

Agenda Item: Community Litter Picking Equipment

Meeting Date: Monday, 17 November 2025

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

This report seeks Members' consideration for the future purchase of community litter-picking station(s) to support environmental initiatives in Witney.

Background

Officers have been advised that some town councils have introduced lockable town centre cabinets stocked with litter-picking equipment, allowing residents to access and use the equipment for community clean-up activities during weekends.

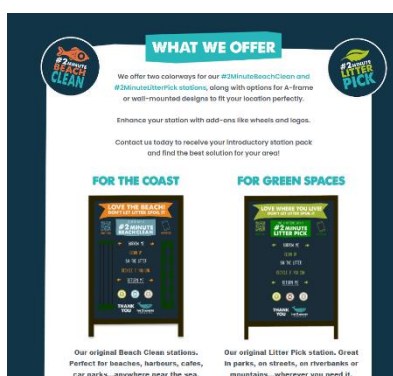
Current Situation

The following information has been researched by the Administrative Support Assistant – Communities & Planning, relating to one area where community litter-picking initiatives are in place:

- There are several active volunteer litter-picking groups operating in Swanage. For example, the “Beach Buddies” meet on Sundays at 9 a.m. and Tuesdays at 6 p.m.
- The Town Council’s minutes refer to a “2-Minute Beach Clean Board” located on the beach and note that volunteers utilise a beach hut for the storage of equipment.

No clear references were found to the use of lockable cabinets in the town centre containing litter-picking kits for community teams. The available reports primarily focus on beach and coastal clean-up activities rather than a town-centre cabinet hire or loan scheme.

The concept remains plausible, however, and a similar model could be considered for use in local streets or parks rather than a beach environment. Information on a potential supplier is provided below.



A brochure from the above company is attached as confidential **Appendix A** - one of the products listed has yet to be publicly advertised.

It should be noted that the Council has a supply of litter picking equipment which is advertised periodically throughout the year and available to collect from the Town Hall during the working week. This equipment has been made use of, but the Council is not aware of any organised litter picking groups – however, the provision of the stations may enable more.

If the Committee is agreeable, the stations should be at Council facilities open during the weekends.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – The purchase of a community litter-picking board provides an inclusive and accessible opportunity for all residents to take part in improving their local environment. By ensuring the board's location, design, and equipment are accessible to people of all ages and abilities, and by using inclusive language and imagery, the Council could promote equal participation.
- b) Crime & Disorder – A community litter-picking board can positively impact crime and disorder by encouraging ownership, and respect for public spaces. Cleaner, well-used environments deter antisocial behaviour and encourage community presence.
- c) Environment & Climate Emergency – Providing a litter-picking board and equipment encourages residents to remove litter, reducing pollution, protecting wildlife, and improving local biodiversity. While the board and equipment have a minor environmental footprint, the initiative promotes sustainable behaviour and contributes to cleaner, healthier, and more environmentally responsible public spaces.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- Providing a litter-picking board and equipment carries some risk, including potential injuries from use or slips, as well as loss, damage, or misuse of equipment. These risks can be managed through safety instructions, age-appropriate and well-maintained tools, regular monitoring, and appropriate insurance, ensuring the scheme remains safe while supporting community engagement and environmental improvement.
- The installation and promotion of the signs could be perceived negatively, suggesting the Council is shifting responsibility onto the public to perform tasks typically managed by Council staff, who already maintain services such as bin emptying and litter picking seven days a week.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

A community litter-picking boards deliver social value by encouraging residents to take pride in their surroundings and actively care for shared spaces. Making equipment easily accessible promotes volunteering, civic responsibility, and inclusion while improving the appearance and perception of the town. The initiative also supports health and wellbeing through outdoor activity and social interaction, creating cleaner, safer, and more connected communities.

Financial implications

- Options range from £150 – 500 each (please see brochure for details).
- Litter picking boards could be funded in the current year from the Infrastructure EMR or could be submitted as a growth item in the 2026-27 budget.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and:

1. Consider whether the Council should purchase this equipment (or similar), how many, and where for and,
2. If yes, whether this is considered as a growth item in the 2026-27 budget or funded in the current financial year.