

Briefing note

Dual-Stream Recycling Update

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Presented to: Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny
Committee

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1. Introduction

The Tamworth and Lichfield Joint Waste Service has now implemented the agreed changes to the recycling service; transitioning to dual-stream collections, with residents asked to separate paper and card from glass, cans and plastics. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the implementation and initial operation (first 4 weeks) of the dual stream collections.

2. Implementation Phase

The implementation of the new service took place over an 8-week period from 4 April to 27 May. During this period a range of service changes were delivered:

- Delivery of bins
- Delivery of bags
- New rounds for recycling, refuse and organics
- Dual stream collections

Implementing all these changes concurrently was unavoidable – they were interdependent-components of a single change – and did put pressure on the service. As a result, there was a period of persistent round non-completions, particularly following the commencement of dual-stream collections from 2 May.

The pressure on the service was exacerbated by a number of other factors:

- Two drivers resigned at the start of the roll-out (the scarcity of HGV drivers is a national challenge). Both drivers have subsequently returned.
- Our waste reprocessor have also had to move to dual-stream disposal – leading to persistent delays (90-minutes+) tipping the RCVs. These problems have now been resolved.
- The period of highest pressure – delivering bags whilst running both dual-stream and comingled collections – was increased due to bag delivery delays and pausing the delivery of new bags to focus on requests for second bags.

The impact on service completions is presented as Appendix 1.

Following the completion of the implementation phase, service reliability has been re-established. Since 30 May, there have only been two days when rounds could not be completed – one of which was 8 June, when the A5 was closed due to a lorry fire.

3. Dual Stream Initial Performance

Full dual-stream collections commenced 30 May and tonnages have been carefully monitored. Weekly tonnages for the first 4 weeks of the dual stream collections are presented as Appendix 2.

Whilst it is very early to draw conclusions from data at such an early stage

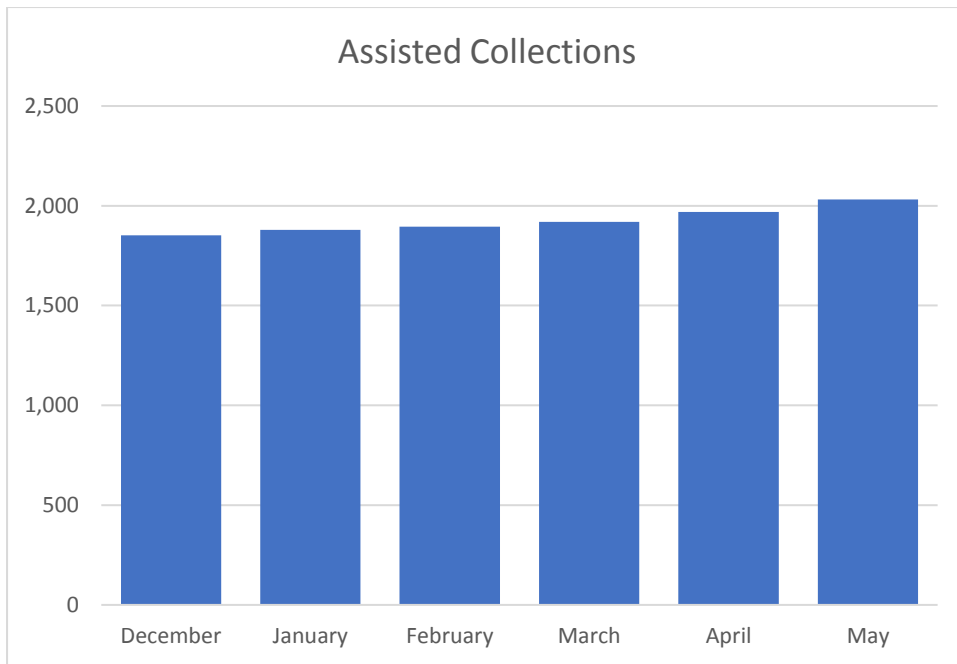
- No appreciable increase in residual waste. Over the 4 weeks the average weekly residual tonnage was 660 tonnes – the average for the 3 months prior to the switch was 760 tonnes per week. This suggests that recyclate is not finding its way into the refuse stream.
- Missed bin reports are steadily reducing (the phone lines were closed for 2 days in week 1 due to the Jubilee bank holidays).
- Rejected / contaminated bins are also reducing - down by more than a third over the period.

The quality of the recycling collected has been transformed – which was the fundamental intent of the transition to dual stream. Prior to the transition, levels of contamination in our recycling were around 14%; since the switch every single load of recycling has achieved the new contamination thresholds of 1% paper and 5% for glass, cans and plastic.

- **Assisted collections**

As anticipated there has been an increase in Assisted Collections. The equality impact assessment completed prior to the implementation indicated that more residents may struggle to handle a bag when compared to wheeling a bin.

At the start of 2022 there were 1,852 assisted collections across both authorities; by the end of May this had increased to 2,031.



- **Service compliance**

Generally, residents have responded very positively to the service change. Using the number of rejected recycling bins as a proxy measure, even at the start of the roll-out over 95% of residents have successfully separated their recycling into the bin and bag. Current compliance with the dual stream separation is consistently above **97%**.

Appendices:

1. Round completion graph
2. Key performance information 30.05.22 – 24.05.22