

## **Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee – 13 November 2018**

### **Report of the Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Waste and Recycling**

Report by: Councillor Majid Mahmood

#### **1. Purpose of report**

This report sets out my Constitutional responsibilities and identifies my portfolio priorities.

#### **2. Accountability and Responsibilities**

In accordance with the City Council Constitution I have accountability for the management of waste services, cleaner neighbourhoods, recycling, enforcement and pest control. My responsibilities are as set out in the Constitution.

#### **3. Priorities**

My overarching priority is to respond to Birmingham citizens' call for cleaner streets and better refuse collection, 57% and 55% respectively made it the two most important issues and through the delivery of activity against the priorities below I intend to achieve that for them.

- Roll out and embed the new refuse collection operating model.
- Launch a new Clean Streets Campaign and Waste Prevention Campaign for citizens, and community groups.
- Establish additional recycling and reuse facilities for residents to promote and facilitate household recycling.
- Every business to have been visited to reinforce the requirements under the Duty of Care legislation.
- Increase take up of BCC trade waste contracts generating additional income for reinvestment.
- Finalise a Municipal Waste Strategy for Birmingham.
- Complete the procurement of new waste disposal contracts.

#### **4. Waste Services - context**

- Circa 360,000 Birmingham properties collected from every week, roughly double the number in cities such as Manchester, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow and Leeds.
- Circa 1,000 tonnes of waste collected every day.
- Circa 675,000 bins (residual, recycling, green)
- Average daily round size of 1270 households and approximately 90 rounds per day.
- 115,000 scheduled collections per day.
- 18,000 households on sack collections, a sixth of the size of Wolverhampton's complete refuse collection service.
- Collection rate has climbed steadily peaking at 98% but more work still needed.
- 5,000 kilometres (3,106 miles) of streets cleaned.
- 1782 bulky waste collections per month.
- Enough electricity to power 55,000 homes from Tyseley Energy from Waste Plant.
- 67,327 garden waste customers – 70,489 bins.

## 5. Progress

### 5.1. Roll out and embed the new refuse collection operating model.

The Waste Collection Service has been undergoing a complex restructure since March 2017. The intent and desired outcome and effectiveness is to improve the efficiency of the service and address the imbalance of the rounds. This had not been reviewed since the introduction of wheeled bins. Analysis of previous performance suggested that some days and rounds were 'heavier' than others i.e. more roads and more collections meaning some rounds continuously failed to finish whilst others finished in plenty of time. This caused an inconsistency in service delivery for certain areas and required crews to be sent out to pick up the missed collections on the days that followed.

To address this new routes were identified using industry software and trials of those routes were undertaken over the summer with discussion and support of the Trade Unions. Following those trials routes were adapted using data collected from the trials and a new Operating Model went live on 17th September 2018 (week 1).

It is clear that with any new operation and especially one of the size and complexity of the refuse collection service that there would be bedding in issues and therefore 4 Rapid Response teams were established to minimise the disruption to residents. Unfortunately, due to agency driver availability those four crews were not fully in place until week 3.

In week 1 the new Waste Reduction and Collection Officer (WRCO) started. They joined each round and have started to record issues, contamination and interactions in a bid to increase recycling rates. Each week we are seeing an increase in this activity as they are becoming familiar with the role and technology and gaining valuable local knowledge of the roads and the particular challenges those roads face.

On 24 September (week 2) the refuse collection service moved to a five day operating model. This removed the compressed working week and rebalanced the rounds. The rounds have been developed using trialled and agreed data, keeping the existing day of collection for the resident.

In week 3 the Rapid Response teams were in place and are managed centrally to ensure prioritisation is given across the city and not to individual depots.

Weeks 4-5 has focused on Round Optimisation, the new rounds have been tested with the majority starting to improve productivity. Round data is being used to track round performance and changes have been made to rounds that have failed to complete.

The new rounds have been developed and staff moved to new teams, additional vehicles have been sourced and allocated to a round. Whilst this has been happening the dependency on agency staff has been reduced by permanently recruiting over 135 staff to refuse collection roles with a further 20 vacancies to fill. We aim to be fully recruited in refuse collection by the end of November, for the first time in over a decade.

Regrettably, although perhaps understandably, performance has dropped as the teams learn the new rounds and gain local knowledge of the areas. This is compounded by the fact that the service has experienced issues with vehicles breaking down and staffing the new roles within the team. To overcome the on-going issue of vehicle availability a vehicle replacement programme has been developed to replace the aging fleet.

Priority is being given to catch up on the dropped work as reported by crews, members of the public and from emails received via the BCCouncillorsEnquiries email address. As of Friday 24

October at 4pm there were 322 roads outstanding, 61 residual and 261 recycling.

Alongside this all of the recycling and garden rounds are being reviewed and work is being reallocated across the teams. The performance compared to last September, when the service was in stabilisation following the industrial action was a combined missed collection of 204 households per 100,000 (target is 52). This September the combined missed collection rate was 104 per 100,000 which although not acceptable is moving in the right direction.

## 5.2. Launch a new Clean Streets Campaign and Waste Prevention Campaign for citizens, and community groups.

Recognising that residents are keen to get involved in cleaning up their local communities by volunteering to organise community clean-up events, and not just during Keep Britain Tidy week but at all times of year, we are now (from 3 October this year) able through the Council's website to offer support to those volunteers by providing equipment, helping publicise the event and supplying useful hints and tips. The litter picking kit includes: litter pickers (for adults and children), high visibility vests (for adults and children) and refuse bags. The Council will collect any rubbish once the event has finished. Organisers do need to register their event with the Council which they can do through the '[volunteer to become a litter picker](#)' link on the dedicated web page below:

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20009/waste\\_and\\_recycling/1769/community\\_litter\\_picking](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20009/waste_and_recycling/1769/community_litter_picking)

An informative leaflet is also available:

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/10715/litter\\_pick\\_leaflet](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/10715/litter_pick_leaflet)

The Street Cleansing service has also undergone a redesign and this took place at the same time as the launch of the redesign of the refuse collection service. Revised street cleansing schedules have been developed from the Cleaner Street Plans, informed by local Councillors and residents. All schedules have been shared with local members and BIDs. The service currently employs 342 staff.

Cleaner street plans are the basis for the blueprint and the stepping stone for total place, a concept that is well supported by Councillors. We know that we need to do more with communities, work closer with them and improve communication with them. We also know that they want to do more for themselves and it is our role to help them. A revised communications strategy has been developed and working with campaigns such as It's Your Neighbourhood will help to provide a focus for incentive to participate.

The LAMS (Land Audit Management System) is a quality inspection system, initially developed by local authorities in Scotland and now rolled out on a UK wide basis, to monitor grounds maintenance, but can also be applied to street cleansing for a total street scene overview. Being a member of APSE we will be able to use the LAMS App. once it has been released to measure the quality of our localities, and at the same time benchmark these against other local authorities.

## 5.3. Establish additional recycling and reuse facilities for residents to promote and facilitate household recycling.

Together with officers in waste management I have met with representatives from the Jericho Foundation to discuss the additional provision of reuse centres in order to deflect reusable items away from the waste stream whilst at the same time providing the opportunity for

people to obtain perfectly reusable items at a very much reduced cost. A mapping exercise of reuse centres has been carried out and progress is being made but identification of suitable sites coupled with the review and re-procurement of waste disposal contracts is naturally impacting on the timescale for their introduction.

The Council's [recycling website](#) has been revised and improved with the addition of helpful hints and tips on options to consider before taking unwanted items to the Household Recycling Centres including contact details of other reuse centres. However, we will continue to inform and remind residents of the importance of reusing and recycling as outlined in the communication strategy.

#### 5.4. Every business to have been visited to reinforce the requirements under the Duty of Care legislation.

The [Waste Duty of Care legislation](#) makes provision for the safe management of waste to protect human health and the environment.

This code of practice (the Code) is issued under section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (the EPA). It sets out practical guidance on how to meet your waste duty of care requirements, but following the guidance does not replace your obligation to comply with the duty of care itself.

The Code is admissible as evidence in legal proceedings and its rules must be taken into account where relevant to questions raised in the case. Failure to comply with the duty of care is an offence subject to an unlimited fine on conviction.

The duty of care applies to anyone who imports, produces, carries, keeps, treats, disposes of, or are a dealer or broker that has control of, controlled waste.

- Waste producer – any person whose activities produce waste. This includes private sector businesses such as shops, offices, factories and tradesman (e.g. electricians, builders, glaziers and plumbers) and public sector services such as schools, hospitals and prisons, as well as charities and voluntary and community groups. It also includes permitted operations or exempt facilities that produce waste as part of their activities. If you carry out a waste operation that changes the nature or composition of the waste, you are regarded as a producer of the waste.
- Waste carrier – any person, who normally and regularly collects, carries or transports waste in the course of any business or with a view to profit, including those that produce and transport their own waste eg builders and landscape gardeners.
- Waste dealer – any person, business or organisation that buys waste with the aim of subsequently selling it, including in circumstances where the dealer does not take physical possession of the waste.
- Waste broker – any person, business or organisation that arranges waste transportation and management of waste on behalf of another party, such as organisations contracting out waste collection services eg local authorities, supermarkets and producer responsibility compliance schemes.
- Waste manager – any person involved in the collection, transport, recovery or disposal of controlled waste, including the supervision of these operations, the aftercare of disposal sites and actions taken as a dealer or broker.

The duty of care also applies to householders. Householders have a limited duty of care

because most household waste is disposed of through normal local authority waste collections services.

There are circa 31,000 active businesses in Birmingham producing approximately 4m tonnes of commercial waste annually. The proposal to visit them all is clearly an extremely challenging one and one that won't be achieved within a twelve month period. However the team has already visited nearly 600 and this will increase over the remainder of the year and into the following years until achieved. As Cabinet Member I have joined the Enforcement team on 3 occasions in Erdington/Perry Barr, Sparkbrook/Small Heath and Kingstanding/Hall Green North to witness first-hand the work involved and the challenges that our staff face on a daily basis.

Outcomes to date from waste investigations carried out by the team are set out in the table below:

Waste Investigation	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Total
Duty of care inspection into the waste disposal arrangements of commercial premises	125	120	156	82	112	595
Section 34 EPA* demand notices issued (trade waste statutory information demands)	105	102	122	71	111	511
Section 34 EPA fixed penalty notices issued to businesses (£300)	30	41	50	35	62	218
Section 87 EPA fixed penalty notices issued for commercial and residential litter offences	0	2	0	0	0	2
Section 33 EPA fixed penalty notices issued for fly tipping (£400)	4	5	3	7	6	25
<b>Prosecutions</b>						
Number of prosecution files submitted to legal services (produced quarterly)			43			43

*EPA\* - Environmental Protection Act*

Citywide fly tipping reports for September were down on the previous month (2151) to 1655

#### 5.5. Increase take up of BCC trade waste contracts generating additional income for reinvestment.

Birmingham City Council operates a Trade Waste service alongside its domestic service, providing waste removal services on a commercial basis to over 6000 businesses in Birmingham. 2017/18 was a particularly challenging year for the service – with many customers experiencing a loss of service as a consequence of the waste dispute, leading to a loss of some contracts. However, despite this challenging environment the service delivered a turnover of £10m pa and a return to the Council of £1.2m.

The focus of the Trade Waste service this year is to improve both the customer experience and the financial return generated from the service and therefore a business case is currently being developed to determine the most effective approach to maximise the benefit of the in-house service and outlining investments/changes required in staffing, infrastructure, marketing and

operations to enable the service to deliver effectively. The full business case evidencing the most effective option for the future, with an attached implementation plan, is anticipated to be completed during quarter 4 of 2017/18.

#### 5.6. Finalise a Municipal Waste Strategy for Birmingham.

Given that municipal waste only accounts for about 20% of the total waste stream the draft municipal waste strategy is going to be further developed and alongside a much broader waste strategy for the city covering industrial and commercial waste. Developing these strategies in tandem will greatly assist the on-going work to explore and maximise opportunities to generate renewable energy from waste which in turn will support the City's economic growth. Analysis of the demand and supply of energy from waste will be undertaken and this will inform what waste strategies for municipal and commercial waste need to be in place. This alongside the options for city owned assets including the Tyseley Incinerator and the CHP (combined heat and power) and district heating networks to support the city's energy requirements.

This more detailed work focussed on future waste strategy development and identification of energy from waste opportunities is being developed by officers in the Economy Directorate in collaboration with Waste Management and is scheduled to be completed in 2019.

#### 5.7. Complete the procurement of new waste disposal contracts.

The current waste disposal contract ceases in January 2019. The contract is currently with Veolia and covers the processing of all municipal waste together with the management of Tyseley Energy Recycling Facility and the Household Recycling Centres. Discussions have been taking place to start a procurement process to go to the market grouping activities together in a different way.

The procurement of new/replacement waste disposal contracts will proceed in line with the recommendations set out in the 13 February report to Cabinet. In that report it was also noted that an overrun agreement with the current contractor to extend the current contract is to be negotiated. These discussions are on-going and are commercially sensitive so detail cannot be disclosed here.

However, the aim of the agreement is to:-

- Ensure Service Continuity through plant availability
- Ensure asset condition was fit for the longer contract
- Negotiate the Gate Fee and Capacity Fee
- Reduce exposure to Landfill tax

The Overrun also enables essential works to be carried out, accelerating the completion of key asset refurbishment and replacement to help mitigate the risks in the procurement of new contracts.