

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 10(ii)

Brighton & Hove City Council

Mr Alan McCarthy
Chief Executive
Brighton & Hove City Council

23 May 2008

Dear Alan,

Refuse collection and recycling in Hanover & Elm Grove Ward

I would like to request that this letter be considered by the Cabinet Member for Environment at the meeting on Thursday 5 June, under the provisions of Procedural Rule 23.3.

I request a report which addresses the annual problem of split bin bags and refuse spilling out onto the streets, and the implementation of weekly recycling in Hanover and Elm Grove Ward.

Every year in Hanover, in the Spring/Summer months local wildlife breaks into black bags left out on the street for collection. This is not just when bags are left out early by householders, it is whenever a bag is put out onto the street.

We receive complaints every year about this unacceptable situation, and every year we request action. As we understand it, Cityclean also receive a number of complaints year on year from Hanover residents.

We have appreciated the efforts of street sweepers and enforcement officers to keep up with the problem, but a systematic solution needs to be put in place.

The area appears to us to have been low down the list of Council priorities in terms of providing refuse and recycling infrastructure over the years, compared with the town centre and outer lying areas.

Black recycling boxes are now in place, but were a long time coming for the area, especially for residents in narrow streets and are collected fortnightly, not weekly as for other town centre residents.

Last year, officers of Cityclean agreed to work with us for the implementation of a Binvelope trial in Lincoln Street in Hanover.

The trial has now been evaluated by officers, having received 54 mainly positive resident questionnaire responses indicating greater satisfaction with the cleanliness of the street and a desire for the scheme to continue. It

appears that despite some concerns regarding residents who continue to use black bags, or leave Binvelopes on the street, the overall feeling was positive.

However I have recently been informed by officers that no further action will be taken towards the roll out of Binvelopes in Hanover because:

- a) Some residents do not use them
- b) The 'shelf life' of Binvelopes is 18 months to 2 years and the cost of roll out to 3,000 residents in the neighbourhood could not be funded as an ongoing expenditure.

I am extremely disappointed by this response given the largely positive feedback from residents in the trial street and my own belief that Binvelopes appear to represent the best possible option to deal with the problem, given the particular characteristics of Hanover.

I fail to understand why, if adequately cleaned and maintained, they could not be used for many years by successive households. With the right support and encouragement from the Council, and ongoing information to residents there should be no reason why they couldn't be an ongoing solution. Enforcement could surely deal with any Binvelopes left out which cause obstruction or represent harm to local amenity, or where bags left out are a problem.

I consider that this matter should be dealt with as a priority, and would request that an officer report be brought back to the next Cabinet Member meeting with:

- 1) An evaluation of the options, including Binvelopes, to address the problem of refuse spilling out onto the streets in Hanover and setting out a proposal for the way forward towards achieving a satisfactory solution that meets residents' expectations of street cleanliness, amenity and quality of life.
- 2) Consider a timeframe for the implementation of weekly recycling in the area.

Many thanks,

Georgia