

Report subject	<b>BCP Council Public Waste Bin Provision Policy</b>
Meeting date	26 March 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To seek adoption of a <i>BCP Council Public Waste Bin Provision Policy</i> which establishes a consistent, evidence-based approach to the provision, management and servicing of litter and dog-waste bins across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(a) Approves the adoption of a BCP Council Public Waste Bin Provision Policy. Noting the operational and financial implications associated with implementing the Policy.</b></li> <li><b>(b) Approves the allocation of a phased annual capital replacement programme of £200k in 2026/27, followed by a future annual amount of £25k accommodated within the existing bin/ skip purchasing and maintenance budget.</b></li> <li><b>(c) Approves the allocation of £60k from the waste infrastructure grant to support project delivery.</b></li> <li><b>(d) Delegate responsibility for implementation to the Director of Environment in consultation with the portfolio holder for Climate Response, Environment &amp; Energy including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>I. decisions relating to installation, relocation or removal of bins, and for these operational decisions to be communicated to ward councillors in advance and on site temporary signage installed directing users to the nearest locations.</b></li> <li><b>II. adoption of consistent bin design and colour scheme.</b></li> <li><b>III. phasing out of standalone dog-waste bins to be replaced with multi purpose bins.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Reason for recommendations	Adoption of this Policy will enable the Council to modernise public waste-bin provision, improve environmental quality, enhance operational efficiency, and ensure a consistent, transparent, evidence-based approach across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley – Climate Change, Environment & Energy
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Kate Langdown – Director of Environment Simon Legg – Head of Neighbourhood Services Anna Fresolone - Finance Manager
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. BCP Council currently manages approximately 2,800 litter and dog-waste bins of varying age, type, and condition. Many bins are outdated, poorly located, difficult to service safely, or no longer aligned with current footfall and usage patterns.
2. Historically, bin installation has been largely driven by public request rather than strategic need, resulting in inconsistent approaches across the three legacy council areas.
3. This proposed Policy provides a framework for decisions on bin placement, design, servicing and replacement, informed by national guidance including the Government's *Litter Strategy for England (2017)* and WRAP's *Bininfrastructure* guidance.
4. The Policy aligns with the Council's corporate focus on improving cleanliness, environmental quality and public realm standards, while ensuring operational and financial sustainability.

## Proposed policy

5. The Policy as detailed in Appendix One, introduces a consistent and clearly defined approach. In summary the proposed policy includes:

### Assessment Criteria for Bin Placement

- footfall and usage demand
- proximity to existing bins
- accessibility considerations
- health and safety for operatives
- installation and servicing costs
- avoidance of street clutter
- environmental sensitivity (e.g., conservation areas)

### **Requests for New Bins**

- All requests will be managed through a structured process, supported by an online form and assessment framework.

### **Standardisation of Bin Types and Design**

- Adoption of a default 240-litre post-mounted wheelie-bin housing, with alternative types used in town/district centres and sensitive areas. Introduction of underground refuse systems will be explored where appropriate.

### **Rationalisation of Existing Provision**

- Bins sited outside of the prioritisation criteria, consistently low usage, poorly located or persistent misuse may be removed or relocated.

### **Health and Safety Requirements**

- Clear standards to reduce manual handling risks and ensure safe vehicle access for collection.

### **Integration of Dog Waste into General Waste**

- Standalone dog-waste bins will be phased out in favour of combined public-waste bins.

### **Recycling on the Go**

- Opportunities for dual-stream recycling bins will be explored, subject to contamination monitoring.

## Options Appraisal

6. Option 1 – Approve the Policy (Recommended)
  - Provides clear strategic direction
  - Enables consistent and efficient service delivery
  - Supports environmental improvement and health and safety objectives
  - Addresses legacy inconsistencies across the conurbation
7. Option 2 – Do Not Approve the Policy
  - Continued inconsistency in bin provision and declining bin assets
  - Reduced operational efficiency
  - Increased costs from poorly located and ageing infrastructure
  - Does not align with national guidance and corporate ambition

## Summary of financial implications

8. A £410,000 per annum capital investment budget was established in 2021-22 for a recurring period of 8 years funded from prudential borrowing for waste bin replacement. The borrowing repayments are factored in the medium term financial plan recurring for 8 years after which point the borrowing budget becomes cyclical. There has been a lag in replacement bin expenditure, therefore £200,000 budget has been carried forward from previous years underspend.
9. It is recommended that the £200,000 underspend brought forward is used in 2026/27 for litter bins replacement, followed by a future annual amount of £25,000 accommodated within the existing £410,000 bin/ skip purchasing budget.
10. An allocation of £60,000 inclusive of on costs is drawn down from the Waste Infrastructure Grant to fund a 12 month fixed term Project Officer to support implementation of a phased replacement plan.
11. The Policy itself does not create new budget requirements. Implementation will be managed within existing resources including the approved council fleet replacement plan to service future bin types, with opportunities to achieve service efficiencies through:
  - rationalisation of under-used bins
  - reduced servicing requirements through larger or underground bins
  - reduced manual-handling incidents and associated costs
  - potential revenue from advertising or stakeholder bin-sponsorship programmes where appropriate.
12. Any significant capital investment (e.g., underground systems, new vehicle requirements) will be subject to separate business case and approval processes.
13. Any ability to increase the speed of replacement will necessitate either, attraction of external investment/grant funding or an increase in funding allocation through future years MTFP budget setting processes.

### **Summary of legal implications**

14. The Council has no statutory duty to provide public waste bins, but does have a duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to keep land and highways clear of litter “as far as reasonably practicable”.
15. The Policy sets out a lawful, rational, and transparent framework for bin decisions, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.
16. Appropriate procurement procedures will be followed for determining future bin provision types

### **Summary of human resources implications**

17. To support the implementation of the policy, it is proposed that a Project Officer is temporarily appointed to support, procurement, communications, prioritisation and phasing programme.
18. Improvement to bin conditions, reduction in distanced walked transporting waste and appropriate supporting vehicles will reduce the number of and ongoing risk of manual handling injuries amongst staff.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

19. The proposed Policy supports the Council’s climate and sustainability goals by:
  - encouraging responsible waste disposal
  - enabling recycling-on-the-go options
  - reducing vehicle mileage through rationalised collection routes
  - reducing environmental damage associated with litter and dog waste

### **Summary of public health implications**

20. Along with damaging the environment, a Tidy Britain Group report shows litter also negatively impacts individuals’ mental health, sense of safety and economic prosperity.
21. When shown an image of a heavily littered street, two thirds of survey respondents (66%) said that they wouldn’t feel safe walking there at night, 86% said they would feel embarrassed to live there and almost one in seven (67%) felt that living in such an area would negatively affect their mental health.
22. It is hoped that improvements to bin conditions will encourage greater use of these assets, as current conditions in some locations are contributing to decreased usage and increased levels of littering.

### **Summary of equality implications**

23. The proposed Policy embeds accessibility criteria, ensuring bin placement does not impede safe movement and that wheelchair users, mobility-aid users and families with prams can use public spaces without obstruction.
24. An EIA screening document has been completed and approved by the EIA panel.

## **Summary of risk assessment**

25. The Policy mitigates risks by:

- reducing manual handling and service-delivery risks for operatives
- ensuring compliance with health and safety standards
- improving community satisfaction and environmental quality

26. It is possible that where existing local provision is moved there maybe incidences of increased littering as users adapt to new locations which may involve retaining their litter/dog waste.

27. If the rate of asset decline exceeds the annual budget available to fund replacements, assets may for safety reasons (broken doors, rusted casings) have to be temporarily removed until future funds are identified.

## **Background papers**

DIA 761

## **Appendices**

Appendix one – Proposed BCP Council public waste bin provision policy.