

Northampton Town Centre Environmental Policy

Consultation Results

February 2024

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) are looking to introduce a Northampton Town Centre Environmental Policy. This will help with certain environmental standards and set out the way that businesses handle their commercial waste.

To support the introduction of this policy, WNC ran a consultation for over 11 weeks from the end of November until mid-February. The consultation questions were designed to gather views on the following,

- Whether there is general support for the Policy
- Opinions on what the issues are with business waste
- Opinions on where the main issues occur within the Town Centre area
- Views on the proposal of timed slots for collections of business waste
- Views on the proposal of holding businesses to account for managing their waste
- The consultation also had some additional questions for businesses to ask their opinions and as to whether they have any concerns regarding the proposals

To support this consultation further and engage with as many businesses as possible within the proposed area, WNC also

- Sent a communication leaflet to every business (appendix A)
- Carried out a door-to-door engagement exercise to businesses supported by partners (this is still ongoing and to date we have met appx 300 businesses). The purpose of this is to engage with businesses to let them know about the Policy and to encourage them to complete the online consultation

The purpose of consulting was summarised as follows within the introduction to the survey,

‘Your views will help us gather public opinion, shape parts of the policy that are to do with waste from businesses in the town centre and help us to understand if there are any obstacles that businesses face in respect of their waste.

This will form part of a wider project of engagement with Northampton town centre businesses.’

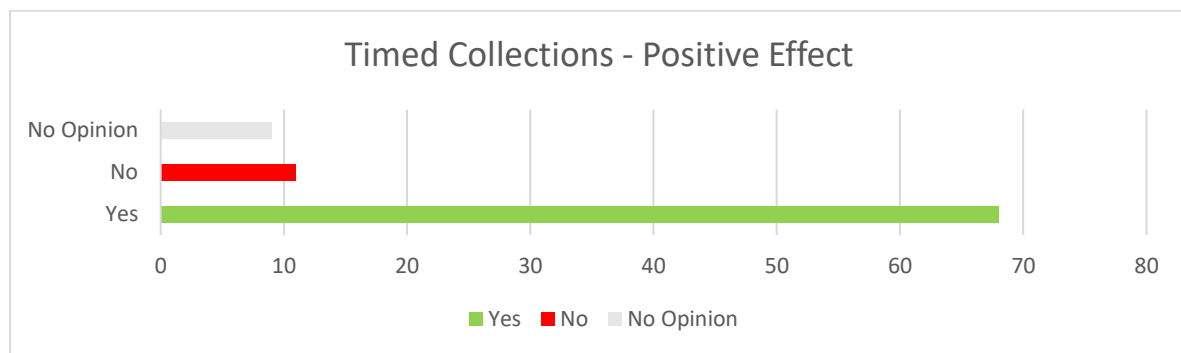
Consultation responses: There were a total of **106** online responses made up of **84** fully completed responses and **22** incomplete responses. Incomplete means that the respondent has worked through some of the survey and not reached the final point where they can submit. We have included the incomplete responses into our analysis where they have provided an answer.

Consultation Analysis

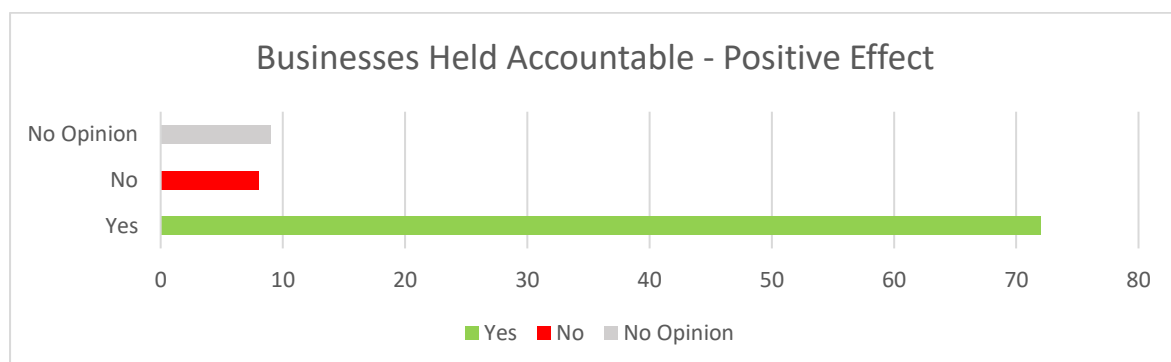
The 106 responses to the consultation can be seen as a good rate of response to the consultation. However, it is disappointing to note that of these 106 responses, only 7 were from businesses.

Whether there is general support for the Policy

Respondents were asked if they feel **restricting the times that businesses present waste** will have a positive effect on the town centre in respect of trade waste storage and collections. There were 87 responses to this question. 78% gave a positive answer, with only 10% giving a negative answer. For those that answered **No** either of these questions there was a further free text answer these responses can be seen later in this report.



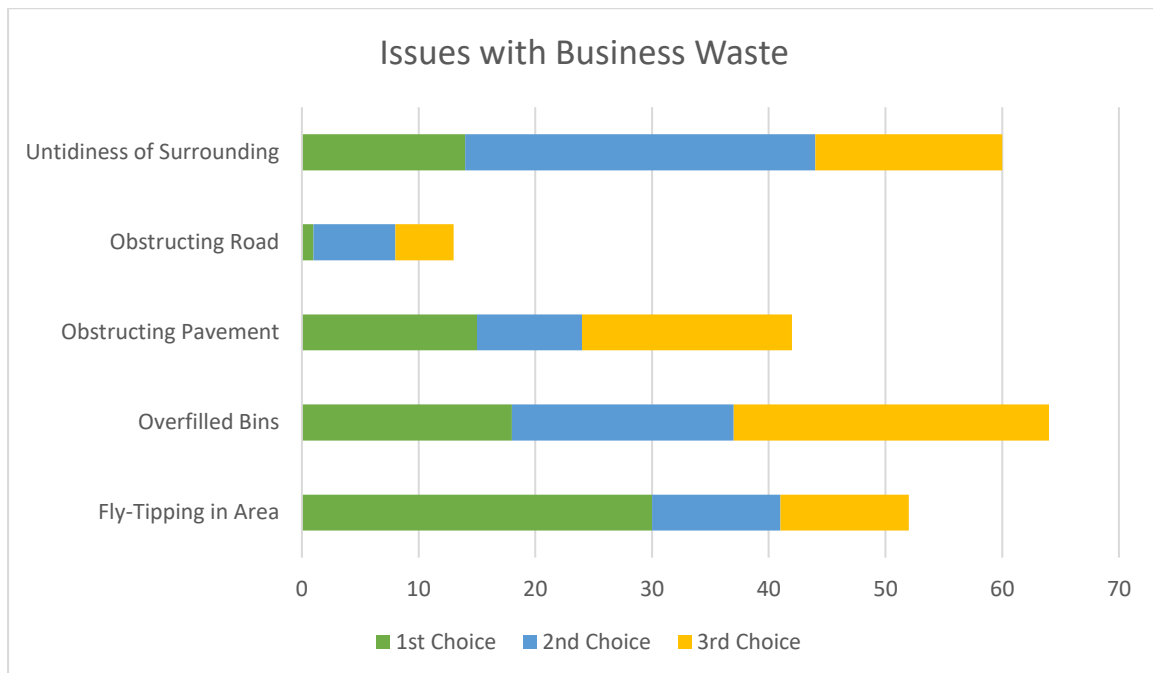
Respondents were asked if they feel **that businesses being held accountable if bins are left out at other times without good reason** will have a positive effect on the town centre in respect of trade waste storage and collections. There were 89 responses to this question. 80% gave a positive answer, with only 10% giving a negative answer.



The conclusion from these two questions is that the majority of respondents are supportive of the proposed Northampton Town Centre Environmental Policy.

Opinions on what the issues are with business waste

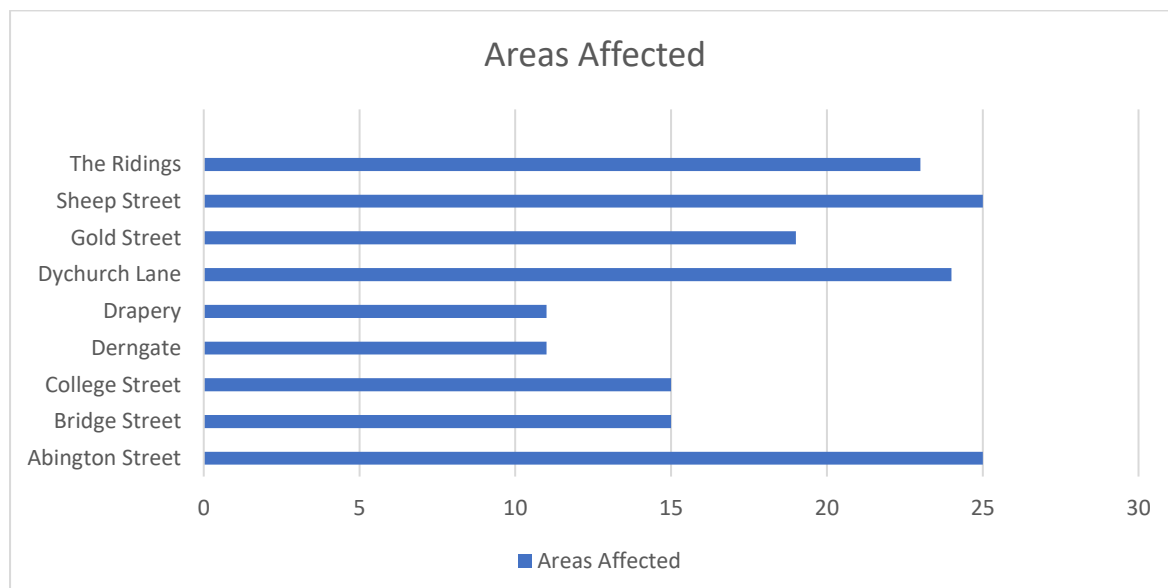
Respondents were asked what they believe the top 3 issues are in Northampton town centre associated with business waste. There were 77 respondents to this question.



There is no clear conclusion from these responses, however it is noted that **30 respondents** had fly-tipping in the area as the top issue, and **over a half of respondents** had Untidiness of Surrounding area, Obstructing Pavement, Overfilled Bins, or Fly-Tipping in Area as an issue.

Opinions on where the main issues occur within the Town Centre area

Respondents were asked where they feel the issues are occurring and were given the choice of all locations by road name within the proposed Town Centre area. We have included all areas chosen by at least 10 respondents in the chart below.



There are no clear conclusions from these responses. However, it is noted that these locations, and particularly the Top 5, represent potential hotspots that may need further focus when the Policy is rolled out. There is also a consideration as to whether WNC can support further in these locations with alternative solutions to businesses where there is a lack of storage space for waste bins.

Respondents by Category

Category	Count
A visitor to Northampton town centre from elsewhere in Northampton or any other area	29
A resident in Northampton town centre	25
An employee based in Northampton town centre	14
As a local business in Northampton	6
A local community or voluntary group	4
Work for WNC	1
Northampton resident	1
A member of Northants Litter Wombles	1
A litter picker from NN3 area	1
A Business Elsewhere in West Northants	1
Resident in Northampton	1
West Northants Council employee	1
A West Northamptonshire Councillor	1

Respondents That Answered 'Disagree' to Either of the Policy Questions Above

It's a very small time slot
This needs to be applied to Wellingborough Road and Kettering Road too. It's small independent shops that have less processes in place for handling their commercial waste.
Companies are not responsible for other people going through their bins or moving them
A lot of business do not have a yard to store the bin in. There are no defined areas for the storage of bins on the street. Maybe the council should look at converting some shops into recycling centres for business and bin storage areas with cctv to stop people abusing the. Most retail shops open at 9am and close at 5/6pm and most waste management companies collect before 8am. Therefore, they will either get fined every week for leaving the bin out over night or it will not be emptied.
It's not when waste is stored, it's how waste is stored.
Businesses will continue to fly tip unless there is some form of penalty involved
Business should be made to keep pavements litter free back in the old days out with their sweeping brushes. Have more pride!
The council make it hard enough as it is and rely on litter picking gros to tidy up the mess
Manpower would be needed to enforce the restrictions. Manpower is lacking for ANY enforcements
Each business is responsible for so many separate collection Bins that they have nowhere to put them other than on the streets
I think they will continue to do it as they don't care. Or as in our area it will encourage more illegal dumping as some don't have anywhere to actually store their business bins!
We need proper big bins on every street to discard waste bags. These should be empties at least 4 times a week at midnight instead of early morning.

The consultation also had some additional questions for businesses to ask their opinions and as to whether they have any concerns regarding the proposals.

The first question asked business respondents ***To what extent they agree or disagree that the timeslots from 6am to 9am and 4pm to 7pm are suitable times to leave their business waste out for collection.***

- 3 business agreed with the timeslots
- 3 businesses disagreed with the timeslots

The second question asked ***if they disagree with the timeslots being suitable what the reason is.***

We can't store waste as we have no space to do so and clinical waste can't be stored inside
I think a wider window in the morning i.e. 6am to 11am and a smaller window in the evening i.e. 4-6pm would be better and have less of an impact on busier early evening periods. It is more likely that there will be people available to deal with issues with uncollected bins/overflowing rubbish in the pre-midday period than post 6pm.
Earlier start might be more appropriate to avoid traffic. Collections used to start about 4:30 am

Summary and Conclusions

The consultation responses are generally supportive of the new Northampton Town Centre Environmental Policy. There are comments from respondents regarding the time slots and whether they need changing.

As a result of the consultation the project group have concluded to:

1. Proceed with the proposal to implement the Policy.
2. Incorporate an engage and educate period of at least three months during the Policy rollout to help businesses resolve any issues.
3. Review the policy after one year to assess if any adjustments are required.
4. As part of the review, consider additional areas that could potentially benefit from an extension of the Policy.