BRIEFING NOTE

September 2015

A review of waste collection policies and standards

Contents

Briefing Note: A review of waste collection policies and standards

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1 Introduction

1.1 Terms of Reference

This briefing note provides a summary of outcomes from the project 2HR005-502 Service Standards and Policies Review, which was commissioned by Zero Waste Scotland and delivered by Anthesis LRS.

The specific objectives of the project, as set out in the original project brief and amended in discussions during project inception were to:

- Carry out research regarding service policies and service standards currently in place across councils in Scotland which relate to household kerbside waste/recycling collection.
- Provide information on these service policies and standards to inform their inclusion the national Recycling Charter and Code of Practice which is being developed by the Zero Waste Taskforce.

For the purpose of this work the research used the following broad definitions:

- Policy: A description of an approach / procedures for managing service delivery which may be formal or informal.
- Service standard: A measurable function of service delivery which may be monitored for performance purposes (e.g. internally by the council or as a KPI for a contracted service).

1.2 Research Approach

The research carried out for this project, engaged and drew information from Scottish councils through two key stages:

Stage 1: Web-survey. Engagement with all 32 authorities was undertaken via an initial email from ZWS to introduce the project and directing the officers to a web-based questionnaire. This questionnaire collected information from respondents regarding the list of services, policies and standards agreed with ZWS and the steering group during the inception meeting (see Section 1.3 for summarised list). The questionnaire also requested further information from authorities in terms of any available published material on service standards and policies currently in place. In total 23 authorities responded to the web-survey.

Stage 2: Direct engagement. Engagement via phone or email to gather details of particular areas of interest from a list of 11 authorities agreed with ZWS based on a review of the responses to the web-survey.

1.3 Agreed list of policies and service standards

The following lists of service policies and standards were agreed with ZWS and the steering group for inclusion in this project.

Service Policies:

1 Excess residual waste
2 Provision of additional residual bin capacity
3 Contamination of recycling container
4 Restriction on items disposed of in residual bins
5 Assisted collections
6 Loss of recyclables (contamination of residual container with target recyclable materials)
7 Servicing end of lane properties / properties on un-adopted roads

8 Requirement for presentation of collection container at a specified location

Service Standards:

1 Collect residents' waste/recycling at a nominated day and time
2 Crews to return containers to property boundary / allocated location after collection and/or in a specified manner
3 Clearance of spillages during collection / wind-blown materials
4 Provision of replacement containers after request
5 Missed collections
6 Call centre response times and accuracy of information provided
7 Communicating service information and details of service changes
8 Providing additional/replacement food waste liners

1.4 Objectives of this briefing note

The specific objectives of this briefing note, as agreed with ZWS is to provide information drawn from the project notes, presentation to Steering Group and the outputs of the web-survey (all already provided separately) in a form suitable to inform development of the Charter and Code of Practice documentation. As such:

- For each policy and standard this briefing note will summarise information under the headings provided by ZWS from the draft CoP i.e. Rationale [background/introduction/context], Essential Contents; Desirable Contents; Challenges to Implementing.
- There will not necessarily be information provided under each heading; i.e. where information relevant to that heading was not provided in the responses to the survey.
- Where there have been changes to the policies through combination within a single section or the addition of new policies not part of the original research, this briefing is limited to the those areas where information was specifically collected and discussed in conversations with the councils.

2 Service Policies

2.1 Excess or Side Waste Policy

2.1.1 Rationale

All but one council responding to the web survey had a policy for managing kerbside excess waste (the exception being Shetland which does not provide a kerbside service). The most typical examples of this are 'closed lid', 'no side waste' and 'overweight bin' policies; similar policies may also include compacted waste which would not be easily emptied at collection or may again result in the bin being overly heavy. Councils have implemented excess waste policies to encourage recycling, reduce the environmental and cost impacts of this waste being landfilled and because of safety concerns. The safety concerns relate to manual handling, risk from sharps in unsorted bags and from the safe operation of wheeled bins on comb-lifters upon vehicles. Overweight bins remain a health and safety concern both in terms of the total weight of the bin and whether uneven weight distribution results in a bin being unstable to move.

2.1.2 Essential contents of this policy

The research suggests the following elements should be considered for inclusion in excess waste policies.

- Policy should clearly define the criteria when collection crews will consider waste to be excess, side waste or not within a container with the lid closed e.g.
    - Excess or side waste is any material that is not within the confines of the provided wheeled bin. This can be loose or contained in bags but the defining point is that it has not been able to fit into the provided bin.
    - Where the waste has been placed in the wheeled bin but the lid cannot be easily closed by hand, this may be deemed to be an overfilled bin.
    - Where waste is compacted and cannot easily be emptied from the bin.
- Policy should clearly define the criteria when collection crews will consider bins to be overweight. For example any wheeled bin that cannot be moved by a single crew member to the point of collection or cannot be manoeuvred easily, will be deemed overweight.
- The policy should state what the consequences of placing excess/side waste or overfilled bins for collection will be e.g. the policy may state.
    - That the waste will not be collected on that occasion.
    - Advice will be given to the citizen on what to do next.
    - Advice will be given to the citizen on suitable alternative places to dispose of extra waste (e.g. recycling points or Household Waste Recycling Centres or through a charged additional collection).
- Where waste is collected in sacks the council may specify a maximum number of sacks that it will collect from a property on any one occasion.
- A note of any incidents relating to excess/side waste or overfilled/overweight bins should be taken by the collection crew.
- A log of any incidents relating to excess/side waste or overfilled/overweight bins should be kept and maintained. This should be used to track any repeating patterns of behaviour to ascertain if further intervention is required by the council.

2.1.3 Desirable contents of this policy

Research suggests the following elements should be considered for inclusion in this policy type.

- Where excess/side waste or overfilled bins have been left for collection, the extra waste should be placed back into the wheeled bin by the crew to help reduce the likelihood of environmental health

issues (such as spillages from torn bags). Some form of notice should be placed on the bin or to the relevant property to inform the citizen of the reasons that the waste has not been collected.

- The notes of any incidents relating to excess/side waste or overfilled/overweight bins should be passed to a customer services function to provide relevant information to the citizen should they contact the Council.
- This policy may be linked to the request for additional capacity where applicable.

2.1.4 Challenges to implementing this policy

Principal challenges identified to implementation of this policy are:

Communal collections / collection points:
- How the policy is implemented where bins are collected from a communal location.
- How to communicate effectively with residents where bins are either collected from a communal location or are bulk bins. It may be possible to engage caretakers / resident groups to provide support.

Overweight bins:
- It is difficult to provide clear and consistently implementable guidance to crews on identifying overweight bins.

2.2 Bulky or Special Waste Collection Policy

This policy was not included in the research.

Note that this policy would include necessary cross links to those excluding or restricting certain wastes from collection; e.g. side wastes, excess garden waste DIY waste, overly heavy or large items not suitable for the standard containers etc.

2.3 Non-Recyclable (Residual) Waste Collection

2.3.1 Rationale

A large number of authorities expressed an interest in increasing recycling via a policy to ban citizens from placing target recyclable materials into the residual waste stream. Although a number of authorities had considered or written policies that would ban target materials from the residual waste stream none had enforced the policy and there was some uncertainty expressed by the steering group regarding the use of FPNs as the final penalty, Councils may similarly have a policy stating that there should be no green/garden waste in the non-recyclable waste bin or that hazardous overly heavy waste (e.g. engine parts) or rubble should not be disposed of in this bin. To some extent these policies may also help communicate where waste should more appropriately be disposed of via the bulky collection or HWRC services and help to drive commercial waste out of household bins.

2.3.2 Essential contents of this policy

- Residents should be given clear guidance on what should and shouldn't be placed in residual waste containers and the correct means of recycling target materials
- The policy needs to provide clear guidance on how collection crews should identify and manage bins containing target recyclable materials or other incorrect material present as well as any guidance on tolerated amounts
- The policy should specify materials that should not be presented as part of the normal residual collection e.g. hazardous wastes, heavy items such as engine arts and rubble.

- For material such as rubble or DIY waste which may be from contracted work carried out in citizen's homes, residents should have clear guidance their Duty of Care and the legal responsibility for the contractor to remove that waste and recycle/dispose of it elsewhere. Obvious trade waste will not be collected.
- The policy should state what the consequences of placing excess/side waste or overfilled bins for collection will be e.g.:
  - That the waste will not be collected on that occasion.
  - Advice will be given to the citizen on what to do next.
  - Advice will be given to the citizen on alternative places to dispose of the materials (e.g.. recycling container or Household Waste Recycling Centres).
- A log of any non-collection incidents should be passed to the council's call centre and maintained. This should be used to track any repeating patterns of behaviour to ascertain if further intervention from the council is required.

2.3.3 Desirable contents of this policy

- A ban of materials from the residual waste container needs to be backed up by clear education and investment in follow-up communication with residents

2.3.4 Challenges to implementing this policy

- Feedback from the steering group suggests that legal advice is required to clarify the use of FPN's as part of the enforcement of this policy
- Can only be implemented where recycling or other banned waste is visible at the top of bins; if covered by other waste it will not be possible for crews to easily identify it
- The level of tolerance for banned materials may need to be considered and communicated to collection crews
- This policy may be considered a step-change in the delivery of the service and will require investment in robust communication/education. The investment level may be a challenge to Councils

2.4 Recycling Contamination

2.4.1 Rationale

Policies to reduce contamination of recycling containers aim to increase the quality of the recycling collected by reducing the presence of non-target materials. These policies are generally well established across Scotland but there remain lessons to learn in terms of implementation and communication from operational comparison. The policies tend to be an escalation of communications and actions via a staged process.

2.4.2 Essential contents of this policy

- Residents should be given clear guidance on what should and shouldn't be placed in the recycling container / in each bin provided
- Policy needs to provide clear guidance on how collection crews should identify and manage bins with non-target material. This might include different levels of tolerance for different materials e.g. collection of containers with a crisp packet in but rejection of a container with a nappy in
- The policy should state:
  - what the consequences of presenting recycling bins with excess contamination / non-target material will be.
  - the circumstances in which a container will not be collected
  - that advice will be given to the citizen on what to do next and what further action the council may take.

- The collection crew council should use a tag/leaflet to communicate why the bin has not been collected and the action required by the citizen
- A log of any non-collection incidents should be passed to the council's call centre and maintained. This should be used to track any repeating patterns of behaviour to ascertain if further intervention is required.

2.4.3 Desirable contents of this policy

- The Council should take a staged approach to deal with contamination/non-target material and in particular relating to repeat offenders. This may include:
    - Collection of lighter contamination with feedback to householder
    - An escalating response to repeat offenders: visits to household, removal of service, charged collection of contaminated bins, consider use of FPNs.
- Communication should encourage residents to take responsibility for containers
- Use a different approach for communal bins, which might include:
    - Swift clearance of contamination and removal of communication tags to prevent excess loss of recycling and public support and removal
    - Identifying evidence linking contamination to individual households to allow targeted follow up
    - Working with caretakers / managing organisation to communicate to residents in flats / tenements
    - Applying charges to managing organisations of flats for clearance

2.4.4 Challenges to implementing this policy

- Communal bins / collection areas will always remain a challenge in terms of identifying and communicating with the offending resident.
- Although the use of FPNs is supported to some extent by many councils, the legal tools to use this, even as a last resort, are presently unclear or not existent.

2.5 Additional Capacity and Assisted Collections

This section combines policies for assisted collections with policies for additional bins

2.5.1 Rationale

The policies in this section deal with operational policies for responding to special requests (e.g. assisted uplifts, large families, and sanitary wastes). Although the requirements represent very different situations, the operational response is similar in many respects in terms of receiving requests, responding to and assessing requests and maintaining lists of those on the modified service. It is normal practice for Council to offer assisted collections and additional waste services to citizens with particular needs however the assessment and service may differ between policies and councils. This section includes consideration of:

- Assisted collections
- Additional bins / bin frequencies

2.5.2 Essential contents of this policy

Assisted collections:

- Assisted collection should be provided to properties where residents are unable, for disability, or other medical reasons, to present bins for collection and where there is no other resident within the household or carer that is available to do this on their behalf. This may also be based on age of resident (e.g. > 80 years).

- A clear assessment of needs should be made before providing an assisted collection. This may include a 2 stage assessment: initially by phone and following this up with an assessment visit. The approach acts as a filter and may save officer time for visits.
- The assessment process should be made clear to residents at the outset in line with any safeguarding procedures recognising that some applicants may be considered vulnerable.
- The assessment should ensure that there is not another resident or carer able to put the bin out for collection.
- Databases of properties on the assisted collection list should be updated regularly with reviews ideally undertaken based on a timeframe appropriate to the resident's circumstances (e.g. a service provided to a resident with a temporary mobility issue such as a fractured leg might be reviewed more quickly than a service provided to an elderly resident) to ensure the service is not provided to residents who no longer need it or to properties where original applicant no longer resides
- The scope of the service provided should be clear e.g. that the container will be pulled out of the front garden / yard by the crews and returned to the same original location after emptying.

Providing additional bins / changed frequencies:

- The policy should make the criteria for providing additional containers or more frequent collection services clear to citizens.
- The policy may make additional recycling bins easy to access but require further evidence before providing additional residual capacity.
- The policy may include large families or those with necessarily larger than normal quantities of waste; e.g. large quantities of nappies/sanitary waste. The policy may be linked to a restricted non-recyclable bin collection service for other residents (i.e. reduced frequency/smaller bin size).
- The assessment should be robust before providing a modified service and may include a 2 stage assessment: e.g. initially by completing a form / waste diary to demonstrate their recycling and waste generation habits and use of services provided followed up with an assessment visit. The approach act as a filter and saves officer time for visits.
- Citizens should be able to demonstrate that they are making full use of recycling services before additional residual capacity is offered.
- Databases of properties on a modified collection should be updated regularly and may be provided for a specified limited time period (e.g. 3 years for households with children in nappies)
- Note that in some instances councils may also specify where smaller or alternative bins may be provided e.g. for ease of handling or to support minimisation of waste.

2.5.3 Desirable contents of this policy

- Before providing an assisted collection, councils may require documentary evidence of a disability or medical condition, however not all councils currently feel this to be appropriate e.g. receipt of a benefit for disability does not necessarily mean that a resident is not able to set out their container.
- Follow up reviews timed based on the reason for the service request can help ensure that the assisted collection is not provided for any longer than required
- The policy may include a detailed breakdown of the bins that can be provided to households based on number of residents.
- An assessment of requests for additional or more frequent residual bin collection may include a broader assessment of how the resident uses the recycling services offered.   This may include asking the resident to complete a recycling diary and / or feedback from collection crews
- Additional bins may be required to display an authorised '2nd bin' sticker.
- All lists of special services need to be regularly maintained and this may include cross referencing against change of residency (council tax) and death notices. A fixed review period should be included where applicable.

2.5.4 Challenges to implementing this policy

- Maintaining accurate lists of properties requiring assisted collections
- Challenge for officers making a correct assessment of needs for assisted collections

2.6 Collection from Un-adopted Roads

2.6.1 Rationale

This policy is usually in place for reasons of (a) operational efficiency – to prevent excess travel and manoeuvring to service single or small numbers of properties (b) liability – in terms of the risk of damage to non-council maintained property / roads (c) Health & Safety – Accessing roads / locations which may present an operational risk due to road condition or other reason (d) Access – restricted access for vehicles or crews which may include width, turning areas, weight limits.

2.6.2 Essential contents of this policy

- Policy should clearly identify circumstances where it will normally apply
- The policy should recognise that it is often based on the assessment of individual properties or groups of properties
- Policy communicated via leaflets to affected properties or by direct communication and where there is follow up required this is also most likely to also be on a direct basis
- Clear information / training needs to be provided to collection teams to promote implementation of policy along with a list of properties affected / agreed collection locations

2.6.3 Desirable contents of this policy

- Maintenance of a list of properties should include identification of changes in residency wherever possible (e.g. via council tax information
- Clear signposting to the policy within planning documents for new developments
- The policy may provide details of the assessment used to determine if collections would be made from non-public roads.

2.6.4 Challenges to implementing this policy

- The survey noted that only about half collection crews enforce the policy all the time, which is low compared to other policies therefore crew monitoring is important

2.7 Prevention of Litter and Fly-tipping*

Assessment of policies to prevent litter and flytipping were not included in the survey or scope of the project; however there is some cross linkage to the service standard on clean-up of spilled material (Section 3.8).

2.8 Presentation of Container in Specified Location

2.8.1 Rationale

The policy broadly outlines the requirement for citizens to present bins for collection in specified locations in order for the container to be serviced. Some councils also stipulate the manner in which the containers should be presented (e.g. with handles towards the road) and how they will be returned by the collection crews. A clear and consistent policy directly supports the reduction of missed collections and the efficient management of queries/complaints by waste team and call centres.

2.8.2 Essential contents of this policy

The policy should include:

- Specifying the time that container should be presented to ensure collection.
- The location where bins should be presented e.g. kerbside or designated point. This may differ for different properties / locations.

- Presentation may be specified to avoid obstruction of the road or footpath.
- The policy may also include details of requirements for residents to collect bins from the kerbside within reasonable time after collection.
- How this information should be communicated to residents, e.g. via website, service leaflets and call centres.
- The policy should clearly identify the actions that will be taken on non-compliance by citizens. This would generally be non-collection.
- The policy should clearly identify how non-compliance is followed up by the council e.g. a non-collected container may not be collected until the next scheduled collection day or the council may impose a charge for collection earlier to that time.

2.8.3 Desirable contents of this policy

- Where possible for new properties the point of collection should be identified through discussions at development planning stage.
- Collection crews should return bins to an appropriate location and in an appropriate manner to promote compliance by residents.
- The policy may include which way round the container is presented, e.g. with handles pointing towards the road or with bins grouped next to neighbour, to improve efficiency of collection.

2.8.4 Challenges to implementing this policy

- Collection crews may not strictly adhere to nominated collection locations to limit reports of missed collection.
- Disputes may easily arise where residents claim to have presented their bin correctly or where the presentation is, in the resident's view sufficiently close to the collection location.
- Members should be on-board with the policy to prevent return collections being made where containers have not been presented correctly.

3 Service Standards

Note that as discussed in the review meeting, there was less information provided by councils on service standards than provided on policies. Service standards tend to relate more to contracted services which have formal measurable KPIs than in-house collection services. In some instances the standard may sit with a department other than the operational waste service; e.g. a standard may be applicable for the call centre or centralised communications team rather than waste collection crews meaning that the waste and recycling teams have little information on this. In some instances the terminology was unclear as some councils were presenting their policies within documents titled 'service standards'.

3.1 Call Centre Response Times

3.1.1 Rationale

The responsibility for responding to queries about waste services may sit with call centre / central communications teams in many instances. For some queries there will be a requirement for response from technical or operational officers for whom knowledge of any policy would be required in that instance. The response this question was low and unclear and this may have been due to responsibilities for this standard sitting with call centres in some instances.

3.1.2 Essential contents of this standard

- This standard may provide target response time.
  - The call centre answering the phone within a certain number seconds/rings
  - Responses being provided to email / phone / online enquiries e.g. within 3 days
- *In Anthesis' opinion,* it would be good practice for the call centre to respond within a set time to assure the resident that their query is being dealt with if they cannot respond immediately.
- If there is a need for waste team technical/operational officers to support the query, they should be made fully aware of the timeline/expectations provided to the resident.

3.1.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- Where possible monitoring should be in place against this standard

3.1.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

No information provided.

3.2 Communication of Service Information

3.2.1 Rationale

The service standard relates to the provision of service information to residents to enable them to participate fully in the services offered and to promote good recycling behaviour

3.2.2 Essential contents of this standard

- The standard should require the council to provide clear information to residents on how to participate in the services offered including service collection days and times and how to present containers for collection.
- Clear information should be provided to residents to support the recognition of materials to be deposited in each container.
- Residents should be given notice prior to any service changes with the opportunity to access further information if required via website or direct contact.

3.2.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- Councils could identify the key stages where information should be provided (annual calendars, service changes, holiday dates, information for new movers etc.).
- Residents should be provided with regular service information reminders. Whilst this may be at minimum yearly as part of the distribution of calendars, Councils presenting information only on web-sites will be looking for a regular update frequency rather than one for the distribution of leaflets.
- *Anthesis would recommend:* Information can also include feedback to residents on the performance of the service (e.g. recycling improvements) and can be designed to address issues identified through monitoring such as low participation or capture of certain materials.

3.2.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

- The principal challenge to delivering this standard is resources/costs. Many councils are moving toward communicating only via the council's website rather than providing information directly via regular leaflets and calendars

3.3 Missed Collections

3.3.1 Rationale

The standard identifies a council's response to a report of a missed collection by a resident, in terms of the assessment of that report and the time taken to respond appropriately.

3.3.2 Essential contents of this standard

- The standard should clearly identify the circumstances under which a missed bin will be collected (i.e. a missed collection by crews rather than a bin not presented).
- The standard should include when the resident needs to report the missed collection (within a certain time after it has been missed).
- The standard should provide clear information on when the bin will be collected. This may differ depending on when it is reported and will rely on what is operationally feasible for the council (e.g. within 48 hours of the report being made).

3.3.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- The standard may outline when a report of a missed collection will be accepted (e.g. only after the last collection would be expected to take place)
- Crews should record information regarding properties where containers have not been set out for collection, to support the assessment of whether bins should be recollected. Electronic in-cab equipment supports this information being made directly to call centres in real time.
- Councils should monitor performance against this standard.

3.3.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

- Councils need to identify where collections have been missed and where bins have not been set out in time for collection.

3.4 Replacement of Containers

3.4.1 Rationale

The standard relates to how a council should deal with reports of containers that are missing, stolen or damaged and therefore need replacement and the time taken to respond appropriately with providing replacement containers.

3.4.2 Essential contents of this standard

- The standard should clearly identify the circumstances under which a container requires replacement (e.g. stolen from property or damaged by collection crews) and how requests relating to each circumstance will be dealt with.
- The standard should be linked to a clear procedure to identify whether containers need to be replaced at the cost of the council or the resident.
- The standard should provide clear information on the replacement timescale for the container. This may relate to ensuring replacement in good time before the next collection to ensure the citizen can continue to recycle / store waste safely.
- Collection crews need to feed-back effectively on bins lost into vehicles or damaged during collection.

3.4.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- Councils may prioritise replacement of recycling bins over residual bins in terms of timescale *(note that although this difference in replacement timescale was apparent for a number of councils it may not be considered a recommended approach).*
- Councils should monitor performance against this standard.
- The council may specify a maximum number of bins that it will replace (unless through the council's own fault) without imposing a charge.
- Residents may be required to report stolen bins or bins damaged by criminal activity (e.g. arson) to the police and obtain a crime number before the council will replace their bin

3.4.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

- Assessment of whether the bin is missing through the fault of the council, the resident or a third party (e.g. theft)
- Consideration of any policies or management procedures that might penalise collection crews for damaging containers and therefore prevent them from reporting issues.

3.5 Collection Day and Time

3.5.1 Rationale

The standard sets out the Council's responsibilities for collecting bins from properties on the expected day and within the expected timeframe.

3.5.2 Essential contents of this standard

- The standard needs to include a clear commitment to collect bins on a nominated day from residents.
- The nominated day will normally be communicated to residents via communication materials delivered to the household or will be available on-line e.g. via a postcode search.
- Where this varies (e.g. due to bank holidays) residents will need to be informed appropriately and the approach to these collections consistent.

3.5.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- The standard may include providing a time window to residents for the collection in order to reduce reports of missed collections (e.g. your recycling may be collected any time from 7am to 6pm).
- Providing the call centre with a broad expected collection time for different properties / route information could help them to better respond to queries.
- Information should be monitored including the evaluation of reasons for missed collections to help resolve service issues.

3.5.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

No information provided.

3.6 Liner Provision

3.6.1 Rationale

This standard is in place only where councils provide liners for residents with a food waste collection service. The standard relates to the length of time to provide replacement liners (there may be a limited quantity of these provided free to each property). In most instances the council will replace liners via collection crews responding to a request by the householder or provide replacement liners via nominated drop in centres; e.g. council offices. Alternatively a year's supply may be delivered to each resident and any further liners will need to be purchased (1 council only).

3.6.2 Essential contents of this standard

- Residents need to be provided with clear information on how to request liners or where to collect them from. This may be a call to the call centre or be by tying a liner to the bin put out for collection.
- In response to an appropriate request and where liners are delivered directly the council should specify a time for delivering replacement liners.

3.6.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- Where in place it would be desirable to monitor against tis standard

3.6.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

No information provided

3.7 Returning Containers

3.7.1 Rationale

The standard relates to the responsibility of collection crews to return containers tidily to the kerbside or nominated collection point after emptying. There may in some instances be an alternative location where containers are returned to.

3.7.2 Essential contents of this standard

- The standard should require that all containers should be returned to the kerbside / point of collection or other suitable nominated position after emptying
- Containers should be presented tidily e.g. with lids closed
- The standard and the location should:
  - Allow residents to easily handle and reclaim containers
  - Be safe for the public (e.g. no obstructions / preventing container blowing away)
- The point of collection might not always be the point of return

3.7.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- In some instance containers are specified to be returned in a particular way, for example:
  - Empty sacks may be placed in a recycling box
  - Food waste caddies may be left open to air
  - Boxes may be placed upside-down to protect the next batch of recyclable materials by preventing water ingress
  - Wheeled bins may be returned on their side in high winds to prevent them blowing away

3.7.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

- Collection crews working to a tight schedule may not have the time for a complex re-presentation of containers.
- Containers can move subsequent to replacement due to wind.

3.8 Clearance of Spillages

3.8.1 Rationale

The standard relates to the clearance of waste/recyclate spillages by collection crews. This may be a result of spillages by residents, collection crews or due to weather / animals. This may be a standard delivered by collection teams with support from street cleansing operations.

3.8.2 Essential contents of this standard

- The standard needs to be clear about the circumstances for spillage and littering and whether littering has been caused by crew operations or by other circumstances such as wind.
- The standard may state that collections should be made in a clean and tidy manner and that spills will be cleared by crews or within a certain response period.
- Crews may generally be required to clear small spillages with larger spillages being reported for street cleansing crews.
- The standard may include separate timescales for clearance of small spillages (by crews) and large spillages (by street cleansing crews)

3.8.3 Desirable contents of this standard

- The standard may identify that special arrangements will be made in severe weather (e.g. with street cleansing crews shadowing collection crews)

3.8.4 Challenges to implementing this standard

- The main challenge to this standard is identifying fault and whether this requires alternate approaches for littering caused by residents.
- Operationally crews are likely to have little time to clear littering and it may be more appropriate for street cleansing to be informed in most instances unless the littering is small.
- There may be considered health and safety implications to crews clearing some types of spillage using the basic equipment provided.

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