

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2018	4
COASTAL CLEANSING AND THE PROVISION OF BEACH BINS			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

The Fylde coast is an important area for tourism and recreation with high expectations regarding beach management and cleansing. Lytham St Annes is a popular tourist destination hosting numerous attractions and events with the number of visitors and residents using the beach, including the dunes, rising steadily per annum. The coastal area is also very popular with local and visiting dog walkers. The growth in new build properties and the improved 'tourism offer' through social media is leading to more local residents and visitors using the beach than ever before. Increasing numbers of beach users has a subsequent impact on litter and cleansing placing extra demand on existing resources. This report provides information on historical and current litter cleansing arrangements, recent developments in coastal resource provision and the valuable work of dedicated volunteer groups. It also outlines the recommendations from the Beach Bin Working Group to extend the provision of litterbins on the seaward side of the beach and sand dunes between St Paul's car park at Fairhaven and Starr Gate, the management of the bins and additional cleansing.

RECOMMENDATION

The Operational Management Committee is requested to consider and approve the recommendations from the Beach Bin Working Group outlined below:

1. To seek an addition to the Capital Programme in 2018/19 (to be funded from the Capital investment Reserve) to provide for the procurement of approximately 30 post mounted 50 litre bins and a 4 wheel drive utility vehicle to collect the bins which will be located on the seaward side of the beach and sand dunes between St Pauls Avenue Car Park and Starr Gate, with the exception of the amenity beach area, together with additional associated staffing costs for the operation requiring a capital investment estimated at £20k to £25k with ongoing revenue costs estimated at £21k to £25k per annum.
2. If the Committee support recommendation 1, they are subsequently requested to make a recommendation to the Finance and Democracy committee to approve additions to the capital and revenue budgets in support of this scheme, as detailed.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

This report was originally presented to the Members of the Operational Management Committee in May 2018. The committee acknowledged the importance for beach management and cleansing and welcomed the initiative to extend the provision of litterbins to the seaward side of the beach but were not convinced that the options included in the report had the capacity to deal with the anticipated amount of waste.

It was proposed that a working group should be established with a remit of looking at alternative options for both the size of bins and resources for the collection of the waste.

Following a brief discussion it was RESOLVED to:

1. Support the initiative to extend the provision of litterbins and cleansing arrangements on the seaward side of the beach and sand dunes between St Paul's carpark and Starr Gate.
2. Establish a Coastal Cleansing and Beach Bins Working Group to comprise of Councillors Alan Clayton, Delma Collins, Kiran Mulholland, Sandra Pitman, Roger Small and Tommy Threlfall to evaluate a wider range of suitable options.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	✓
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	✓
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	✓

BACKGROUND

The Beach Bin Working Group met on the 7th June 2018 to evaluate a range of suitable options to extend the provision of litterbins and cleansing arrangements on the beach. It was agreed that the key aim of the group was to establish the most effective and practical means of providing suitable waste bins on the beach and associated collection and removal of the waste. The main areas for consideration included:

- The size/number of bins
- The vehicle used to empty the bins
- The additional cleansing resource required to support this new service.

Members were supported by officers from Waste Management, Coastal Conservation, Fleet Services and the Health and Safety team to provide professional expertise and guidance with regards to the feasibility of various options. The Group attended a site visit on the beach to observe a practical demonstration of the challenges associated with the manual handling of large, free standing bins on the beach. The 4 wheel drive utility vehicle used by the Fylde Sand Dunes Project Team was also available for inspection by Members. A detailed discussion took place regarding the three main areas for consideration and after exploring a range of options the Members of the Working Group agreed unanimously to support the recommendations outlined in the original report, with a number of minor amendments as detailed in the body of the report below. A special meeting of the Operational Management Committee will be arranged for the 25th June 2018 to put these recommendations to the full committee ahead of a meeting of the Finance and Democracy Committee.

REPORT

1. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 imposes duties on certain land owners to keep specific land clear of litter and refuse and local authorities to keep clean public highways for which they are responsible. The national Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse issued by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is used as a guide for determining the levels of service provision for litter collection and cleansing by the local authority.
2. The Council has a statutory responsibility for the cleansing of the amenity beach in St Annes, this is the section of beach between the lifeboat station and public conveniences on North Promenade car park, during the official bathing season (1st May – 30th September). This is currently carried out by mechanical sand raking and removal with manual litter-picking. The service operates flexibility when providing additional resource to cleanse the beach at other times of the year subject to weather conditions, events and anticipated visitor numbers.
3. There is no statutory requirement on the local authority to cleanse the remainder of the beach or the sand dunes although litter picking does take place after busy weekends. Historically, ad hoc raking was carried out

on other sections of the beach, including the section from the end of North Promenade car park to Starr Gate, usually following the high tide. As part of the dunes restoration project the mechanical raking ceased to allow natural accretion that supports sand dune development. The Coast and Conservation Team have subsequently implemented alternative cleansing options with the support of volunteer litter-picking groups to keep the area free of litter. A number of organised community litter picks take place throughout the year under the banner of FLAG (Fylde Litter Action Group).

4. In 2009 Trax Windsports Centre received a government grant which subsidised the provision of resources to assist with litter removal on the beach as part of kite surfing activities. The funding provided placements for disadvantaged youths who were able to offer support to empty beach litter bins. This involved locating bins on the beach at key locations, then Trax collecting the full bins with a beach buggy and trailer and taking the bins to a designated collection point on North Beach Car Park. The Council emptied these bins and Trax staff replaced the empty containers back on the beach. The bins were well used but unfortunately the government funding secured by Trax was withdrawn. Trax continued their scheme until 2011/12 and then stopped employing the large number of trainees. Support was withdrawn resulting in overflowing bins and associated complaints. The Council did not have the resource or equipment to continue offering this service so the bins had to be removed from the beach which led to a number of enquiries including complaints.
5. In response the Coast and Conservation Team piloted an alternative scheme that involved locating up to 24 x 240L grey wheeled bins on the beach covering the area between Starr Gate to St Pauls Avenue carpark, that were emptied once or twice weekly dependent on resources by the Coastal Patrol Officers. The team used the beach Land Rover and trailer manually pulling the bins to the back of the trailer then transporting them to North Beach car park to be emptied by the Operational Services Cleansing Team before redistributing the empty bins back across the beach, no additional resource was available to support the pilot.
6. The pilot was very well received by residents and visitors who could conveniently dispose of waste on the beach rather than carrying it with them for disposal in one of the many litterbins located along the promenade, or in some cases leaving it on the beach. During the pilot over 400 bin loads of rubbish were collected, including dog waste bags, beverage containers and disposable BBQs with an average weekly weight of 1 tonne in the height of summer.
7. However, the process was time consuming and required a full health and safety assessment to manoeuvre bins on an uneven, shifting surface and manually lifting on and off the trailer. During the peak season and weekends the pilot also added to the workload of the Coastal Patrol Officers who had priority statutory duties to attend to. As a consequence there were issues collecting the bins from the beach when resources were stretched, some bins were overflowing with unsightly litter accumulations. Numerous options were attempted to resolve these issues but it was not possible to provide an ongoing, safe and reliable beach litter bin service within the existing labour and fleet resources, and it became necessary to end the pilot and remove the containers from the beach.
8. The removal of the bins from the beach was supported with an education and social media campaign and the provision of 24 additional larger bins positioned at key locations along the promenade which provided nearly double the capacity of the standard litter bin and have proved very popular. Additional litterbins have also been located along the roadside stretch of the promenade between North Beach and Starr Gate. In total there are 120 litterbins located along the seafront in the six miles from Starr Gate to the end of Lytham Green excluding those in town centres parks and gardens. In peak season the bins are emptied 2 to 3 times per day.
9. In addition, there are four volunteer litter picking groups affiliated with Keep Britain Tidy's national LoveMyBeach Campaign, which support the Council's litter collection and cleansing arrangements. Each group covers a designated section of beach from Lytham to Starr Gate, undertaking valuable litter picking in the respective areas at least one morning per week. The volunteers play a vital role in assisting the Council with the control of litter along Fylde's coastline complimented by numerous ad hoc organised litter picks on the beach and seafront throughout the year.
10. Despite the additional cleansing measures put in place to accommodate the removal of the beach bins, there are still requests to provide direct litter collection arrangements on the seaward side of the beach and sand dunes between St Paul's and Starr Gate. The Council does not currently have the necessary resources in

terms of manpower or a suitable beach vehicle available to provide a litter collection service on the beach and officers have been asked to look at suitable alternative options.

11. A suitable vehicle that can drive on soft sand at the base of the dunes without posing a risk of becoming stuck is essential, the Fleet Manager has recommended a 4 wheel drive utility vehicle similar to that used by the Fylde Sand Dunes Project Team with a rear tipper cargo box to store bagged waste from beach bins (as per Fig 1 at the end of the report). This would remove the need for an additional trailer to be attached to the rear however the optional installation of a tow bar would provide flexibility if a trailer was required in future. The Fylde Sand Dunes Project vehicle was replaced in September 2017 at a cost of £18,200 funded through a grant allocated by the Environment Agency and is specific to the project. The estimated cost of a similar vehicle to perform the bin-emptying and litter picking duties on the beach is estimated between £18k and £20k, with ongoing revenue, maintenance and insurance costs.
12. The type of bins located on the beach must be a suitable size to meet the waste demand without presenting a manual handling risk to the operative i.e. a smaller bin with an inner refuse sack which can be removed and replaced rather than a larger wheeled bin that would need to be physically removed and emptied. The bin would need to be covered at the top to prevent seagulls accessing the waste, and hard plastic outer to prevent corrosion to the bin mechanisms and provide protection against water damage (as per Fig 2 at the end of the report). It is important that the style of the bin is suitable for the coastal environment and consistent in design.
13. Consideration must be given to the location of the bins so that they are not washed away at high tide. One option is to fit the bins on posts bolted onto concrete slabs in the sand to provide stability allowing high tides to wash around them without washing them away. An additional recommendation would be to drill holes in the bin case to let water flow in and out without mixing with the contents.
14. Officers have identified a litterbin design that is post mounted with a removable body and a curved hood to protect contents from the external elements. The bin has a 50 litre capacity with a sack securing system, it should be possible to locate these bins along the coastline in similar locations as the previous wheeled bins at an estimated cost of £4,000 excluding any installation costs or maintenance. It may be possible to mount 2 bins back to back on one post in key locations to provide additional capacity.
15. It is acknowledged that these 50 litre bins will not be suitable for the disposal of bulky items such as BBQs and broken beach equipment; the primary use will be for the disposal of bagged dog waste, particularly in the dogs off leads section of the beach. Members of the Working Group were particularly keen to see the introduction of this new bin service accompanied by appropriate signage and education to encourage beach users to take their rubbish off the beach and dispose of it in one of the many litterbins located along the promenade, or preferably, to take it away and dispose of it at home.
16. The 240L wheeled bins provided 5 x more capacity and were emptied once or twice a week at peak times, these smaller bins would need to be emptied on a regular, more frequent basis, ideally daily (and possibly more during peak times) with the actual frequency determined after a period of use. The council does not have the resource capacity within the existing establishment to service the bins which would require the equivalent of a full time post added to the cleansing team at an estimated cost of around £21,000. Additional beach and litter cleansing duties as well as the removal of wind-blown sand would be included within the role consistent with the work of the cleansing team.
17. The resource to provide the bins, the emptying of them and the additional cleansing support as outlined in this report would require an initial capital investment estimated at £20k to £25k with ongoing revenue cost estimated at £21k to £25k per annum.
18. Members of the Operational Management Committee are asked to debate and consider the recommendations of the Beach Bins Working Group proposal to provide litterbins on the beach and additional cleansing support on the seaward side of the beach and sand dunes between St Paul's and Starr Gate and to make the necessary recommendations to the Finance and Democracy Committee to approve additions to the capital and revenue budgets in support of this scheme.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The resource to provide the bins, the emptying of them and the additional cleansing support as outlined in this report would require an initial capital investment estimated at £20k to £25k (to be funded from the Capital Investment Reserve) with ongoing revenue cost estimated at £21k to £25k per annum. If the committee decide to support the introduction of beach litter bins and the additional cleansing service as described a further report would be presented to the Finance and Democracy Committee to seek approval of additions to the capital and revenue budgets.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications arising from the report
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	Introduction of additional litter bin provision along the coastline will have a positive impact on the amenity and cleanliness of the area
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There will be no direct health & safety and risk management implications arising from this report

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
none		

Appendix

Fig 1 – Example of 4 wheel drive utility vehicle suitable for beach driving

Fig 2 – Example of post mounted litter bin with curved hood



Fig 1 – Example of 4 wheel drive utility vehicle suitable for beach driving



Fig 2 – Example of post mounted litter bin with curved hood