

**REPORT FOR: Portfolio Holder Decision**

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**SUBJECT: Civic Amenity Site: Policies and charges**

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**Responsible Officer:** Caroline Bruce  
Corporate Director Environment and Enterprise

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Susan Hall, Leader, Portfolio Holder for  
Community Safety and Environment

**Key Decision:** No

**Urgent/Non Urgent:** Non Urgent

**Decision subject to  
Call-in:** Yes

**Power to be  
exercised:** Paragraph 2 of the Appendix to the executive  
procedure rules, part 4d of the Council's  
constitution

**Exempt:** No

**Enclosures:** None

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets out proposed changes in relation to the deposit of waste by vans at the civic amenity site in Forward Drive, which is necessary to address the issue of aggressive behaviour, by some traders at the site

**Recommendations:**

1. Suspend the current policy to allow three free tips per annum by residents using

vans. All deposits of waste by vans would be chargeable as trade waste. This suspension to be reviewed in June 2014 to determine if any further action is required.

**Reason: (For recommendation)**

To reduce instances of verbal intimidation and aggression towards staff working at the site.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This report addresses issues around verbal abuse and aggressive behaviour, towards site staff, by some traders, which have increased significantly in recent months

### **2.2 Options considered**

#### 2.2.1 Do nothing.

Doing nothing would not address the issue of verbal abuse and aggressive behaviour by some traders towards site staff.

#### 2.2.2 Introduce changes

The current policy for vans is that each resident is entitled to deliver three free tips of household waste in any twelve month period using a van. This limit was introduced to prevent abuse of the free tipping facility (for residents) by traders. This revised policy is being abused by some traders (of which a number are from outside the borough) who are verbally abusing and intimidating site staff to obtain free tips. It is considered that an immediate suspension of the policy will help to resolve this issue.

The above changes would be introduced on Saturday 22 February 2014.

Other managerial actions include: -

- Installation of an emergency exit gate adjacent to the weighbridge office. This will allow traders who refuse to pay to be directed out of the site without gaining access to the tipping area. (Subject to Environment Agency approval).
- Provision of personal body-worn CCTV to staff - to allow recording of any confrontation.
- Investigation of option to employ professional witnesses to give evidence.

We are obliged to ensure that policies are put in place to ensure we support our staff in carrying out their daily duties. This suspension of an identified policy which has resulted in threats of verbal and physical abuse to staff will remove/reduce this threat. It will also clearly set out to all van users that the disposal of their waste will be charged.

The above change will be reviewed in June 2014 to determine if any further action is required.

### 2.3 Current situation

There are serious Health and Safety issues at the site connected with aggressive behaviour by some traders who wish to deposit trade waste free of charge. In 2013, 30 incidents of serious aggression have been recorded. These include threats of physical violence to staff and their families. A number of other incidents (involving swearing and hand gestures) have not been considered serious enough to record.

The Anti Social Behaviour team have been assisting the service with the introduction of a banning notice which is issued to traders that refuse to pay. The notice captures the registration number of the vehicle, and with the assistance of the Police, contact with the trader is made and they are advised not to return to the site.

### 2.4 Why a change is needed

To reduce instances of verbal intimidation and aggression towards staff working at the site.

### 2.5 Policy at other CA sites in West London

Twyford Road, Brent - Operated by WLWA	All vans are charged, unless residents provide ID and a utility bill. No significant problems reported with aggression.
Victoria Road, Hillingdon - Operated by WLWA	As above. Also from 20 Jan 2014. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No vans accepted at all</li> <li>• New charge for residents depositing asbestos</li> <li>• No trade asbestos accepted.</li> </ul> No significant problems reported with aggression.
Spaceways – Hounslow	All vans are charged, unless residents provide ID and a utility bill. The most prevalent cause of aggression tends to be with respect to charging residents for Home Improvement waste, with a smaller percentage from the van policy. Vehicle registrations and descriptions of the customer involved are always logged. Repeated occurrences result in complete ban from site.
Harefield - Hillingdon	All vans are charged, unless residents provide ID and a utility bill. Some recent problems with some aggressive traders trying to avoid payment
Greenford Road – Ealing – operated by contractor	All vans are charged, unless residents provide ID and a utility bill. No trade waste.
Townmead Road - Richmond	All vans are charged, unless residents provide ID and a utility bill. Trade waste accepted

### **3. Implications of the Recommendation**

#### **3.1 Legal Implications**

The responsibility to provide civic amenity site resides with WLWA. Harrow provides the site at Forward Drive on behalf of WLWA. The site has a dual function with the general public using the upper tipping area and traders and the council using the lower tipping area. All vans have to use the lower tipping area. This change would mean that they would either have to pay the commercial charges or go to another civic amenity site in the WLWA area, where they would have to comply with the rules on that site

#### **3.2 Financial Implications**

These proposals will have a minimal financial impact and any additional expenditure will be managed with the overall departmental budget.

#### **3.3 Performance Issue**

The proposed changes will have no significant effect on performance regarding the proportion of household waste reused, recycled and composted, or residual waste

#### **3.4 Environmental Impact**

These proposals will have a minimal environmental impact. There may be an increase in fly-tipping in the borough. This will be monitored to determine if this change has any adverse impact. The Environmental Compliance Team will be diligent in taking appropriate enforcement action in relation to fly-tipping.

#### **3.5 Risk Management Implications**

This change, in conjunction with other managerial action, is expected to resolve the H&S issues at the site

#### **3.6 Equalities implications**

An EqIA has been undertaken that shows no adverse impact on people with the protected characteristics.

Residents who own vans but not a car will be adversely affected by this decision. However there is no evidence that they fall into any protected group. The 2011 Census reported that 23.5% of Harrow's Households did not have access to a car or van.

The implementation will be reviewed in June 2014 to ascertain the impacts to staff with regard to Health & Safety. The wider impact to residents who only own vans will also be considered through customer feedback.

#### **3.7 Corporate Priorities**

The report incorporates the administration's priority to deliver a cleaner, safer and fairer Harrow, by ensuring that the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff (at the civic amenity site) are protected.

## Section 4 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Ann Begley.....  on behalf of the  
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 31/01/14.....

Name: Matthew Adams.....  on behalf of the  
Monitoring Officer

Date: 31/01/14.....

## Section 5 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: M. Randall.....  on behalf of the\*  
Divisional Director  
Strategic  
Commissioning

Date: 31/01/14.....

## Section 6 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker  on behalf of the\*  
Corporate Director  
(Environment &  
Enterprise)

Date: 31/01/14

## Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Andrew Baker, Head of Climate Change  
[Andrew.baker@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.baker@harrow.gov.uk)  
Extn 2779

**Background Papers:** None

Signature: .....

Position Corporate Director Environment and Enterprise

Name (print) Caroline Bruce.....

Date: 31/01/14

## For Portfolio Holder

\* I do agree to the decision proposed

~~\* I do not agree to the decision proposed~~

*\* Please delete as appropriate*

Notification of disclosable non-pecuniary and pecuniary interests, any conflict of interest or dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service(if any):

[Should you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, you should not take this decision.]

Additional comments made by and/or options considered by the Portfolio Holder

Signature: Susan Hall.....

Portfolio Holder

Date: 31/01/14

**Call-In Waived by the  
Chairman of Overview  
and Scrutiny  
Committee**

*(for completion by Democratic  
Services staff only)*

**YES/ NO / NOT APPLICABLE\***

*\* Delete as appropriate  
If No, set out why the decision is  
urgent with reference to 4b - Rule  
47 of the Constitution.*