

INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY AND GROWTH COMMITTEE

22nd August 2024

Report of the Operations Manager of the Joint Waste Service

Operations Service Performance Update and Data

None Exempt

Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee a quarterly update of the Joint Waste Service. This is a shared service that Lichfield District Council (LDC) deliver on behalf of both authorities.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

1. Endorse the progress and updates provided.

Background

This report provides the Committee with an update on Joint Waste Service Operations, including Operational Performance, Resident Participation, Tonnage Performance, Finance Update and Joint Waste Service Products.

A breakdown of the Joint Waste Service (JWS) performance data is attached as Appendix 1 and the trends are discussed below:

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 326 missed bins per month in the first quarter of this year versus an average of 357 in same quarter last year. Although not shown in the statistics the most significant improvement has been the fall in the number of missed assisted collections this quarter, they accounted for 16% of the missed collections whereas in the same quarter last year it was 20%. Considerable time and effort has been put in to ensure this area of missed bins has improved.

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%.

At the end of June 43,659 subscriptions for garden waste had been taken up. In 2023 (calendar year), 44,085 residents signed up to the Garden Waste Service, so we are very much on target. 35% of the total were Tamworth residents, with 65% being Lichfield residents. This is unsurprising due to the urban nature of Tamworth.

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 has fallen to an average of 1,040 per month versus an average of 1,595 for the corresponding quarter last year. 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 in May 2022 only 1 load has been rejected at the Materials Recycling centre. For Quarter 1 this year the rate is 2.89% compared to 2.86% for the same quarter last year so it is holding consistently. 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.

After the growth in residual waste tonnage over the Covid period, figures have settled down to an average 3,253 tonnes per month for 23/24, versus 3,051 tonnes in 22/23 and 3,468 tonnes in 21/22. This is relevant as reducing residual tonnage is beneficial to all and is an action area.

The final outturn for recycling for 23/24 was 41.7% for the Joint Waste and 37.41% for Tamworth which was an improvement from the year before, but can mostly be accounted for there being a better growing season last year so there was a higher organic total than the previous year when it was a very hot dry summer.

Recycling Rate:	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/5 qu 1
JWS & TBC				
JWS	43.4%	40.59%	41.7%	45.86%
TBC	39.75%	35.72%	37.41%	40.7%

In the financial year so far, the JWS has collected an average of 1,222 tonnes per month of dry recycling versus 1,240 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 at the end of 23/24 was 22.36% for the JWS, and 23.12% for TBC.

Dry Recycling Rate:	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25 qu1
JWS & TBC				
JWS	25.56%	26.01%	22.36%%	19.56%
TBC	28.04%	26.43%	23.12%	20.2%

Delays to the recycling campaign, caused in part by the general election mean that it will now be launched in the latter part of the summer, with the aim 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 free of charge, 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 budget for 2023/24 was controlled. At the end of the financial year the overspend for the JWS was £154k, this equated to a cost of £64k for TBC, which has been covered through existing waste service reserves.

This is against an expenditure of £8.7 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.

It is worth noting that net expenditure for the JWS was £39k under budget. There was a shortfall of £193 on income; this was a result of lower commodity prices and dry recycling tonnages fallings in 2023/24.

Joint Waste Service Projects

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

- Fleet procurement – tenders have been analysed, and papers have been presented to Members of both Councils to request the award of the contract.
- Production of a Roadmap to transition to an alternatively fuelled fleet.
- Launch of a new recycling campaign (launch late Summer).
- Contract renewal:
 - Green waste disposal (led by Staffordshire County Council)
 - Dry Recycling Contracts (possible extension of existing contract)
- Preparation for 'Simpler Recycling' (specifically food waste collections and disposal).
- Review of the commercial waste service.
- Review of Bulky Collection Service.

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

Appendices

Joint Waste Service Statistics

This page is intentionally left blank