

## INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY AND GROWTH COMMITTEE

21<sup>st</sup> March 2024

### Report of the Operations Manager

#### Operations Service Performance Update and Data

##### **Background**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on Joint Waste Service Operations.

**A breakdown of the Joint Waste Service (JWS) performance data is attached as Appendix A and the trends are discussed:**

##### **Operational Performance**

Performance across the Joint Waste Service remains good. All collection rounds are being completed on time, with very few exceptions because of operational issue such as a breakdown or a road closure.

There was an average of 370 missed bins per month so far this year versus an average of 326 in the previous year. Since a record low figure in November, we have risen slightly, but constantly work to address.

An average of 2 complaints per month this year were received versus an average of 2.4 in the corresponding period the previous year.

The service has had a very good year in 2023 in terms of stats, so our challenge is to maintain the trends, finding improvements were possible.

##### **Resident Participation**

Resident participation in the recycling service remains very high with most properties presenting both a bin for the glass, cans and plastic and a bag for paper and card every fortnight. This presentation rate is between 98 and 99%.

In 2023 (calendar year), 44085 residents signed up to the Garden Waste Service. 35% of the total were Tamworth residents, with 65% being Lichfield residents. This is unsurprising due to the urban nature of Tamworth.

To date in 2024, 29000 residents have signed up for the Garden Waste scheme.

Residents now have the option to sign up to the Garden Waste Service using either direct debit or traditional card payment. This increases customer choice, and around 8% of residents have chosen direct debit as their preferred payment option.

The number of contaminated bins reported for the year so far as fallen to an average of 1279 per month versus an average of 1488 for the corresponding year. We did have a blip in January. We don't specifically know the full reason but have worked with the teams and February 2024 was our lowest figure to date at 967 contaminated bins. However, this may not be all positive, as is it reduced bins or our teams not reporting? The recycling officers and crews continue to work with residents to minimise this number.

The quality of the material produced by the JWS is high since the service change. Since the change to dual stream only 1 load has been rejected at the Materials Recycling centre. For Qtr. 3 23/24 contamination rates of DMR (Plastic, cans, and glass) was 2.89%, a slight decrease from 3.14% last quarter. Fibre was reported at 0% contamination.

### Tonnage performance

The tonnage of both residual, organic and recycling waste is stable as indicated on the graphs in appendix 1.

Christmas saw the expected surge in recycling tonnage. In the two busiest weeks we averaged 164 tonnes of DMR and 252 tonnes of fibre per week. This is a 54% and 47% increase versus our average tonnage for DMR and fibre. It highlights the hard work of the team as the peak period passed without any major issues.

After the growth in residual waste tonnage over the Covid period, figures have settled down to an average 3128 tonnes per month so far, this financial year, versus 3051 tonnes in 22/23 and 3468 tonnes in 21/22. This is relevant as reducing residual tonnage is beneficial to all and is an action area.

The current recycling rate looks positive at 43.51% for the JWS, and 38.61% for TBC. However, this is only Q1 to Q3 figures and the % is likely to fall across Q4 as Garden Waste tonnage decreases through the winter months.

<b>Recycling Rate: JWS &amp; TBC</b>	<b>21/22</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24 (Qtr1&amp;2)</b>
JWS	43.4%	40.59%	43.51%
TBC	39.75%	35.72%	38.61%

In the financial year so far, the JWS has collected an average of 1240 tonnes per month of dry recycling versus 1266 tonnes per month in the previous year. This follows a national trend of a steady decline in dry recycling and is an area which is being worked on.

Unfortunately, the trend across Staffordshire authorities is of recycling rates falling.

The current DRY recycling rate looks low at 21.09% for the JWS, and 21.41% for TBC. However, this is only Q1 to Q3 figures and the % will rise across Q4 due to expected lower Garden Waste tonnage.

<b>Dry Recycling Rate: JWS &amp; TBC</b>	<b>21/22</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24 (Qtr1&amp;3)</b>
JWS	25.56%	26.01%	21.41%
TBC	28.04%	26.43%	21.09%

The total tonnage of dry recyclate collected from the kerbside in 2022/23 has fallen 18% compared to 21/22. A total of 15,213 tonnes was collected in 2022/23 and 18,395 tonnes the previous year. The reduction is significant but does coincide with the country coming out of lockdown and we are now experiencing a cost-of-living crisis. There has also been a 10% reduction in residual tonnages over the same period.

A substantial residents engagement campaign will be launched before spring which aims to improve performance by explaining the benefits of recycling correctly, for both the community and the environment. It is being offered to all Staffordshire Authorities foc, and the aim is to licence the product to Councils around the country. Sponsorship from partners in the private sector has funded the campaign.

### **Financial Performance**

Budget monitoring indicates the JWS is on track versus budget for 2023/24. At period 8 the anticipated outturn is a £40k overspend for the JWS, this is approximately £16k for TBC. This is against an expenditure of £9 million, with net expenditure of £3.3 million.

For comparison there was a £194,990 overspend on the Joint Waste Service budget in 2022/23. Whilst income levels were strong, there were significant increases in driver pay, agency rates, additional infrastructure on the Recycling Service and fuel. New property growth in both Tamworth and Lichfield has also had an impact on the budget. The overspend has been funded from the Joint Waste Service Reserve with Tamworth’s share being £79,770.

### **Joint Waste Service Projects**

Several important projects have completed, are currently underway or will be completed over the next few months. These include:

- Direct debits for Garden Waste subscriptions (COMPLETED)
- Completion of the migration of flats and HMOs onto the new dual stream recycling service (COMPLETED and being monitored)
- Options appraisal for the proposed mandatory weekly collection of food waste (high level appraisal completed – information to be shared with JWB). COMPLETED  
Intention is to arrange Member Group including LDC & TBC to review options (options may be limited due to Government policy).

- Fleet review and procurement (in progress – tender out in April(?))
  - Cost increases will occur.
- Appraisal for moving fleet to alternative fuel (in progress)
- Launch of new recycling campaign (launch by Spring)
- Completion of the round review (to be revisited early 2024)
  - A number of rounds have been amalgamated, leading to a potential £50k saving per annum without an adverse effect on service level.
- Review of the commercial waste service

Regular updates on the progress of each of these projects will be reported to the Committee.

### **Recommendation**

#### **That the Committee:**

- 1. Note the update on the performance of the Operational Service**