

19th January 2022

Street Drinking Litter Update

Briefing Note of the Assistant Director - Streetscene

1. Purpose of the Briefing Note

- 1.1 To provide a briefing paper to the Wyke Area Committee to inform a discussion relating to a request to trial can recycling bins near to street drinking litter hotspots in the Wyke area, to reduce the environmental impact of this anti-social activity.

2. Background

- 2.1 Due to street drinking issues arising in the Wyke area, there is evidence of an ongoing cans and plastic bottles litter problem associated with this anti-social activity.
- 2.2 Elected members for Wyke area requested a discussion relating to the provision of can and bottle banks in street drinking hotspots, to alleviate the litter problems.
- 2.3 The litter issue is a symptom of the wider street drinking problem, recently highlighted in a December 2021 Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) team report to Wyke Area Committee, which detailed interventions designed to alleviate the impact of street drinking and associated issues in this area.

3. Issues for consideration

- 3.1 Understanding the council's approach to managing areas affected by street drinking from an anti-social behaviour point of view is essential to this piece of work. This makes certain that any works to alleviate the litter issues, do not impact on the interventions devised by the council's Anti-Social Behaviour team. Graham Paddock, Neighbourhood Nuisance Team Leader has confirmed that a great deal of work has been carried out across street drinking hot spots in Wyke, to tackle the root cause of this issue.

Interventions have included; regular joint patrols with partners to explain the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) which is used to manage anti-social behaviour, support for street drinkers to access services to adjust behaviours, use of dispersal orders, CCTV and local intelligence.

- 3.2 On the go recycling has previously been trialled in the city centre, with split litter bins being placed in the Albion Street area for the recycling of cans and bottles. Unfortunately, the trial was not a success due to the high level of contamination in the recycle, hence the decision to avoid the installation of recycling litter bins during the public realm works which have taken place across the city centre.
- 3.3 In 2018, the UK Government released the draft Resources and Waste Strategy for England – a policy blueprint designed to aid the transition to a circular economy, to support an effective domestic recycling infrastructure and to tackle the challenges of plastic pollution and food waste. One of the key elements of the strategy was the introduction of a deposit return scheme (DRS) in England for cans and bottles in 2023/24. The pandemic has led to a delay in the roll-out of this legislation, however, for the purpose of this report it is worth noting that the introduction of a DRS will adjust the make-up of litter as a result of cans and bottles receiving a deposit on return to the point of purchase, or alternative. This should help to significantly address the problem in the future but is clearly a way off being introduced. A legislative update relating to DRS was provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2021.
- 3.4 Leaving littering issues unaddressed, can contribute to further declines in local environmental quality. For this reason, it is important that a solution to the waste generated by the street drinking is sought.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The principle issues for consideration in this matter are firstly, will the provision of bins for cans and bottles in street drinking litter hotspots contribute to reducing the littering problem, and secondly does the provision of bins for street drinking litter conflict with the PSPO approach adopted in this area.
- 4.2 Consider the litter issue in conjunction with partners including; ASB team, Humberside Police and Renew, as part of a multi-faceted approach to dealing with the symptoms of the wider street drinking problem. Waste Management are happy to work with elected members and partners to identify a street drinking hotspot that would benefit from a review of litter bin arrangements.
- 4.3 Reviewing bin provision may alleviate some of the issues given the recurring nature of this problem. The placement of waste receptacles in a street

drinking hotspot is supported in principle, but with reservations, by the Anti-Social Behaviour team and Humberside Police community policing team, due to the PSPO in place in this area. Historically, when bins have been placed in street drinking litter hotspots, it was perceived as a green light to continue with the street drinking and associated anti-social behaviour. Review mechanisms with appropriate monitoring will be required to understand the impact of any service adjustments.

- 4.4 The operational impact of the review, including associated cost and collection arrangements requires consideration. At present, street drinking litter is collected through the traditional litter bin/street cleansing process, and defined as non-mechanical street sweepings, with low level recyclate obtained post-collection.
- 4.5 Littering behaviours of the target group need to be clearly understood, to ensure any potential communication challenges, due to language barriers and inebriation are managed. Unfortunately, there is a lack of research on this type of littering, therefore it is difficult to understand if the provision of bins for recycling litter generated from street drinking activities will result in adjustment of littering behaviours. Information on littering behaviours is attached in 'the little book of litter' at appendix 2.
- 4.6 Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) offer a range of litter engagement campaign materials to partner Local Authorities. A selection of campaign materials (appendix 1) is available to us to utilise in locations where we believe there could be an impact. Some of these campaigns can incur costs. If elected members would like to trial the use of the KBT campaigns, we would be happy to support the development of these materials.
- 4.7 Can bank generated income from a stand-alone collection is unlikely at this time, due to the delays in the roll-out of the DRS and uncertainty surrounding the exact shape of the scheme.
- 4.8 On a related issue, working in partnership with the Environmental Enforcement team, elected members can identify hotspot locations for increased patrols from the Litter Enforcement teams as a visible deterrent to street drinking littering behaviours.

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Officer interests: None

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Background Documents:

1. Keep Britain Tidy – campaign materials – littering engagement interventions:
 - a) Bin it for good
 - b) It's still littering
 - c) Volunteers cleaned this area
 - d) Miscellaneous campaigns

2. Keep Britain Tidy – the little book of litter: an essential guide