

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Zero Waste Management Sub Committee
DATE	22 November 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Missed Bins Policy
REPORT NUMBER	ZWSC/16/7679
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	YES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the procedure for dealing with collections of domestic waste or recycling that are not collected by the Council and to define what constitutes a “missed” collection.

2. RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Zero Waste Management Sub-Committee approves the proposed Missed Bins Policy included at Appendix 1.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Whilst efficiencies will be made in the collection service that will result in some reduction in overall service costs due to vehicles not being required to return off-route to collect an individual bin at a later date or time; however, this is difficult to quantify as there is no reliable historical data relating to how many bins are genuinely “missed”.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The adoption of this policy will clarify the Council’s position when dealing with missed bin complaints.

In sustainability and environmental terms, a lesser requirement to return for individual missed bins will increase the efficiency and sustainability of collections by reducing the distances travelled to collect small volumes of materials.

In terms of policy implications, this is in line with the Council's Waste Strategy in terms of encouraging householders to manage their waste responsibly and has no impact on other areas of the service.

For the customer, the establishment of a formal policy provides clarity and ensures all households are treated equally.

5. BACKGROUND/ MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) places a duty upon local authorities, as the Waste Collection Authority, to collect household waste within its area.

5.1.2 Residents are presently required to place their wheeled bin out for collection **before 7am** on the scheduled collection day. Even if the bin is normally emptied later in the day, the exact timing of collection may vary and therefore the 7 am rule allows for this.

5.1.3 The Missed Bins Policy specifies the procedure that will be followed where a bin has not been collected.

5.1.4 This policy applies to all wheeled bin collection services – general waste, mixed recycling and food/garden waste collections.

5.1.5 For clarity, this policy does not apply to communal bins or trade waste bins.

5.2 Definition

5.2.1 Generally, there are four categories of missed bins:

1. The bin was not presented correctly by the householder – either the bin was not presented by 7 am (or other specified time) on collection day, or, it was presented on the wrong day.
2. The bin was presented by the householder on the correct day and time but the collection vehicle passed by it and did not empty it.
3. The bin was not collected due to adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances (road closures, accidents, riots, etc.).
4. Missed assisted collection.

5.2.2 Where a bin has been left by the crew due to incorrect use, this will not be classed as a missed bin and no return will be made to collect (please also refer to contamination policy). Incorrect use is:

1. Bin contents contaminated by wrong materials.
2. Bin filled with material that makes it unsafe to empty due to excessive weight (this is judged by the loader who will assess whether he/she feels it is safe to move the bin).
3. Unauthorised additional bin or non-standard bin.

In these cases the householder would be notified of the reason their bin was not collected and this would be logged onto the in-cab system.

5.3 Procedure

5.3.1 The procedures proposed for dealing with each of the scenarios defined in 5.2.1 is as follows (a clean copy of the policy is attached as Appendix A):

1. Bin not presented by householder

- a. Where a domestic bin has not been presented, the collection crew will log this instance using their in-cab electronic system. This information is available to the Contact Centre and Waste Team staff in real time.
- b. If the householder subsequently complains that their bin was not collected, staff will check this against the collection records. If it is found that the bin was logged as not presented, staff will advise the householder of this and ask them if they can manage their waste until the next collection cycle – either by keeping the bin until the next collection, or by taking it to an HWRC/Recycling Point (where appropriate) or arrange for a special uplift (for which a charge will be made).
- c. If they cannot manage, arrangements will be made to return to collect the bin and the householder will be advised to leave it out for collection. Collection will be made on the next occasion where a vehicle is in the area and collection may not be made on that same day. The householder will be advised that they must take responsibility for the waste until it is collected – this means they must ensure it is secure and does not escape from the bin until it is collected.

- d. A letter will be sent to the householder (and a record of the letter being sent will be recorded against that address) setting out the policy for missed bins and advising the householder:
 - of the correct time and day of presentation to reduce the risk of recurrence.
 - to make contact with the Waste & Recycling Team if they are having difficulty with their waste.
 - that if the bin is not presented in time again then then it will not be collected until the next collection cycle.
 - side waste will not be accepted and the bin lid must be able to close prior to collection.
 - e. If there is no further recurrence for 12 months then the record will be cleared.
2. Bin presented by householder correctly.
 - a. Householder complains that their bin has not been collected.
 - b. Staff will check this against the collection records, if no instance of a bin not being presented has been logged for that address (or an address nearby/adjacent), then the bin will be deemed to have been missed by the collection vehicle.
 - c. Householder will be advised to leave their bin out for collection and the Waste & Recycling Service will undertake to return to empty the bin as soon as is practical.
3. Bin not collected due to adverse weather conditions
 - a. During adverse weather conditions the service is at risk of widespread disruption. In this situation, the driver in consultation with a direct supervisor will make a decision whether to access a road / street based on route safety.
 - b. During extreme conditions, the Waste Collection Manager will make a decision on the withdrawal of a complete route or service. In the absence of the Waste Collection Manager, approval to withdraw the service must be approved by the Waste & Recycling Manager or Head of Service.
4. Bin not collected due to other unforeseen circumstances
 - a. Where an unforeseen occurrence (such as accident, fire, flood, riot, etc) has prevented bins being emptied, the Waste

Collection Services Manager (or Waste & Recycling Manager in their absence) will make a judgement on when it is safe for the collection crews to return to carry out the service in consultation with relevant other agencies.

5.3.2 Assisted Collections

Where a householder reports that a bin that has an assisted collection has not been emptied, every effort will be made to return to empty it as soon as is practically possible.

5.4 Communication

5.4.1 Details of this policy will be available on the Council website for public perusal. Information regarding the placement of bins by 7 am is already on the website and has been the policy for some time. In addition, there will be a “honeymoon” period where this policy will be brought in gradually and any people reporting missed bins in the first 3 months will be advised of the procedure.

5.4.2 Interruptions to service delivery on individual routes will be notified to the Contact Centre for dissemination to the public and this will also be publicised via social media and the Council website where appropriate. During area-wide service disruption the Council’s Communications Team will be notified and a public notification strategy agreed and implemented.

6. BENEFITS

6.1 The Missed Bin Policy will result in a clearer system for dealing with missed bins. The implementation of the new in-cab system for reporting of collection issues allows for greater control and accountability of the service and this policy makes good use of that facility.

6.2 Improved recycling and waste collection service in terms of:

- Reduced requirement to return for missed bins – better use of vehicles and less fuel waste
- Greater availability of vehicles for other tasks (such as covering breakdowns or assisting other collection routes)
- Increase in crew morale by not being requested to return to collect a container that they know was not out for collection

- 6.3 The implementation of this Policy will assist the Council in its aim to improve services through efficiency and continuous improvement and establishes a clear and consistent approach to service delivery.

7. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –

This policy will provide clear guidelines for staff and residents on the policy for missed bins. It will also result in harmonisation of service provision and ensure that the Council is being open and transparent and fair and consistent in its approach.

Improving Staff Experience –

This policy will result in improved morale for staff by providing clear guidance on this issue and reducing the instances where collection crews are sent back to collect bins that were not presented at the correct time.

Improving our use of Resources –

This policy will improve the efficiency the service by reducing journeys for individual bin collections and enabling greater vehicle availability for other priority work.

Corporate -

This policy helps us to work towards achieving the Smarter Environment (natural resources) element of the Smarter City vision by helping to manage waste effectively and in line with UK and European legislative requirements by improving the efficiency of our collections thereby reducing our costs and carbon footprint.

Public –

It is expected that the introduction of this policy will heighten awareness of the requirement for bins to be presented correctly at the appropriate time on collection day which will, in time, lessen the complaints received about missed collections. To publicise the service change to residents we will increase awareness of the policy by making it available online in the waste section of Council website and on social media. In addition, there will be a “honeymoon” period where this policy will be brought in gradually and any people reporting missed bins in the first 3 months will be advised of the procedure.

An EHRIA has been completed and is attached. There are no significant equalities impacts, those householders who find they have difficulty in managing a different waste and recycling collection point will be able to apply for an assisted collection service which is available for those people who fall under the protected characteristics categories as defined by the Equalities Act 2010. A PIA is not required for this report.

8. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Risk	Mitigating action
Public acceptability of policy content	Communication campaign consisting of general awareness raising on Council website and direct contact with households in writing and/or in person. "Honeymoon" period to allow changes to be communicated and understood beforehand. Training of Waste and Contact Centre Staff.
Risk of increased fly-tipping or littering due to non- return for bins	Monitoring of implications and consideration of introduction of process for enforcement action.
Data Protection	Officers will ensure that the process is compliant with the Data Protection Act requirements and all calls will be handled via the Council's contact centre in line with the usual complaints/queries process. Data collected on the Waste & Recycling Service's back office system will also comply with the necessary requirements.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1. Missed Bins Policy

10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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APPENDIX A

Policy Name	Missed Bins Policy
Committee Date/Name	Zero Waste Sub-Committee, November 2016
Review Frequency	2 years
Next Review Due	November 2018
Implementation Date	1 November 2016

1.0 Purpose of Policy

1.1 To clarify the procedure for dealing with collections of domestic waste or recycling that are not collected by the Council and to define what constitutes a “missed” collection.

1.2 This policy does not apply to commercial properties.

2.0 Standard Service Provision

2.1 For householders using the wheeled bin service the Council’s standard service provision is:

- 1 x 180 litre general waste wheeled bin (from March 2017)
- 1 x 240 litre mixed recycling bin (from March 2017)
- 1 x 240 litre garden and food waste bin

2.2 All of these containers are collected fortnightly.

2.3 This policy applies to all of the above services.

3.0 Definition of Missed Bins

3.1 There are four categories of missed bins:

1. The bin was not presented correctly by the householder – either the bin was not presented by 7 am (or other specified time) on collection day, or, it was presented on the wrong day.
2. The bin was presented by the householder on the correct day and time but the collection vehicle passed by it and did not empty it.
3. The bin was not collected due to adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances (road closures, accidents, riots, etc).
4. Missed assisted collection.

3.2 Where a bin has been left by the crew due to incorrect use, this will not be classed as a missed bin and no return will be made to collect (please refer to contamination policy). Incorrect use is:

1. Bin contents contaminated by wrong materials.
2. Bin filled with material that makes it unsafe to empty due to excessive weight (this is judged by the loader who will assess whether he/she feels it is safe to move the bin).

3. Unauthorised additional bin or non-standard bin.
4. In these cases the householder would be notified of the reason their bin was not collected and this would be logged onto the in-cab system.

4.0 Missed Bin Procedure

4.1 Bin not presented by householder.

- a. Where a domestic bin has not been presented, the collection crew will log this instance using their in-cab electronic system. This information is available to the Contact Centre and Waste Team staff in real time.
- b. If the householder subsequently complains that their bin was not collected, staff will check this against the collection records. If it is found that the bin was logged as not presented, staff will advise the householder of this and ask them if they can manage their waste until the next collection cycle – either by keeping the bin until the next collection, or by taking it to an HWRC/Recycling Point (where appropriate) or arrange for a special uplift (for which a charge will be made).
- c. If they cannot manage, arrangements will be made to return to collect the bin and the householder will be advised to leave it out for collection. Collection will be made on the next occasion where a vehicle is in the area and collection may not be made on that same day. The householder will be advised that they must take responsibility for the waste until it is collected – this means they must ensure it is secure and does not escape from the bin until it is collected.
- d. A letter will be sent to the householder (and a record of the letter being sent will be recorded against that address) setting out the policy for missed bins and advising the householder:
 - of the correct time and day of presentation to reduce the risk of recurrence.
 - to make contact with the Waste & Recycling Team if they are having difficulty with their waste.
 - that if the bin is not presented in time again then it will not be collected until the next collection cycle.
 - side waste will not be accepted and the bin lid must be able to close prior to collection.
 - If there is no further recurrence for 12 months then the record will be cleared.

4.2 Bin presented by householder correctly.

- a. Householder complains that their bin has not been collected.
- b. Staff will check this against the collection records, if no instance of a bin not being presented has been logged for that address (or an address nearby/adjacent), then the bin will be deemed to have been missed by the collection vehicle.

- c. Householder will be advised to leave their bin out for collection and the Waste & Recycling Service will undertake to return to empty the bin as soon as is practical.

4.3 Bin not collected due to adverse weather conditions.

During adverse weather conditions the service is at risk of widespread disruption. In this situation, the driver in consultation with a direct supervisor will make a decision whether to access a road / street based on route safety. During extreme conditions, the Waste Collection Manager will make a decision on the withdrawal of a complete route or service. In the absence of the Waste Collection Manager, approval to withdraw the service must be approved by the Waste & Recycling Manager or Head of Service.

4.4 Bin not collected due to other unforeseen circumstances.

Where an unforeseen occurrence (such as accident, fire, flood, riot, etc) has prevented bins being emptied, the Waste Collection Services Manager (or Waste & Recycling Manager in their absence) will make a judgement on when it is safe for the collection crews to return to carry out the service in consultation with relevant other agencies.

Interruptions to service delivery on individual routes will be notified to the Contact Centre for dissemination to the public and this will also be publicised via social media. During area-wide service disruption the Council's Communications Team will be notified and a public notification strategy agreed and implemented.

5.0 Assisted Collections

Where a householder reports that a bin that has an assisted collection has not been emptied, every effort will be made to return to empty it as soon as is practically possible.