



One Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee

5 December 2012

Report from Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected:
All

Waste and Street Cleansing Review – Waste Collection Implementation

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This paper provides a progress update with respect to the One Council and street cleansing services that were changed as part of that project.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the contents of this report are noted.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Waste and Recycling

In line with the council's objective to reach a 60% recycling rate, officers are now implementing a programme of work to further increase the amount of waste that is diverted from landfill.

Recent initiatives include:

- The provision of caddy liners to all properties that currently receive a separate food waste collection.
- The removal of refuse bins from households that were deemed to have had over-capacity.
- The separation for recycling of waste dumped in town centres.
- The receipt of grant funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government for the provision of a weekly collection of food waste from over 300 blocks of flats in Brent.
- A review of the provision and location of on-street recycling containers.

- Improved arrangements - and a revised process - for engaging with householders to reduce levels of contamination and side waste.
- New guidance for landlords on how they must ensure their tenants engage properly with the council's waste collection requirements.
- The development of a differential charging policy for waste collection containers that further promotes the use of recycling containers over those used for refuse.
- Work with Veolia and WLWA to capture items collected through the bulky waste service for re-use.
- Competitions to incentivise recycling participation.
- New arrangements for schools recycling

At October, the 2012/13 average stood at 45%, a 13 percentage point increase on the same period in 2011/12.

3.2 Street Cleansing

As part of the review, the street cleansing contract cost was reduced by £2m in October 2011. Cleansing arrangements are now much reduced.

In order to maintain street cleanliness to a decent standard, monitoring is now more focused. Officers now pay particular attention to streets and areas in their wards that are known problem areas. This means they dedicate more of their time to these specific locations.

For their part, Veolia have introduced bespoke cleansing arrangements in very difficult areas such as the residential streets around Harlesden town centre. Here, resource has been reallocated so some streets get an additional litter pick on a second day of the week.

This is a more intelligent application of resource and is an approach we would hope to adopt in the next contract. This helps these streets hold up through the weekend when there is no cleaning.

As indicated, Veolia have now introduced a recycling pick-up of waste dumped in town centres. This ensures a second additional early morning clearance in these areas.

Also, Recycling and Waste and Community Engagement are considering options for an anti-litter campaign that will, for the first time, deliver a concerted communications campaign to raise awareness of littering in Brent.

3.3 Fly-tips

There has been an increase in reported fly-tipping this year. The three main contributing factors are likely to be:

The council's new household waste collection arrangements that restrict the volume of waste that is collected. This has led to residents dumping excess/uncollected waste on footpaths and near litter bins in some areas. As described, R&W officers and Veolia combat this by sharing information and through direct engagement with residents in problem streets.

Reduced frequency of street cleansing. Small fly-tips are cleared by the regular sweeping operation. A less frequent sweep means items are

left for longer and are more likely to be reported.

Increased commercial waste disposal charges. This has led to dumping by unscrupulous traders who wish to avoid these charges. Commercial waste disposal costs rise each year; in difficult economic times they can be particularly burdensome, especially for small and medium sized businesses. Unfortunately, they are all too easily avoided by anyone prepared to dump waste in public places.

3.4 Response

To help remedy this, Recycling and Waste is to change its structure. A new team is to be created within the service which will combine graffiti work and waste enforcement. It will be called Environmental Crime Prevention and will have a specific remit to tackle these issues.

Indeed, a priority for us this year is to create a refreshed focus on waste enforcement, dealing particularly with business waste and fly-tips. This will not only improve cleanliness in some of the worst areas but also drive down the cost of waste disposal.

Despite the reduction in resource last October, cleansing scores have held up. An average of only 11% of streets were deemed to be below an acceptable standard in the first two independent surveys for this year.

4.0 Financial Implications

The level of efficiency savings was provided in the full report to committee in September 2011

5.0 Legal Implications

None arising from this report

6.0 Diversity Implications

None arising from this report

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

None arising from this report

Contact officers

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