

Haringey Council

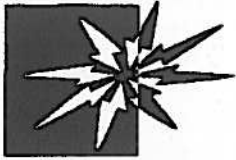
Report for:	Cabinet 18 th December 2012	Item Number:	TBC
Title:	Response to Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel interim report on the Waste and Recycling Services		
Report Authorised by:	Lyn Garner Director of Place and Sustainability		
Lead Officer:	Stephen McDonnell- Assistant Director Single Frontline		
Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions:		

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. The interim report of the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel on the new waste and recycling service contained a number of recommendations in regards to the final stage of the roll-out of the changes to the waste collection services as set out in Appendix A. This report provides a proposed Cabinet response to the recommendations made by the Panel and received by Cabinet on 13th November.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

- 2.1. The changes to the waste and recycling services in Haringey have been one of the biggest service changes that have been undertaken and directly affected approximately 75% of Haringey's households. This provision is one of the main services which affect resident perception of the Council as it is delivered to every household on a weekly basis. The last phase, which saw the introduction of the weekly recycling and fortnightly residual collection to 13,000 households in Tottenham as well as a change in the collection day for 80% of households across the borough is still to settle down and being closely monitored.
- 2.2. I welcome the interim recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel. The resident survey of the new service shows that overall residents are satisfied with the changes with 87% very satisfied or satisfied with the weekly recycling and 62%



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very satisfied or satisfied with the fortnightly residual collection. Many of the recommendations are concerned with communication and consultation with ward members and residents. There has been an unprecedented amount of resident engagement on this service change and in agreeing to many of the recommendations, Cabinet will be demonstrating that it accepts that improvements can still be implemented as engagement with residents will be ongoing on waste and recycling.

2.3. I look forward to the final report of the Scrutiny Panel which will also provide a further opportunity to update Cabinet on the progress that has been made.

3. Recommendations

3.1. The Cabinet is asked to agree the response to the interim recommendations as set out in Appendix B.

4. Alternative options considered

4.1. Not applicable

5. Background information

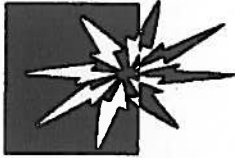
5.1. The council has rolled out a new waste collection service designed to increase recycling rates and reduce carbon emissions. The changes have been introduced in a three phased approach to all street fronting properties :

- Phase 1 (5th March 2012) to 22,000 households predominantly in the west of the borough;
- Phase 2 (18th June 2012) to 44,000 households predominantly in central parts of the borough;
- Phase 3 (22nd October 2012) to 15,000 households predominantly in the east of the borough.

5.2. All dry recyclables, food and garden waste are continued to be collected on a weekly basis. The remaining residual waste is being collected fortnightly. The implementation of the new service is a key component of delivering the waste contract targets of 40% recycling rate and a 40% reduction in carbon emissions by 2015.

5.3. The full year effect of introducing fortnightly collections across all three phases is an increase in recycling of 7%. Throughout the year the Veolia Engagement Team will continue to engage with households to maximise the amount of waste recycled and composted.

5.4. The Council is on target to deliver its 2012/13 target of 31.7%.



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- 5.5. Achieving the 2015 target will result in the Council saving up to £1 million in avoided landfill disposal cost. In addition it is anticipated that this will save 12,000 tonnes CO2 equivalent.
- 5.6. The interim report was presented to the Environment and Housing Panel on 22 October 2012, which was the same day that the last phase of the roll-out of the waste service changes started. Both the Council and Veolia will be continuing to work with residents on the implemented changes on an on-going basis and it is in this context that many of the recommendations are accepted.
- 5.7. Of the ten recommendations, eight are agreed and two are partly agreed. In responding to recommendation 1, it is not possible to agree the return to weekly collections in particular circumstances as this would be contrary to current policy and likely to require additional budget provision. The response to recommendation 7 on the minimum training for staff it is not considered practical for all local officers (neighbourhood action teams, village manager, crew, street cleaners, Veolia monitoring staff and Councillors) to have complete knowledge of all recycling facilities in the borough and all collection days, but they should be able to advise residents on where to get the information.

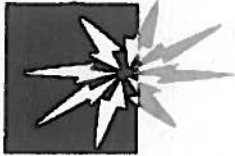
6. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 6.1. The majority of the interim recommendations can be implemented at no or minimal costs and thus can be auctioned within existing resources.
- 6.2. However, where a recommendation has clear budgetary implications which would incur additional cost outside of the contractual budget envelope, for example recommendation one of the interim recommendations, then Cabinet would need to agree appropriate budgetary provision before the recommendation could be agreed and implemented.

7. Head of Legal Services and legal implications

- 7.1. The Head of Legal Services notes the contents of the report and the response to the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel Report and advises that there are no specific legal issues.
- 7.2. The interim recommendations will need to be carried out pursuant to the Council's Waste Management Contract with Veolia.

8. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments



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9. Head of Procurement Comments

9.1. Not applicable

10. Policy Implication

11. Reasons for Decision

11.1. The Scrutiny Panel heard evidence from a wide range of stakeholders and visited a number of sites across the borough to gather evidence on issues that have arisen following the introduction of the changes. This report provides a response to the recommendations.

12. Use of Appendices

12.1. Appendix A- Environment & Housing Panel Interim Report on Waste & Recycling Service

12.2. Appendix B- Response to Scrutiny recommendations

13. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Appendix B:

Response to Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel recommendations for the Waste and Recycling Services

Recommendations	Service Response
<p>1. Where the successful application of the new waste and recycling collection system is not immediately deliverable (e.g. no room for wheelie bins), a more bespoke system is developed which utilises the full range of available receptacles: bags; boxes; boxes with bags; 120, 240 & 360 litre bins; food waste bins; hessian sacks and community bins and is undertaken in consultation with ward councillors, local residents, residents associations and community groups. This should also include the option of returning to weekly collection of residual waste in exceptional circumstances where other options have been ruled out as unworkable.</p>	<p>Partially agreed</p> <p>Two key objectives of the waste service are to increase recycling and to ensure, where possible, that waste is stored in containers and does not overspill.</p> <p>We have provided a range of different containers for residents depending on their property. However, it is not possible to provide a completely free choice due to some operational restrictions.</p> <p>It is no longer possible for residents to use the green box for dry recycling as the new service has seen a fundamental change to the way in which recycling is collected. Previously, the green boxes were emptied into a service bin and the service bin was wheeled to the back of the collection vehicle to be lifted into the vehicle. With the introduction of wheeled bins these service bins have been removed. This means that if green boxes were still used the collection staff would have to lean over into the back of the vehicle to empty the contents of the box. This is an unacceptable practice from a health and safety perspective. Therefore, recycling must now be presented for collection in the supplied wheelie bin or recycling sacks. Should residents wish to present the sacks in the box they can do so. We have investigated that Southwark still use green boxes for recycling but they still use the service bin method described above and so this does not pose a health and safety issue.</p>

Recommendations

Service Response

Where residents do not have wheelie bins, for example due to step access to the property, then we provide bags to contain both waste and dry recycling.

In terms of requests for different containers these are assessed and may require a site visit to ensure that there will still be an increase in recycling and waste contained. For small households (1 or 2 people) whom require a smaller wheelie bin, no site visit is normally required

Both Veolia and the council have worked with individual households and multiple households such as HMOs or houses converted in flats to ensure an appropriate number of containers is provided, and this can be smaller/bigger or less/more containers than originally provided.

Further work is due to be undertaken on rationalising containers with multiple households in multiple properties, particularly wheelie bins. Different options will be explored with ward councillors, local residents, resident associations and community groups as requested and where resources permit.

The current policy is to continue with the existing weekly collection of recycling and fortnightly collection of residual waste. It is still considered that due to the provision of a weekly recycling service there should not be a need for a weekly collection of residual waste as well.

Recommendations	Service Response
<p>2. That there is greater general inclusion of ward councillors by Single Front Line Service during phase 3 of the rollout of the new waste and recycling service. Ward Councillors should be provided with a list of potential problem sites/ streets within their ward to enable them to assist in engaging and supporting residents in the development of local waste and recycling collection solutions where one is not immediately apparent.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Prior to the roll-out ward councillors in the phase three area ward councillors received a list of HMOs in their ward and were asked to add to this list by sharing their local knowledge. The list had been put together with information from the property survey conducted prior to roll-out as well as information from the Housing Improvement Team (Private sector). Wards members were also invited to accompany the Veolia Outreach Team when undertaking door-knocking in the phase 3 area.</p> <p>Where problems have been identified, either Veolia or Council staff have met with residents and ward members to explore different options and agree a solution. This work on problem locations is continuing.</p> <p>Following the launch on 22nd October a weekly progress update has been circulated to all councillors.</p> <p>Officers from the Council and Veolia continue to engage with residents and councillors where problems arise.</p>
<p>3. That an information and advice sheet is developed on the bin rationalisation options available (e.g. larger bins, bin sharing, community bins) which is circulated to local residents, residents associations and community groups and published on the Council website. This could be in the form of a 'How to Guide.' This is to be implemented once the new system has bedded down and residents have adjusted to the increase in volume of materials that they are able to recycle and establish volumes required</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The service will explore producing a guide to assist residents where bin rationalisation is an option. The priority for communication prior to the service change concerned how the new service would operate and currently engagement work is focused on re-inforcing this message and encouraging recycling to reduce side waste and overfull bins.</p>

Recommendations	Service Response
<p>for residual waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to emphasise that the onus of brokering agreements between residents on bin rationalisation in shared premises should rest with the residents themselves and not the council whose responsibility should be the facilitation of reasonable changes suggested where possible; There should be greater use of social media to facilitate successful bin rationalisation requests. 	<p>The next stage of engagement will continue the emphasis on increasing recycling but also seek to address issues on container provision.</p> <p>The response to recommendation 1 sets out the work that Veolia and the Council have undertaken so far with individual households and with households sharing a property to agree provision on containers. In addition, it highlights that there will be circumstances where Veolia/Council can assist with rationalisation of containers for multiple properties.</p> <p>The use of social media will be discussed with Veolia and what other means could be used to promote and publicise rationalisation. However, the Council would still wish to be assured that recycling will increase and waste will be contained through any proposed solution.</p>
<p>4. To ensure consistency and coordination of approaches within the phase 3 roll-out, that a ward based update is provided to (1) local councillors and officers and (2) local residents and community groups that incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic collection information (e.g. collection day); Veolia help desk number and other key contacts; Local performance measures (e.g. missed collections, side waste, open lids). 	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Veolia and the Council produced a range of materials prior to the roll out of the service changes. This included a letter to all households letting them know the changes were coming and the reasons for the change. This was followed up with the delivery of new containers and a leaflet setting out the details of the service changes. In the phase 3 area, all households were door-knocked and the Veolia engagement team used pictorial images of the waste and recycling containers to help engage</p>

Recommendations	Service Response
	<p>with residents on the doorstep. All communication included the Veolia call centre contact number.</p> <p>Following the introduction of phase 3 on 22nd October, the council has provided weekly updates to all councillors. This provides updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling performance • Missed collection • Contact Centre performance <p>The council and/or Veolia has attended Area Forums, residents' association meetings and held roadshows prior to each phase to outline the changes and discuss any areas of concerns/issues that may arise. Members and residents have been encouraged at these to raise or let Council officers or Veolia know of any problems so that these can be addressed.</p>
<p>5. That quality assurance and performance monitoring systems are assessed to ensure that there is a robust and effective mechanism to identify and respond to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missed collections; • Food waste not being collected; • Bins not returned to properties (or left on street); • Detritus left in the street after waste collection; • Broken or missing bin lids. 	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Mechanisms are already place to monitor the performance of the contract. In addition to the annual strategic targets, there is also Contract Operational Targets (COTs) which are reported on a monthly basis, for example missed collections and spillages post collections.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Action Team is currently focusing heavily on monitoring of the new waste collection arrangements to ensure that collections are completed on schedule and that the quality of service is good. This includes monitoring missed collections and bins not put back properly.</p>

Recommendations	Service Response
<p>6. Where a problem area or street has been identified in the phase 3 roll out, that a lead officer (Veolia or Haringey Council) is identified to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that service responses are timely, coordinated and seen through to conclusion; • Lead on local engagement; • Provide liaison support between local agencies and Councillors, residents and residents groups to help identify a sustainable solution to identified problems. 	<p>Veolia have put in place a number of additional crews for a "transitional" period to deal with missed collections. In addition, they have made adjustments to the number of permanent crews for some rounds since 22nd October to deal with recurrent problems, mainly due to increased demand for dry and organic recycling.</p> <p>Any of the problems listed should be reported to Veolia in the first instance. In addition, all these issues are monitored as part of the contract, which has a penalty feature where there is repeated poor performance.</p>
<p>Agreed</p> <p>Every effort is made to ensure that service responses are timely, co-ordinated and seen through to conclusion with a designated officer for dealing with most of the complaints relating to the service changes.</p> <p>Engagement is co-ordinated between Veolia and the Council</p> <p>The local Neighbourhood Action Team Leaders and Officers would liaise with residents, ward Members and resident groups on individual cases to understand local problems. Any follow up actions would be coordinated with the Veolia Outreach and Operational Teams.</p> <p>Please note, engagement will be ongoing and is not solely linked to the launch of phase 3.</p>	

Recommendations	Service Response
<p>7. Ensure that there is a consistent level of awareness of the new waste and recycling collection system among local officers (neighbourhood enforcement team, village manager, crew, street cleansers, monitoring officer and Councillors) and that there is training to bring staff up to an acceptable minimum standard in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent messaging from both Council and Veolia staff; • Knowledge of what, where and when materials can be recycled locally; • When collection days are; • Different types of receptacles available; • Appropriate signposting to address issues or concerns raised within the locality; • How problems that arise are dealt with and by whom. 	<p>Partially Agreed</p> <p>The element that is not agreed is the level of awareness that can be achieved for all the local officers mentioned. If staff are not able to answer a query, they will be able to signpost residents or members to the Veolia Call Centre to provide the information.</p> <p>Staff are briefed on the recycling service provided by the Council/Veolia in terms of the weekly collections and the bulky waste collection but they will not necessarily have comprehensive knowledge of all recycling facilities in the borough. They will also be able to advise how residents can look up their collection day, if they are not able to answer immediately.</p> <p>There has been extensive briefing on the waste service changes to all staff mentioned in the recommendation and information provided to Members.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Action Team has been briefed on the changes to the waste collection service and receives regular updates via their monthly training sessions. This covers the points listed within the recommendations. Furthermore, briefings have been provided to the Single Frontline Business Support Team and the Council's Customer Service Team.</p> <p>With reference to Veolia, members of the Outreach Team have visited each village to discuss the changes with all street cleansing operatives and it is a regular item in monthly management team meetings.</p>

Recommendations	Service Response
<p>8. That there is greater liaison with landlords, letting agents and other managing agents to ensure that those properties which are not adhering to the new waste and recycling collection system are held to account. This should be seen as part of a general shift in emphasis towards holding to account those landlords whose properties are kept below minimum standards.</p>	<p>Officers from the Council and Veolia have attended many of the Area Forums to present the waste service changes. Weekly updates have also been provided to Members on performance.</p> <p>Both the Council and Veolia have established procedures for dealing with either service requests (such as my bin has been missed) or more complex problems and these are logged and allocated through the Veolia Call Centre or the Single Frontline Business Support Unit. All Member Enquiries go through the Council's Central Feedback Team.</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>There has already been a great deal of work to contact and engage with landlords, letting agents and tenants. A separate Houses in Multiple Occupation Action Plan was developed and implemented to address this issue in both Phases 2 and 3 of the service change.</p> <p>A letter was sent to all landlords and letting agents setting out the waste service changes. Officers attended the Landlord Forum to present the changes and answer questions. An article was included in the Landlords newsletter on the waste service changes as well.</p> <p>Houses in Multiple Occupation were identified through the property survey and details of licensed HMOs were obtained from the Housing Improvement Team. These premises were targeted for engagement work and all households in phase 3 were door knocked.</p>

Recommendations	Service Response
	<p>We have been introducing initiatives to work with Landlords in putting messages across to their tenants about the change of service. For example leaflets that they can give to new tenants and posters that can be placed up in shared hallways inside properties have been distributed to landlords and delivered to houses in multiple occupation. There has been a positive response from some landlords with requests for additional leaflets and posters.</p> <p>The service is developing options in regards to dealing with households who fail to contain and manage their waste. This includes liaison with the Council's Housing Improvement Team and identified landlords – also see response below to recommendation 9.</p> <p>The service will also be writing to community groups to encourage greater involvement in recycling and waste issues.</p>
<p>9. That there is greater liaison between Single Front Line Service and the Housing Improvement Team (private sector) in which properties with waste and recycling problems are cross referenced against borough wide enforcement data with a view to strategic enforcement of the worst offenders (under Management Regulations within the Housing Act).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The service is working with the Housing Improvement Team and information has been provided including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on those properties who, despite officers engaging with, are repeatedly failing to manage and contain their waste • Property survey data <p>The Housing Improvement Team will prioritise action on those properties where they have the most powers to intervene and seek corrective action by the landlord. These are the HMOs</p>

Recommendations	Service Response
	<p>covered by the discretionary licensing scheme which covers the Ladder roads where there are additional licensing conditions.</p> <p>If an additional discretionary licensing scheme is introduced in the future, this would allow for greater control of waste from HMOs in other parts of the borough.</p> <p>The Partnership Tasking Group and Rogue Landlord Action Group both provide a forum for sharing information and agreeing actions to tackle the worst offenders.</p>
<p>10. That all engagement materials are in plain and simple language and where possible, supported by pictorial illustrations.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>All of the literature supplied to households is picture and symbol-based to make it as understandable as possible for all residents, no matter what their language. However, the literature can be translated upon request.</p>