

## TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL

### Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2024 held in the Guildhall.

#### Present

Councillors Brian Madgwick, Chair  
Richard Adair, Vice Chair  
Nicholas Dorrington  
Charlotte Gerada  
Gerald Vernon-Jackson

Councillor Lee Hunt, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Sport & Leisure.  
David Emmett, Head of Waste Management Services  
Doug Gray, Parks Operations Manager  
Anne Hamilton, Operations & Performance Manager  
Colette Hill, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods.  
Caroline Hopper, Corporate Projects Manager

#### **27. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Asghar Shah gave his apologies.

#### **28. Declarations of Members' Interests.**

No interests were declared.

#### **29. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2023 were noted.

#### **30. Review into environmental anti-social behaviour**

Councillor Gerada explained the background to this review. Full Council requested it be done after a notice of motion called 'Pride in the streets of Portsmouth' was discussed on 19 March. Everyone recognised that street cleansing, fly-tipping, litter, glass are huge concerns to residents and there is a sense that the problems are getting worse.

She added that bins and bags obstructing pavements regularly cause access issues for people with disabilities or pushchairs; this is exacerbated on narrow pavements. In Central Southsea bins left out are often ripped open. The council is running a 'bring your bin back in' campaign to deal with this issue. Litter and fly tipping of domestic and business' rubbish is blighting the streets. She said that residents would be happy to feed into this review to share their experiences.

Members identified the following problem areas:

*Litter:* Guildhall Walk, Gunwharf Quays, Albert Road and Palmerston Road.

Anne Hamilton explained that these roads are in the Nighttime Economy (NTE) areas and therefore are cleaned every morning before 8am.

*Litter and glass:* Albert Road, Lawrence Road, Elm Grove and Waverley Road plus at the corner of Fratton Road and Clive Road.

Anne Hamilton explained that these roads are cleaned every morning and the adjacent secondary and tertiary roads once or twice a week. In response to a suggestion from the panel that when cleaning the main roads, the operatives could also clean 100m up the secondary roads, she advised that this would require an amendment to the contract and there would be an associated cost.

Members agreed that parks and green spaces (including the Common) are generally clean and tidy. Doug Gray explained that there are litter hotspots specially in Summer and that they aim to clean them by 9am.

Councillor Lee Hunt, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Leisure & Sport informed the panel that:

- He ensures that the cleaning up is carried out.
- Areas of concern are Hilsea Lines, Foxes Forest and Hilsea Holt where litter is often strewn about and buried in the sand. He said he would be happy to receive the panel's ideas about how environmental crimes like this can be detected.
- The perpetrator must be caught in the act and given a chance to clean their litter.
- South West Trains is working with the council to create a new footpath from Eastern Road to Foxes Forest.<sup>1</sup>
- Education is more effective in the long term to reduce fly tipping.

He suggested that the panel invite more partners to contribute to this review including landlords, the university and voluntary groups who look after Hilsea, Portsdown Hill and Milton Common.

The following information was provided to the panel:

#### Other Local Authorities.

*CCTV* - Portsmouth City Council (PCC) is one of few local authorities in Hampshire to have retained CCTV and has a large suite of CCTV and re-deployables.

*Cleansing following waste collection* - In most local authorities the waste collection and street cleansing are done by same contractor or in house team.

*Enforcement* - some authorities' enforcement teams are joined with parking. PCC has retained community wardens, and environmental enforcement officers with a separate civil enforcement team.

*Food waste collection* - this has been introduced here and should have reduced food waste presented in black bags. Only Eastleigh and Rushmoor in Hampshire have introduced separate food waste collection ahead of statutory requirement.

#### Kerbside Collection.

- *General rubbish* - either in a wheelie bin or in some cases bags.
- *Recyclables* - plastic bottles, card, paper, tins and aerosols.

---

<sup>k1</sup> Information about this project was provided to the panel after the meeting and has been added to the minutes as an appendix.

- *Small electrical items*
- *Batteries* - This collection was introduced in Summer 2023, because of the fire risk they pose in the vehicles and recycling centre.

#### Changes introduced

In October 2018, 55,000 properties were provided with black wheelie bins. 11,000 household (flat fronted or with limited space to store a bin) were given the option of having a black wheelie bin or put out a maximum of three standard bin bags, approximately 25,000 properties have a communal collection.

In September 2019 food waste collection trials were introduced and the subsequent city-wide rollout was completed in December 2023.

Additional bring banks were introduced for plastics and cartons.

Kerbside battery collections started in Summer 2023.

Planning permission was obtained in September 2023 to deliver the new Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) which will expand the range of recyclables that can be collected from the kerbside.

A streamlined bins on streets process was introduced in July 2023 and promoted through the summer and autumn. Swaps and removals started January 2024

In January 2024 charges were removed at the Household Waste Recycling Centre.

The collection services were brought in house on 1 April 2024

#### Food Waste Collection.

All businesses must have food waste collections in place by 2025. All local authorities must provide domestic food waste collection by 2026. The council started it in September 2019.

The Havant team has been out with our team to learn about this collection and was very impressed.

Take-up was between 40 and 55% at the start. Non-participants were surveyed, and the reasons given included: they have a home compost, they do not understand or they have no interest in separating food waste for recycling. Using this feedback, more work was undertaken to increase participation. A survey of residents in flat-fronted areas will be undertaken in early 2025.

On collection day operatives walk along the street emptying grey bins into one big bin and shout out to the person in the cab 'not out' when they come across a household that is not participating. However, as they do a few at a time, they may not remember which houses did not put out grey bins. If the black wheelie bin is not being filled, there is no incentive to separate the food waste into the grey bin.

#### Textile collection banks.

The council has moved or added banks and is constantly reviewing the collection frequency.

### Hard plastic bring banks.

These are well-used.

### The Materials Recycling Facility (MRF).

In September 2023 planning permission was granted for a brand-new facility at Eastleigh which will mean a wider range of recyclables can be collected at kerbside across Hampshire. Two recycling bins would be required for each household: one for card and paper and the other for everything else. However, since then the government put the changes to the necessary legislation on hold and therefore the council is waiting for clear guidance from government on Simpler Recycling.

### Bring your bin back in campaign.

Last summer Cabinet received a report on bins which are left on pavements and subsequently this engagement campaign was launched. It involved officers knocking on doors of flat-fronted houses, leaflet drops, a social media campaign, putting stickers on bins that were left out asking residents to take them inside. Since the swaps and removals scheme was introduced in January this year, 553 warning letters have been issued, 229 properties have had their bins swapped for stackable systems and an extra 27 households have been identified as requiring assistance with their bins. Some roads have been revisited and many residents now take their bins in. This work is expected to complete first pass in early 2025.

### Glass Bring Banks

Some glass banks are a magnet for fly tipping.

Collection kerbside and the subsequent removal of glass banks should improve the street scene.

### The Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)

In January 2024 charges for soil, rubble, ceramic items were removed by the government. In Portsmouth, this has not had an impact on fly tipping. There remain some restrictions regarding allowance etc which are detailed on the council's website.

### Waste Collection Services

This service has been in-house since 1 April 2024 and work is underway to implement improvements.

Portsmouth has one of the lowest missed collection rates in Hampshire.

The crews are very happy with the bartec system which was introduced to provide more information on issues encountered on the rounds.

### Commercial Waste

Businesses are responsible for having a commercial waste disposal contract.

### Community Wardens

There are 16 Full Time Equivalent community wardens who cover 122 hours duty over 7 days. Several years ago, 8 of them changed from temporary to permanent contracts. They deal with early waste presentations, bins left on the street, littering, fly tipping,

graffiti, nuisance anti-social behaviour and related operations such as Op Nautical. They are the lead for unauthorised encampments in the city and Portsmouth-owned land in Havant. They also patrol local authority housing estates and blocks out of hours.

The Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) charge will increase on 1 September 2024.

#### Fly Tipping and Littering.

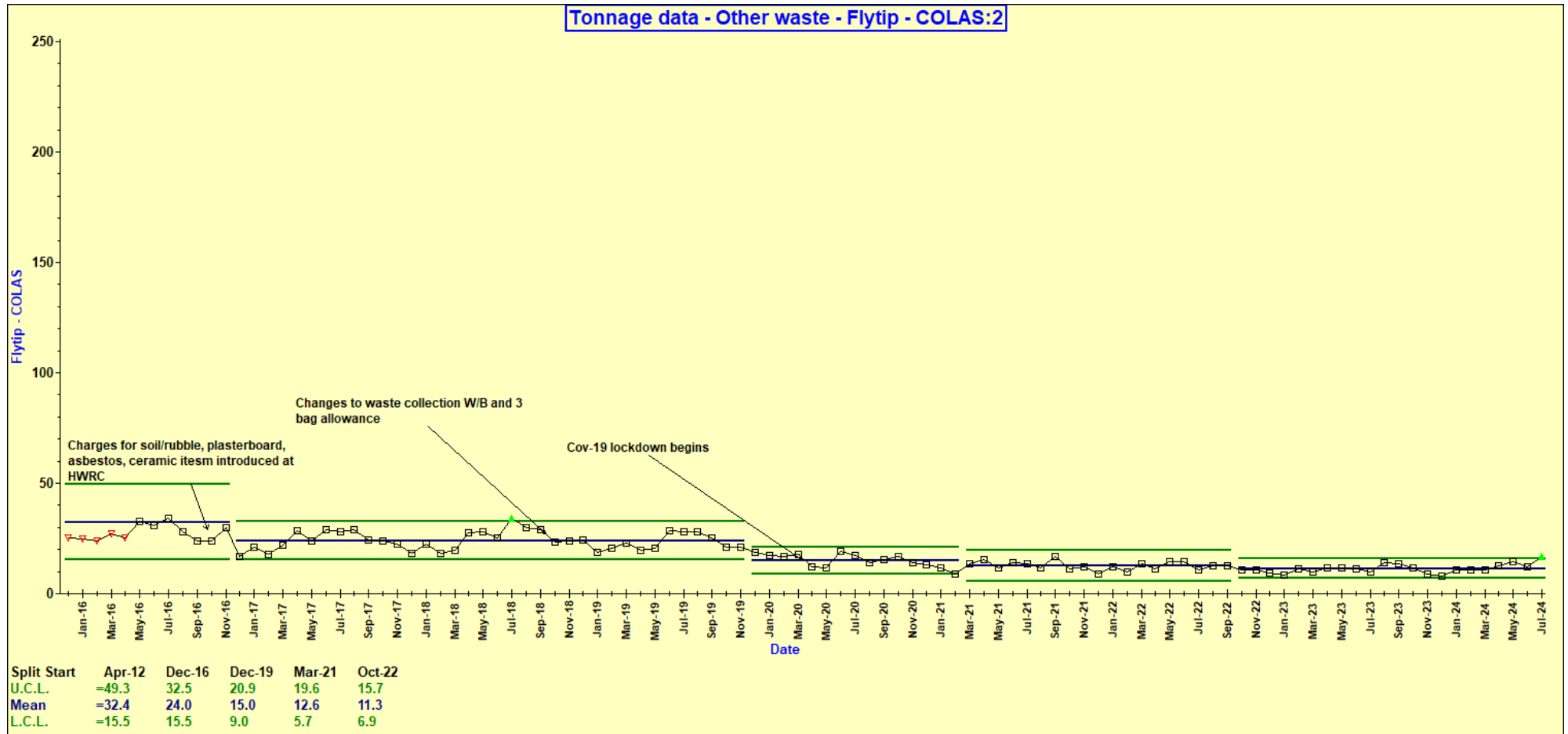
Three graphs were circulated to the panel showing fly tipping and littering in terms of the number of fixed penalty notices issued, the numbers of prosecutions and tonnage collected.

In the last 12 months, 393 FPNs were issued for littering and 33 for fly tipping. If people do not pay the fine, they are prosecuted. Currently 80% of offenders pay the fine.

Between February to August, there were 3,941 demands for removal of unauthorised waste, mostly on pavements: 326 on housing land, 114 on private land and 22 on commercial land. All are investigated either over the phone or in person. Re-deployable cameras are installed where there is prolific littering, especially around recycling banks.

Litter thrown out of cars has been caught on dashcam and FPNs issued.

Fly tipping in all areas has reduced since 2018. Approximately 10 tonnes a month are collected. In 2015 it was an average of 30 tonnes a month - see below.



### Response rates.

The council investigates all reports of fly tipping and then passes the details to Highways for removal. However, until recently Colas was clearing any that it comes across immediately without notifying the council. This meant that it was not recorded or investigated. The council discussed this with Colas and now reports are passed on to the council for investigation/resolution. Reports are then passed to Colas once the investigation is complete.

### Environmental Enforcement Officers

These four officers work Monday to Friday during office hours and lead on complex fly tipping, trade waste and waste carrier licence issues. They also enforce public space protection orders for dog fouling and dogs off lead. Officers are allocated to targeted projects to ensure ownership and focus.

### CCTV

The council has 50 re-deployable cameras (up from 30) which it uses in targeted areas.

### Students

At the end of the year, some students leave a lot of things they no longer need on the pavement or next to bring banks.

A lot of work is done to ensure that they know the rules around waste disposal including door knocks in the last two weeks of October when they move in and in March when some leave, plus stickers being put on bins. Engagement is also done with landlords, with attendance at landlord meetings and putting regular articles in newsletters that go to landlords. Meetings with the university have been set up to coordinate the communications drive for the end of this academic year.

### The Environmental Tasking Co-ordinating Group

Its first meeting was on 29 August 2024 and it is chaired by Lauren Rackham. This is a cross directorate / partner meeting to ensure targeted and joined up responses to issues. Attendees will be able to refer issues and proactively manage issues affecting residents.

### Graffiti

A report will be taken to Cabinet later in September.

Hundreds of clean-up jobs have been completed; some in the same location.

Some graffiti spots have been identified but the council is waiting for permission to remove it or they cannot be accessed safely.

Graffiti was removed from the lower part of the Debenhams site in Commercial Road.

### In response to questions from members, officers clarified the following points:

They did not know whether the minimum standards for streets that the council adheres to applies to Network Rail.

The team reminds residents to report any graffiti they come across to the council.

Colas is responsible for streets, the council for buildings and a specialist contractor for monuments.

The council cannot remove graffiti from shutters.

It is difficult to identify who has done the graffiti or tags because they often do it very late at night and wear dark clothes and a mask or balaclava. The council caught one person and issued a FPN because they were shown on CCTV getting out and back into their car. The council cannot post CCTV photos on social media to ask for help in identifying individuals for legal reasons. These are however, shared with the police. Sometimes perpetrators post videos of themselves doing the tag on social media and these can be used for prosecution. The police recently stopped one person in town and confiscated aerosols from them. However, they are really stretched and dealing with this type of crime is not a priority for them.

The motorway must be closed to remove graffiti from overhead signs.

The High Street, Commercial Road, Albert Road and Palmerston Road are cleaned with a hot wash on Sunday mornings. The other high streets are cold washed on Sunday mornings.

One textile bank on Lawrence Road was removed because the charity who leased it did not adhere to the emptying schedule.

Sometimes bags are put next to a textile bank even though it is not full. Re-deployable cameras are often put on bring banks. Stickers are also put on them instructing people to use them correctly.

Some recycling banks have been relocated. A suitable location must have access for the lorry to empty it, space for pedestrians to get past and not be too close to other banks.

Textile banks are an important source of income for both the charity and the council. On average 30-35 tons are collected a month.

Any excess waste left outside a house will not be taken by the collection team.

Gosport Borough Council is trialling providing a portable skip for residents to use. Analysis so far indicates that this has had no impact on fly tipping. The skip is publicised as being on site from 9-11.30 but is removed as soon as it is full. This has left some people disappointed when they have brought their rubbish and find the skip is already gone.

Council officers have knocked at the door/ letter dropped at houses in Multiple Occupation in the city at least three times in the last three years. The council engages with the Portsmouth & District Private Landlords Association.



Black bags left out for collection should not have any food waste in them and therefore would not attract animals. If a bag is split when picked up, the crew clean it up promptly. If it has already been opened, the collection team notifies Colas who sends their hit squad.

Having a street cleaner attached to each collection vehicle might slow down the collection. It is important that the rounds are completed as efficiently as possible because they block roads, use a lot of petrol and need to collect 1,800 bins every day. The possibility of having a street cleaning crew follow the collection lorries could be looked into; however they would not necessarily follow the route because that may change on the day due to traffic or parking issues.

On average 30 tons of textiles are collected every month. That is a significant quantity not going into the waste stream. Forty-seven tons were collected over Christmas.

The Salvation Army is quite responsive to the council's requests for the banks to be emptied more frequently when necessary.

Hard plastic recycling banks are located on 10-14 sites.

Once the new MRF is operational, households will be supplied with two recycling wheelie bins; one for paper and card and the other for everything else. It is important to have the glass separate as once broken it contaminates other recyclables.

Members noted that fly tipping is common near the bring banks in Francis Avenue, Elm Grove and Lawrence Road.

**Action**

It was agreed that a cost analysis of the textile banks would be brought to a future meeting.

## **Appendix One.**

The following details were provided after the meeting.

The council has been awarded £50,000 from South Western Railway (SWR) communities fund to make some small improvements between Hilsea station, the WW1 Remembrance Centre, and start of Hilsea Lines, to support feelings of safety as the area has been identified as being a bit intimidating due to its isolation. This will enable the council to improve wayfinding, lighting and install additional CCTV in the area. As part of this project, the council will also be working with SWR to develop connectivity between their own Safe Spaces work within the train network, and its local Safer Streets work. It is working with other officers across the council to recognise the potential connectivity to other projects such as Linar Park and the Cosham Transport Hub.