

BREIFING NOTE FOR ALL COMMUNITY & TOWN COUNCILS IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

DOG FOULING BIN EMPTYING – AUGUST 2019

A meeting took place on 8th August 2019 between MCC officers and representatives from community & town councils across Monmouthshire. It was a very positive meeting and heartening that all present are willing to work together and to take the message back to their respective areas/clusters.

Collaboration between Community & Town councils is something to be encouraged. Collaboration between 2 or 3 local councils is not easy so taking this proposal forward across the 33 community & town councils in Monmouthshire will be a major challenge but a positive first step has been taken.

Those in attendance were:

Huw Owen (Environmental Health), Carl Touhig (Head of Waste), Sue Parkinson (Waste & Recycling Education Officer) at Monmouthshire County Council,

George Weston (Trellech United CC), Martin Beattie (Caerwent CC) John Love (Llangybi Fawr CC) Frank Rowberry (Caldicot TC), Jane Lee (Abergavenny TC clerk) representing Community & Town Councils.

Purpose of the meeting

There is concern about having only one option available for contracting dog waste collection and disposal, and the risk that this entails. The meeting was called to explore how the service could be delivered in the future and to make sure that there is a Plan B should one be needed.

MCC reassured those present that if the current provider was unable to continue to provide a service then MCC would step in.

General Comments

- Many of the rural community councils have not experienced issues with their current service provider. They generally have less bins that are less heavily used than those in towns however the risks associated with having only one provider are relevant.
- The replacement of dog bins with litter bins would require more litter bins in rural areas particularly.
- If more than one service delivery option becomes available, it should be noted that if councils chose different service providers there may not be enough work to make either service unviable, hence the desire for all to work collaboratively
- There are areas requiring clarification re current operation of the service.

- Community & Town Councils have a duty of care to ensure that the waste is being disposed of correctly
- Using litter bins to collect dog waste will prevent any litter from being recycled.
- Dog bins have the advantage over litter bins of being lidded, preventing smells and flies, however litter bins are emptied more often than dog bins
- The weight of dog waste will be counted as waste disposed of by Monmouthshire CC, so will adversely affect the recycling & waste statistics
- In the longer term MCC indicated that there are benefits in phasing out dog bins and use litter bins instead for dog waste. There is currently duplication of effort where there is a litter bin next to a dog bin. Collecting dog waste with litter will enable it to be incinerated along with household waste.

Areas for further consideration

Following discussion, it was agreed that a number of areas should be explored and more information collected.

1. To explore service delivery with Blaenau Gwent CBC as it is understood that there may be capacity to empty Monmouthshire's bins. However, the extent of the potential contract cannot be quantified as there is not a comprehensive list or map of the locations of all the dog waste bins in Monmouthshire
 - **Action:** All C&TCs to send (email or post) to Sue Parkinson a map or list of the locations of the dog bins installed prior to 2015.
2. It is not currently known if the waste collected by Merlin is incinerated or put in landfill.
 - **Action:** If any C&TC has received details from Merlin such as the waste collection licence, Waste Transfer Notes stating the quantity of material collected and disposed of please could you forward this to Jane Lee, Clerk at Abergavenny Town Council
3. It is important the Town and Community Councils work together to jointly procure a good and cost-effective service for all. It would be less attractive to a 'new' service provider if the contract only covered a proportion of the community & town council areas and subsequently this may make any new and existing service unviable.
 - **Action:** On behalf of C&TCs, Jane Lee will contact MCC procurement to seek advice

4. MCC would like to receive income from C&TCs for the increased levels of service that would be involved with more frequent litter bin emptying (inc dog waste). It would be necessary to find a fair way of apportioning costs between Councils with different densities of bins and for all C&TC in Monmouthshire to come on board and contract with a new service provider.
 - **Action:** No further action at this time
5. MCC would need to know the weight of dog waste disposed of. Suggested that the contents of an averagely full dog bin are weighed to obtain an estimate and then multiplied by the number of bins when known.
 - **Action:** MCC to pursue when a comprehensive list of bins is available
6. T&CCs need to look at their contracts with Merlin.
 - **Action:** Please could C&TCs send details of their contract with Merlin Waste to Jane Lee, Clerk at Abergavenny Town Council or if there is not a contract to send an email stating that there is no contract.

Timescale

Please could community & town councils send the information requested by end of September as an update will be provided at the next Give Dog Fouling the Red Card meeting on 10th October.

Contacts

For more information please contact one of the Community & Town Councils reps in attendance or Sue Parkinson, MCC susanparkinson@monmouthshire.gov.uk or Jane Lee, Town Clerk, Abergavenny Town Council clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk