

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

<b>Title/Subject Matter:</b>	Waste Policy Developments & Huntingdon Needs Analysis of Open Space & Play Facilities.
<b>Meeting/Date:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-being) – 10 November 2015
<b>Executive Portfolio:</b>	Councillor Robin Carter – Executive Councillor for Operations & the Environment
<b>Report by:</b>	Alistair Merrick – Interim Head of Service (Operations)
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	All Wards

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**Executive Summary:**

1. The report provides the Panel with the opportunity to overview the progress made on the review work required to develop a new lane end collection policy for the Waste Service. This review work was dependent on the surveying of 87 separate locations and this work has taken longer time to complete than originally planned because it has also in certain instances required dialogue with local residents about their particularly circumstances.
2. The survey work is now completed to confirm the appropriate collection arrangement by location. This will now enable the route planning work to be undertaken and notification of residents of any changed collection arrangements by the end of January 2016 for the introduction of any changed collection arrangements. However, if specific problems existed at a location that required immediate attention then remedial action has been taken.
3. The report also provides the opportunity for the Panel to scrutinise the Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis and the new dry recyclates contamination policy before they are adopted.
  - a) The Greenspaces and Play Needs Analysis for Huntingdon is the needs analysis work completed for Huntingdon of current provision against the benchmarks for provision. The conclusions reached are as follows:
    - Overall the town is well provided for in terms of green space including parks, open spaces, natural and semi-natural spaces with no action being recommended to enhance existing provision.

- There is a shortage of allotment provision in the town, in the North and West Wards and there are proposals recommended to address this by creating community gardens at Mill Common (West Ward) and Sapley Playing Fields (North Ward).
- Play provision is largely fit for purpose in the Town but would benefit from enhancement of four existing play areas to create NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play) facilities this investment can be funded through use of current Section 106 monies.
- b) Building on the garden waste contamination policy previously scrutinised by this Panel a complementary contamination policy has been developed for dry recyclates that focuses on customer needs. This operational policy involves the following:
  - Crews taking a photograph of contaminated recyclates in a bin to be able to evidence to the resident the reason for rejection.
  - If it is clear small items have been dropped into the bin overnight then the crews will now remove such items and tie them to the emptied bin in a small recycling sack that promotes recycling. This will request the resident to support us by correctly recycling the items.
  - Other small items that are not recyclable and that are not easy to remove will be left in the bin but the bin will be emptied. This has now been agreed with the waste processor.

**Recommendation(s):**

1. The Panel are invited to make comments that will be included in the future reports to Cabinet concerning the two matters submitted for scrutiny, the Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis and the new dry recyclates contamination policy.

## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The report provides the Panel with the opportunity to overview the progress made on the review work required to develop a new lane end collection policy for the Waste Service; and the opportunity for the Panel to scrutinise the Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis and the new dry recycles contamination policy before they are adopted.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 **Overview Matters:** The collection of waste from lane ends and unadopted roads has been an issue for a number of residents, specifically when the Council will collect from a point or the properties within the lane end or when the residents are required to pull the bins to the access point of a lane end. This report provides an update on the review work completed and outstanding to develop a lane end policy that ensures customer needs are consistently met within a safe working environment for the collection crews.

- 2.2 **Progress to date:** A survey of those properties that may be affected has been undertaken over the last four months using external resources to ensure progress was made during the restructure of Operations. This survey assessed the following:

- Road surface condition;
- Road width;
- Road length and the provision of passing places (if necessary);
- Height clearance;
- Turning area for the vehicle;
- Access – e.g. are there any locked gates;
- Any other resident issues that impact on collections.

- 2.3 In total 87 tracks, lanes or unadopted roads have been surveyed individually. This has proved more time consuming than planned because of the level of detail that has needed to be collated. In certain instances it has required dialogue with local residents about their particular circumstances, specifically asking them to warranty the Council in respect to any damage caused to an unadopted road by Council collection vehicles, if it is used to access properties for collections.

- 2.4 Some of these locations have one property; others have a number of properties, and we are now able to quantify the overall numbers of properties potentially affected. The information from the survey is now being reviewed on individual basis to see whether collections could continue in their current format (with an indemnity from the property owners on an unadopted road being put in place to allow collections from properties) or whether alternative arrangements need to be considered.

- 2.4 This next phase of review work will include route planning work to finalise the proposed lane end policy which it is targeted to bring back to Overview and Scrutiny in January 2016 for scrutiny and consideration in advance of submitting the policy to Cabinet for approval and prior to any information being sent to residents.

2.5 Members should note that where specific problems existed at a particular site that required immediate attention then remedial action has been taken as part of the drive to improve the customer orientation of the Waste Service.

2.6 **Scrutiny Matters:** The report also allows the Panel to scrutinise the following two matters before they are adopted:

- The Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis that has been developed to better target both capital and revenue resources of both the Town and District Councils going forward at a time of diminishing resources.
- The new dry recyclates contamination policy that builds on the garden waste contamination policy previously scrutinised by this Panel as a complimentary contamination policy that focuses on customer needs.

### 3. ISSUES FOR SCRUTINY

3.1 The following are the matters for the Panel to review as part of the scrutiny function of the Panel.

3.2 **Greenspaces and Play Needs Analysis for Huntingdon: Appendix 1** contains the needs analysis work completed for Huntingdon. The conclusions reached are as follows:

- a) The green space provision for parks and gardens is only deficient in the West Ward. However the West Ward does have a high level of industrial development where the main area of deficiency is showing. The East and North Wards are within the policy requirement.
- b) Development through capital resources of some of the natural and semi-natural areas as parks and gardens in the south of the West Ward is a consideration. However, because the A14 divides the ward this would only benefit a small residential area as there is limited access across the A14, consequently there would be a low return on investment, and therefore no further action is recommended. There are no other suitable sites in the ward for development.
- c) The North Ward is deficient in natural and semi natural green space. The East and West Wards are both over provided for making the total provision for Huntingdon 117 hectares over the policy requirement as set out in Table 1 of Appendix 1.
- d) In the North Ward there are no potential sites that could be converted to natural and semi-natural green space, therefore no further action is being recommended because of the over provision within the town as a whole.
- e) Both the North and West Wards are lacking allotments and community gardens. However the allotment in the West Ward is closer to more houses in the North Ward than many of those in the West Ward. There is an overall deficiency in Huntingdon as a whole of three hectares.

3.3 To address the shortfall in allotment provision the following options exist for the Town Council subject to funding becoming available:

- In the West Ward the area south of the A14, Mill Common; currently natural and semi-natural green space, part of this site could be considered as a community garden.
- In the North Ward part of the Sapley Playing Fields could also be considered as a community garden or allotments, this would also benefit many of the residents from the West Ward.

3.4 **Play:** Huntingdon is made up of three wards and when properly analysed it became clear that there was a need for a limited increase in play provision throughout the wards; which can be achieved using existing allocated Section 106 funding for Huntingdon.

3.5 After consultation with Huntingdon Town Council, 4 sites have been identified (shown in Appendix 1) as potential locations that could be increased to ensure adequate play coverage against the benchmark for provision. These areas are:

- *The Pits, Sapley Road Play Area* Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) (Town Council owned) to increase the existing play area to a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) by installing a ball game element along with other facilities.
- *Sallowbush Road, adjacent to Multi-use Games Area (MUGA)* (HDC owned) to increase existing site to include a play area and re-designating the site as a NEAP.
- *Devoke Close, Stukeley Meadows Local Area for Play (LAP)* (Town Council owned) to increase the existing play area by installing a low key ball element with other facilities to make it a NEAP.
- *Elsie's Way, field adjacent to Huntingdon Gym* (Town Council owned) to install ball game element and other facilities to increase to a NEAP.

3.6 The Panel are invited to scrutinise the conclusions reached and the proposed actions. It is planned to continue with the needs analysis work to St Neots and then other towns, including Sawtry and Godmanchester. This work will then be brought together to underpin the development of a new Parks, Open Spaces and Play Facilities Strategy as a key corporate plan issue. It will also mean the use of Section 106 monies will be targeted to refurbishment and redevelopment of current facilities rather than creating new facilities if this is the priority confirmed through the needs analysis work.

3.7 **Dry Recyclates Contamination Policy:** to build on the contamination policy for garden waste previously scrutinised by this Panel a complementary contamination policy has been developed for dry recyclates. There are generally three causes for rejections:

- a) The resident is unclear about what can be recycled. This will be resolved by an improved awareness campaign scheduled for December 2015 and then on into 2016.
- b) Individuals who choose deliberately to not comply with the Council's collection policies. This is a very small number of people.
- c) When passers-by drop items in the top of a bin after it has been put out for collection the next day. Rejection on these grounds particularly aggravates residents.

3.8 In response the current dry recyclates contamination policy has been fundamentally reviewed and the new proposed policy is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report. This operational policy involves the following:

- a) Crews taking a photograph of contaminated waste in a bin to be able to evidence to the resident the reason for rejection, in doing so reduce the levels of debate with residents initiated through the Call Centre that the bin has been missed rather than rejected as contaminated. The photograph will be made available if required to the resident.
- b) If it is clear small items have been dropped into the bin overnight then the crews will now remove such items and tie them to the emptied bin in a small recycling sack that promotes recycling. This will request the resident to support us by correctly recycling the items.
- c) Other small items that are not recyclable and that are not easy to remove will be left in the bin but the bin will be emptied. This has now been agreed with the waste processor.

3.9 The Panel are invited to scrutinise the draft policy and propose any amendments for consideration by the Portfolio Holder.

#### **4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**

4.1 Comments of the Panel will be included in future reports to the Cabinet concerning the two matters submitted for scrutiny, the Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis and the new dry recyclates contamination policy. The collection from Lane ends policy will be brought back to Scrutiny for consideration once further developed.

## **5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS AND HOW THESE WILL BE ADDRESSED**

- 5.1 The structured approach (involving full consultation with town and parish councils) being adopted for the needs analysis work is to ensure priorities are being identified through robust assessment to then ensure capital and revenue resources to be more accurately targeted to the priorities. This is critical at a time of diminishing resources. It will also help to ensure the maintenance costs of the provision are sustainable in the medium term.
- 5.2 The development of the operational policies in the Waste Service is to improve orientation on the customer and to ensure efficiencies are driven out of the service by getting service right first time.

## **6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 6.1 Each of these projects is in the service improvement plan and each has a deadline set for completion. On a monthly basis a RAG report (red, amber, green traffic light status) is produced to confirm progress being made. If a project or action is flagged as red, in danger of not being delivered it is targeted for intervention by the Head of Service to ensure it is ultimately delivered. This approach is consistent with Council's policy for the management of major projects and programmes.

## **7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

- 7.1 The outputs and outcomes from these projects will fundamentally contribute to the Corporate Plan as follows:
- a) Enhancing fundamentally the built and green environment of the District.
  - b) Empowering local communities to become involved in the design of services.
  - c) Operations becoming much more business-like and efficient in the way it delivers services.
  - d) Ensuring that service improvement planning (priority setting) and service delivery in Operations is driven by customer engagement.

## **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The bespoke consultation is being progressed with the stakeholders specific to each area of policy development. For example residents are being consulted to future collection arrangements for each lane end subject to review if change to arrangements is proposed.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no immediate legal implications concerning the two matters submitted for scrutiny, the Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis and the new dry recycles contamination policy.

## **10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no immediate resource implications concerning the two matters submitted for scrutiny, the Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis and the new dry recyclates contamination policy. The work has been done within existing resources. The finalised operational policy for dry recyclates contamination will also be delivered within the existing resources of the Waste Service. The needs analysis work for green spaces and play facilities will also help to target future S106 monies better to priorities that have been clearly quantified. Specifically the cost of upgrading the four play areas in Huntingdon identified by the needs analysis would be circa £136,000 and this can be funded from seven existing Section 106 monies.

## **11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The needs analysis work seeks to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance in the provision of green space and play facilities across the District to militate against under provision so that no residents are unreasonably excluded from such provision.
- 11.2 The new operational policy for dry recyclates contamination seeks to better support residents to recycle waste as a positive step in better management of the environment of the District.

## **12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 12.1 The matter for overview in Section 2 of this report gives the Panel the opportunity for oversight of the work being done in the Operations Service to improve the service delivered by the Waste Service focused around the customer but also to delivery efficiencies.
- 12.2 The two matters for scrutiny give the Panel the opportunity to influence the final decision making regarding the Huntingdon green spaces and play needs analysis (and the priorities for investment) and the new dry recyclates contamination policy before introduction.

## **13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1 - Huntingdon Greenspaces & Play Needs Analysis  
Appendix 2 – Draft Dry Recyclates Contamination Policy

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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## Appendix 1: Huntingdon Green Space and Play Needs Analysis

Huntingdon comprises of three wards, East, North and West which has a variety of open space that provides numerous benefits to the local community. This document outlines the importance of these sites and will help us to consider the value, quality and future of these areas whilst trying to help create a sense of ownership, and maximising their usage.

The table below illustrates those areas of deficiency when related to the Council's policy requirements.

**Table 1: Identified Areas of Deficiency**

	East		North		West		Total	
	Policy	Actual (ha)*	Policy	Actual (ha)*	Policy	Actual (ha)*	Policy	Actual (ha)*
Green Space Provision (ha)								
Parks and Gardens	4.67	8.19	3.26	4.88	3.73	1.30	11.66	14.37
Natural & Semi Natural	2.24	14.74	1.56	0.00	1.79	108.00	5.59	122.74
Allotments & Community Gardens	3.11	3.29	2.17	0.00	2.48	1.55	7.77	4.84
Play Provision (ha)								
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>1.70</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>1.94</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>6.07</b>	<b>0.95</b>
* HDC, TC & PC and 3rd party ownership all included								

Whilst Table 2 overleaf outlines in detail the actual Green Space and play provision in Huntingdon.

**Parks and Gardens:** The green space provision for parks and gardens is only deficient in the West Ward. However the West Ward does have a high industrial development where the main area of deficiency is showing. The East and North Wards are within the policy requirement.

Development through capital resources of some of the natural and semi-natural areas as parks and gardens in the south of the West Ward is a consideration. However, because the A14 divides the ward and this would only benefit a small residential area as there is limited access across the A14, consequently there would be a low return on investment, and therefore no further action is recommended. There are no other suitable sites in the ward.

**Natural and Semi Natural Green Space (N&SN):** The North Ward is deficient in natural and semi-natural Green Space. The East and West Wards are both over provided for making the total provision for Huntingdon 117 hectares over the policy requirement.

In the North Ward there are no potential sites that could be converted to natural and semi-natural green space, therefore no further action is recommended because of the over provision within the town as a whole.

**Allotments and Community Gardens (A&CG):** Both the North and West Wards are lacking allotments and community gardens. However the allotment in the West Ward is closer to more houses in the North Ward than many of those in the West Ward. There is an overall deficiency in Huntingdon as a whole of three hectares.

**Potential Action:** In the West Ward the area south of the A14, Mill Common; currently natural and semi-natural green space, part of this site could be considered as a community garden. In the North Ward part of the Sapley Playing Fields could also be considered as a community garden or allotments, this would also benefit many of the residents from the West Ward.

**Play:** Huntingdon is made up of three wards and when properly analysed it became clear that there was a need for a limited increase in play provision throughout the wards; which can be achieved using existing allocated Section 106 funding for Huntingdon.

**Potential Action:** After consultation with Huntingdon Town Council, 4 sites have been identified as potential locations that could be increased to ensure adequate play coverage against the benchmark for provision. These areas are:

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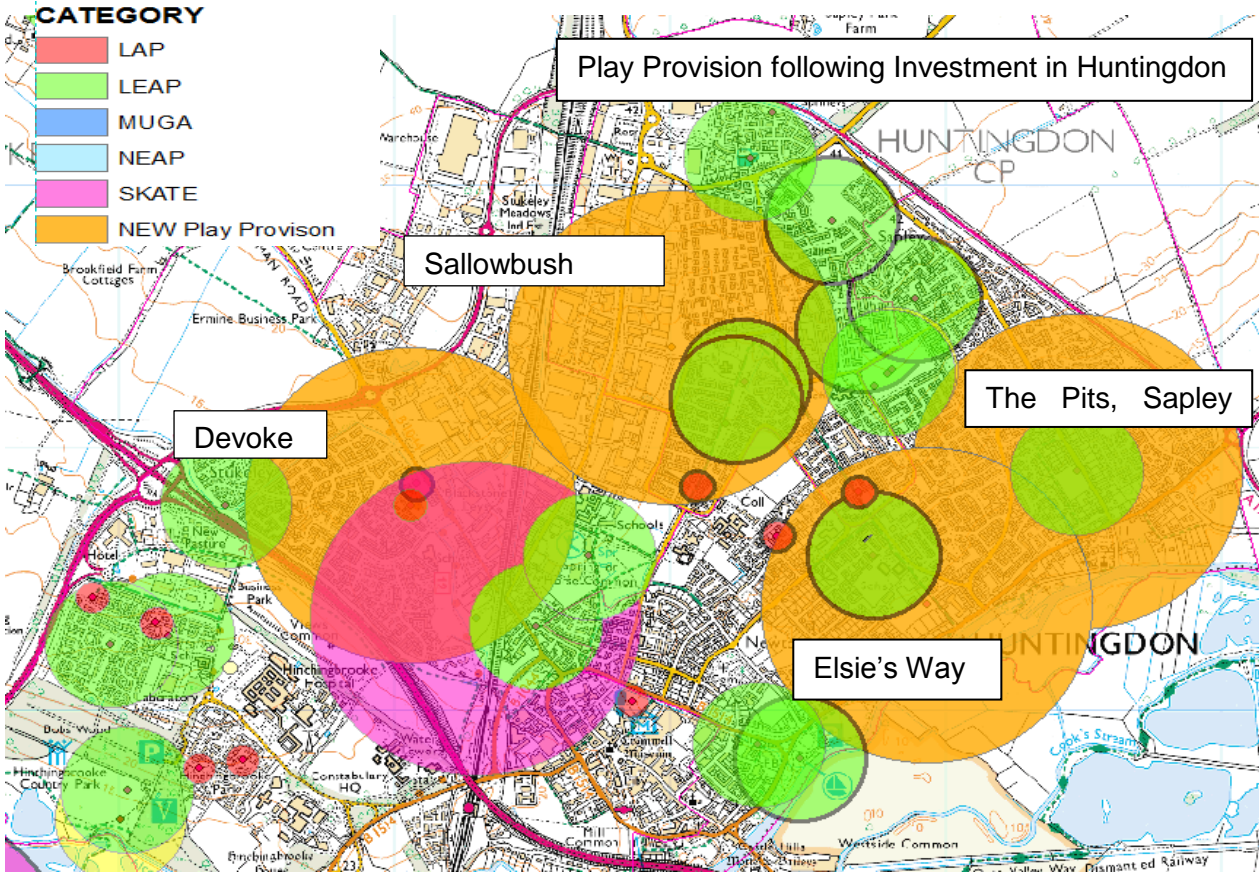
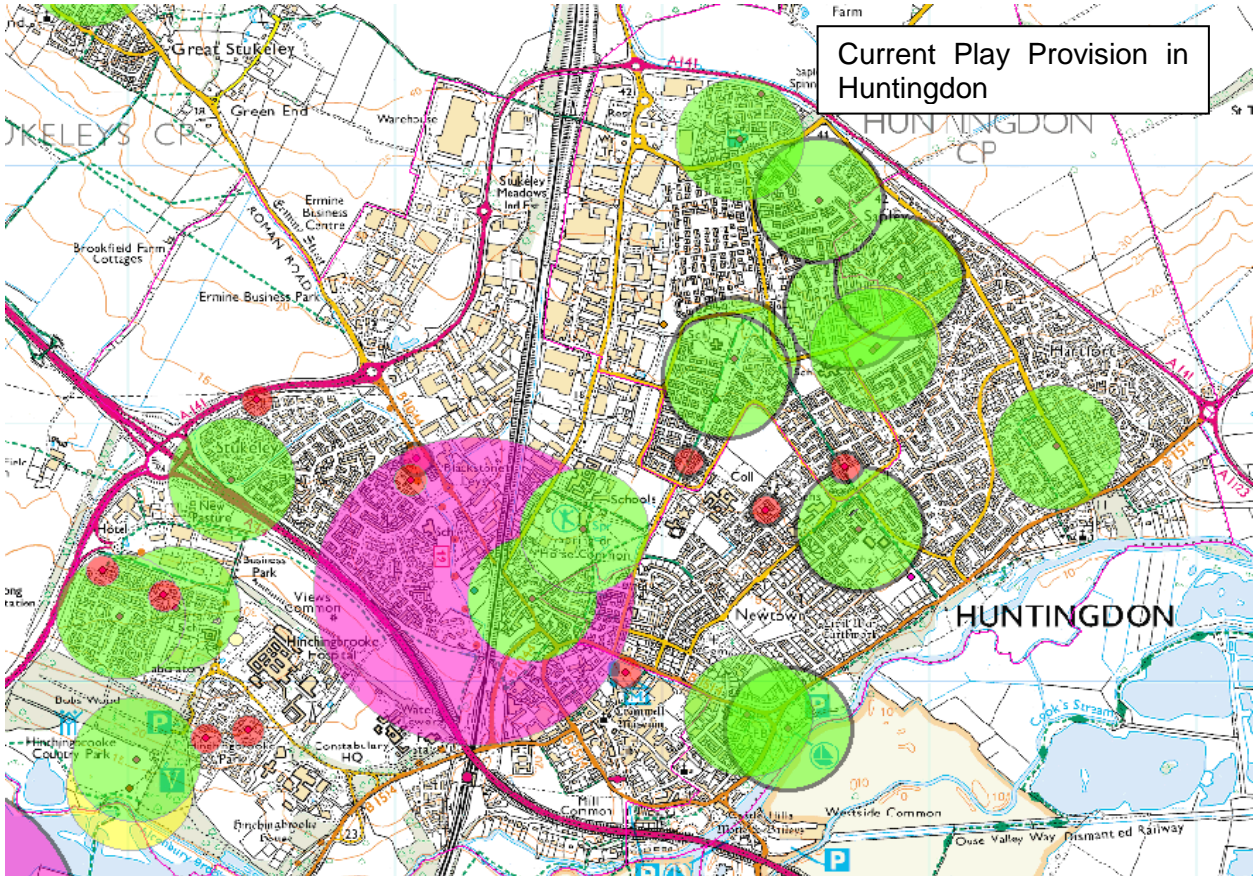




Table 2: Detailed Needs Analysis Data		East		North		West		Total	
<b>Population</b>	<b>Population figures taken from Lower Super Output Areas - National Office of Statistics</b>	<b>9,734</b>		<b>6,789</b>		<b>7,765</b>		<b>24,288</b>	
<b>Green Space Provision (ha)</b>	<b>Green Space Definitions from PPG17</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Actual (ha)*</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Actual (ha)*</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Actual (ha)*</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Actual (ha)*</b>
Parks & Gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events	4.67	8.19	3.26	4.88	3.73	1.30	11.66	14.37
Green Corridors	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel and opportunities for wildlife migration	0.00	3.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.80	0.00	6.49
Natural & Semi Natural	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness	2.24	14.74	1.56	0.00	1.79	108.00	5.59	122.74
Allotments & Community Gardens	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion	3.11	3.29	2.17	0.00	2.48	1.55	7.77	4.84
Amenity Green Space	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas	10.61	25.95	7.40	32.37	8.46	18.28	26.47	76.60
<b>Total Green Space</b>		<b>20.64</b>	<b>55.86</b>	<b>14.39</b>	<b>37.25</b>	<b>16.46</b>	<b>131.93</b>	<b>51.49</b>	<b>225.04</b>
<b>Play Provision (ha)</b>	<b>Definition</b>								
LAP (0.01ha)	Small play space aimed at up to 6yrs children, not equipped	n/a	0.05	n/a	0.04	n/a	0.08	n/a	0.17

LEAP(0.04ha)	Equipped play area, 5 types of equipment, 4-8yr olds	n/a	0.24	n/a	0.20	n/a	0.24	n/a	0.68
NEAP(0.1ha)	Equipped play area, 8 types of equipment to include ball games, aimed at older children	n/a	0.00	n/a	0.10	n/a	0.00	n/a	0.10
<b>Total</b>		<b>2.43</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>1.70</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>1.94</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>6.07</b>	<b>0.95</b>

## Appendix 2: Contamination Policy – Dry Recycling Bins

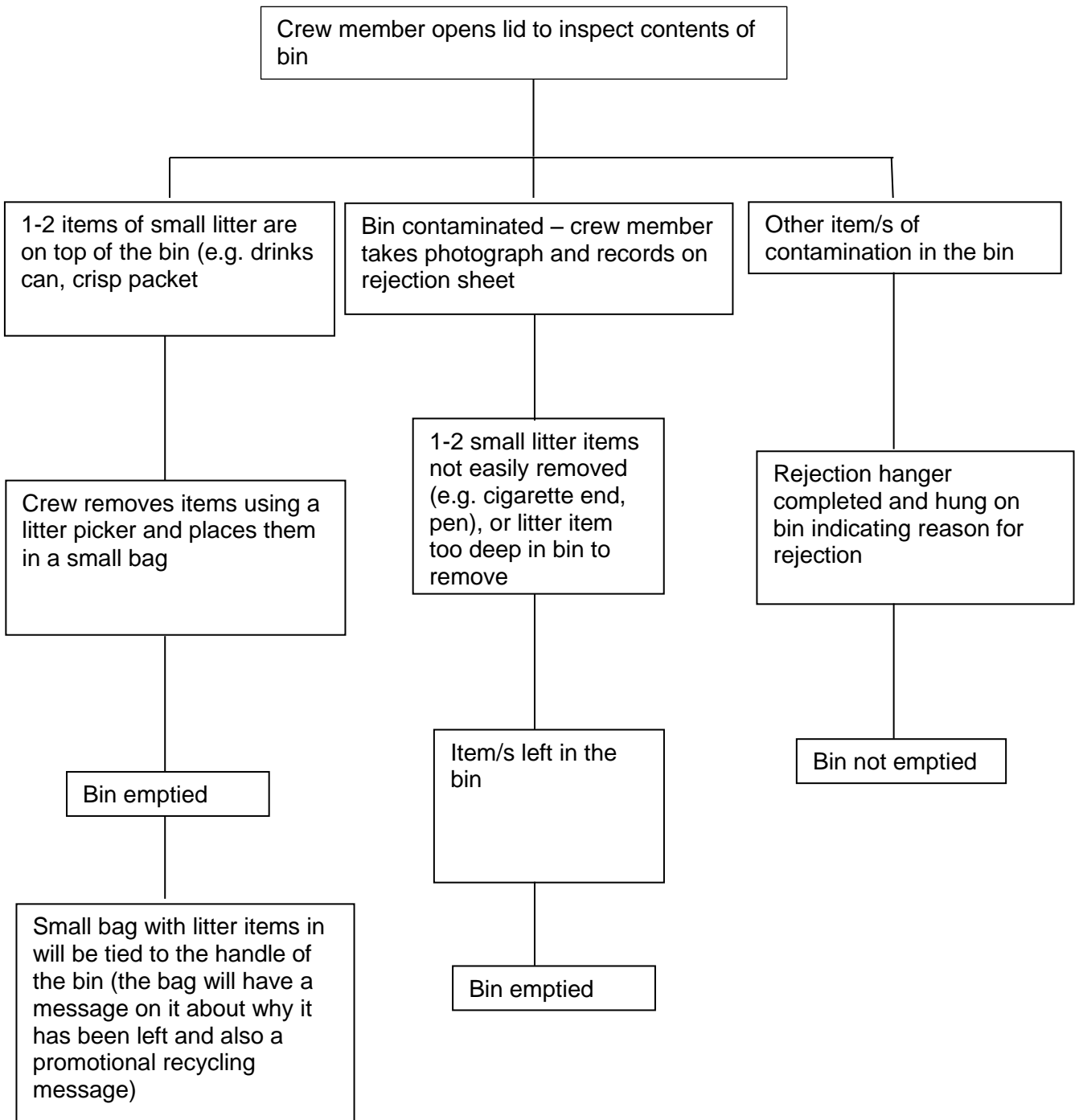
Following the trial undertaken earlier this year by one of the garden waste collection crews, a similar trial is being undertaken in the last two weeks of October by a dry recycling crew.

The crew will be photographing all contaminated bins that are rejected as well as recording them on their contamination sheet. This data will be used to assess whether the proposed operating procedure detailed below will work for this service in a similar way to the garden waste service.

The proposed operating procedure is as follows:

### Proposed Future Operating Procedure

For garden waste bins the following procedure will be followed:



Following completion of the trial the Waste Service will provide an update to the Panel in December 2015 on whether this procedure is recommended for implementation and a timescale for introducing it.

