

# RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 FEBRUARY 2020

## REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR (OPERATIONAL SERVICES)

### A.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICE

(Report prepared by Jonathan Hamlet)

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

Overview of the roll out and service implementation of the new waste and recycling service.

#### **INVITEES**

Michael Riches; Contract Manager Veolia, who will be in attendance to answer questions.  
Councillor Michael Talbot Portfolio Holder for Environment and Open spaces.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In June 2019 the authority implemented a new waste collection service, changing from a weekly black sack collection to fortnightly wheeled bin service and as such represented a significant service change.

#### **DETAILED INFORMATION**

##### **Planning**

##### Communications

Long before the roll out of the new service a full communications campaign was launched. This initially involved an 8 page information leaflet posted in March/April to all properties in Tendring as part of the council tax leaflet delivery. This was supplemented with advertising on the existing refuse and recycling trucks. Leaflets and posters were delivered to libraries, collection points and parish councils. Posters were placed on bring site banks and at recycling centres along with adverts in the local press. Our website was also updated with the "New waste service" page which contained information and FAQ's along with a list of all the roads in the district, where residents could find out if they were on the new bin service along with the week of delivery. Additional to this information on line forms were developed for authorised side waste applications along with the assisted collection form updated. A program of Facebook posts were also deployed, including boosted social media posts. A prolonged program of GIS mapping was undertaken which forms the foundations for the new tendring portal for online reporting and applications.

Two brand new collection calendars were designed, along with collection day change letters, these were then matched together before being printed and sealed in a polybag in readiness for delivery with the bin.

With an A and B calendar along with day changes over 5 days resulted in 10 combinations of calendar and day change leaflets to be bagged ensuring enough of each combination for the associated delivery day and numbered over 58,000 in total. Collection day change letters were also designed for properties remaining on a weekly black sack collection but still having a collection day change.

## Procurement

A brand new fleet of 13 collection vehicles for both refuse and recycling were purchased and delivered to site ready for the start of the roll out, these were then fitted with new adverts promoting waste, recycling, littering and mental health issues and also included an advert designed by a school child following a competition.

20,000 authorised and non authorised stickers were designed and printed in time for the roll out. Additional to the existing stock, over 40,000 recycling containers were ordered, with lead times of 5-7 weeks orders were placed whilst the warehouse was at 100% capacity.

60,000 wheeled bins were procured, with 12,000 delivered to the Weeley site over a 7 day period in May 2019 to provide a buffer stock, these were unloaded by Veolia operative and forklift truck.

60,000 polyethylene food waste bags were procured and delivered to the Weeley site again in May in readiness for the roll out, with each household to receive a roll of 52 food caddy bags to promote the food waste service along with the calendar and day change leaflet delivered with each bin. The foodwaste bags and information leaflet were both supplied in a polybag.

## Property audit and route planning

The auditing of all the properties in Tendring started in April 2017, taking over 1 year to complete this was a time sensitive piece of work, as from this the route planning, delivery maps, website information and my tendring portal were all based upon. Once the audit was completed TDC and Veolia carried out a series of intergrity testing to ensure properties had been assigned to the correct service, once verified and agreed, the work on amalgamating the front line rounds could begin. The old service had 8 front line refuse and recycling collection rounds whilst the new service has 5 refuse and 8 recycling rounds. Redesigning route maps for a new mode of collection is complex involving computer modelling; not only were Veolia taking into account access restrictions and average time for servicing a wheeled bin, the biggest challenge at this stage was mirroring up the refuse and recycling collections so that they all took place on the same day along with a change in vehicle deployment, so that now all the vehicles are in the same area on collection day which provides a greater degree of robustness if one of the vehicles were to breakdown or need assistance. The round maps also had to ensure that each of the crews had an acceptable level of households to service. The design of new rounds ultimately led to the change in collection days whilst also accounting for the new work practice of collections on Bank Holidays. Once this work was completed by Veolia, bin delivery lists and maps could then be prepared in readiness for the bin delivery contractor.

## Service roll out

Officers had been in contact with other local authorities who had carried out similar service changes. The responses were all similar: expect disruption to last at least 6 months and communication is the key.

Veolia as a company have also been involved in service changes and consequently had set aside additional vehicle, operative and overtime resource for this bedding in period to help minimise the disruption. Based upon 5 frontline refuse collection crews operating on a 2 week schedule (A+B calendar) the delivery of the wheeled bins had to be completed over a fixed 10 week period with no leeway as once the bin was delivered the service for that property went live the following week.

## Implementation

### Bin delivery

The first bins were delivered on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June, with on average 1200 bins delivered per day, 5 days per week over a 10 week period with the bin delivery finishing the week before the Clacton Airshow so as to reduce risk of disruption. Summary of the delivery timetable is below:

<u>WEEK 1</u>	<u>Round</u>	<u>Area</u>
MONDAY 10TH JUNE	1A	Clacton
TUESDAY 11TH JUNE	1A	Holland
WEDNESDAY 12TH JUNE	1A	Clacton
THURSDAY 13TH JUNE	1A	Clacton
FRIDAY 14TH JUNE	1A	Brightlingsea
<u>WEEK 2</u>		
MONDAY 17TH JUNE	1B	Walton
TUESDAY 18TH JUNE	1B	Frinton
WEDNESDAY 19TH JUNE	1B	Harwich
THURSDAY 20TH JUNE	1B	Harwich
FRIDAY 21TH JUNE	1B	Lawford
<u>WEEK 3</u>		
MONDAY 24TH JUNE	2A	Clacton
TUESDAY 25TH JUNE	2A	Holland
WEDNESDAY 26TH JUNE	2A	Clacton
THURSDAY 27TH JUNE	2A	Clacton
FRIDAY 28TH JUNE	2A	Brightlingsea
<u>WEEK 4</u>		
MONDAY 1ST JULY	2B	Frinton/Walton
TUESDAY 2ND JULY	2B	Frinton/Kirby Cross/Great Holland
WEDNESDAY 3RD JULY	2B	Harwich
THURSDAY 4TH JULY	2B	Great Oakley/Little Oakley/Ramsey
FRIDAY 5TH JULY	2B	Great Bromley/Ardleigh
<u>WEEK 5</u>		
MONDAY 8TH JULY	3A	Clacton
TUESDAY 9TH JULY	3A	Holland/Clacton

WEDNESDAY 10TH JULY	3A	Clacton
THURSDAY 11TH JULY	3A	Jaywick/ West Clacton
FRIDAY 12TH JULY	3A	Alresford/Frating
<u>WEEK 6</u>	<u>Round</u>	<u>Area</u>
MONDAY 15TH JULY		Kirby le Soken/Kirby Cross
TUESDAY 16TH JULY		Thorpe le Soken/ Weeley
WEDNESDAY 17TH JULY		Harwich
THURSDAY 18TH JULY		Harwich/ Wrabness/ Bradfield
FRIDAY 19TH JULY		Elmstead, Crockleford, Ardleigh
<u>WEEK 7</u>		
MONDAY 22ND JULY		Clacton
TUESDAY 23RD JULY		Clacton
WEDNESDAY 24TH JULY	4A	Clacton/Little Clacton
THURSDAY 25TH JULY	4A	Point Clear/Jaywick
FRIDAY 26TH JULY	4A	Elmstead/Frating
<u>WEEK 8</u>		
MONDAY 29TH JULY	4B	Frinton/Kirby Cross/ Walton
TUESDAY 30TH JULY	4B	Little Clacton/ Weeley
WEDNESDAY 31ST JULY	4B	Harwich
THURSDAY 1ST AUGUST	4B	Mistley/ Bradfield
FRIDAY 2ND AUGUST	4B	Colchester new estate
<u>WEEK 9</u>		
MONDAY 5TH AUGUST	5A	Clacton
TUESDAY 6TH AUGUST	5A	Clacton
WEDNESDAY 7TH AUGUST	5A	Clacton
THURSDAY 8TH AUGUST	5A	Thorrington/ St Osyth
FRIDAY 9TH AUGUST	5A	Great Bentley
<u>WEEK 10</u>		
MONDAY 12TH AUGUST	5B	Kirby Cross/Frinton
TUESDAY 13TH AUGUST	5B	Wix/ Tendring/Weeley/Beaumont
WEDNESDAY 14TH AUGUST	5B	Harwich
THURSDAY 15TH AUGUST	5B	Lawford/ Manningtree
FRIDAY 16TH AUGUST	5B	TBC

Specialist delivery contractors JETT were employed to deliver the bins. Consisting of 2 crews each crew had 3 operatives, each crew with a 3.5 tonne lorry. These crews were then piloted primarily by TDC and Veolia operatives. The role of the pilots were to direct the contractors; ensuring that they delivered bins to the correct properties, as it has to be remembered that some areas are a mixture of bins and bags, or properties of multiple occupancy requiring more than the standard 1 bin. The pilots would also ensure that households that had successfully applied for a an additional bin were delivered and most importantly that properties were not missed. The use of pilots whilst not always used by all authorities is proven to reduce the amount of missed delivery reports. The use of a TDC officer present as a pilot becomes beneficial when householders either contest the delivery of the bin or ask waste and recycling questions and resulted in reported missed bins of less than 2%.

The council depot at Weeley was chosen as the central storage and loading area for the wheeled bins. On top of the initial stock of 12,000 bins, wheeled bins were

delivered to Weeley each day by articulated lorry; normally consisting of 2 deliveries per day. These were unloaded by 2 Veolia operatives and Veolia forklift truck; both of which were on site full time for the 10 week period. Deliveries to households started everyday at 06.30, with the 2 JETT lorries loaded by Veolia forklift, typically each lorry could hold 300 bins and with each round consisting of 1200+ bins, each crew would have to reload during the day at least once.

During the 10 week roll out period, reports of missed bin deliveries were logged, these were then passed over to the contractors to revisit and deliver as part of their contracted duties.

As part of the delivery contract; 2 weeks after the final bin delivery the contractor returned to mop up the bulk of any further missed bin deliveries; this consisted of several hundred but included whole roads which had been missed off the original delivery lists or flats that wanted to change over to the bin service.

#### Waste and Recycling Collections Veolia

During the 10 week roll out period Veolia were providing both the new and existing waste collection services side by side. This placed increased demand upon Veolia to which Veolia increased their resources with 3 extra refuse vehicles, 3 extra recycling vehicles and 24 extra operatives (loaders and drivers).

During the bedding in period of the new waste service Veolia were unable to complete on all of the allocated collection days; this impacted mainly the recycling rounds, snowballing from Monday works rolling over in to Tuesday and so on and so on, resulting in Veolia working late into the evenings along with Saturdays and occasionally Sundays to catch up. All associated overtime payments remained the liability of Veolia.

During this 10 week period the authority and Veolia continued to work closely together with continuous operational meetings to ensure that both teams were fully aware of operational issues along with customer feedback and that this information was passed on to all the stakeholders. Whilst the bedding in period was extremely busy, both the authority and Veolia management maintained a strong and robust stance over the day to day collections, with a unified attitude towards misconduct and conduct not appropriate for contractors appointed by the authority. As such one of the refuse collection crews were observed undertaking tasks not inkeeping with their contracts and following formal investigation the driver and loaders were all dismissed. Whilst this placed an immediate pressure upon both Veolia to resource and train this crew through agency and pool staff and the authority in the disruption to service this would entail the decision was correct and provided a clear and strong statement to the collection operatives that misconduct would not be tolerated.

#### Customer support

Contact centre and Environmental admin team deal with missed collections and customer enquiries.

Before the new service roll out an average 74 phone calls and 58 emails per week (March to June) were processed.

During the roll out Peaked 2800 phone calls and 214 emails per week (July)

After the roll out: 590 phone calls and 114 emails (November)

248 phone calls and 115 emails (January)

Extra resource were allocated to the customer support teams with 2 temporary customer support assistants along with an apprentice based in another team within TDC. Additional resource remains in place until August 2020 to assist with customer support.

#### Waste Team

Including 2 dog wardens the team totalled 6 FTE. Resource made available for 3 FTE additional Officers for the roll out period, however only able to fill one of these posts; heavy impact upon the team as 2-3 officers required daily for piloting duties. Officers dealt with enquires from public, members, Management Team and MP's; scatter gun approach significantly impacted the ability to resolve issues, plus the day to day job still continued.

#### Communication

Surge in followers on facebook during roll out period along with increased social media. Comms team proactively replied to comments and questions.

Use of local social media groups to push key messages and information.

Boosted post on facebook ahead of August bank Holiday collections that reached 85,000 people. Total facebook spend £2424.40

TV interviews, FAQ's with local papers, 5 press releases and 2 follow up releases along with numerous comments and statements issued.

#### Results

September 2019 was the first full month on the new waste service and at the time of this report audited data is available for September and October, with the data compared to the same period in 2018 and are as follows:

	September 18	September 19	Difference (tonnes)	% change
Residual waste	2811.5	2013.9	-797.6	-28.37
Food waste	118.86	340.32	221.46	186.32
Paper/cardboard	340.34	373.66	33.32	9.79
Plastic/cans	96.4	129.06	32.66	33.88
Glass (banks)	128.93	189.41	60.48	46.91
Recycling rate	29.06%	41.83%		

	October 18	October 19	Difference (tonnes)	% change
Residual waste	3038.4	2160.78	-877.62	-28.88
Food waste	180.56	369.1	188.54	104.42
Paper/cardboard	383.80	451.63	67.83	17.67

Plastic/cans	98.34	141.36	43.02	43.75
Glass (banks)	104.83	128.92	24.09	22.98
Recycling rate	27.48	40.49		

## Overview

The introduction of the new waste service to the entire district was always going to attract associated disruption and it was planned that this disruption would be for a 6 month period; 3 months for the initial roll out (June 10<sup>th</sup> to end of September 10<sup>th</sup> ) and a further 3 months bedding in period (September 10<sup>th</sup> to December 10<sup>th</sup> ). with the final amendments made to the collections in Thorrington at the beginning of December the service has since performed to target.

Three main areas were highlighted during this 6 month period attributing to the disruption:

Failure to complete collection rounds:

More recycling material is being collected than anticipated, consequently Veolia have employed additional resources at their expense; with an extra vehicle, driver and 2 loaders.

Difficulty in contacting the council/Officers:

The authority received a high level of contacts from the public and whilst this was envisaged and extra resources put in place, physical constraints such as the total number of phone lines available to the authority is a critical point. Combined with the lack of interest in vacant posts with only 1 out of 3 of the temporary recycling posts filled for the roll out period attributed to the delays in responding and dealing with customer enquiries.

Missed assisted collections/ Remote Properties:

With the front line collection rounds changing in number and size resulted in a loss of local knowledge from the loaders as they were now collecting from different areas. Provisions were made to minimise this loss of knowledge with the collection crews made up of operatives from all the old rounds but with all the rounds changing combined with an influx of new assisted collections applications, this was one set of customers who had increased disruption. The lack of in cab technology highlights the fragility of a paper based system

As above changing the rounds highlighted individual properties that previously had very bespoke collections which fell by the side as the information was lost between crews and again in cab technology could have reduced the amount of disruption.

## Learning Points

- Commence the process of evaluating the contract options at an earlier stage; this could then be combined with including a working party of members which would provide sufficient time and resource for all stakeholders to have an

opportunity to provide input into the final contract option.

- Recruitment of the temporary posts to start at an earlier stage, combined with the fixed term contracts being of a longer duration. This would allow the new posts to be filled before the roll out of the service and allow ample time for training and for the officer to find their feet. Offering the contracts for a longer period, possibly 1 year instead of 4 months could attract a stronger field of applicants.
- Quicker at feeding operational issues up to the communications and support teams; this information could then be fed out to customers via social media and other avenues and would reduce the amount of customer contact enquiries.
- Reduce the reliance upon the local knowledge held by individual operatives for the collection rounds; transferring this data on to robust round sheets and technology.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee determines whether it has any comments or recommendations it wishes to put forward the relevant Portfolio Holder or Cabinet.