

Columbia TRA

CTRA General Meeting minutes - 10 January 2022

Present from the Committee

Kevin McKenna (Chair)
Penny Creed (Vice Chair)
Jonathan Moberly (Secretary)
Ed Furey (Treasurer)
Pam Haluwa
John Cotter
Dave Sinclair
Helenka Wargon
Mary Dineen
Duncan Barnes

THH Officers Paul Gudge, Muhammed Ali

Council officers Nigel O'Flaherty, Neil Crump (waste management team)

Councillor Asma Islam (environmental services)

Absent with apologies

No apologies

Waste Management Issues

Kevin - What is the impression of the officers of what the problems are?

Neil Crump (NC) - officers are recently appointed so not familiar with the issues

Helenka - historical issues have not changed, recycling and regular rubbish bins are constantly full eyesore health hazard, rubbish tipped out by addicts and squirrels. Hasn't worked in the past and is not working now. wWhen rubbish is tipped in to the trucks, mess remains on the ground

NC (LBTH)

- suffering heavily from covid reducing workforce. Reduced staff.
- in normal time if there is waste not in the bin is a matter for estate management to resolve. Lot of pressure on workforce to move on and collect other peoples bins.
- misunderstandings regarding who responsible for what. It is THH responsibility to manage waste until it is collected and LBTH responsibility to collect.

PG (THH)

- environmental services (caretakers) make sure bins are collectable on day of collection and returns bins to their housings.
- Issues around locations of bins.
- issue with fly tipping, due to proximity to hackney road and bethnal green road. commercial dumping. There is an expectation THH deal with it but nearly impossible for them to do so.
- black bag in recycling (contamination) is a problem, sometimes need to educate via signs and letter drops
- blocked rubbish chutes

Mary - we need to follow up on these issues and so need clarity who is responsible for what.

John C - Recycling bags?

Paul Gudge (PG) - preference is not to use them at all as they are themselves single-use plastics, try to use something reusable to take your recycling to the bins and empty in to them.

Ed

- recycling bins seem to breed .Don't necessarily get emptied, a new one appears.
- Resident education/confusion what goes in to recycling what doesn't. Simple information isn't available at the point of disposal to avoid contamination.

NC - we have had problems with collections due to covid. Temp staff don't have detailed knowledge of collections. Regarding what can be recycled, info is on website and pictures on the sides of the bins.

Mary - passers by don't care whether it's recycling or not, are putting all rubbish in the recycling.

Penny

- Pelter St - cuff point - its filthy all the time. Not enough bin corrals bins are on the streets occupying parking space. Constant fly tipping. Some bin corrals were taped up for some time.
- Given lots of time waiting for Violea changeover to make a difference and it hasn't
- Arthur Wade and Robert Owen bin corrals not fit for purpose as permanently locked.
- Permanently locked - those blocks don't have access to bin corrals so eight bins outside 1-12 Baroness Road. Only 12 flats there but have to pass load of rubbish. Arthur Wade and RO have to walk a long way to empty their case. No one up or down the hierarchy is listening.

Pam

- what happened to walkabout/audit carried out a few months ago?
- 'recycle here' sign encourages dumping
- if recycling bins are full and overflowing with stuff piled up around them why can't the caretakers just put the excess in the normal bins. Dumped rubbish encourages more dumped rubbish
- slums aren't built they are created
- can we get rid of all the recycling bins things would be much easier

CLlr Asma Islam (AI)

- some of these issues have been raised by THH regarding infrastructure. Some of that has been picked up - members enquiry how we design out the bin areas. AI has raised the cuff point design due to health and safety issues.
- This is not the standard we want to provide. We need to rectify but the service had come in house in May 2020 as we went in to lockdown.
- Management restructure has only just been completed, will take time to learn the issues.
- We want to add an extra recycling round to support residents enthusiasm about recycling.
- Recycling bags can be collected from Idea Store but any bag can be used so long as it goes in the purple bins. LBTH working on a reusable bag solution.
- we will provide more purple bins where needed
- LBTH has just approved CIL money for recycling rollout for flats which can include redesigning bin locations etc.
- communication - education in different languages how to recycle and what can be recycled
- includes local waste issue response teams
- contamination - will try and put resources in place where they are needed. need to put resource in place to avoid that. recycling not helpful in areas with high footfall due to contamination
- we work with THH via the housing forum to make sure everyone knows their responsibilities
- street cleansing - a lot of cleaners have retired, we had a period of restructuring and recruiting.
- its completely not acceptable some of the pictures we see
- a lot of it related to the Weavers footfall and the night time economy
- we will take this away and get back to you with some real actions to help.

Penny

- we've considered covid. Hackney doesn't look this bad but is also suffering covid.
- we need more collections not more bins. The bins are an eyesore.
- any walkabout needs all responsible parties. There have been many walkabouts without outcomes.

PG - should be possible to organise this walkabout. For THH, PG, MA and Caretaker team leader (Tommy) can attend.

Kevin - walkabouts happen, notes get taken but we don't get a fully shared problem list, if we can all work off a common plan and set of actions then we can be transparent with members and residents. Things aren't getting joined up between estate issues and street issues.

Mary - can we itemise and prioritise. Helenka and Mary tasked with being point of contact on this and can help to manage a list

NC - agrees to this way forward

MA - when the bin men collect the bins, who is responsible to return them to their normal place?

NC

- bins are supposed to be presented we are supposed to collect what is presented and then they are put back
- in reality various agreements on different estates and blocks due to practicalities.

AI

- it is caretakers responsibility to put bins on the road for pickup
- problems of access / blockages from delivery vans and parked cars often cause missed pickups. Caretakers can help to avoid this.
- before we commit to a walkabout we will make a plan internally so the walkabout is just another tier of support for a pre-existing action plan.

Mary - plan was never shared in the past.

AI - we can share in the future. We need about two weeks to revisit plan and make amendments, then sent to the TRA for comments.

Mary - agreed: we wait to receive this report from AI, Mary and Helenka work on our list of issues, then cross check with the plan.

AI - action plan will be owned by TRA and council.

Mary and Helenka to share contact details

PG - agreed for THH.

AI - agree to get waste management plan in place first (next 2-3 weeks) then walkabout (mid-February). Plan to be shared with THH and TRA and to be used by TRA to hold other parties accountable.

Dunk - who is responsible for bins in Ravenscroft Park? They pick up using vehicles and it leaves mud tracks on the grass. PC - not familiar but will ask and enquire. AI - will raise it to see if there are alternative ways to collect when wet and muddy.

JM - should purple bins be parked on public footways? NC - not without a really good reason

Mary - what is the difference between reporting on the LYN app or on the website?

NC - website reporting will be a richer experience than the app. It will have feedback. App is for small and quick items, website for more complicated issues. ('Whitespace' reporting system)

Bulk waste collection

Penny - bulk waste used to be collected within a couple of days, not it is two weeks

NC - covid caused more bulk waste demand as people spend more time at home.

Penny - results in more fly tipping as people have no room to store their bulk waste.

NC - bulk waste collection is not a statutory requirement. If people need faster collection they need to book a private collection.

AI - the service should work once covid demand goes down in a few months.

Penny - estate is charged for fly tipping if bulk waste put out before collection is due

NC - when people book the collection they are told not to put the waste out until the day. They should book a private collection if they want it done sooner. It is residents responsibility to manage their waste.

Kevin - private waste via 'man with a van' often gets illegally dumped on the estates anyway

AOB

Leaseholders meeting next Monday 17 to discuss major works

Pam - we need a discussion about caretaking staff as the standard is slipping. We can't blame covid on everything. Variable service. How much training do they get? Some caretakers take more responsibility than others. We need to understand their duties sometimes we blame them for things not their responsibility.

PG - will get some feedback from the caretakers on their understanding of their responsibilities

Pam - a Tomlinson Close bollard that gets continually knocked down keeps getting replaced and getting damaged again. How to block it from getting repaired.

PG - will raise removal of bollard it with the caretaker.

MA. PG - will request Orwell House bins redesign with estate services

Penny - leaseholders must not pay for this as it was raised during the build.

[in the zoom chat - a list of some of the waste issues...]

- Bins regularly overflowing
- residents often not able to put their waste in their block's allocated bins
- Capacity not well matched to demand.
- Spill over onto streets, roads, pavements. Access ways and pavements blocked by rubbish.
- Fly-tipping – ongoing issues of big dumps of bulk rubbish in most bin areas on our estates, with the block residents sure that it isn't all coming from themselves – residents are being charged to clear this and it is taking up a lot of caretaker time.
- Estate bins being used by public as general rubbish bins – estate bins are placed close to main walkways and are used as general street bins.
- Local private houses use estate bins as overflow rubbish/bulk rubbish points. Non-estate residents often seen placing waste in the estate bins or dumping bulk waste there.
- Bins on streets and estates in the wrong places
- Bins on streets not well matched to demand at weekends (especially market day) – Note that the whole area has a high tourist footfall, which peaks on Sundays, but which is an issue all week long. Footfall increases across the week as the shops open on Columbia Road mostly Friday, Saturday and Sunday. High footfall related to night-time economy as well. Our estates are major pedestrian routes, as well as the main roads.