

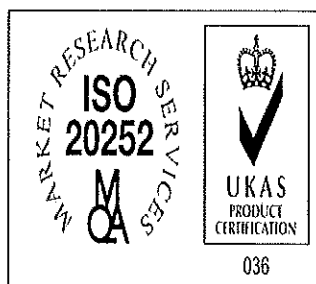


Belfast City Council

Waste Management Consultation

23 October 2018

Final



Executive Summary

Belfast City Council commissioned Social Market Research (SMR) to undertake a programme of research to help support a broader consultation on its Waste Framework. This research was based on two elements: a survey among a representative sample of council residents (n=1142); and, an online survey hosted on the council's Citizen Space platform (n=2175). Research fieldwork was undertaken between 31 July and 7 October 2018

Key Findings

Please note that when interpreting these results, the findings from the sample of 1142 residents [the representative survey] are representative of all residents from across the council area. The findings from the 'Citizen Space Survey' are not based on a representative sample of all council residents.

Commitment to Recycling

The evidence from both surveys suggests a high level of commitment to recycling among residents in Belfast:

- **Representative Survey:** 70% rate their commitment to recycling as very high or high;
- **Citizen's Space:** 87% rate their commitment to recycling as very high or high;

Understanding the benefits of Recycling

A majority of respondents from both surveys reported an excellent or good understanding of the benefits of recycling, with self-reported understanding higher among those taking part in the Citizen Space survey:

- **Representative Survey:** 73% rate understanding of benefits as either excellent or good;
- **Citizen's Space:** 92% rate understanding of benefits as either excellent or good;

Satisfaction with Current Waste Collection Arrangements

Most respondents are satisfied with their current arrangements for waste collection, with little difference in the pattern of response between both surveys:

- **Representative Survey:** 65% are satisfied with their current arrangements;
- **Citizen's Space:** 63% are satisfied with their current arrangements;

Support for Receiving a Weekly Collection of Glass

A majority of respondents in both surveys are supportive of everyone receiving a weekly glass collection, with a relatively higher level of support recorded by those in the representative survey:

- **Representative Survey:** 77% supportive;
- **Citizen's Space:** 61% supportive;

Support for Receiving a Weekly Food Waste Collection

A majority of respondents in both surveys are supportive of everyone receiving a weekly food waste collection, with a relatively higher level of support recorded by those in the representative survey:

- **Representative Survey:** 82% agree;
- **Citizen's Space:** 69% agree;

Recycle More if Knew Recycling was Creating More Jobs

Respondents in the representative survey were more likely to agree that they would recycle more if they knew their efforts were creating more jobs. This view was shared by less than half of those who took part in the Citizen Space survey:

- **Representative Survey:** 81% agree;
- **Citizen's Space:** 46% agree;

Waste Collected and Treated in Northern Ireland for Recycling, Repair and Reuse Here

Respondents in both surveys recorded high levels of agreement with the view that waste collected and treated in Northern Ireland should be recycled, repaired and reused here:

- **Representative Survey:** 89% agree;
- **Citizen's Space:** 83% agree;

Support for Changing Waste Collection Arrangements to a 'Stacked Wheelie Box'

A majority in both surveys supported changing the waste collection arrangements to a 'Stacked Wheelie Box' system, with a relatively higher level of support recorded by residents in the representative survey:

- **Representative Survey:** 77% supportive;
- **Citizen's Space:** 60% supportive;

Support of a Different Waste Collection System if Created Quality Employment and Boosted Local Economy

Residents in the representative survey were overwhelmingly supportive of a different waste collection system if it created quality employment and boosted the local economy. Although still a majority, support from those taking part in the Citizen Space survey was relatively lower:

- **Representative Survey:** 82% supportive;
- **Citizen's Space:** 57% supportive;

Proposed Changes Likely to Have an Impact on You and Your Family

In terms of the potential impact of the changes on respondents and their families there was a significant difference between the surveys. Relatively fewer respondents in the representative sample survey said that the proposed changes would have an impact on them or their families compared with those who took part in the Citizen Space survey:

- **Representative Survey:** 9% believe the proposals will have an impact;
 - Impact of the change on their household i.e. having enough room / space
 - The proposed changes would make it easier to recycle
 - Preference for the current arrangements
 - Option to recycle glass welcomed
- **Citizen's Space:** 52% believe the proposals will have an impact;
 - Concern about the number of black bin collections
 - Concerns about the size of the stacked wheelie bin
 - Reduced black bin collections leading to health hazards
 - Being able to use the new stacked wheelie bin (older residents, disability etc.)
 - Option to recycle glass welcomed

"A reduced black bin collection will not generate more recycled, just more fly-tipping."

"A stacked wheelie box would not be big enough for my family as we use 4 black and 4 red kerbside boxes each week as well as 3 food waste boxes."

"Having a large family with two children, (using disposable nappies) a monthly collection of the black bin would not only be overflowing with rubbish, but the smell it would give off would encourage rats and vermin!"

"The stacked wheelie boxes would also make it harder for many of us with disabilities to manage, as there would be much more bending and lifting involved than with the current system."

"I'd be very keen to recycle glass; at the moment I don't because I don't drive and there's nowhere in walking distance where I can do it."

"We find that the current size of the recycling bin does not meet our needs as a family. The bin is full long before the end of the 2 week cycle. By moving to a stacked wheelie bin, I feel that this will only make things worse as we will struggle even more to fit larger objects into the recycling bin"

Aware of other Equality Issues which Council should take into Account

Very few residents in the representative survey were aware of other equality issues arising from the proposals, whereas awareness of equality impacts were more likely to be reported in the Citizen Space survey:

- **Representative Survey:** 1% aware of other equality issues with the proposals;
 - Impact on those with a disability or mobility issue
 - Impact on rates
 - Impact on larger households
- **Citizen's Space:** 18% aware of other equality issues with the proposals;
 - Concerns about being able to lift / weight of the new box
 - Elderly not understanding the new scheme
 - Impact on those with a disability
 - Large families may be adversely affected

"Accessibility for older people, and people with disabilities - these top loading bins require bending and lifting that may prove difficult?"

"Are the boxes/trolley easy to handle or identify for people who are elderly, inform, poor sighted etc.? If not, can they be adapted? "

"Age and disability [need to be considered]"

"A family produces more waste than I do living alone"

"Nappies and people with disabilities. Stuff that can't be recycled....nursing homes and hospitals...could do more"

Black Bin Options

Both surveys generated high levels of support for Option A which involves 180ltr black bins being collected every two weeks:

- **Representative Survey:** 81% preferred Option A (180ltr bin collected every 2 weeks);
- **Citizen's Space:** 75% preferred Option A (180ltr bin collected every 2 weeks);

Would it Matter if Collection Days for Recyclables and Black Bins were Different

In both surveys a relatively small minority of respondents said that having their recyclables and black bin waste collected on different days would matter to them:

- **Representative Survey:** 17% said it would matter if different days;
- **Citizen's Space:** 17% said it would matter if different days;

Motivating Residents to Recycle More

Respondents in both surveys made a range of suggestions on how residents can be motivated to recycle more, with the most common suggestions including: providing better recycling bins; better information and clearer instructions; and, the council providing a glass collection facility:

- **Representative Survey:** better recycling bins (18%); nothing more I can do (13%); more information and clearer instructions (7%); provide glass collection (4%); education (3%);
- **Citizen's Space:** better information and clearer instructions (17%); provide glass collection (15%); nothing more I can do (7%); accept more plastic packaging (5%); increased number of collections (5%); bigger bins including bigger stacker bins (5%).

"A better understanding of what can and cannot be accepted in the recycling bin .e.g. which different types of plastic are accepted, what about tetra packs etc."

"A bin for my glass- I currently take this to the dump/recycling bins at supermarkets but much handier if EVERYONE, not just those with kerbies were given somewhere to put glass bottles and jars."

"I recycle everything I can already but I am aware that many people do not and need to be told to stop dumping absolutely everything into their black wheelie bins."

"Bigger kerbside boxes (I'm already very good at recycling but find if I am being 100% strict with what I recycle, I don't have enough space in my kerbside bins for everything I need to recycle)."

"All plastics in the one bin...sometimes it's difficult to decide what's a plastic bag and what's a food wrapper especially, if you are firing things in in a hurry. And then the stuff comes back in the box."

Conclusions

The evidence from both surveys shows that residents are supportive of the changes to waste management arrangements being explored by Belfast City Council.

On the potential change to a 'stacked wheelie box', a majority of residents are supportive. Similarly, in relation to black bin collections, a majority of residents are supportive of their general waste being collected in 180ltr bins every two weeks, with most residents saying they would be unaffected if their recyclables and black bin waste were collected on different days. Residents are also supportive of everyone having weekly glass and food waste collections.

Although the survey findings suggest that residents are supportive of the changes, some did highlight potential impacts associated with the proposals. These concerns relate to the potential impact on residents with a disability, older residents and those with reduced mobility. Concerns were also expressed regarding the impact of the proposals on larger families, as well as around the size of the 'stacked wheelie box' and its capacity to accommodate the amount of waste being recycled.

