

Stronger Communities Committee

Date: 16th March 2020

Title: Litter & Dog Bin Requests

Contact Officer: Office Manager (Adam Clapton)

Background

The provision of new or additional litter and dog waste bins across the town is not a simple issue. The current bin stock was mainly installed and emptied by West Oxfordshire District Council. A small number of bins on Town Council owned land, put in at its request, were paid for by the Town Council along with their monthly emptying costs.

The District Council will not consider the installation of a new litter or dog waste bin at a resident's request unless it has been made officially from the Town Council possibly as it is within the power of Town and Parish Council's to do so and due to the high number across the area. In recent years the Town Council has received numerous requests for additional bins, most of which have fallen on land not in its ownership. Where requests are made on land not owned by either WODC or the Town Council, the landowner (or requestor with their permission) would be required to pay the installation and emptying costs.

Following further requests between 2016-2018 the town council was advised that no further bins would be considered for installation until completion of a bin audit which was in the process of being completed by WODC.

The last report offered to Council on this issue was at the Community Services committee on 17th September 2018. Minute no. C473 contained the following recommendations:

- that the [resident] requests for bins on Town Council land be scheduled into its long-term aspirations
- that the Town Clerk writes to the other organisations and authorities with relevant requests have been received to ask if they would consider the requests, once WODC's audit had been completed
- that the Town Clerk requests a copy of the completed bin audit.

Several previous requests on land owned by differing landowners Requests were agreed by a former administration at the Town Council, but the full implications of those decisions were not understood at the time and no bins were installed.

Current situation

The bin audit was carried out by Publica (on behalf of WODC) and finally completed at the end of summer 2019 and forwarded onto the Town Council on request (**Appendix A**).

Communication has been received from publica advising that the cost of any new or additional bins will have to be borne by the town council along with the ongoing emptying costs.

There are several requests on file for bins with one area between West End/Crawley Road to Woodford Mill (across the meadow) receiving several and the most recent request (**Appendix B**). As shown on the audit this could be considered to have a need. This land is under the ownership of an Oxford College whose permission would be required should the Town Council want to install a bin across the meadow. However, the Operations and Estates Officer has identified an area at the entrance to this footpath from the West End side that may be under the remit of the county council, this would however need further investigation. Other requests, some which are litter hotspots are included on an attached spreadsheet showing the relevant information (**Appendix C**).

With regards to the above, the path across the meadow has been there for some time and users have managed without a bin so the Council should balance the need versus cost. If agreement on providing bins and emptying costs is agreed moving forward further criteria should be established or else costs could increase quickly. Although not an exhaustive list, this could include items such as:

- WTC will not pay for new bins and emptying on land under the ownership of or adjacent to land owned or maintained by WODC,
- Where possible WTC will consider the provision of new or additional bins on land owned by or maintained or adjacent to WTC and OCC (following relevant permissions),
- The council will be mindful of obstructing footpaths for disabled and pushchair users,
- WTC will budget for one bin each financial year but reserves the right not to install one if there is no request or requests are not considered necessary in consultation with the current audit,
- WTC will prioritise well used walking and cycling routes along with the centre of the town,
- WTC will encourage that new bins should offer recycling alternatives,
- WTC will endeavour to put bins adjacent to bus shelters or any other areas where large numbers of people congregate,
- WTC will encourage developers to include this infrastructure in their plans through planning consultation.

Environmental Impact

If the Council were to install further bins it may be at the detriment to any future plans to change them to recycling ones. Likewise, the District Council may be phasing out dog waste bins and dog waste will be included with general waste/litter anyway.

The Town council has a plan of replacing litter bins for recycling ones on its land on a rolling programme. Where new bins are installed the town council should encourage partner agencies to do the same.

Risk

If the Town Council resolves to installing new or additional bins it starts a precedent and this could be perceived as double taxation as this was a service already provided by the District Council.

There would be further cost should the bins be damaged or vandalised and insurance would need to be sought for insurance purposes. i.e. vandalism.

Financial Implications

- The cost of installing a new litter bin is **£407.80** (cost to be covered by WTC)
- The cost of ongoing emptying costs of a litter bin are **£7.07 per empty** (generally two collections per week (cost to be covered by WTC)
- The cost of installing a new dog waste bin is **£230.32** (cost to be covered by WTC)
- The cost of ongoing emptying costs of a dog waste bin are **£3.13 per empty** (generally two collections per week (cost to be covered by WTC)
- There is no additional budget in the current or forthcoming financial year towards litter or dog waste bins and collections
- The Community Clean up grant of £7500 from the District Council can be used for the purpose of installing new or additional bins
- There are ear-marked funds in the budget for year on year replacement of litter bins under the ownership of the Town Council to recycling ones

Based on the above costs for the current year, one new litter bin would cost **£735.28** a year to empty while a dog waste bin would cost **£325.52**

Recommendation

- Members are asked to note the report; and,
- Consider whether Witney Town Council should cover the cost of installing new or additional bins and their ongoing emptying costs; and if yes,
- Consider whether it supports the request for a dog waste bin between West End/Crawley Road and Woodford Mill, and
- Consider ring fencing a portion of the community clean up grant towards the provision of new litter/dog waste bins; and
- Consider formulating a medium to long-term plan on new bin requests based on the points above which encompasses the Council's environmental objectives and that the cost of emptying bins be included in budgetary setting for 2021-22 if appropriate.

Appendices

APPENDIX A – Public Bin Audit for Witney

APPENDIX B – Woodford Mill Bin Request

APPENDIX C – Current Bin Requests