

Penny Thompson - Chief Executive
Brighton & Hove City Council
King's House

30th July 2014

Dear Penny

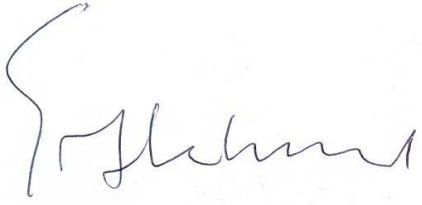
I would like this letter included on the agenda for the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee meeting of 7th October under Council Procedure Rule 23.3. I have submitted the letter in good time to enable officers to respond to some of the questions I have raised.

Since communal refuse bins were introduced widely across much of the city in 2008 and 2009 I, and many other residents, have recently become increasingly concerned about the deterioration in the condition of many of the bins. They are frequently damaged, have their lids missing, are daubed with graffiti and are often surrounded by fly-tipped rubbish. In short, they have become an eyesore, a public health hazard, and do not give a good impression of the city to our many visitors. I am not suggesting that we return to the pre-communal bin system but, when they were introduced, I certainly didn't expect them to be allowed to deteriorate to such an extent as we now see.

A recent survey carried out in the Montpelier and Clifton Hill area, covering Regency and St. Peters & North Laine Wards (as reported in the latest Montpelier & Clifton Hill Association Newsletter), found that 70% of bins were defective. Most either had their lids missing or permanently open leaving them vulnerable to both seagulls and rodents. It is a similar situation in most other communal bin areas. A cursory inspection of bins also reveals that they often contain recyclable materials.

I would like to know whether Cityclean has systematic arrangements in place to monitor the condition of its communal bins and to remedy any defects, including removing graffiti?; is there a dedicated budget to repair or replace defective bins and is there a rolling programme of replacement?; what is being done to catch fly-tippers who repeatedly dump large items of rubbish around bins?

At a more general level, we believe that the time has come to look again at how the current arrangements for managing rubbish collection across the city could be improved. The round changes that were introduced nearly a year ago still seem to be causing problems. The refuse vehicles suffer from an abnormally large number of mechanical breakdowns and recycling rates remain woefully low. Refuse and recycling collection is the most basic of Council services which other similar sized cities seem to manage perfectly well. Why should the residents of, and visitors to, Brighton & Hove continue to suffer by comparison?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Theobald'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Cllr. Geoffrey Theobald OBE