

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee

30 March 2023

Implementation review of the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) Vehicle Access Policy

For Review and Consultation

Portfolio Holder: Cllr L Beddow, Culture, Communities and Customer Services

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: J Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

Report Author: Gemma Clinton
Title: Head of Commercial Waste and Strategy
Tel: 01305 224716
Email: gemma.clinton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

This report provides an update on the implementation of the updated HRC vehicle access policy since its introduction in May 2022.

Recommendation:

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the implementation of the policy and to consider whether the Place and Resources Overview Committee should be invited to undertake a further review of any elements of the policy.

Reason for Recommendation:

To provide assurances to the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee that vehicle restrictions introduced at the HRCs are sufficient to allow legitimate householders to use the sites while deterring the deposit of commercial waste free of charge.

1. Background

- 1.1 Vehicle access policies have been introduced and refined over many years at Dorset HRCs to deter access to sites by traders attempting to deposit commercial waste free of charge, while giving reasonable access to legitimate residents to deposit their household waste. While the Council's waste transfer stations accepts commercial waste at a charge, and Swanage HRC accepts commercial waste for recycling, the remaining HRCs are considered not suitable for commercial waste due to limited footprint and high usage.
- 1.2 Following a public consultation a proposal to amend the vehicle access policy was considered by the Place and Resources Overview Committee of Tuesday 19 October 2021. The paper - [Household Recycling Centre HRC Vehicle Access Policy.pdf \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](#) – covers the history, consultation and reason for the changes. The Committee resolved to recommend the changes which were ratified by the Cabinet of 7 December 2021.
- 1.3 The main changes were
- sole vehicle visits are now limited to 12 visits per year, this was previously unlimited. Sole vehicles are when there is only one vehicle belonging to a household and this vehicle requires a permit. This vehicle cannot be commercially registered, or sign written.
 - weekend access for limited entry permits is now allowed and increase visits to six per year from the previous three per year. Limited entry permits are defined by the policy for where there is more than one vehicle belonging to a household or the vehicle is commercially registered, or sign written.
 - dual crew cab, 'pick up' type vehicles are added to in the 'needs a permit' list
 - an annual declaration for permit renewal is required rather than automatic renewal of all permits
- 1.4 The following graphic summarises the new policy:



2. Introduction of Revised Policy

2.1 The revised policy was introduced on 1 May 2022.

2.2 As of 15 February 2023 there have been 6760 permit applications, 2635 for the sole vehicle 12 visits and 4125 for the 6 visits permit.

2.3 The waste team have logged 58 customer comments regarding the revised policy with 5 being logged as “formal complaints”. The vast majority of contacts have been dual crew cab owners who require a permit. The comments received are shown in Appendix 1. The contacts have mainly been at the time of the introduction of the new policy as can be seen from the graph below:



- 2.4 There have been 9 contacts from those who said they did not have an email address (a requirement of the automatic online application). These have all been resolved after discussing with the resident and it is considered that the low numbers involved allow for officers to continue to intervene when necessary.
- 2.5 There have been 7 contacts where the second vehicle available for use by the householder was not suitable to access the HRC, this has been resolved by issuing a 12-visit permit.

3. **Financial Implications**

This policy is directly linked to Dorset Council's waste disposal budget. It seeks to allow reasonable usage of the HRCs by residents for their household waste while preventing the misuse by the free deposit waste from a business. The costs for administering this policy are small – less than £10,000 per year and the monitoring and recording of permit use are contractual requirements of the HRC operator.

4. **Environmental Implications**

- 4.1 Managing waste as a resource is the heart of the services Dorset Council provides. HRCs provide a valuable resource to Dorset Council residents to separate, reuse, recycle and deposit their household waste.
- 4.2. Improving access to legitimate users seeks to maximise the amount of household waste that is reused, recycled or composted via the HRCs.
- 4.3 Dorset Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019. The waste hierarchy is actively followed by the waste team to manage waste as a resource, reduce costs and reduce our carbon impact. This revised policy supports the Council's climate agenda by reducing non household waste at the HRCs and ensuring traders are disposing of their waste responsibly.

5. **Well-being and Health Implications**

- 5.1 HRCs provide a safe and environmentally sound outlet for bulky household waste which needs to be removed from residents' homes.
- 5.2 HRCs provide the opportunity for residents to reuse and recycle their waste, providing a positive feeling both individually and for the community. There's also the opportunity for residents to purchase items at a reduced rate contributing to the circular economy and adding social value to the community.

6. **Other Implications**

None

7. **Risk Assessment**

7.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low

7.2 Concerns of increased fly tipping have been raised from the public consultation. Recommendation two improves access to HRCs allowing legitimate users a greater availability to access the service. This includes use at weekend and an additional three sits per year. Limiting sole vehicle permits to 12 visits per year although a reduction for unlimited access is supported by usage monitoring and consultation responses as a reasonable number of visits for most users over a 12-month period. These policy amendments are therefore not considered to increase the risk of fly tipping with the Dorset Council area and since the introduction of the policy there has been no noticeable increase in fly-tipping as recorded by waste services.

8. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

An equalities screening assessment has been conducted and has not identified any negative impacts.

9. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Comment received on revised policy.

10. **Background Papers**

Place and Resources Overview Committee, 19 October 2021, Household Recycling Centre (HRC) Vehicle Access Policy
Cabinet, 7 December 2021, Household Recycling Centre (HRC) Vehicle Access Policy

Appendix 1 – Comments received on revised policy

Date	Complaint	Comments
04/01/2022	Complaint	I am not a trader so don't see why I should be limited as a private individual. I pay my rates and as such have a legal right to use the facility.
28/03/2022	Complaint	My objections are to the arbitrary restrictions now being imposed that in practise restrict legitimate access to HRC's and add to the risk of unlawful fly tipping whilst doing nothing to improve enforcement of reducing commercial waste.
29/03/2022		converted VW Transported and uses as a camper but removes when wanting to use it as a van, therefore no perm fixtures and fittings = not a "camper van".
30/03/2022	Complaint	two vehicle household (one is a company car with private use permitted) not happy with restricted 6 visits
31/03/2022	Complaint	elderly lady has large garden and alpacas and cannot lift heavy bags into dual cab so requires more than 12 visits
06/04/2022	Complaint	The way the brochure is worded is abusive, rude and discriminate. It should have been worded better.
13/04/2022	Complaint	clearing property from late mother in law and does not want to use inheritance for skip or clearance company wants unlimited access or access not to be registered against his Ford Ranger Crew cab permit
22/04/2022		Doesn't use kerbside services as collection point is half a mile away, so uses HRC more than 12 times. Advised that the option to use the kerbside was still available. Customer then asked for collection day info.
22/04/2022		Customer has two vehicles, one is a sign written van which they use for their business (self employed window cleaner) and dual cab pick up as their day to day family vehicle.
25/04/2022		does not have a kerb side collection and needs more than 12 visits to HRC
25/04/2022	Complaint	2nd vehicle registered belongs to daughter who is away most of the year at Uni - customer cancelled the permit and re-applied manually inputting address and therefore overriding the system check on UPRN - now has 12 visits
25/04/2022		uses HRC and restricted access won't be enough as he hasn't had kerbside collection since 2010 - query raised and passed to appropriate team to action

29/04/2022	Complaint	the needs of any council tax payer to dispose of legitimate waste are not changed or diminished because they happen to have a van as their sole vehicle...especially whilst others with multiple vehicles/campervans/minibuses can continue without any restrictions at all!
03/05/2022		I applied for a permit for my vehicle yesterday but I feel I have made a mistake My vehicle is a Toyota Hilux 4x4 but it has a truck top and is therefore not a pick up. It actually is the same as any family car, it is not used for business or transporting any business waste. I simply drive to work in it
03/05/2022		personalised number plate - difficulty getting permit - user error.
03/05/2022	Complaint	Citron Nemo is not seen as a van is customers eyes and therefore should not be treated as such by DC, should be allowed to bring a trailer in with this vehicle as the sports cars (Mazda MX5) do not have a tow bars and in their opinion are not cars that can tow a trailer.
05/05/2022		renovating house and needs access at weekends - hadn't realised the permit had changed enabling weekend and bank holiday access and also more visits
05/05/2022	Complaint	have a large garden and need to access the HRC more than permit allows
05/05/2022		someone else has used my address to apply for a permit - resolved - incorrect address chosen
05/05/2022	Complaint	why am I being penalised for my Land Rover Defender when my Audi estate can accommodate more rubbish - do not want have to clean my Audi estate every time I go - I feel this is a shocking rule that has no justification at all
05/05/2022		was not aware of new policy and thinks it should have been more widely publicised
06/05/2022	Formal complaint	We pay Dorset council £319 a month in council tax and now we are unable to use the recycle facility in the way we have for the past 17 years that we have been resident here. Yet other residents with Estate cars and people carriers can go to the facility as often as they wish.
06/05/2022		Renovating house so need more than 12 visits
07/05/2022	Complaint	I pay my council tax and being penalised due to my choice of vehicles
07/05/2022	Complaint	have a motor home which I cannot use as too large to go onto an HRC site- would like a review to enable 12 visits in my dual cab - being penalised for choice of vehicle pay council tax like everyone else and now have less service.
09/05/2022	Complaint	Large garden - 12 visits not enough - being victimised

10/05/2022	Complaint	second car is a sports car does not have a "boot" to take garden waste - unfairly penalised
10/05/2022		someone else has used my address to apply for a permit - resolved - incorrect address chosen
13/05/2022		Someone else has used my address to apply for a permit - resolved - incorrect address chosen
16/05/2022		no email address - spoke to customer who created one and supported to apply for permit on line
16/05/2022		not a DC resident - wants to use Sherborne HRC with a permit - email sent to advise not eligible and signposted to Somerset County Council with links to website included
16/05/2022		no email address - spoke to customer who created one and asked for a phone call back tomorrow for assistance in applying
18/05/2022	Complaint	customer stated no email address but does have one- just reluctant to pass on details to DC until reason explained - not happy about 6 visits, only has a small two seater smart car as alternative vehicle with very limited carrying space.
23/05/2022	Complaint	believes the new system is unfair and prejudiced against van owners. Also 12 visits a year is not sufficient -The van is the only family vehicle and the new rules encourages fly-tipping determined to get the system changed, and will get in touch with MP if this is necessary
27/05/2022		helping vulnerable neighbour who hoards to clear property - cardboard, plastic, paper waste but four room full and 6 visits will not be enough. Can we help at all.
30/05/2022		no email address - customer does not use technology and does not have access to any devices - have used my DC one as a temp workaround
01/06/2022		no email address - does have one but it is a business address - user confirmed this is household waste not commercial
01/06/2022		visited at weekend but permit did not show up - allowed ot off load can we check to ensure permit is on system - checked and advised technical issues and permit is valid
07/06/2022		The vaild from date of the 2 May 22 on the confirmation email is confusing. Asked IT to amend
09/06/2022	Formal Complaint	6 visits not sufficient. other vehicle is a mini which isn't suitable for garden waste, is being discriminated against
22/06/2022		6 visits not sufficient. even though they only had three on previous permit system

30/06/2022	Complaint	written letter - no reply - feels discriminated re choice of vehicle - van - had unlimited access before - large garden 180 foot is clearing home of clutter due to life changing health diagnosis, 12 visits will not be enough
01/07/2022		does not have an email - has no access to technology/smart phone - my works address used as a temporary measure
04/07/2022	Complaint	policy not thought through fully, should be on an individual basis as only has a van as family vehicle and will need more than 12 visit
14/07/2022		has two vehicles, both require permit, only one permit allowed, not fair, large trees under TPO which need to be kept well maintained as borders public highway. Can we increase number of visits? - permit extended to 12 visits.
21/07/2022		6 visits is not enough, large garden, on waiting list for green kerbside collection, second vehicle is a Mini and wife does not like garden waste in because of bugs/spiders etc. Could we not have a pay for permit to enable unlimited access?
26/07/2022	Complaint	discriminated against just because we happen to own pickup trucks, I along with many other owners don't run any form of business. If I owed a large estate car I can make as many visits per year as I like and could even attach a trailer, Please can the next review of the household waste sites redress this discrimination and allow privately registered pickup trucks to be used on the same basis as other cars.
27/07/2022		no email address - spoke to customer who does have one just reluctant to use and assisted in application
08/08/2022		has always used Shaftesbury HRC but now needs a permit and lives on the boarder and not a DC resident - now it's a 30 mile round trip to Salisbury - not fair.
08/08/2022		just moved to South Somerset but literally 2 miles from Sherborne, needs a permit for van but not able to get one - seems silly as no restriction for cars out of area
15/08/2022		6 visits not enough - after discussions agreed to increase to 12 visits
30/08/2022	Formal Complaint	myopic criteria, Why should I be penalised for the type of vehicle I choose to own? I pay my council tax, at a rather high rate I might add, and so effectively I am being penalised and effectively unable to use the service I am paying for. As such I feel this terribly unfair and frankly wrong for such permits to be imposed based on such simplistic criteria

01/09/2022		has no other vehicle at the address and dual cab is not sign written nor used for commercial use. Undertaking renovation which includes several hippo bags of garden green waste - brambles and ivy (in conjunction with EH - Steve March)
11/01/2022	Complaint	I now feel I am being victimised for my choice of vehicle by you. Not only by limiting my visits but also preventing me using my new trailer that I bought solely for trips to the recycling centre.
17/11/2022	Complaint	6 visits not enough - I clean up leaves from pavements and sand from sea - doing the councils job for them - if I used a trailer with my car I would have unlimited access - policy not fair.
28/12/2022	Formal Complaint	why the Council is judging me and pre-judging my behaviour and actions just because of the car I drive. I thought in this day and age that this is exactly NOT what we are supposed to be doing. We are constantly told that we cannot judge a book by its cover. We are constantly being told that we cannot assume people are stereotypes. Yet this is exactly what this Council policy is doing. And I am most upset that the Council is judging me and assuming that I am a rogue trader that is intent on abusing your facilities...just because of the car that I drive!
10/01/2023	Formal complaint	why am I being victimised for choice of vehicle, as victimisation is illegal in this country, cannot base policy on type of vehicle as this is discrimination. Wants to take this to our legal department wants this sorted out not happy to wait for formal scrutiny by elected members (formal complaint dated 11/01/2023 submitted)
05/02/2023	Complaint	Only qualifies for the 6 visit permit. Feels like I am being victimised for choice of vehicle. Not used for business. Has a second car but it's a mini so not big enough for tip runs, the car is also brand new so doesn't want to put waste in the car.