



**South
Cambridgeshire
District Council**

REPORT TO: Environmental Services Portfolio Holder 25 February 2015
LEAD OFFICER: Mike Hill Director Health & Environmental Services

Business Improvement & Efficiency Programme (BIEP) Waste & Recycling Service Changes – Interim Update

Purpose

1. As part of the Business Improvement and Efficiency Programme (BIEP), in February 2013, Cabinet agreed to a package of changes to the waste and recycling service in order to achieve required efficiency savings. This report provides an interim update on the implementation of these changes and their status in view of the following intended aims:
 - To achieve efficiency savings of £400k in 2015/16 and in-year savings of £200k in 2014/15.
 - To introduce the agreed package of service changes from September 2014 in order to achieve required savings.
 - To seek out further ways in which efficiency savings could be achieved within the service.

Efficiency savings achieved contribute to required savings of £1.1m per year across the Council due to reduction in Government funding.

2. This paper is not a key decision; it provides a brief overview of progress to date and current status pending a full project end report following the financial year end, when the impact of the services changes can be fully assessed.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder notes:
 - (a) The progress and achievements of the project to date, in view of intended aims.
 - (b) That a full project end report will follow after financial year end, when a full assessment can be undertaken.

Summary of Progress against Intended Aims

4. The service achieved a reduction of 12 posts and two Refuse Collection Vehicles from 1 September 2014, which will provide in-year efficiency savings of £200k during 2014/15 and full year savings in 2015/16 of £400k. The reduction of 12 posts was

achieved without the need for compulsory redundancies by planned management of vacancies.

5. The service delivered the following key operational changes to agreed timescales in order to achieve these efficiencies:
 - The number of household waste collection rounds was optimised from 210 to 180, following a detailed review and re-modelling exercise, enabling two Refuse Collection Vehicles to be taken out of service. The 180 new household waste collection rounds went live on 1 September, with just nine out of over 63,000 households requiring a change to collection days.
 - A driver-only Trade Waste Service began on 1 September (previously the service was operated with driver plus loader).
 - Monthly green bin collections began from 1 December and will continue for three months over the winter period, before returning to fortnightly collections in time for spring.
 - New working practices, new working patterns and new service management tools and systems were also introduced from September 1 to support and enable these service changes.
6. The service, responding to efficiency saving ideas sought from staff, also introduced changes to Christmas collection arrangements in 2014 as part of the package of service changes. A detailed assessment of the impact of these changes is in progress and will be included within a full project end report.

Performance

7. The service is monitoring and assessing its performance following the implementation of changes, with key performance areas being customer satisfaction levels, numbers of missed bins and working hours/new collection rounds. The following provides an overview of current performance in these areas.
8. An increased level of customer complaints was anticipated, as has been the case in all recent major service changes introduced by the waste and recycling service. To date, around 150 residents have contacted the authority to present their opposition to, or criticisms of, elements of the service changes. Although regrettable, this represents less than 1% of residents. A couple of residents have also registered their support for the changes. The Directorate's annual Customer Satisfaction Survey will be undertaken from the end of February until early April and will inform the full project end report.
9. As with customer complaints, an increased level of reported missed bins was also anticipated, given the substantial nature of the operational changes introduced. The number peaked at circa. 220/100k in the first few weeks as crews learned their new rounds, the service adjusted to new working practices and working patterns and residents, in many cases, adjusted to their new collection times. Missed bins are being actively managed downwards with the objective that numbers will return to pre-change levels of circa. 45/100k in the very near future.
10. The time taken for crews to complete their new rounds is being actively performance managed to ensure that the completion times arising out of the detailed review and re-modelling exercise will be achieved. This is in conjunction with implementation of ad-hoc round revisions identified by crews as they become more familiar with their new rounds and with their new team finish working practices.

Implications

11. No significant implications, other than those highlighted in this report, have been identified at this time.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1 - We will listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money

12. Successful implementation of the Business Improvement and Efficiency Programme (BIEP) package of changes to the waste and recycling service has made and will continue to make a significant positive contribution to the council's Strategic Aim 1.

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