

Report to:	TOURISM, ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
Date of Meeting	25 October 2017

WASTE SERVICES AND STREET CLEANSING PERFORMANCE REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To review the performance of Waste Services and Street Cleansing, with an emphasis on headline data, statistics and performance indicators.

2.0 Recommendation:

- 2.1 To scrutinise the performance of the services and identify any matters for further scrutiny.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation:

- 3.1 To ensure effective scrutiny of the Waste and Street Cleansing services.

- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

- 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”.

5.0 Report Information

5.1 Scope of the Report

5.1.1 The report provides a brief outline of the various elements of the services and highlights any current or anticipated issues. Waste Services (*Waste*) and Street Cleansing (*Cleansing*) are two of the Council’s main, high-visibility frontline service areas responsible for delivering a broad range of specialist services to the public.

5.1.2 The scope of this report includes all functional service areas within Waste and Cleansing.

WASTE - including:

- Domestic Waste (incorporating the Refuse and Recycling Collection Contract)
- Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC), including the Re-use Shop
- Trade (or business) Waste
- Waste Disposal Contract (Lancashire Waste Partnership with Lancashire County Council (LCC))
- Third Sector Partnerships including Bulky Matters (bulky items collection) and the Re-New Workshop (electrical repair/ refurbishment of white goods and IT and the furniture restoration partnership with Shabby-to-Chic).

CLEANSING – including:

- Street Sweeping
- NEAT (Neighbourhood Environmental Action Team) incorporating Enforcement and Fly tipping
- Street Litter Bins
- Beach Cleaning
- Weed Spraying
- Graffiti Removal
- Gully Cleaning.

5.2 Budget Information

5.2.1 Waste and Cleansing represent a significant proportion of annual council spend. The combined budgets for the two services are in the region of £17.6million with the Waste budget currently at c£14 million and Cleansing at c£3.6million.

5.3 What is going well?

Waste Services

5.3.1 Third Sector Partnership

5.3.2 Links to third sector partner Calico have continued to grow and strengthen over the last 12 months with the opening of the new Furniture Matters Shop on Counce Street. The shop sells furniture, white goods and an array of household items that have been refurbished, reused or upcycled in the warehouse at Bristol Avenue.

5.3.3 Calico have also taken over delivery of three lots of waste contracts in the last 12 months, namely: Rover (as mentioned above), paper/card collections and wheeled bin management.

5.3.4 A re-use shop is also opening in Cleveleys town centre which will help to strengthen the network.

5.3.5 The Rover Service

5.3.6 The Rover service is a mobile recycling unit servicing those residents with no access to a car, which in some of the inner wards is over 50% of the households.

5.3.7 Calico have proven to be very successful in delivering Rover, exceeding all expectations by increasing the number of items collected, resident visits and locations. In 2015/2016 it collected 42,075 items totaling 114.82 tons of material that was recycled from 7,069 resident visits. In 2016/2017 this increased to 43,029 items, 116.9 tons and 7,681 visits. There are also many items that are sold in The Tip Shop helping to generate an income.

5.3.8 Bulky Matters

5.3.9 Bulky Matters is the Council's bulky item collection service in partnership with a third sector partner, Furniture Matters who now also come under the Calico umbrella.

5.3.10 The bulky waste service continues to perform to target and increasing amounts of collected furniture are going back out to those in need across the town, through partnership working with the Social Fund.

5.3.11 The service is operated in conjunction through a cost sharing agreement with Wyre Borough Council on a 70/30% split.

5.3.12 Since January the service has made 4,049 collections, with 9,009 items collected and 339 Social Fund deliveries. 48% of the items have been recycled.

5.4 Garden Waste Subscription Service (Green and Go)

- 5.4.1 In June 2016 we introduced a subscription charge for the collection of green waste. This was taken up by just over of 10,000 properties and has generated an income of c£250,000 in 2016/2017 which then pays for the resources to deliver the Service as well as off-set pressures in other services areas.
- 5.4.2 Current performance for 2017/2018 is 10,400 customers with a forecast revenue of £317,000. This increase in revenue will help to alleviate overspend in other areas of Waste, particularly at the Household Waste Recycling Centre where there is significant pressure.

5.5 Review of Veolia Refuse and Recycling Contract

- 5.5.1 As the end of the refuse contract approaches in March 2019, work is already underway to review the future delivery model for the service.
- 5.5.2 A detailed options appraisal is being undertaken and working with Procurement and Finance. The aim is to establish a model that delivers value for money to both residents and the Council alike.

5.6 Lancashire Waste Partnership

- 5.6.1 Following termination of the PFI and bringing the waste operating company back in-house, Lancashire County Council have carried out a substantial programme of transformation which has resulted in significant savings to the operating budget.
- 5.6.2 As well as organisational transformation, there have been significant changes to the way in which the plant operates and the way that waste is processed. Again, this has been done in order to make savings.
- 5.6.3 Waste is no longer processed through a Mechanical and Biological Treatment (MBT) process and nor is any Organic Growth Media (compost) being produced.
- 5.6.4 Instead, waste is now mechanically separated and then shredded to produce Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF).
- 5.6.5 Mass Loss Trials are also underway to reduce the physical amount of waste through drying/evaporation.

5.7 Keep Blackpool Tidy

- 5.7.1 The Keep Blackpool Tidy (KBT) Campaign has seen a number of organised events and activities over the summer. Beginning with 'Moose' and the reverse graffiti campaign, which generated a lot of interest and engagement with locals, visitors and businesses. As well as

that, there have been three organised litter picks on the Promenade, Stanley Park and Hounds Hill Shopping Centre. Links to Leisure's 'Steps To Health Programme have also seen volunteers getting involved in community clear-ups.

- 5.7.2 The campaign also gained valuable exposure on the back of Sky's Ocean Rescue with 'Plasticus', the giant plastic whale, coming to Blackpool, as well as some activities supporting Love My Beach.
- 5.7.3 The campaign also designed and installed Keep Blackpool Tidy flags on to all the litterbins on the central promenade and around the blue flag beach, which has helped to visually see the number of bins and generate awareness, particularly with the large events that we have hosted over the summer.
- 5.7.4 The last 12 months have seen a mini-campaign focusing on smoking litter and a soon to be rolled out campaign in relation to chewing gum.
- 5.7.5 The main focus however remains on engagement with volunteers and we continue to encourage residents and businesses to show their commitment by signing up to the campaign at www.blackpool.gov.uk/tidy and pledging their support. Litter action packs are continually being distributed to volunteers across the town to support their activities.

5.8 Street Cleansing

- 5.8.1 The introduction of the Livewire events along with long established events such as the Air Show and Firework Championships were resourced and managed by the service to good effect with no noticeable negative publicity around cleanliness. The time lapse filming of the clean-up following the illumination switch on in the arena offered great publicity of how professionally the service is delivered and this was shown on public counter screens.
- 5.8.2 Litter bin provision across the borough is continuously reviewed, with additional litter bins deployed to high litter generation areas and stock continues to be standardised to increase volume and capacity. The service has integrated the Parks and Open spaces litter bin servicing into day to day operations and has from May 2017 taken the responsibility for providing the litter bin servicing to Stanley Park following their litter bin refurbishment program introducing 34 large capacity litter bins which are serviced twice weekly.
- 5.8.3 Neighbourhood shopping parades continue to be cleaned on a daily or alternate day depending on the size and footfall in the area. The frequency determines the level of litter migrating to residential streets, which is then cause for complaint. All shops have sufficient litter bin provision and as previously mentioned, volume and capacity increased where replacement and renewal litter bins have been introduced. Where possible larger capacity litter bins will be installed as funding and replacement provision allows.

The service has developed a robust monthly inspect and clean regime for residential streets which results in the service only deploying resources to those areas which need cleaning. The results of the inspection are closely monitored by service managers using a dashboard which monitors 32 residential mapped areas.

5.8.4 Arterial routes through the town have also been prioritised above residential street cleaning and considered an effective and efficient use of resource. This delivery of the street cleansing service is seen by many and reduces litter spreading to minor highways reducing complaints and increasing cleanliness perception.

5.9 What is not going well and why?

Waste Services

5.9.1 Household Waste Recycling Centre (including The Tip Shop)

5.9.2 Due to above average increased waste arising, the increased cost of waste disposal coupled with rising transport costs and the volatile nature of the recycling markets, the Household Waste Recycling Centre is experiencing budgetary pressures forecast at c.£40,000

5.9.3 After a milestone year last year, when the Tip Shop successfully topped the £100,000 threshold, performance is slightly down year to date. Although it still continues to perform well overall, selling items for re-use and diverting waste from landfill. Work is ongoing with regard to analyzing possible causes and solutions in an effort to encourage more residents to donate items to the shop as well as visit the shop to see what it has to offer.

5.10 Waste Disposal Infrastructure and Policy

5.10.1 Generally, the rising cost of waste disposal is something beyond our control. With the exit from the EU and overall lack of direction from central government in relation to national waste policy, there is a significant gap in the investment of waste infrastructure (both public and private). Coupled with reducing landfill, this represents financial and operational risk at a local and national level.

5.10.2 Blackpool Council is now actively involved in devising and delivering a new Lancashire Waste Strategy in partnership with Lancashire County Council. This will focus various elements, particularly on disposal options, waste minimization and education for the medium to long term. The Council is also part of the Local Government Association and the National Association of Waste Disposal Officers (NAWDO), in the national debate relating to waste, in order to drive policy.

5.11 Street Cleansing

5.11.1 The emergence of weed growth on arterial commuter routes whilst successfully managed during late spring and early summer did deteriorate during the middle and latter summer months largely due to weather. The programme around residential streets followed a similar decline and became reactive to complaints only with little or no attention offered to back streets. It would be naïve not to admit that the resources trained to carry out treatments when the weather offers good opportunities is split into shifts and not always readily available. There is no magic wand on the subject of weeds but will be reviewed to consider improvements.

5.12 3GS Environmental Solutions

5.12.1 At its meeting of 20 June 2016, the Executive agreed to a one-year pilot working in conjunction with 3GS Environmental Solutions to carry-out a cost neutral enforcement activity in relation to litter and dog fouling.

5.12.2 The Director of Community and Environmental Services was authorised after consultation with the Head of Procurement and Development, to grant an exception to Corporate Procurement Rules.

5.12.3 A private sector company, 3GS Environmental Solutions, were identified as they promoted a comprehensive managed on-site based environment enforcement service, providing a professional cost neutral solution that focusses on the growing issue of street scene environmental crime.

5.12.3 This approach was supported by Keep Britain Tidy, as one of a number of actions in relation to our Keep Blackpool Tidy campaign.

5.12.4 In terms of enforcement, in excess of 900 fixed penalty notices had been issued by the company between August 2016 and May 2017, with more than 600 being paid. In relation to those outstanding, a number have been concluded through the court process, with others pending court. Although it has come to light a number have been issued in error. A general concern has been the quality of the documentation to support a case to prosecution. Since 3GS have finished, a number of case files have been forwarded to the Head of Public Protection for progressing, however as previously highlighted in many cases the documentation is poor.

5.12.5 The majority of notices related to cigarette waste in particular, which is a huge issue nationally. It is likely that if the pilot had been in neighbourhood areas, general litter and dog fouling would have figured to a greater extent.

5.12.6 In terms of the latter, a number of Members have enquired as to the potential of the service being available in their ward in the future if contributed to by ward funding.

- 5.12.7 In relation to the pilot and working with 3GS Environmental Solutions, this has not realised or resulted in the benefits envisaged at the outset of the scheme, with the Head of Public Protection having to become involved in many operational matters.
- 5.12.8 It is clear that there is a role for enforcement of litter and dog fouling environmental crime and in neighbourhoods a greater focus on fly-tipping. Therefore, in light of the wealth of experience and expertise of the Cleansing Services and Public Protection, the way forward will be to set up an in-house service, which members could buy in to in terms of a contribution from ward funding.
- 5.12.9 In relation to an in-house service, consideration would be given to all officers across services who issue enforcement notices of one kind or another being trained to issue fixed penalty notices for littering, dog fouling and fly-tipping, therefore, creating a generic team.

5.13 What are the barriers to improvement?

- 5.13.1 Inflexibility in relation to the refuse and recycling collection contract has, and remains, a barrier to improvement in delivering efficient and integrated waste services.
- 5.13.2 Differing priorities and focus in relation to the outsourced Veolia contract and the in-house Cleansing service means that implementing new and improved ways of delivering cost effective value for money services can be a challenge.

6.0 Performance

Which areas are performing well?

6.1.1 Trade Waste

- 6.1.2 The service continues to perform well as the largest local provider of business waste solutions with a market share of circa 45%.
- 6.1.3 A sustained campaign of enforcement work is still underway to ensure business compliance with Waste Transfer Notes (WTN) regulations. This is generally being well received by local businesses as the Council visibly taking action against businesses who blatantly disregard their environmental obligations.
- 6.1.4 The judicial review brought against HMRC by MAX Recycle, in which Blackpool's Trade Waste Service was heavily cited, has been heard in the upper tribunal. The verdict was ruled in favour of the HMRC in relation to the application of a special legal regime in relation to VAT, so this is a really positive outcome for Blackpool Council.

6.2 How does the Council compare with other authorities in terms of benchmarking?

- 6.2.1 The Council's Waste Services is an active member of the Association of Public Service Excellence. Through this association the Council subscribes to Association of Public Service Excellence's Performance Networks benchmarking group. The group allows comparison and benchmarking with other authorities or 'family groups' (in terms of demographics and deprivation indices). The next batch of reports will be produced at the end of October 2017.
- 6.2.2 The number of performance indicators produced is vast and far-ranging. In essence, benchmarked against other authorities, Blackpool Council's Waste Services is a good performer (within its constraints) however, in the spirit of continuous improvement it is always looking at how to do things better and more cost effectively.
- 6.2.3 The main headline indicator for waste is the municipal recycling rate. Blackpool Council is required to report waste data in to the governments Waste Data Flow System. Recycling rates for recent years are as follows: 2012/2013 – 39.6%, 2013/2014 – 41.1%, 2014/2015 – 39.9%, 2015/2016 – 45% (*provisional*) and 2016/2017 – To be confirmed.
- 6.2.4 The recycling rate is now at the national average and it ought to be noted that the highest performing Council can count on 30% of its overall rate coming from garden waste. Prior to subscriptions, garden waste only contributes 12.5% of Blackpool's overall recycling rate, which reflects the low number of gardens in the Blackpool housing profile, but highlights that in all other areas of waste collected the Council outperform most districts in Lancashire.

INDICATOR	2015/2016	2016/2017	Year to date
Green Waste Subscriptions	N/A	10,000	10,400
Bulky Matters Collections	4,617	5,038	4,049
Missed Bin Collections (justified)	2,444	1,630	504
Trade Waste Market Share	48%	43%	45%
Rover Visits	7,069	7,681	4,461

6.3 What are the priorities in terms of improving performance this year?

- Continue to expand the green waste subscription service.
- Further develop the 'Keep Blackpool Tidy' campaign with local events and quarterly campaigns.
- To further develop and support the Council's corporate commitment to the Channel Shift ethos.
- Review of Refuse and Recycling Collection Contract and possible delivery options post 2019.
- Ongoing support and review of our third sector working partnerships in order to create increased community recycling initiatives.
- Ongoing review of the recycling off-take contracts at the Household Waste Recycling Centre.

- To work with Lancashire County Council in identifying and supporting efficiencies within the operating company and to translate these in to financial savings.
- Continue to work with the Local Government Association and the National Association of Waste Disposal Officers in relation to contributing to the national debate in order to drive policy.

7.0 Finance

7.1 The 2016/2017 revised budgets for Waste and Street Cleansing are shown in more detail in the table below:

SERVICE	2016/2017 BUDGET at last Scrutiny	2017/2018 BUDGET
Trade Waste	(729,165)	163,286
HWRC	470,640	1,094,388
Bulky Waste Collection Service	31,731	139,748
PFI	10,530,119	273,896
Regular Collections	4,084,420	11,941,419
Bin Purchase	53,418	53,078
Calico	63,100	120,000
Waste Disposal	305,862	184,875
WEEE Workshop	0	58,697
TOTAL WASTE BUDGET	14,810,125	14,029,387
Street Cleansing	2,760,822	3,468,997
LEAF	0	0
Winter Maintenance	104,567	104,567
Pest Control	7,213	9,735
TOTAL STREET CLEANSING BUDGET	2,872,602	3,583,299
TOTAL COMBINED WASTE AND CLEANSING BUDGET	17,682,727	17,612,686

8.0 Cross Departmental Working

8.1 Due to the considerable spend within these service areas, the service has fostered a wide range of cross-departmental working relationships and always seeks to maximise the delivery of value through the development and maintenance of strong connections with colleagues in support services such as Legal, Procurement and Finance. This leads to closer working relationships with key people in delivering our objectives, in key areas such as Communications and Marketing, Print Services and Business Support.

9.0 Engagement and Communication

9.1 How the service communicates the good work it is doing to residents.

- Direct communications via the Council's website, Your Blackpool and increased use of effective and targeted social media.
- Regular conversations with residents through the Household Waste Recycling Centre and the Rover service also provide valuable feedback. Use is made of the Waste Liaison officer to deal with residents and members of the public face to face. The service also undertakes a varied array of internal and external advertising campaigns.

9.2 How is it known that the services provided are making an impact and are valued by residents?

- 9.2.1 The Waste Service commissions an annual Household Waste survey, in conjunction with other local authorities, which is used to inform decision making (i.e. green waste) and drive future strategy. The 2017/2018 survey results will be published in November 2017.
- 9.2.2 The questionnaire results highlighted a number of areas where residents want to see change in the mediums used to communicate, namely increased use of leaflets.
- 9.2.3 Planned use of the Council's 'Infusion' service to develop and understand resident insight and perceptions.
- 9.2.4 Questionnaires from residents utilising the Rover service and the Household Waste Recycling Centre continue to be used to assist in understanding resident's perceptions and expectations of the service.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

10.0 List of Appendices:

None

11.0 Legal considerations:

11.1 None

12.0 Human Resources considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Equalities considerations:

13.1 None

14.0 Financial considerations:

14.1 None

15.0 Risk management considerations:

15.1 None

16.0 Ethical considerations:

16.1 None

17.0 Internal/External Consultation undertaken:

17.1 None

18.0 Background papers:

18.1 None