

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL
DATE: 4 SEPTEMBER 2008

FLY TIPPING AND THE ON-STREET CLEANSING OF WHEELED BINS

Purpose

Levels of fly tipping in the borough and the on-street cleansing of wheeled bins have been identified as issues that the scrutiny panel is concerned about.

The Panel considered fly tipping in detail at its meeting on 15 December 2004 and received a report entitled "Bulky waste collections and fly tipping".

Fly tipping

Until this year, Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) were used to measure the cleanliness of the street and local environment with specific reference to litter and detritus, graffiti, fly posting and enforcement actions relating to fly tipping. BVPI 199 has now been superseded by a number of indicators in the new National Indicator set. These are:

- NI 195A and B – litter and detritus
- NI 195C – graffiti
- NI 195D – fly posting
- NI 196 – fly tipping enforcement actions

Flycapture is a web-based, fly-tipping database for England and Wales, introduced to meet the requirements of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. It is managed by the Environment Agency on behalf of the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Flycapture is a strategic tool which can help authorities to improve intelligence on fly-tipping and focus resource on fly-tip hot spots. Walsall Council has been submitting monthly returns to Flycapture since April 2004.

The Authority's Flycapture returns for the financial years 2006/7 and 2007/8 are shown in figures 1 and 2. The overall number of incidents during 2006/07 (1499 incidents) and 2007/08 (1422 incidents) has remained more or less the same. It can be seen that the number of fly tips was increasing in 2006/7, but that the number of fly tips was on a downward trend in 2007/8. The month on month numbers indicate that the Council's policy of removing fly tipped waste promptly is having a positive effect.

Figures 3 and 4 show the trend in the size of waste fly tipped, using Flycapture's classification system. The percentages are broadly comparable, with the exception of the increase in number of small van loads rising from 34% in 2006/7 to 41% in 2007/8.

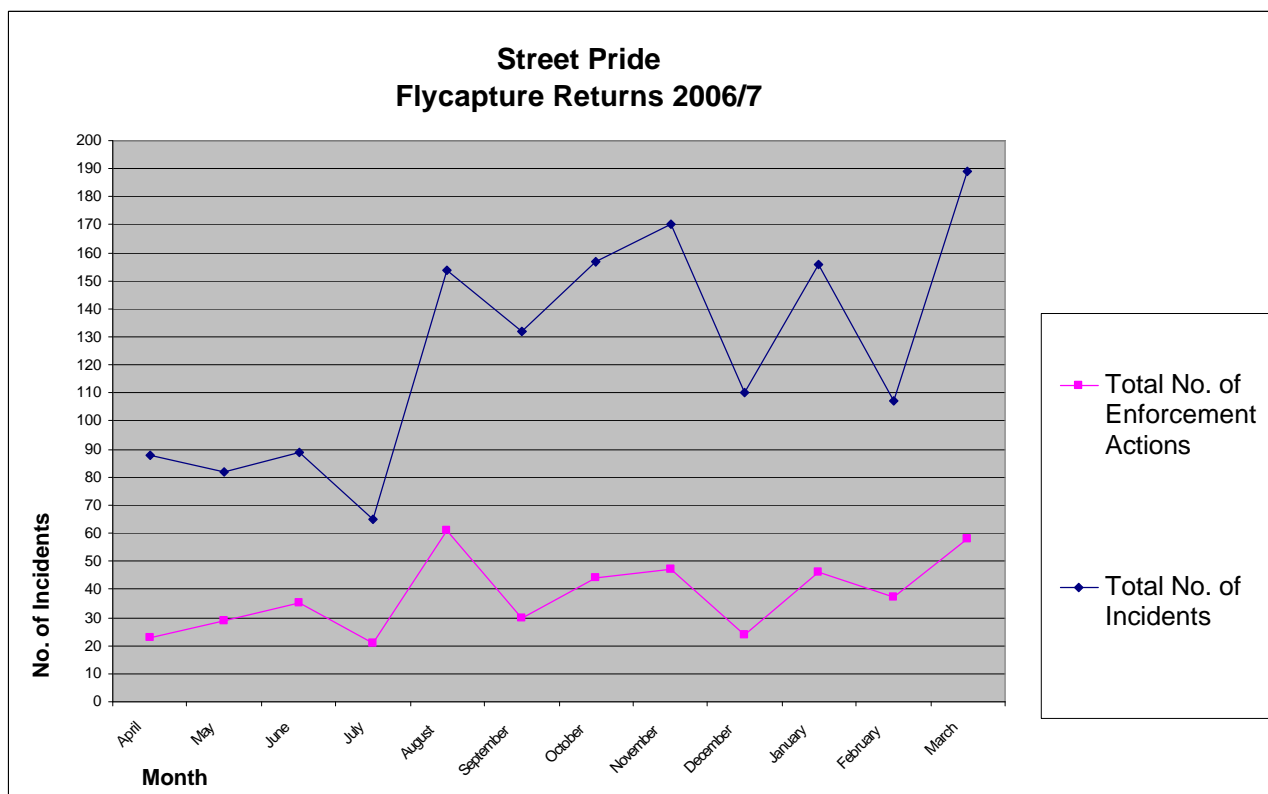


Figure 1

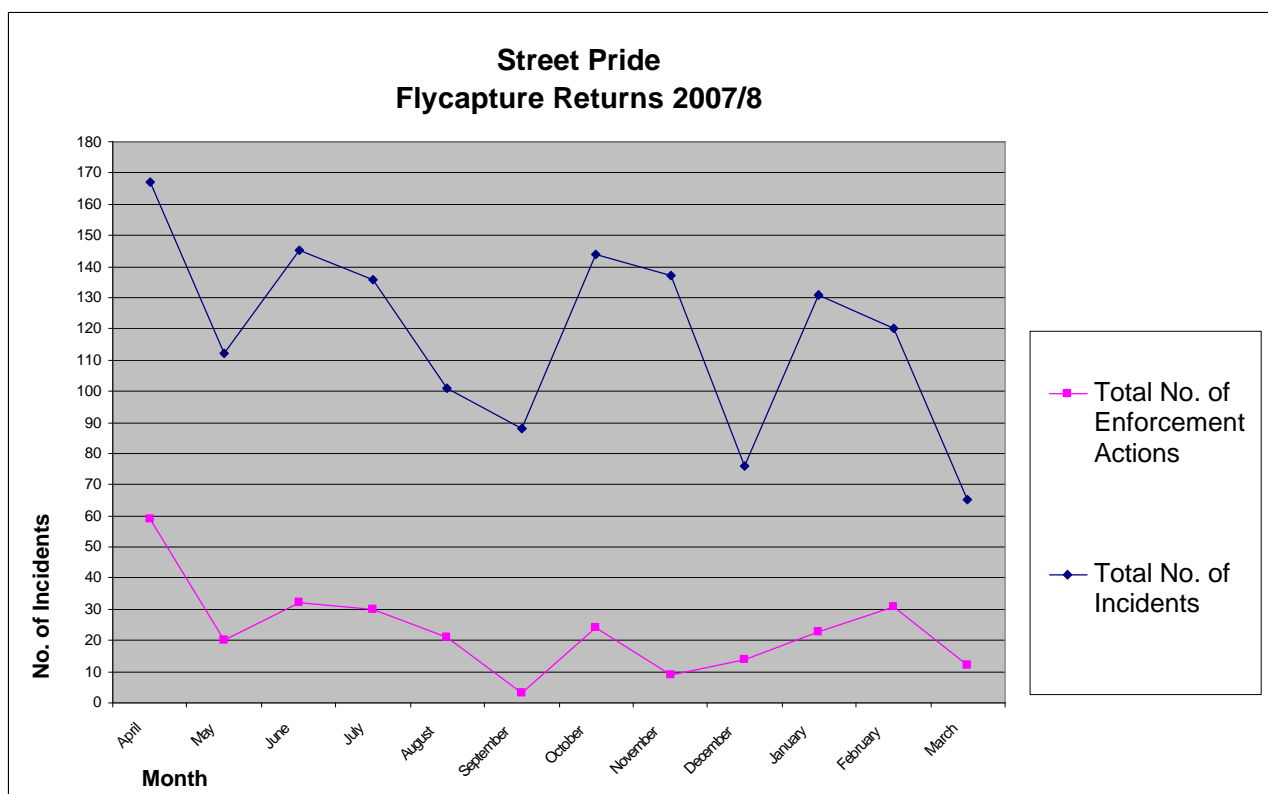


Figure 2

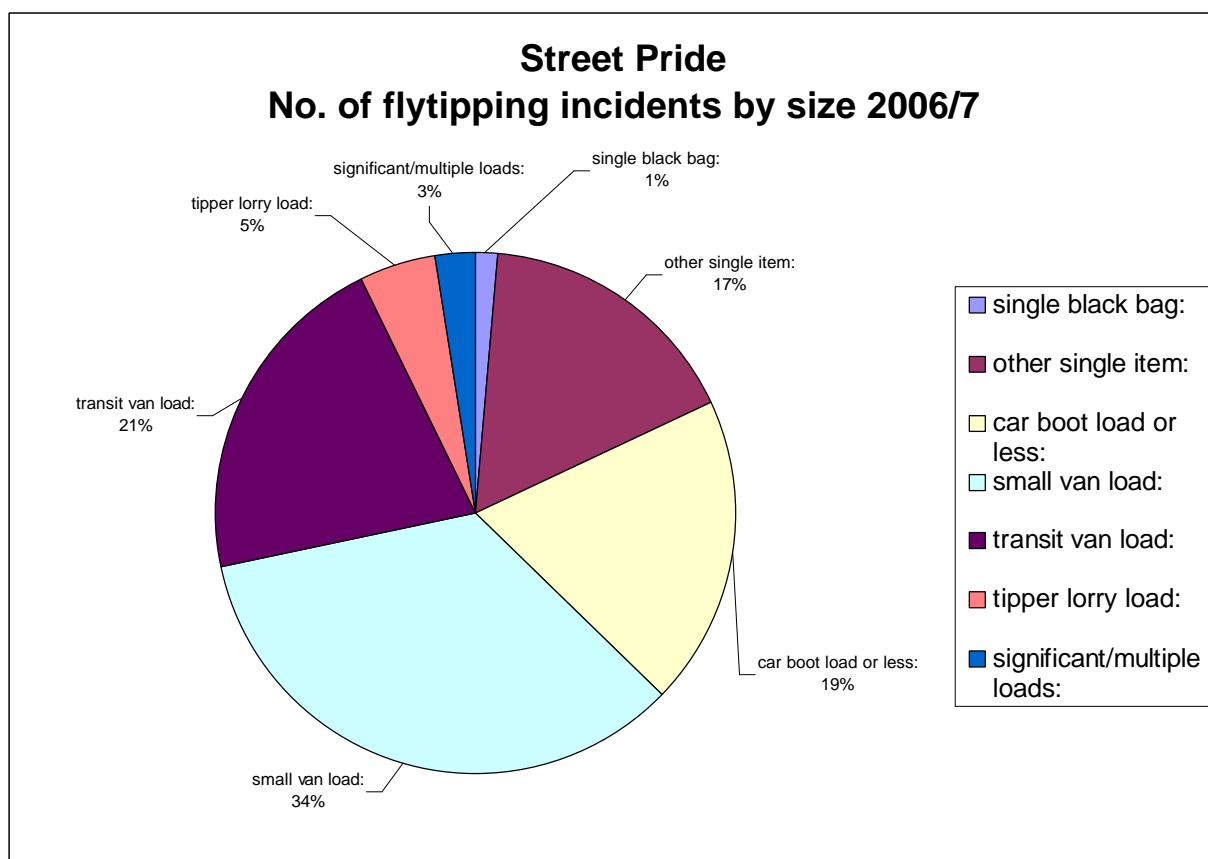


Figure 3

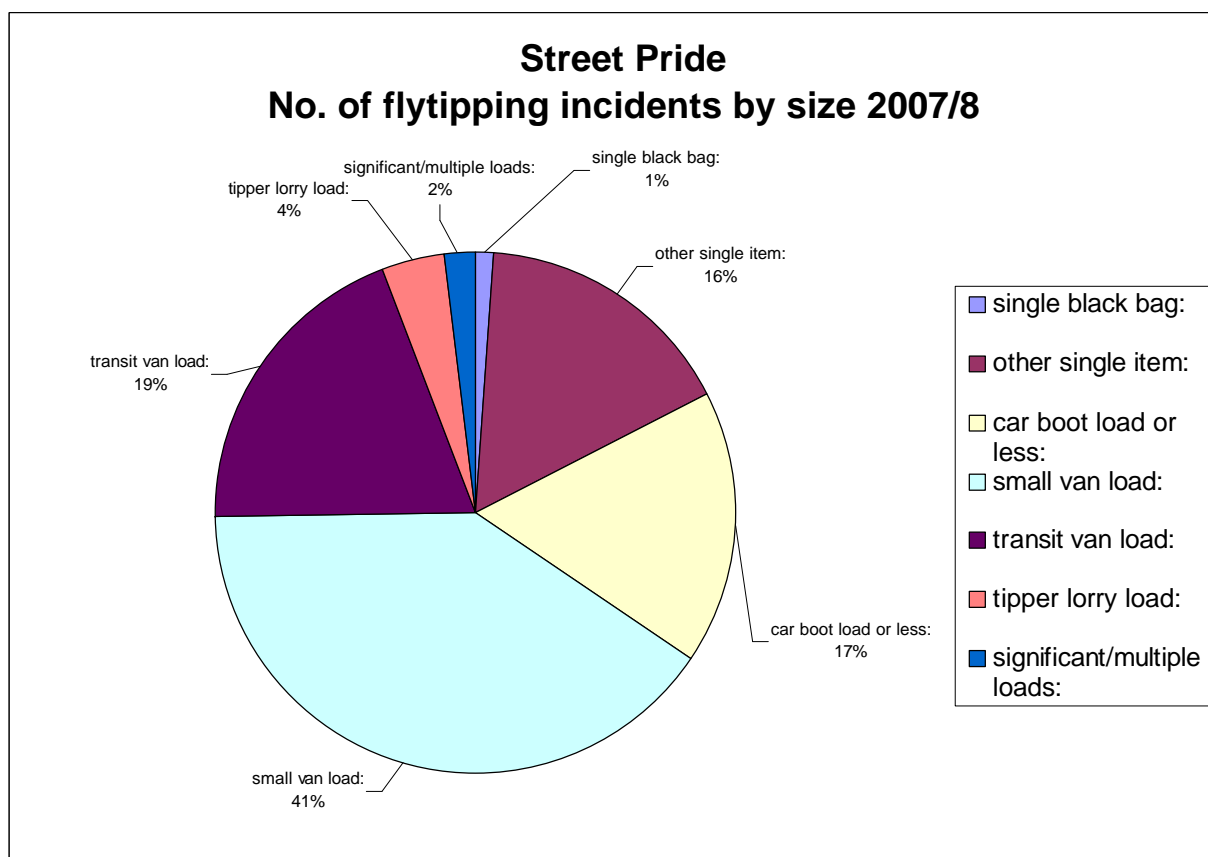


Figure 4

Year on year comparison shows that the same sites are being targeted as detailed in figures 5 and 6, which show the number of fly tips, by ward, in 2006/7 and 2007/8. Derelict sites, quiet highway lanes and large open spaces are routinely being used for this anti-social behaviour. There is more fly tipping in the west of the borough. Whilst there are incidences of fly tipping on the borough boundary between Walsall and Wolverhampton, there is no evidence to suggest that this is increasingly a problem. It is, however, possible to establish trends of regular tipping at certain hotspots in the borough including:

- Harrowby Road Moxley
- Cartbridge Lane, Rushall
- Shakespeare Crescent, Blakenall
- Bridle Lane, Streetly
- Slacky Lane, Goscote

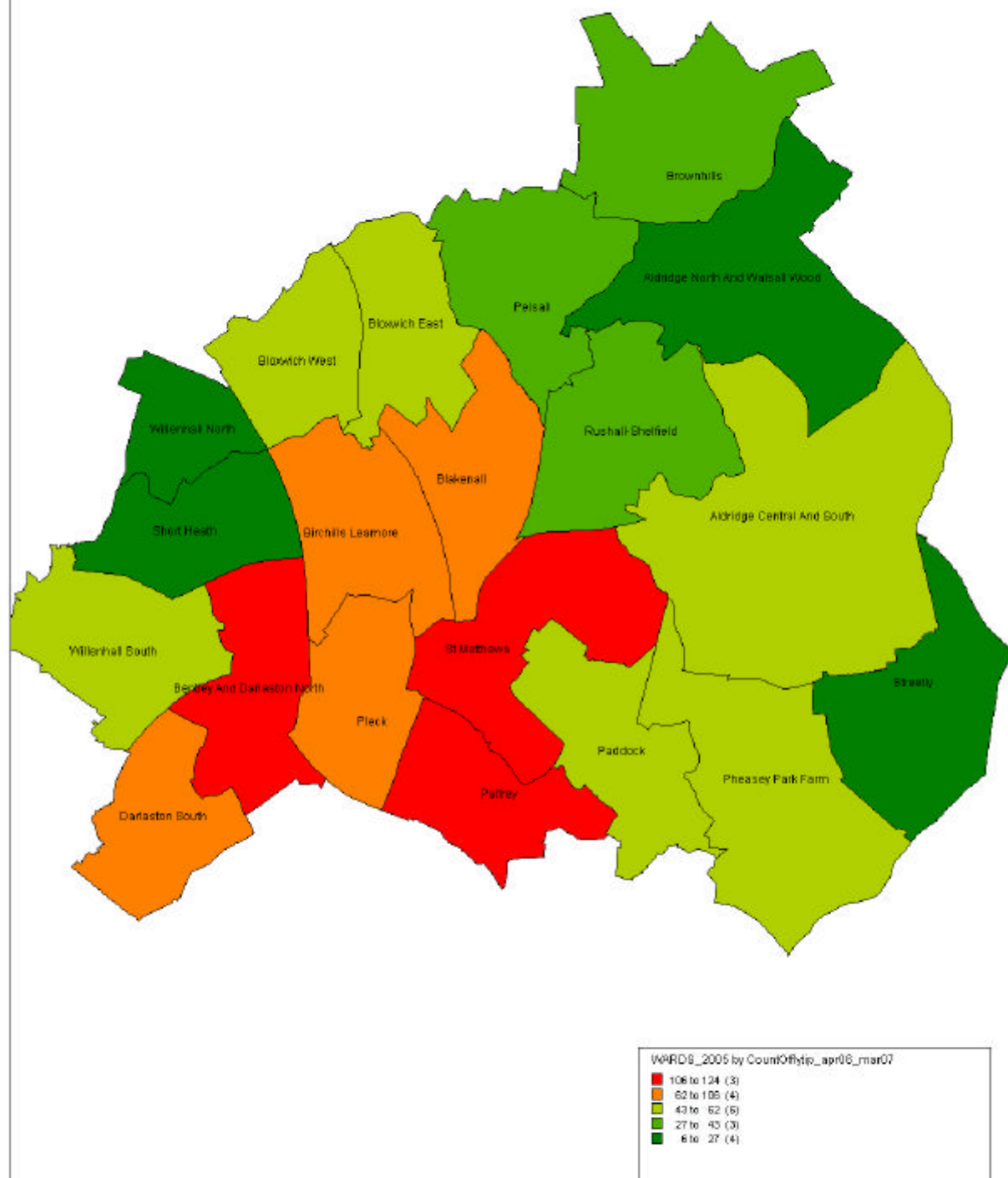
The difference to note between the hotspots is that some, such as Slacky Lane, have been used by residents to tip small amounts of household wastes for so many years that the sites have a level of notoriety. Other hotspots, such as Harrowby Road and Shakespeare Crescent which are undergoing demolition and regeneration works, tend to be targeted to tip large amounts of construction and commercial waste. One disposal invoice received in April 2008 for such sites was in the region of £5,000 – clearly involving significantly more costs than the disposal of small amounts of household wastes. In this respect the number of fly tips recorded does not reveal the whole picture.

As reported to the Panel in 2004, the introduction of a charge for the Bulk Collection Service in 2001 did not see a corresponding increase in fly tipping. The average number of bulk collections prior to introduction of a charge was 1500 per month. The average number of bulk collections is now constant at around 500 per month and has been since the charge was introduced.

The type of waste being deposited year on year has not changed but the volume of different waste types is changing over time, with a marked increase in fly tipping of commercial waste. Tonnage of individual fly tips is not currently recorded.

The land type the fly tipping is being deposited on also does not vary year on year, but highlights that 90% of fly tipping reported to the Council is found to be on land owned or maintained by the Council.

Fly Tipping Distribution April 2006 - March 2007



Street Pride

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Figure 5

Fly Tipping Distribution April 2007 - March 2008



WARDS_2005 by CountOfMippingapr07_mar08

100 to 135	(4)
81 to 100	(5)
42 to 61	(4)
29 to 42	(3)
10 to 29	(4)

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Figure 6

Wheeled Bin Cleaning

There appears to be no current legislative controls that could be applied to Wheeled Bin Cleaning businesses to effectively 'licence' their operation. The ability to clean out a wheeled bin would probably fall into the same category as cleaning your car. You usually carry this out on your drive or in the road outside of your house and the residue runs away into the nearest drain.

If the business uses a mild detergent to clean the bin out this can be a consideration for Severn Trent Water Company and the Environment Agency. Where the effluent is discharged into a storm drain only, then this can eventually feed out into a water course and the detergent can cause pollution. Where the effluent is discharged into a combined storm/foul drain then this is eventually transported to a sewage works where it is treated and no harm is done.

If the business uses a caustic material to clean out the bins the effluent discharged could have an adverse effect at the sewage treatment works and could be of concern to the sewage undertaker. In all cases of improper discharge into the drains both Severn Trent and the Environment Agency can take action.

If, in the process of cleaning the bin, the effluent is not discharged down the drain but contains material that is deposited on the highway, this can be classed as 'litter' under the Environmental Protection Act and our officers can take any appropriate action.

Residents can report any incidents of fly tipping or littering by following our Service Standards and reporting these through the contact centre in the usual way.

Initial investigations conclude that selling space on wheeled bins for advertising would be difficult to implement and manage for a number of reasons including:

- Who owns the bin? In cases where residents have paid for a replacement bin, they may, quite naturally, refuse to have an advertisement placed upon it.
- How often the bin is presented for collection. Households who recycle and compost may only present their green bins on a fortnightly basis.
- Where bins are stored. Where possible, most households tend to store bins out of sight, severely reducing advertising opportunities.
- How bins are presented for collection. Depending upon how the bin is positioned, any advertisement may not be visible from the road.
- Who would be responsible for replacing damaged adverts or putting new adverts on replacement bins?

By the end of the current calendar year, the Council will have 29 new refuse vehicles with the ability to display promotional displays. It may be more practical for consideration to be given to piloting the sale of advertising space on the vehicles, rather than on bins.

Recommendation

The Panel is recommended to note the contents of this briefing note.

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