



**Decision of Cabinet Member for  
Environment, Infrastructure and  
Climate Action**

8 July 2022

**Report from the Strategic Director  
of Regeneration & Environment**

**Consultation on future waste collections and street  
cleansing services**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-Key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 16 August 2021, as part of the Redefining Local Services report, Cabinet approved inviting tenders for the Integrated Street Cleansing, Waste Collections and Winter Maintenance Services Contract ("Integrated Contract"), with a contract start date due on 1 April 2023.
- 1.2 The Integrated Contract procurement has followed the Competitive Dialogue Procedure and following dialogue with bidders as part of the Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions stage, the council has now identified its preferred specification for the services ("Preferred Service").
- 1.3 The Preferred Service includes the following key service changes that would directly impact the existing level of service received by residents:

- A shift from weekly, co-mingled (single stream) dry recycling collections to weekly alternate twin stream dry-recycling collections (containers one week and a separate sack for Fibre [mixed paper/card] the next).
  - A switch from a frequency-led to an intelligence-led approach to street cleansing
- 1.4 The Preferred Service can be delivered within contract budget with significant benefits to the climate emergency agenda and in accordance with the National Resource and Waste Strategy that provides the future direction of related services and which focusses on reducing waste and promoting recycling and the circular economy.
- 1.5 It is necessary to consult with the general public on the proposed changes while proposals are at a formative stage. This consultation will therefore need to be undertaken prior to issuing the Invitation to Submit Final Tender (“ISFT”) in early September. This will enable the Council to consider consultation responses and incorporate any changes, where appropriate, in the ISFT documentation. The consultation will inform an Equalities Impact Assessment that will be prepared to inform the final service and the contract award report.
- 1.6 The procurement timetable therefore allows for a 6 week consultation period which will run from 11<sup>th</sup> July until 21<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action agrees the proposals in this report for the ‘Future Recycling Collections and Street Cleansing Services Consultation’ and approves the proposed consultation process as set out in this report, in consultation with the Leader.

## **3.0 Context**

### **RLS Final Delivery Model**

- 3.1 In 2018, Brent adopted a deliberate strategy to synchronise the end dates for its outsourced environmental services so that they coincide for reconsideration at the same time. The Redefining Local Services (RLS) programme was subsequently initiated in May 2019 to develop and implement a commissioning strategy in time for new service arrangements to take effect from 1 April 2023.
- 3.2 The aim set by members for the RLS programme is to design and implement a better, more integrated and flexible local services delivery model that improves the look and feel of Brent’s public realm. The following RLS programme objectives were defined by Brent’s members following the launch of the programme in May 2019:
- Meet residents’ and businesses’ requirements for the services: fully engage with the community to understand their needs and aspirations
  - A clean, green environment: place clean streets, clean air, carbon reduction, quality green spaces, trees & biodiversity at the heart of the programme

- Help the local economy: create jobs for local people and opportunities for local businesses to deliver our services
- Be bold and innovative: explore all possible delivery options and seek out best practice and innovation from other providers, from the UK and abroad
- Provide the best value possible with available council resources, in the context of post-Covid financial pressures
- Ensure services are flexible and adaptable to change: build in control, flexibility and resilience to manage future change

3.3 In August 2021, following statutory Best Value Consultation, Cabinet agreed the final RLS Delivery Model, “specialist contracts with low to moderate levels of insourcing” and in February 2022, Cabinet agreed the final level of insourcing within the Delivery Model as “Specialist Contracts with Low Level Insourcing”, with the full highways reactive maintenance service continuing to be outsourced).

Table 1: Final RLS Delivery Model agreed by Cabinet in February 2022

<b>Specialist Contracts with Low Level insourcing</b>
<b><i>Specialist contracts</i></b>
• Integrated street cleansing, waste collections and winter maintenance
• Recyclates reprocessing
• Grounds maintenance
• Parking services
• Tree maintenance
• Street lighting
• Highways Services
<b><i>Insourcing (TUPE noted where applicable)</i></b>
• Education, Communication and Outreach function from waste contract (TUPE)
• Informal Parking Appeals (TUPE)
• Tree surveying, data, work orders (TUPE)
• Park wardens function (TUPE)
<b><i>Stronger client (new post)</i></b>
• 1 additional highways inspector

### **RLS Service Improvement Priorities**

3.4 A comprehensive review of existing environmental services provision was undertaken as part of the RLS programme in order to identify areas for service improvement. The Final RLS Delivery Model is aiming to achieve the following overarching objectives, informed by the outcomes of the RLS reviews:

- A neighbourhood approach to managing local issues to meet the needs of local areas
- A borough-wide approach to managing our assets and infrastructure to ensure investment is spent well

- A specialist contracts approach for outsourced services
  - Improved contract management and monitoring for contracted services
  - An intelligence-led approach to the deployment of resources
  - Integrated deployment of environmental enforcement services across public realm
  - Greater responsiveness to addressing issues and problems in the public realm
  - Better digital customer interface with real-time information and issue reporting
  - Additional council capacity for continuous service improvement and innovation
  - Focusing specialist officers where they can add the greatest value, with more triaging between generalist and specialist roles
  - Deliver improved Social Value outcomes via our Social and Ethical Procurement Policy, including: striving for carbon neutrality by 2030 and enhancing nature and biodiversity; the number of local jobs created (where appropriate for the contract), including focus on disadvantaged groups; and the number of SMEs and third sector organisations that benefit from the procurement exercises.
- 3.5 The Final RLS Delivery Model was estimated at a £3.2m additional annual cost above the 'as is' operating model and this has been budgeted for in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 3.6 £0.2M of this is to fund the additional pension costs for the 15 posts being insourced across RLS services, while £3M was earmarked for pressures on waste collection and disposal costs upon renewal of arrangements for these services when the current public realm contract ends in March 2023 (circa £1m for the extra residual waste cost that will fall on the council with the ending of the tonnage penalty Veolia are paying, tied to the current Public Realm contract, and circa £2m for the increase in recycling cost due to the significant change in the value of recyclates over the current contract term).
- 3.7 In addition to these financial pressures that have been accounted for already in the MTFS, there are significant new inflationary pressures which will impact the cost of new RLS contracts. These inflationary pressures on the Integrated Contract linked to the rising cost of fuel and labour alone are estimated at circa £1m. Furthermore, the appetite for risk in the market is at an extreme low in recent times which is informing our approach to all RLS contract procurements.
- 3.8 An engagement programme entitled 'Let's Talk Climate: Waste and Green Space' was undertaken in late 2021-early 2022 to gather the views of communities as part of the re-procurement process for the Integrated Contract, amongst other purposes. The resident feedback has informed considerations over the Preferred Service for the Integrated Contract. In particular, residents wanted:
- Better information and guidance about how to recycle and why it is important
  - More frequent bin and recycling collections and for the council to collect different kinds of items
  - Better recycling facilities for people living in flats
  - New item swap, donation and reuse programmes so people don't have to buy 'new'
  - Stronger enforcement against those who litter or dump rubbish on the streets
  - More bins on streets

- Better education and guidance to encourage people to take more responsibility for keeping the streets clean
- Improved street cleaning
- More community skips and places to take bulky waste for free
- A cheaper or free bulky waste collection service

#### **4.0 Preferred Service for the Integrated Contract to be issued for consultation**

##### **Waste and recycling collections**

- 4.1 Whilst Residual Waste would continue to be collected fortnightly and Food Waste weekly, the current weekly comingled (single stream) dry recycling collection would change to an Alternate Weekly Twin Stream Dry Recycling Service.
- 4.2 The proposed change to Twin Stream dry recycling is in line with the direction of a travel in the National Resources and Waste Strategy in respect of “Consistency in Recycling Collections”. Separating Fibre is the most sensible and advantageous service change the council can take to align itself with the inevitable changes that will be mandated over the coming years.
- 4.3 Moreover, Twin Stream is the only option that can bring the cost of the next contract in line with Council budgets without requiring significant cuts to be made to other R&E Directorate services.
- 4.4 This Alternate Weekly Twin Stream Dry Recycling Service would consist of:
- Stream 1 - Container Mix (Plastic bottles [all grades], Cans [Aluminium & steel], Aerosols, Pots/Tubs/Trays, Glass)
  - Stream 2 - Fibre (Mixed Paper, Cardboard, News & Pamphlets)
- 4.5 One week residents would put out containers and the alternate week they would put out the fibre sack. Containerisation would be a wheeled bin for Container Mix and a reusable 75l plastic sack for Fibre. Assisted collections would continue for residents who have difficulties in putting out their waste and recycling.
- 4.6 The Alternate Weekly Twin Stream service would cover all Street Level Households (SLHs), Communal Households that are incorporated into the SLH rounds (where there is space to introduce separate containers so up to 1100 Litres for Stream 1 and Up to 360 Litres for Stream 2) and the North Circular Road Households.
- 4.7 For maximum efficiency, all Communal Households that are serviced on the separate Communal rounds and Other Customers would remain as a Single Stream Dry Recycling Collection.
- 4.8 It is anticipated that this change would be implemented in September 2023.
- 4.9 The benefits of switching to Alternate Weekly Twin Stream include:
- Residents will still receive a weekly recycling collection albeit different streams

- No requirement for significant round changes meaning that the majority of residents will not experience any day changes to their collections
- Existing crews are familiar with the rounds and the collection methodology
- Shorter lead time to introduction of the service change compared to fortnightly twin stream collections
- Use of existing fleet to minimise new vehicle purchase lead-time delays
- Improvement in the quality of recycled material due to lower contamination, with greater income generated from the material
- An increase in the recycling rate and the diversion of waste from the residual stream through a refresh of the service would result in an increase in the diversion of food waste, with reduced waste disposal costs

4.10 Twin Stream will therefore also make a significant contribution to the Council's Climate Emergency commitments.

### **An intelligence-led approach to street cleansing**

4.11 The switch from a frequency-led to an intelligence-led approach to street cleansing was always intended as a key service improvement in the Authority to Tender report (16 August 2021). The Preferred Service will include new dedicated rapid response teams in each Brent Connect Area which the council will be able to task directly to address any ad hoc issues arising.

4.12 Officers are in ongoing discussion with bidders in reviewing locations in the borough where resources are most needed in order to determine the most efficient allocation of staff under the new regime.

4.13 Data management through will also be improved within the new contract with a new dedicated Digital Manager post sitting with the contractor and a live dashboard shared with the Council's client team which we will jointly monitor on a daily basis and which the council will analyse for trends to determine locations which require changing levels of resource. The new regime will therefore be flexible meaning that resources can be reallocated where required across the borough.

4.14 Joint regular inspections on NI 195 standards between contractor and client staff will continue in line with the current contract.

### **Small items collection services**

4.15 A new Small Items Collection Service would be introduced. The service would include:

- Textiles
- Small WEEE Collections
- Households Batteries Collections
- Coffee Pod Collections
- Paint Collections

## **Other operational savings**

- 4.16 There are a range of other operational changes, including a shift of some core items to variable items, which are not expected to result in a difference in the service residents are currently receiving.

## **New client side arrangements**

- 4.17 As part of the Final RLS Delivery Model, the Education, Communication and Outreach (ECO) team (6 staff) will TUPE transfer to the Council on 1 April 2023. This will give the Council direct responsibility for communication, education and outreach to help address our considerable waste, climate emergency and circular economy objectives and challenges and help manage the risk that will in future sit with the council rather than the contractor in respect of waste diversion and maximising recycling.
- 4.18 The team will be integrated into a new host service which will oversee performance of the Integrated Contract and enable a more integrated and coordinated education and enforcement function across the public realm. It will also enable a more strategic and holistic approach to stakeholder management and community engagement.

## **5.0 Future Recycling Collections and Street Cleansing Services consultation proposals**

- 5.1 As stated in the Introduction, the maximum period for general consultation that the Integrated Contract procurement timetable allows is a six week period, starting 11 July running to 19 August 2022. Extensive and pro-active community outreach will take place during the consultation.
- 5.2 We will also make reference to the Let's Talk Climate consultation feedback (see para 3.8 above).
- 5.3 The **Aim** of the consultation is to provide clear information to residents in Brent on the proposed service changes and the reasons why the Council believes this is the best option for the Borough.
- 5.4 The effectiveness of the consultation will be assessed through the numbers of:
- Responses to the consultation survey
  - Click throughs to the consultation from digital adverts targeting people in other languages
  - People engaged with on social media, through the website, and through online advertising to raise awareness of the proposed service changes.

## **Audiences**

- 5.5 We know that changes to local refuse collections affects everyone in the borough, but there are some groups which it will have a larger impact on:
- Residents with mobility issues or that need to be cared for
  - Residents that live in blocks of flats or that live in dwellings with less space

- 5.6 There are also a number of groups that are seldom heard as they might be less engaged with the council or have language barriers:
- Black and Asian communities
  - Our seven community language groups: Gujarati, Urdu, Arabic, Hindi, Portuguese, Romanian, Somali

5.7 Other target audiences:

- Ward councillors
- Resident and community interest groups
- Businesses and other organisations
- Media – Local, Regional, Blog & Trade
- Critical voices on social media
- Brent Council colleagues

### **Format and methods**

- 5.8 The consultation will go live on the Citizens' Lab Portal on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July. This will present information on the council's Preferred Service (outlined in Section 4 of this report) together with information on alternative options that have been assessed but are not favoured (outlined in Section 6 of this report).
- 5.9 We will do blanket communications from standard channels utilising our own website, Brent magazine, social media platforms, local media contacts, e-newsletter.
- 5.10 In addition, road shows and 'Vox Pops' will take place in each Brent Connect area led by the Council's Neighbourhood Managers, amongst other officers.
- 5.11 All residents that currently have help with their collections will be contacted directly with a link to the consultation website. We will reach out to the Disability Forum and other known disability groups.
- 5.12 The consultation will be available to complete in our seven community languages. We will point to these with translated assets, saying 'Have your say on bin collections, find out more: [abc.brent.gov.uk](http://abc.brent.gov.uk)'. These will be shared via known community networks.
- 5.13 There are a number of engagement activities taking place across the borough, which will be a way of directly engaging with residents, including seldom heard groups. We will support these events with materials, engaging with community groups and advertising online.
- 5.14 We will use a consistent form of words which everyone can use to talk about the proposed changes and the options available.
- 5.15 We will create easy to understand graphics that are predominantly visual of the new proposed changes for use at engagement events and on digital channels. This will include short video explainers for social media.
- 5.16 These will be shared directly through community groups and at engagement events. These should be visual enough that someone who doesn't speak English will understand changes are coming and what the changes will mean.



5.17 We will draw on existing networks and connections to communities within the council.

### **Draft consultation material**

#### Introduction

5.18 The information we will be sharing during the consultation is set out below in draft and will be refined further prior to launch:

- The contract we have to pick up your waste and recycling and to keep streets clean is coming to an end.
- We are in a procurement process with companies bidding for the new contract and we have now identified our 'preferred service' for future delivery of the services.
- We want to take this opportunity to make some changes to the service you have received for the past few years. There are a few reasons for this:
  1. The government is likely to change the way it asks us to provide recycling services over the next few years, to align with changes to national policy contained in the Environment Act 2021.
  2. We're working together with local people to make Brent a carbon neutral borough by 2030. We know lots of you want to do your bit to live more sustainably and through the Let's Talk Climate conversation, you told us that we could help by making it easier to do the right thing and recycle – including making it easier for you to know what can and can't be recycled.
  3. The council's budgets have been stretched by the pandemic, rising prices, a growing population and a reduction in the funding we get from the government. We need to save money and so have to think differently about how these services are delivered in the future.
- This consultation asks for your views on the changes we are proposing.
- The changes we think are needed (our 'Preferred Service') are as follows:

#### Changes to collections

- Introducing alternating weekly recycling collections for two different types of recyclable material. This means that 'containers' (e.g. tin cans, pots and glass) will be collected one week in your blue-topped bin, and 'fibre' (e.g. mixed paper, card and newspapers) will be collected the next week in new, separate reusable sacks that we'll provide to residents. So you will still have weekly collections.
- The proposed changes to recycling collections will affect all street level households – those who currently put their recycling in a blue-topped bin that is collected at the kerbside – and some communal households (flats) where there is space to provide a separate bin for fibre. All other flats and households along the North Circular Road will not be affected.

- Other London boroughs have tried this and found that people recycle more – this is better for the planet and on balance would likely save the council money because it's costly to dispose of general waste and we can sell recycling to providers.
- With this option, general waste would continue to be collected fortnightly and food waste weekly – remaining as they are now.

#### Additional materials

- In addition, we will be introducing a new separate Small Items Collection Service which will enable you to book a slot for free to have the following items collected for recycling:
  - Textiles
  - Small electrical items (WEEE)
  - Batteries
  - Coffee Pod
  - Paint

#### Changes to the support you'll get to recycle

- We're bringing in-house a team which will be dedicated to recycling education and helping people to understand how to do their bit for the environment.

#### Changes to street cleansing

- At the moment, streets are cleaned on a rota basis, regardless of whether they need to be cleaned or not. We're proposing switching to an intelligence-led approach to cleaning Brent's streets. Here's how it would work:
  - A rapid response team will be based in each Brent Connect area and they will plan their cleaning schedule around reports from the Council's Neighbourhood Managers, Environmental Enforcement team, councillors and residents who are already used to reporting issues via the Love Clean Streets app. The idea is to tailor street cleaning around each neighbourhood.
  - This would be a trial at first and any changes would come into force properly on or after 1 July 2023.
- We think this is good value for money. The market conditions for these services has changed dramatically since 2014 when we let the contract last.

#### Background:

- In 2021, we asked you about your priorities for neighbourhood services, because a few other contracts are coming to an end around the same time. You told us that you would be happy to continue outsourcing (paying a provider) for specialist services and to insource where it made most sense and when we could afford it. You also told us your objectives for services.
- Earlier this year, we ran a Let's Talk Climate; Waste and Green Space Edition engagement. You told us you wanted us to make it easier for you to recycle, including making it easier to know what can and can't be recycled.

#### What if I have assisted collections?

- Assisted collections will not stop and the contractor will continue to help those that need it with their waste.

Other options the council considered but does not favour:

- Introducing a **Fortnightly Twin Stream dry recycling collection** - this would cost the council an estimated additional £0.6M each year compared to the Preferred Service and would mean you can only recycle every fortnight, which means you will need to store more materials for longer.
- Introducing a **Weekly Twin Stream dry recycling collection** – whilst all materials would be collected weekly, this would cost the council an estimated additional £1.4M each year compared to the Preferred Service, which the council could not afford without making significant savings to other important council services.
- Introducing a **Fortnightly Single Stream (comingled) dry recycling collection** – this would cost the council an additional £1.8M each year compared to the Preferred Service and would mean you can only recycle every fortnight. Less material will be recycled with more waste disposed, which is worse for the planet.
- **Maintaining the existing service** in the current Public Realm contract – this would cost the council an estimated additional £3.5M each year compared to the Preferred Service and we cannot afford this without making significant cuts to other council services. This is also the worst option for the environment with less material recycled and more waste.
- Moving from a two weekly to a **three weekly residual waste collection** – this was considered as a potential saving option, however, it was not fully costed as it is not considered to be viable for an inner London Borough such as Brent due to the density of our housing and concerns over space for storing waste over that period and the potential negative impact on street cleanliness. No other London boroughs have or are planning to have a three weekly residual waste collection.

5.19 The Draft consultation questions are as follows:

- Do you agree with the council's Preferred Service for recycling collections?
- Do you agree with the council's Preferred Service for street cleansing?
- Is there an alternative option that you favour? Please specify
- Do you have any other suggestions to make on how your waste and recycling is collected?
- Do you have any other suggestions to make in relation to how Brent's streets are kept clean?
- Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

## 6.0 Alternative Options Considered

6.1 The council's Preferred Service will be presented together with information on alternatives that have been assessed but are not favoured. The alternatives options are:

- Maintaining the existing service in the current Public Realm contract
- Introducing a Fortnightly Single Stream (comingled) dry recycling collection

- Introducing a Fortnightly Twin Stream dry recycling collection
- Introducing a Weekly Twin Stream dry recycling collection
- Moving from a two weekly to a three weekly residual waste collection

6.2 The reasons for discarding the above-mentioned alternative proposals are set out in paragraph 5.18 of this report.

## **7.0 Financial Implications**

7.1 The costs of the consultation proposals will be met from existing council budgets.

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

8.1 Where consultation is carried out it must comply with the following ‘Gunning’ Principles, *which were initially cited in the High Court case of R v Brent LBC ex parte Gunning (1985) and were subsequently approved by the Supreme Court in the case of Moseley v Haringey LBC [2014]:*

- Consultation must be undertaken at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage
- Sufficient reasons for any proposal must be provided in order to allow proper and intelligent consideration and response
- Adequate time must be given for consideration and response
- The decision maker must give conscientious consideration to the responses.

8.2 The above principles apply to the proposed general public engagement set out in this report.

8.3 Following the Supreme Court case of *Moseley v Haringey LBC [2014]*, there are certain circumstances where it is prudent for a public authority to set out, during a consultation process on a preferred proposal/option, what alternative proposals were considered and discarded and the reasons for rejecting such alternative proposals.

8.4 The table in paragraph 13 of Part 3 of the Council’s Constitution states that the Lead individual Cabinet Member has authority to approve consultation arrangements in consultation with the Leader.

8.5 There are no other significant legal implications at this stage other than set out in the Equality Implications section and the main body of this report.

## **9.0 Equality Implications**

9.1 We will begin development of an equality impact assessment (“EIA”) for the Integrated Street Cleansing & Waste Contract once the Preferred Service has been agreed and

this will be completed in time to inform the contract award report scheduled for December/January 2022.

- 9.2 The proposed consultation with the public will assist in carrying out this EIA and identifying whether there are adverse impacts and what such impacts are. The EIA will identify if there are any adverse impacts on those with protected characteristics from the proposals and if there are, to decide what acts (if any) should be carried out to mitigate any identified adverse impacts on equalities arising from the proposal(s) in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

#### **10.0 Any Other Implications (HR, Property, Environmental Sustainability - where necessary)**

- 10.1 A green and clean environment is a key priority for the RLS programme and every opportunity is being explored to ensure that future services and depot arrangements are aligned to our commitments to tackle the climate emergency, air pollution, waste and to enhance green spaces and biodiversity.

#### **11.0 Proposed Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

- 11.1 Information will be sent in the All Member Bulletin on 1<sup>st</sup> July providing members with information on the consultation and how they can promote this in their wards.
- 11.2 The proposals for the consultation process are included in section 5 of this report.

**Report sign off:**

**ALAN LUNT**

Strategic Director Regeneration & Environment