

COUNCIL

10 SEPTEMBER 2014

QUESTION FROM MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

Brian Bamford

Given that in anticipation of what Bury MBC may regard as '*teething problems*' in relation to the proposed change to the collection of '*grey waste*', Waste Management has recently issued an instruction for bin operatives:

- 1) Not to collect side-waste left beside bins.
- 2) To only to remove bins with raised lids if it is deemed safe to do so at the discretion of the operative.
- 3) To only remove over-weight bins at the discretion of the operative.

The question then arises as to who will remove the '*side-waste*' and bins that are left stranded in the streets?

If the answer in the case of '*side-waste*' is that the '*side-waste*' left behind will be removed later by other operatives from the Streets Cleansing Department, doesn't this mean that the whole procedure is simply a conjuring trick that is transferring the collection of the waste from one department (Waste Removal) to another (Street Cleansing)? Thus, the cost of removal of the waste is merely shifted from one department to another by a bureaucratic slight-of-hand.

Please will you also enlighten me as to what happens regarding the over-weight bins and those with raised bin lids, and as how this represents a saving?

A. Mr Bamford is not correct in all of his assumptions.

This is not a recent instruction. It has always been the case that waste operatives should not take side waste left by the grey bins. This message is also consistent on literature that is sent out to residents and information that is on the web-site.

We are asking operatives to take cardboard side waste or occasional blue bin waste that is left by the side of green bins and only when it is safe to do so.

The crews are requested to use their judgement when collecting bins that have the lids slightly raised, and only when safe to do so. The information that is provided to the public is that bin lids should be closed. (which also reduces the risk of odours, vermin and flies).

It has always been the case that the operatives use their judgement not to take bins which are too heavy. In such cases the bin will be stickered to explain why the bin has been left. The crews also receive support from the recycling awareness and enforcement team

Waste management has a team of recycling and enforcement officers who support the waste operatives on a daily basis. Side waste, heavy bins and fly tipping can be reported through the on-board computer which is then followed up by visits to households to provide help and advice to residents.

The back up service provided by the recycling and enforcement team is also to be enhanced by providing each crew with a direct contact to a support offices for improved communication and follow up.

There is no evidence to suggest that there should be an increase in side waste or fly tipping (which is the case in Falkirk). What we are asking residents to do is place all recyclable materials in the blue, green or brown bins.

Therefore the grey bin should only contain the lighter materials such as food containers, yogurt pots and plastic bags. The heavier materials such as food waste should be in the brown bin (which will stay at 2 weekly collection) and blue bin materials such as glass (which will increase to 3 weekly collection)

The Council is already aware of areas where there may be a higher risk of fly tipping such as some of the back streets. These are currently being tackled jointly between waste management, cleansing and Environmental Health

In terms of over full grey bins, where households are recycling everything they can and there is a genuine need for extra space eg larger families, an application can be made for an extra grey bin. Extra green and blue bins can also be provided free of charge.

The Council is fully committed to supporting its in-house workforce. The new waste management system is about increasing recycling and making sure that the right stuff goes in the right bin. A 10% increase in recycling could save going on for £1 million per year and help protect other services.

I am sure Mr Bamford as representative for Unite the Union is aware that the aim of the new system is to achieve efficiency savings through increased recycling and not a cut to the existing workforce. No jobs will be lost in the waste service as a result of these changes.

