

WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Introduction

Milton Keynes Council undertook a formal borough wide consultation for twelve weeks from Monday 2 November 2020 until Sunday 24 January 2021. We consulted with residents and other stakeholders on the future waste collection system from 2023, with a focus on ensuring that we have the right approach for Milton Keynes to improve waste collection.

The consultation provided the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to share views on the proposed future waste collection service.

Milton Keynes aspires to become a greener city. Currently about 20% of the recycling we receive contains the wrong items. Our focus is on improving the waste collection system, keeping our streets cleaner by reducing the amount of rubbish spillage from sacks, increasing recycling rates with residents by making it easier to separate out recycling materials and reducing the number of injuries residents and staff experience by moving waste in sacks.

The consultation covered the following areas;

- Household waste recycling centre
- Recycling
- Use of wheeled bins
- Information and accessibility

4,484 residents responded to the consultation

6 representations received from 6 parish and town councils. Other parish and town councils chose to respond on an individual basis.

76% of all respondents are in favour of the use of wheeled bins.

74% of respondents would accept more wheeled bins to improve the quality of recycling.

71% of respondents think that wheeled bins will be easier to use than sacks.

88% of respondents think that there should be more information and education to encourage to recycle.

Background

The last consultation on waste took place in 2005 and was focussed on waste strategy and a waste development plan. In 2005, 35% of respondents were in favour of wheeled bins, as opposed to the current response rate of 76%. The move towards a separate food and garden waste service followed in part from the responses received to this consultation.

Undertaking a consultation now ensures that it is meaningful and that decisions on services are still at a formative stage. Responses to the consultation can be taken into consideration before any future decisions are made. The consultation assists MKC to understand resident priorities for waste services, to understand the preferred options for kerbside properties and to explore resident views on recycling and improving the quality of recycling.

Consultation documents and information;

Waste and Recycling Consultation <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations/609>
Waste and Recycling Consultation Delegated Decision Report -
[file:///H:/Google Chrome/Waste%20and%20Recycling%20Collection%20Consultation delegated%20decisions%20paper.pdf](file:///H:/Google%20Chrome/Waste%20and%20Recycling%20Collection%20Consultation%20delegated%20decisions%20paper.pdf)

Engagement Methodology

The Covid19 Pandemic has had a direct impact on the approach to engagement. Traditionally a range of options would have been implemented which also included face to face interactions at public events, supermarkets, roadshows and physical attendance at meetings. Following government guidance to stay home and minimise contact, this type of engagement did not happen. To ensure that information about the consultation was shared more widely, a proactive contact approach was adopted, and this was supported by a digital approach.

- A cross party Waste Collection Working Group chaired by the Cabinet member for Public Realm and Housing, Cllr Emily Darlington, which has met regularly since October 2019.
- The website was updated including a dedicated page for the consultation.
- E-alerts were sent regularly to residents who had signed up to receive updates on waste and environment. Social media post alerts were scheduled on a regular basis over the 12-week duration of the pilot.
- Media releases – start of consultation and January 2020
- MKFM radio interviews/video clips Cllr Darlington following the delegated decision to have a consultation and early in January 2020 to encourage responses before the consultation closed.
- MKFM paid for adverts from 21 December 2020 until Sunday 24 January 2021. MKFM poll 8 January 2021 – 24 January 2021.
- Virtual Information sessions for ward councillors, parish and town councils November 2020.
- Direct email with information – all ward councillors, parish and town councils at the start of the consultation and Councillor News articles.
- Direct email other groups; including resident groups and representative groups.
- Hard copies of consultation promoted and posted out directly on request.

- Virtual attendance to parish council meetings and Youth Cabinet November 2020
- Video and audio clip shared via social media and on webpages.
- Posters for use on websites, Facebook and notice boards.
- Dedicated inbox with automated responses promoting consultation.
- Satisfaction survey postcards to almost 3000 homes within the Waste Collection Pilot with link to consultation.

Waste and Recycling Collection Consultation (extract of specific questions on wheeled bins and recycling collections): Questions and responses

Which Property type do you live in?

Most respondents live in houses.

How many people live in your household?

Most respondents live in 1-2 person households or 3-4 person households only 25 respondents lived in larger households.

Do you think that a container such as a wheeled bin would be helpful to store waste and recycling?

- 76% (3428) respondents said yes
- 20% (890) respondents said no
- 4% (165) respondents Don't know

Would you accept more bins to improve quality and increase recycling?

- 74% (3329) respondents said Yes
- 23% (1015) respondents said no
- 3% (138) respondents don't know

If your property is not suitable for bins at all, please tick which option you would prefer; boxes or sacks

- 52% (1475) respondents Boxes
- 48% (1351) respondents Sacks

If you believe that your property is suitable for fewer than the proposed three new bins and the green food and garden waste bin, which collection would you like to have in a wheeled bin?

- 76% A wheeled bin collected weekly for waste that cannot be recycled
- 58.5% A wheeled bin for paper and card
- 63.5% A wheeled bin for plastic, metal and glass
- 91% A food and garden waste wheeled bin

How important is recycling to you?

- 95% of respondents rated recycling as important -very important.

Should the council consider action for those households that persistently refuse to recycle? Respondents could tick more than one option. Should the Council:

- 88% respondents supported education/communication
- 49% respondents supported the use of fines
- 26% respondents supported no penalty and collecting all waste
- 23% respondents supported no collection of waste

What would encourage you to recycle more? In order;

- Wider range of materials accepted
- More frequent recycling collections
- Other
- Separate food and garden waste collections

Do you think wheeled bins will be easier to use?

- 71% (3196) respondents Yes
- 29% (1286) respondents No

If you do think wheeled bins might be harder to use, can you please say why. This information will be used to help us help you.

There were some concerns raised on the following;

- Difficulty in moving bins for people with mobility issues
- Bins being too heavy to manoeuvre, particularly in places where space was tight.
- Manoeuvring bins in locations where space is tight

As a free text box, respondents used this box to share other feedback ranging from;

- Worries about bins/boxes not being returned to property boundary
- Bin blight on streets if bins are not put away after collection
- Who will be responsible for cleaning the bin?
- Concerns about houses of multiple occupation and flats
- Concerns about broken glass and other residents not recycling effectively

Summary and Conclusion

The findings from the formal consultation demonstrate that 76% of residents are in favour of moving towards using containers such as wheeled bins, with 74% of 4484 respondents willing to accept more bins to improve quality and increase recycling.

Should the Council move towards implementing a wheeled bin collection system, the qualitative responses demonstrate that there is a need for information to be shared more widely to ensure that all residents are aware of Assisted Collections. This is a scheme that provides support to people who are not physically able to move bins without support.

There is a strong desire from respondents for more education and communications to be made available to support residents to recycle more effectively.