

Report for: Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, June 2016

Item number:

Title: Street Cleansing, Waste and Recycling: Current performance

Report

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Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Non Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 This report sets out the year-to-date performance of the council's street cleansing, waste and recycling services. The key current service delivery issues are highlighted together with the action being taken to pursue these.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

2.1 This report sets out key performance statistics for the council's street cleansing, waste collection and recycling services. The principal purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with current service performance data to enable it to constructively challenge performance and suggest specific areas that might benefit from further examination or indeed a change of approach.

2.2 Street cleanliness, in particular littering, is a key area of focus since the service change to weekly sweeping on residential and some other roads from January 2016, which was required to deliver £860,000 savings. Recent performance has decreased overall but has been variable from month to month and we therefore need to continue to closely monitor and develop targeted actions to deal with areas where performance is falling down.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the panel consider the contents of this report and comment as necessary on current cleanliness, waste and recycling service performance and the delivery issues presently being addressed by the council.

4. Reasons for decision

4.1 It is for the Panel to make any specific recommendations having considered the contents of this report.

5. Alternative options considered

5.1 Not applicable. The council's waste and recycling services are provided by Veolia following a competitive tendering of the services in 2010. Procurement was by way of competitive dialogue, with the final agreed service secured through a contract setting out specific service requirements.

6. Background information

- 6.1 The performance of both the council waste collection and street cleansing services is subject to regular review at monthly council/contractor officer liaison meetings and at quarterly Waste Contract Partnership Board meetings, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Environment. Both meetings receive detailed service performance information on waste collection and street cleansing services and a copy of the latest performance statistics for waste collection and recycling are shown in the appendix to this report.
- 6.2 The principal measure for street cleansing performance is the NI195 national indicator for litter and detritus. Performance is assessed by random inspections carried out by the council's Neighbourhood Action Officers and the results for the last 2 years are shown in Appendix 1, figures 1 & 2. Contractual strategic performance targets are set as the % of roads surveyed that are not of the required cleanliness, as defined by the National Indicator guidance. Performance should lie within these failure levels (i.e. the lower the % the better the performance). The litter NI195 scores have been consistently within target between October 2014 and Dec 2015. This is notwithstanding rounds of sweeping service reductions in that period to deliver savings from the waste contract.
- 6.3 The most recent full set of survey data (for the Jan-March 2016 'tranche' inspections) showed litter performance at 9% on average, up from the average for the first two tranches of the year (3% in each). This brought the 2015/16 annual performance to 5% against the contractual target of 7%, which is based on achieving London upper quartile performance.
- 6.4 From 4th January 2016, the council moved from twice to once weekly sweeping on 'zone 2 & 3' land uses (residential roads and some other roads such as industrial) in order to deliver further savings targets contained in the Council's published Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 6.5 The drop in performance coincides with the change to weekly sweeping. However, land use types other than residential roads, which are also routinely surveyed as part of NI 195 and have not been the subject of the recent service changes (such as some retail and commercial use roads) had also deteriorated and contributed to the reduced overall litter performance. We are therefore using the survey data (and complaints data) to target actions to specific areas and land use types. This includes engaging with residents, traders, schools and the organisers of events that are identified as causing litter problems, and where necessary taking enforcement action.
- 6.6 Finally, preliminary data from the first month of the first 3-month tranche period of 2016/17 (May) indicates an improvement in performance at 4% for litter across all land uses. However, given the variability in performance, we will need to monitor performance over the coming 2-3 months, along with ongoing complaints data, before reaching conclusions on the service change.

- 6.7 Scores for Detritus have similarly been consistently within target since April 2014 before seeing above target (worse) scores in two of the past 5 months. Even more so than with litter scores, this is more closely linked to failures on roads within specific land uses (namely industrial roads but also residential roads).
- 6.8 Appendix 1, figure 5 shows the volume of street cleansing complaints received by Veolia over the last 3 years. There was a peak in November 2014, but since then the volume has reduced to a third of the level of November 2014. We will continue to monitor monthly trends and are currently cross checking against the complaints received by the Council, to provide a better all round picture of customer perception. We will develop plans where necessary to further reduce the incidence of complaints.
- 6.9 The two other NI195 indicators we monitor are graffiti and fly posting, the results for the last 2 years are shown in Appendix 1, figures 3 & 4. Performance for graffiti remains consistently good. Performance for fly-posting has been above target on 11 out of 12 previous months. The fly posting figures have historically included the small business-card size emergency window replacement stickers which appear on the window frames of many retail premises throughout the borough. Dealing with these stickers through enforcement against those responsible has proved difficult and the impact on the street environment is limited in comparison to larger scale flyposting. Consequently, a change in approach was agreed in which the small window stickers will not be included in NI195 fly posting scores (but continue to be recorded separately).
- 6.10 Appendix 1, figure 6 shows 12 months of flytip data which shows that flytipping continues to be an issue in the borough. Veolia, the council and other stakeholders are implementing a flytipping action plan. This is involving engagement with residents, landlords and traders in hotspot areas and follow-on enforcement, the use of CCTV in selected hotspots to aid enforcement and act as a deterrent, and trialling a community-led poster campaign in Noel Park.
- 6.11 Reported missed refuse collection levels are below the current year's contractual ceiling of 80 per 100,000 properties (Appendix 2, figure 1). The level of dry recycling missed collections were above the target level in April but have returned down during May and will be monitored closely going forward. Missed food and green waste collections have broadly followed the pattern of the previous year and will similarly require monitoring through the monthly liaison meetings, as both have had higher missed collections in the first months of the year when compared to last year.
- 6.12 The provisional recycling out-turn for 2015/16 was 37.0%, a shortfall of 1.7% against the target of 38.7% for the year. The target for 2016/17 is 40.1%. As can be seen from the latest performance figures (Appendix 2, figure 2), the year to date figure as of May 2016 is below target, at 37.6%. Performance has been affected by a change in law which has forced recycling processing companies to adopt much stricter sampling regimes, leading to a higher number of rejected loads.
- 6.13 A joint recycling action plan, led by Veolia and supported by council officers is in place which includes specific actions to mitigate the impact referred to above. The plan also includes actions to increase recycling from estates, increase food waste collections from kerbside properties and minimise the amount of refuse that is disposed of.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1 The actions set out in this report are aligned to Council Priority 3 – a clean and safe borough where people are proud to live.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance and Procurement

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

Legal

8.2 There are no specific Legal implications arising from this report.

Equality

8.3 There are no specific Equalities implications arising from this report.

9. Use of Appendices

9.1. The attached appendix sets out the council's latest waste and recycling performance statistics.

Appendix 1 – Street Cleansing Performance

Appendix 2 – Waste and Recycling Performance

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 None.