



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Health and Environmental Services Committee
Subject:	Access Problems for Waste Collection Vehicles
Date:	4 th June 2008
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Relevant Background Information

At the Committee meeting on 5th December 2007 Members asked for a report to be brought detailing proposals to address the access problems being experienced by our waste collection vehicles due to parked cars.

Members will be aware that in a number of locations across the City access problems for waste collection vehicles are common due to the narrow width of the street and with cars being parked in such a manner as to restrict access to the street. This causes occasions when our large waste collection vehicles are unable to gain access to streets or parts of streets.

Key Issues

The problem arises due to cars parking on double yellow lines, cars parking too close to corners and cars which are legally parked but due to the narrow nature of the street the access width is very narrow.

Our staff would call back on numerous occasions to try and gain access and we usually manage to collect the bins but this may not be on the designated day. We sometimes have to call back on another day or at a different time. We have taken a number of approaches to this issue.

In streets where residents' parking is a problem, we have sent letters to residents in the affected streets asking them not to restrict access by the way they park their vehicles. This has generally received a very poor response from residents.

In streets where commuter parking is a problem, or where people are ignoring yellow lines, we have been liaising with the DRD Roads Service regarding the placement of double yellow lines where required and the use of Parking Attendants where illegal parking is evident.

The previous Lord Mayor, Cllr McCarthy, also convened a meeting with the relevant statutory bodies to highlight this problem.

Cleansing Services are of the opinion that any solution should lie in the hands of the Council and not rely on prolonged solutions involving other bodies. Our primary approach is to remove the problem streets from the normal waste collection rounds and to place them on a designated round serviced by a narrow bodied bin lorry. As we are currently undertaking an exercise to review all of our waste collection routes now is an opportune moment to undertake this process. This should afford first time access on the majority of occasions, however, where access is still difficult, then the other more prolonged solutions can be utilised, such as double yellow lines, Parking Attendants etc. Given that these other solutions would only be required in a much reduced number of streets then resources could be more readily available from other bodies. Implementation will involve discussion with the Trade Unions and is likely to be completed within three months.

Resource Implications

The narrow bodied waste collection vehicles are already included in the Council's capital programme. Given their reduced load capacity there will be some operational efficiency loss but this will be offset by the reduced need to keep calling back to streets where access was denied. It is proposed to utilise this solution from within existing staff resources. We estimate we would need to service approximately 2,800 households in 90 streets/locations across the city.

Recommendation

The Committee is requested to note this report.