

## INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY AND GROWTH COMMITTEE

12<sup>th</sup> November 2024

### Report of the Operations Manager

#### 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, Joint Waste Service Products.

**A breakdown of the Joint Waste Service (JWS) performance data is attached as Appendix A 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 312 missed bins per month in the second quarter of this year versus an average of 332 per month in the previous 12-month period. The trend is a positive, and there has also been a decrease in the number of missed assisted collections.

#### 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%.

- As of September 2024, **44876 subscriptions for garden waste had been taken.**
- In 2023 (calendar year), 44085 residents signed up to the garden waste service.
- 34% of the total subscribers are Tamworth residents, with 66% being Lichfield residents. This is unsurprising due to the urban nature of Tamworth.

- 42% of Tamworth residents sign up to the service.

It is worth noting that the total number of subscriptions increased in 2024 when LDC increased their charges from £36 to £40 per garden waste bin.

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 per month**

- For quarter 2 of this year is an average of 1179 per month versus an average of 1254 for the previous 12 months.

This is a slight increase on the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter and the trend will be monitored. The recycling officers and crews continue to work with residents to minimise this number.

The **quality of the material** produced by the JWS remains high since the service change.

- For Quarter 2 this year the contamination rate has risen to 3.22% compared to 2.98% for the previous 12 months.
- Fibre was reported at 0% contamination. However, there was approximately 2 tonne of fibre which was removed from a fibre load before it reached the paper mill, due to being contaminated with broken glass. It is believed this was an isolated incident caused by a single resident using their blue bag for bottles. Whilst a 'blip' it highlights the importance of residents buy in to use the recycling scheme as requested.

### **Tonnage performance**

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

Residual tonnage for the JWS (average monthly tonnage):

- 3327 for Q1 & Q2 24/24
- 3253 tonnes per month for 23/24
- 3051 tonnes in 22/23
- 3468 tonnes in 21/22 (Covid year)

The slight increase is an area to be monitored.

The recycling rates are unfortunately following national trends and falling slightly. Although Quarter 1&2 figures are a higher % than 2023/24 figures, they are slightly below the quarter 1&2 figures from 2023/24.

<b>Recycling Rate: JWS &amp; TBC</b>	<b>21/22</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/5 Qtr. 1&amp;2</b>
JWS	45.5%	43.27%	41.36%	44.79%
TBC	42.26%	37.71%	37.15%	39.42%

In the financial year so far, the JWS has collected an average of 1225 tonnes per month of dry recycling versus 1246 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 is following the same trend of slightly lower rate so far for 2024/25.

<b>Dry Recycling Rate: JWS &amp; TBC</b>	<b>21/22</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25 Qtr. 1&amp;2</b>
JWS	24.60%	23.63%	22.51%	20.33%
TBC	27.42%	24.11%	23.26%	21.19%

The Council's 'Recycle for Good' has a soft launch on 29<sup>th</sup> October, with a full launch in November. Councillors from both Lichfield and Tamworth are promoting the campaign. This is the start of a 3-year campaign with the aim of helping to address the issue of falling recycling rates. Sponsorship from partners in the private sector has funded the campaign.

A Staffordshire County Council campaign, which involves 'bin-tagging' many of our bins with recycling messages in also due to launch prior to Christmas.

### **Financial Performance – need input for this part**

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 equates to £64k for TBC. 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 £193k on income; this was a result of lower commodity prices and dry recycling tonnages fallings in 2023/24.

At the time of writing the report figures for Quarter 2 are being finalised. There are budgetary pressures, but actions such as reducing agency usage and direct delivery of residual to the Energy from Waste (EfW) facility have been implemented to help combat the pressures.

### **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 – NRG Ltd, are our new contractor, and 25 new RCV's are in build and will be in operation by April 2025. The contract value is £11.5million over a 7-year period.
- Green waste disposal contract (led by Staffs County Council) has started having been awarded to Greener Composting Ltd., who were the incumbent. The contract is running well.
- Launch of the new recycling campaign 'Recycle for good' is taking place, with joint support from Councillors from both Lichfield and Tamworth.
- A Staffordshire County Council campaign, which involves 'bin-tagging' many of our bins with recycling messages in also due to launch prior to Christmas.
- Production of a Roadmap to transition to an alternatively fuelled fleet. The project is progressing well, and a draft report should be completed by December. This will advise on the costs to 'electrify' the current depot, as well as timescales / options / costs around transitioning to an alternatively fuelled fleet.

- Dry Recycling Contracts. The current three contract with Biffa ends April 2025 however it incorporates the option for extension of 1+1+1 year, this is intended to be activated-subject to formal approval processes.
- Preparation for 'Simpler Recycling' (specifically food waste collections and disposal)
  - Food waste vehicle procurement
  - Food waste receptacles
  - Anaerobic Digestion contracts (via SCC)
  - Project team and associated tasks to ensure service delivery by April 2026.

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

## Appendices

### Joint Waste Service Statistics

Briefing Paper prepared by:  
Steve Gee – Joint Waste Service  
Victoria Woodhouse- Joint Waste Service