

POLICY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ABANDONED SHOPPING TROLLEYS

Purpose of Policy

- 1.1 To adopt a policy to manage abandoned shopping trolleys across North Ayrshire.

Background

- 2.1 The Council has an informal agreement in place with local supermarkets whereby the supermarkets will uplift any abandoned shopping trolley before 1100 hrs each day. Thereafter Streetscene Operatives will check the local area and uplift any further abandoned trolleys and remove them to storage. The cost of collecting, storing, disposing or returning abandoned shopping trolleys is £16. This charge has not been reviewed since 1998.

Legislation

- 3.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 99 and Schedule 4 provide the legal parameters around abandoned shopping trolleys.

Local Authorities can under EPA 1990 resolve to apply Schedule 4 in its area. This gives provision to:

- Seize and remove abandoned trolleys;
- Store abandoned trolleys for a period of 6 weeks;
- Serve notice on anyone who appears to be the owner, within 14 days of removing the trolley, informing them that the trolley will be disposed of if it is not claimed ;
- Sell or dispose of abandoned trolleys after the six week period has expired; and
- Make a charge on the retailer who appears to be the owner to an amount which covers the costs of removal, storage and disposal.

Environmental Benefits

- 4.1 The adoption of Schedule 4 of the EPA 1990 will help to minimise and control the number of abandoned shopping trolleys throughout the district. It will encourage retailers to manage and control their assets and work with the Council to do so.

Abandoned shopping trolleys are seen to have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the public realm, attract waste and litter, contribute to anti-social behaviour, can cause harm to wildlife and create flood hazards if left in watercourses.

Stakeholders

5.1 There are a number of stakeholders in relation to abandoned shopping trolleys prior to implementing or any future review of the policy the Council is required by statute to consult the following stakeholders:

- Retailers;
- Residents;
- Shopping Centre management; and
- Private land owners.

1.2 Prior to the Council approving the proposed policy the EPA 1990 requires the Council to consult with stakeholders. A six week consultation has taken place with local supermarkets and three responses were received. In addition a meeting took place with one of the main supermarkets to hear their views.

1.3 To inform all interested stakeholders a public notice will be placed to provide 3 months' notice of the policy being implemented.

Process

6.1 When an abandoned shopping trolley has been reported to or observed by the Council the following steps will apply:-

6.2 If the trolley is deemed to be in an area in which it might be a hazard the Council will seize it immediately and remove it to a storage facility;

6.3 The proposed Council policy is more generous than is legally required and allows the Supermarkets contractor to collect trolleys until 11am each day and return them to the store. If the store or agent has not collected the trolley by 11am the trolley shall be removed by the Council and taken to its storage facility;

6.4 The Council will tag the abandoned trolley identifying the time, date and location where the abandoned trolley was retrieved. The Council will notify the owner of the trolley that it has been abandoned.

6.5 The Council shall advise the trolley owner in writing of the removal of the trolley and its location within 14 days of having seized it;

6.6 The trolley owner should, upon payment of agreed fees collect the trolley within 6 weeks of it being seized; and

- 6.7 If after 6 weeks the owner has not paid the appropriate fees and collected the trolley the Council can dispose of the trolley as they see fit and charge the trolley owner for the storage and cost of disposal.

Removal of trolleys from waterways and difficult locations

- 7.1 Retrieving trolleys from watercourses and difficult to access areas can present significant health and safety risks to those involved. In most circumstances, but in particular where banks are steep or deep water, trolleys should be removed by properly trained personnel / contractors with the correct safety equipment. The Council will work with The Rivers Trust to clear trolleys in these circumstances.
- 7.2 Abandoned shopping trolleys on private land is out with the scope of this policy and will remain the responsibility of the landowner.

Implementation of the Policy

- 8.1 Prior to implementing this policy the Council has:

- Met and consulted with Supermarkets to discuss the problem;
- Contacted all supermarkets known to provide a trolley service within the Council boundary that may be affected by the introduction of the Abandoned Trolley Policy;
- Adopted Schedule 4 of the EPA 1990 on a date not less than three months from the date of Resolution;
- Published details of the policy in at least one local newspaper, indicating the general effect of the policy; and
- Make arrangements to review the policy at least every 3 years and monitor the number of trolleys to ascertain if adequate and proportionate steps are being taken to reduce the number of abandoned trolleys.

Fees and Charges

- 9.1 The proposed charge for removal, storage, disposal or return of shopping trolleys is £33 per trolley. These charges have been calculated as at July 2013 by Streetscene Management and represents the cost of providing the service.
- 9.2 Once established the charges will be reviewed annually in line with inflation in accordance with the Council's Charging Policy.

Co-operative working between Retailers and the Council

10.1 In order to assist the Council in minimising abandoned shopping trolleys retailers are expected to:

- Clearly label trolleys for ease of owner identification;
- Actively manage ways of minimising the number of trolleys abandoned;
- Provide the Council upon request maps of collection routes and schedules; and
- Retain records of all trolleys reported & collected and provide the Council with such upon request.

In order to assist retailers in minimising abandoned shopping trolleys the Council will:

- Support retailers in promoting good practice;
- Provide relevant information to retailers with regards trolley locations; and
- Encourage trolley containment schemes / practices.

July 2013