy change.

### **3. What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?**

- 3.1. The changes proposed for the assisted collection service will make it easier for residents to understand what qualifies them for help, and how applications are assessed.
- 3.2. The changes proposed, if adopted will make application of the eligibility criteria, fair, and consistent and ensure that only those people who are in need of the service receive it.

### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1. The Committee is asked to:
  - 4.1.1. Provide their views and comment on the changes proposed.
  - 4.1.2. Identify any additional groups the Committee feels should be directly approached with the consultation

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