

## Summary Sheet

### **Name of Committee and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 9 July 2018

### **Report Title**

Capital Investment in Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins

### **Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

### **Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Damien Wilson, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment.

### **Report Author(s)**

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### **Ward(s) Affected**

All

## Summary

The Budget and Council Tax 2018-19 report to Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting approved the Council's Capital Strategy to 2021/22. As part of this, £610,000 of Priority Capital Investment monies were identified for 'Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins'. This investment is intended for service improvement for cleansing and bins with options for Solar Compactor Bins to be explored.

Individual projects, setting out costs and efficiency savings, were to be brought to Cabinet for approval.

This report seeks approval to spend £408,500 of this allocation on a range of capital investments in street cleansing equipment and bins, balancing the need for short-term investment in 'traditional' approaches, and the longer term need to assess more innovative approaches to litter bin provision. In particular, the project seeks to pilot the provision of solar litter bins, in order to assess their potential to support wider investment in litter bin provision, via the delivery of efficiencies in operational street cleansing services and increased advertising revenues.

## **Recommendations**

- 1 That £408,500 of Capital Expenditure be released for investment in Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins.
- 2 That the proposed approach to expenditure of the Capital Investment in Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins be approved, as outlined in Section 4.10 to 4.13 below.
- 3 That the Assistant Director of Community Safety and Street Scene be authorised to make all necessary arrangements for the delivery of the proposed approach, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities.

## **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix A Example Bin Types across Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

## **Council Approval Required**

No

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Capital Investment in Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins**

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That £408,500 of Capital Expenditure be released for investment in Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins.
- 1.2 That the proposed approach to expenditure of the Capital Investment in Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins be approved, as outlined in Section 4.10 to 4.13 below.
- 1.3 That the Assistant Director of Community Safety and Street Scene be authorised to make all necessary arrangements for the delivery of the proposed approach, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Budget and Council Tax 2018-19 report to Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting approved the Council's Capital Strategy to 2021/22 on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018. As part of this, £610,000 of Priority Capital Investment monies were identified for 'Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins'. This investment is intended for service improvement for cleansing and bins with options for Solar Compactor Bins to be explored.
- 2.2 Paragraph 3.7.8 of that report identified that individual projects, setting out costs and efficiency savings, were to be brought to Cabinet for approval.
- 2.3 This report sets out the business case for this investment and seeks formal approval to draw down £408,500 of this earmarked funding. This capital investment in a range of street cleansing equipment and bins, balances the need for short-term investment in 'traditional' approaches, and the longer term need to assess more innovative approaches to litter bin provision. In particular, the project seeks to pilot the provision of solar litter bins, in order to assess their potential to support wider investment in litter bin provision, via the delivery of efficiencies in operational street cleansing services and increased advertising revenues.

### **3. Key Issues**

#### **Mechanical Cleaning**

- 3.1 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council undertakes scheduled street cleansing using a mixture of manual (litter-picking) and mechanical (path/road sweeping) resources. Mechanical cleansing is by far the most efficient and effective way to keep the public highway clear of litter and detritus. Regular mechanical cleaning of highway channels removes litter, but also prevents the build-up of detritus and weed growth, and supports the cleanliness of drainage gullies.
- 3.2 The current mechanical cleansing schedule in Rotherham is arranged around three frequencies:

- Town centre – daily as required.
- A-Roads – once per month
- B-Roads – four times per year
- All other roads – once per year

3.3 These cleansing frequencies are dictated by the vehicular resources available to the service. In Rotherham the Council runs two large LGV size road-sweepers which are only suitable for roads, and one small path-sweeper, which can sweep roads and pathways.

3.4 In comparison our neighbouring authorities run more mechanical cleaning vehicles than in Rotherham. Doncaster Council have four large LGV road sweepers, and ten small path-sweepers. Barnsley Council have three large LGV road sweepers, and two small path-sweepers.

3.5 In order to bring Rotherham’s mechanical provision more in line with neighbouring Authorities, the Council would need to expand its current mechanical sweeping provision by three vehicles.

### **Litter Bin Provision**

3.6 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council services 1,880 litter bins across the borough (7.2 per 1,000 head of population). Of these around 120 are in the main town centre of Rotherham. A recent audit showed that around 15% of the litter bins are damaged or inappropriate, and require repair or replacement. They fell into the following categories:

<b>Reason for replacement</b>	<b>Number of bins</b>	<b>Estimated Cost of Replacement</b>
Damaged / with faults	90	£31,500
Open concrete bins	70	£24,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>£56,000</b>

3.7 At present the number of requests for repair or replacement of litter bins outstrips the Councils’ financial capacity, and has led to a backlog of reactive repairs. Where litter bins are dangerously damaged and need removing urgently, this can mean that the Council simply removes the bin in the first instance, rather than replaces it, as there is insufficient budget to ensure a replacement can be provided.

3.8 In addition to the above, there are a number of litter bins across the Borough which, whilst not damaged beyond repair, require replacement. There are 70 concrete open top bins, which should be prioritised for replacement with more modern bins, to contain litter more effectively. There are therefore 160 bins that require a priority replacement when these are included.

3.9 The current budget for the replacement of litter bins is £8,793 per annum, which only equates to the replacement of around 25 new bins each year. At this level

of funding it is estimated that it will take over six years to replace the existing number of damaged and inappropriate litter bins identified in our recent audit.

3.10 Furthermore, a recent review identified a number of improvements that should be made to the overall service including:

- A full audit to improve asset management and information related to litter bin assets;
- The identification of each bin with unique reference number;
- The establishment of an asset management system in order to manage changes, replacements and scheduling going forwards.

Regardless of the outcome of this report, the service is now taking steps to address these issues.

### **Solar Compaction litter bins**

3.11 There are a number of suppliers of solar powered compaction litter bins on the market. Solar compaction litter bins use a solar powered unit to monitor the fill level of the bin and compact the waste within it. They can be equipped with remote monitoring, that can inform the operational service when bins are full, and support operational services to plan bin emptying more effectively.

3.12 Suppliers of solar compaction litter bins claim that they can reduce the number of required collections by around 80%, and that this also leads to reductions in the use of bin liners, and vehicle wear and tear and fuel consumption. In turn the manufacturers claim that the high cost of these bins can be offset by savings through productivity and route efficiency, through optimised collections, reallocated resources and reduced staff time.

3.13 Whilst there are a number of case studies supporting the claims, these bins are significantly more expensive than a standard litter bin (around ten times the price). Some authorities have also identified issues with public acceptability and operational emptying of compacted waste.

### **Future Service Review**

3.14 A full review of Community Safety and Street Scene Services is proposed, and this could result in changes to the operational model and the requirements for equipment. Any capital expenditure in the short-term must take into account the potential for any future need for capital expenditure to support any proposed changes and the delivery of future innovative approaches.

## **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

4.1 A number of options for the expenditure of the Capital allocation have been explored in the context of the information in Section 3 above.

### **Option 1 - Spend the entire £610k on solar litter bins**

- 4.2 The estimated cost of a solar litter bin is around £3,500. This would equate to the provision of 174 litter bins across the borough, less than 10% of Rotherham's overall litter bin provision. Should the manufacturer's claims prove to be correct however, the installation of solar litter bins could reduce overall operational costs and the net cost of the bins would therefore be significantly reduced.
- 4.3 However, there is a significant risk that the bins will not reduce operational costs by a large enough proportion to off-set the significant additional costs associated with them. Any savings would also need to be cashable, through a reduction in workforce or vehicles, and the Council would therefore need to be confident that such savings could be delivered within a reasonable timescale.
- 4.4 Spending the entire budget on solar bins would also mean that the Council would remain with the current level of mechanical cleaning that it currently undertakes, which is much lower than that delivered in other neighbouring Local Authorities.
- 4.5 No capital funding would be available to support any potential changes to services to deliver more innovative approaches in the medium term.
- 4.6 None of the litter bins requiring replacement as a priority would be replaced.
- 4.7 Given the clear financial and operational risks, the Service does not recommend this approach.

### **Option 2 - Spend the entire £610k on 'traditional' street cleansing approaches.**

- 4.8 The option to spend the entire allocation on 'traditional' approaches is the most straightforward operational approach.
- 4.9 The purchase of three additional path-sweepers would cost approximately £450,000, leaving £160,000 which could be spent on replacing existing litter bins across the Borough. The 286 bins requiring urgent replacement would be prioritised at a cost of approximately £100,100, with the balance (£59,900) then being available to improve and standardise litter bin provision in commercial areas, as a priority. This approach would enable the Council to replace 457 litter bins across the Borough, which is 24% of the overall litter bins in Rotherham.
- 4.9 There is also an option to reduce the level of path-sweeper provision, and increase the number of litter bins replaced. A reduction in the number of additional path-sweepers to two, would enable a further 429 litter bins to be replaced, and allow the Authority to replace 47% of its litter bin assets.

4.10 Whilst this option is the most easily deliverable by the service, it clearly means that the Council would forgo the opportunity to test more innovative technologies. Solar litter bins have the potential to deliver service efficiencies, and the opportunity to assess the potential of these bins would be lost under this option. No capital funding would be available to support any potential changes to services to deliver more innovative approaches in the medium term.

4.11 On this basis, the Service does not recommend this approach.

**Option 3 - Deliver a mixed economy of 'innovative' and 'traditional' approaches to test future options.**

4.12 The most favoured option is one which acknowledges the short-term challenges in terms of mechanical cleaning, and existing litter bin provision, which is described above, but presents an opportunity to test the solar litter bin approach to potentially deliver future savings.

4.13 This option proposes to purchase two additional path-sweepers at a cost of £300,000 to increase provision of mechanical cleaning across the Borough.

4.14 The Council proposes to buy 15 solar compaction litter bins, at an estimated cost of £52,500, to be located in commercial centres, both in central Rotherham and outlying commercial centres. This approach will allow the Council to test solar bins in varied environments in order to understand any potential future savings.

4.15 Replacement of the 160 'priority' litter bins described above would be prioritised, at a cost of approximately £56,000.

4.16 This would leave £201,500 of capital funding, which would be available to support any potential changes to services to deliver more innovative approaches in the medium term, once the outcome of the service review is known. A further report to Cabinet would outline how this remaining budget would be spent.

4.17 Given the flexibility this approach allows, and the potential to test future approaches, the Service recommends this approach.

**5. Consultation**

5.1 Whilst the location of the priority litter bins to be replaced will be dictated by their current locations, consultation with local Ward Councillors will be undertaken to ensure that the location of the existing bin is the best location going forwards. Where necessary priority bins will be relocated following consultation to more appropriate locations.

5.2 The assessment of the pilot of solar bins will consider public feedback and usage before any business case for further expansion

## **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

6.1 A detailed timetable for the implementation of the decision will be produced following this decision. In outline it is currently estimated that each element of the investment programme will be delivered by the following milestone dates:

- Procurement and mobilisation of additional path-sweeping resources – by spring 2019.
- Procurement and installation of pilot solar compaction litter bins – by end December 2018.
- Priority Litter bin replacement by end of December 2018

## **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

7.1 The Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting of 19th February 2018 approved an allocation of £610,000 as a priority capital investment in Street Cleansing Equipment and Bins. This capital allocation was provided subject to individual projects, setting out costs and efficiency savings, being brought to Cabinet for approval. This report constitutes the request for approval to draw down this funding. Section 4 above identifies the recommended option, which in summary is that the £408,500 of this capital allocation should be spent as follows: £300,000 – 2 additional mechanical path-sweepers; £52,500 – 15 Solar Compaction Bins and £56,000 – 160 replacement standard litter bins.

7.2 The procurement of the goods/equipment identified in this report will be undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's own Standing Orders.

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no identified legal implications.

## **9. Human Resources Implications**

9.1 None at present.

## **10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 There are no identified implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

## **11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

11.1 The usage and provision of solar bins will be assessed to ensure there are no implications for people with disabilities.

## **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

12.1 None

### 13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The main risk of this approach is the purchase of solar compaction litter bins, and the risk that they do not deliver operational savings as expected. This would mean that the additional cost was not justified and the opportunity to purchase a number of standard litter bins will have been lost. In the first instance however, the Council only intends to purchase 15 of this style of bin, to minimise this risk.

### 14. Accountable Officer(s)

Tom Smith, Assistant Director of Community Safety and Street Scene

Approvals obtained on behalf of:-

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services	Jon Baggaley	06.06.2018
Assistant Director of Legal Services	Neil Concannon	18.06.2018
Head of Procurement (if appropriate)	Karen Middlebrook	21.06.2018
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	John Crutchley	18.06.2018

*Report Author: Tom Smith, Assistant Director, Community Safety and Street Scene.*

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://modern.gov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

**Appendix A – Example Bin Types across Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**



Glasdon Brunel



Wybone LBV/7



Concrete Bins



Glasdon Topsy Royal