

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## STREET SCENE and ENVIRONMENT SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

11 June 2019

### Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services

#### Part 1- Public

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

## 1 WASTE SERVICES CONTRACT

### Summary

**This report updates Members on the new Waste Services Contract which started on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, with the new and improved recycling services due to commence from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019. The report also highlights the Government's recently published new 25 year Resources & Waste Strategy.**

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Council's Waste Services Contract has recently been retendered in partnership with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Urbaser was appointed as the successful contractor by Cabinet on the advice of this Board, and commenced the delivery of the new contract on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

In summary:-

- the contract covers the collection of household refuse and the cleansing of streets across the boroughs of Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells [in Tonbridge and Malling this involves circa 54,580 households];
- between 1<sup>st</sup> March – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019 the contract matches the service delivery arrangements in the previous contract;
- from the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 a new improved household recycling collection service will be introduced including weekly food waste, plastic bottles, trays, pots and tubs, glass, bottles and jars, paper and card/cardboard, tins and cans, household batteries, small electrical appliances and textiles;
- the new Service will also include the change to an opt-in garden waste service for which a separate annual charge will apply.

1.1.2 At the last meeting of this Board on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2019, Members were updated on the contract arrangements, met with representatives from Urbaser and made a number of recommendations to Cabinet as follows:-

- the Mobilisation Arrangements for the new Waste & Recycling Service as outlined in the report be approved;
- the draft Operational Marketing Plan be agreed and implemented;
- the Domestic Recycling & Waste Collection Policy Procedure & Statement for the new Service be agreed; and
- the Partnership Manager brings forward an Annual Service Delivery Plan to a future meeting of this Board for approval and ongoing monitoring.

1.1.3 A separate Member Group has been established by this Council to help oversee the implementation of the new contract, and has already met on a number of occasions. The Group last met on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and focussed on the new Information Technology system being used to manage the contract (Whitespace) together with digital marketing, and the new temporary waste and recycling website. Following the Borough Council elections it is appropriate to revisit representation on the Member Group. At the present time there are 4 Member representatives in addition to the Chair and Vice Chair of this Board and the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services.

## **1.2 Contractor Performance**

1.2.1 Urbaser commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, so it is still very early days in the life of the new contract. Performance to date has been in accordance with the requirement of the contract, which has been helped by the majority of the staff employed by the previous contractor choosing to continue with their employment on the new contract.

1.2.2 Until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 Urbaser will continue with the previous service arrangements and are therefore using hire vehicles for this period. Key Monthly Performance Indicators to monitor performance of the contractor are being finalised by the Partnership Manager, and these will be included in future reports to this Board. It is hoped that some initial performance information will be available for the meeting of the Board and this will be shared verbally on the night.

## **1.3 Mobilisation Arrangements for the New Service**

1.3.1 At the last meeting of this Board Members approved the Mobilisation arrangements for the new Service. The two agreed phases can be summarised as follows:-

i) Phase 1

- for subscribers to the opt-in garden waste service, new brown garden waste bins will be delivered before the service starts on 30<sup>th</sup> September;
- food waste bins will be delivered from August onwards and will all be in place before the service starts on 30<sup>th</sup> September for every property.

The above approach takes into account that peak demand for garden waste is ending, will enable follow up messaging with residents still presenting 'old' garden waste receptacles, and will free up the contractor's staff and vehicles. The timing of the food waste will allow residents to continue to dispose of food waste when the garden waste receptacles are removed.

ii) Phase 2

- collection of residual waste and recycling will commence from 30<sup>th</sup> September;
- the new bring bank service will commence once the new service has bedded in [10 key strategic bring bank sites will be retained]. This will involve replacing banks at those sites earmarked to remain to mirror the new kerbside service. Banks will be removed from sites approved for closure in liaison with the land owners, and public notices will be displayed at the sites prior to closure. A report will be submitted to the next meeting of this Board on the arrangements for the new bring bank service.

The above approach ensures co-ordination with the new recycling and food waste collections. There will be no change to the existing Saturday bulky waste service with the exception of exclusion of garden waste from 30<sup>th</sup> September.

1.3.2 With regard to the opt-in garden waste service the 'Early Bird Scheme' went live on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May and closes on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019. The Early Bird scheme will not only offer residents a reduced price of £35 p.a. for the service (guaranteed for the first 2 years), but will also ensure their new garden waste bin is delivered and available for use in accordance with the aforementioned Implementation Plan. For all those applying for the garden waste service after 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019, the full charge for the service will be applied (£40 p.a.), they will be added to a waiting list and their new bin will be delivered as soon as is practicable. It is not anticipated that this will be before 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

1.3.3 At the time of writing this report Officers are pleased by the initial take-up for the garden waste service, with 4,150 households subscribing, 4,549 bins ordered (households can have up to 3 bins), and £155,225 of income generated. 71% of subscriptions have been self-service and 20% have signed up for direct debit in the future. The income target for garden waste subscriptions in the 2019/20 revenue budget is £550,000, which is based on 30% of all households in the

borough subscribing to the service. The delivery of the garden waste bins for those subscribing will commence in July 2019, and will be undertaken by a specialist company employed by Urbaser.

- 1.3.4 Following a procurement exercise undertaken in liaison with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, the new garden waste bins and internal and external food caddies have been ordered with the successful suppliers. The cost of the containers is within the £600,000 budget allocation within the Capital Plan.

## 1.4 Marketing/Communications

- 1.4.1 At the last meeting of this Board Members approved an Operational Marketing Plan developed in liaison with the Member Group and a marketing consultant employed directly by Urbaser. The Plan was developed to ensure information reached as many residents as possible, was cost effective and utilised both traditional and modern marketing techniques.

- 1.4.2 I have attached at **Annex 1** a copy of the Plan, including an update on each of the activities. Members will note that since the last meeting of this Board the following actions have been progressed:-

- an Introduction Leaflet about the new contractor was mailed to all residents by Urbaser;
- a flyer outlining the new service arrangements was mailed out with the Council Tax bills;
- a new waste and recycling website went live on 3rd May 2019 [www.tmbc.gov.uk/recycleforall](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/recycleforall);
- a wide range of social media advertising has progressed;
- individual presentations have been made to 12 Parish/Town Councils;
- 4 roadshows have taken place in Tonbridge, Kings Hill, Hildenborough and Shipbourne;
- presentations have been made to seven community groups ranging from Tonbridge Civic Society to Wouldham Coffee Morning and Borough Green Womens Institute to the Snodland Older Persons Open Day; and
- presentations have been made to meetings of the Parish Partnership Panel and Tonbridge Forum.

- 1.4.3 The new waste and recycling website has proved to be popular with 13,415 visitors to the site between 7<sup>th</sup> May – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The website includes a promotional video, frequently asked questions, pictures of the new containers and a whole host of helpful information.

- 1.4.4 The next most significant marketing activity will be the posting of the New Recycling Service Guide to all households in August 2019. Individual letters will also be sent to residents who require a 'sack collection' and those living in flats/communal areas. The Service Guide will not only explain in detail the new service arrangements but will also advise households on which day their waste will be collected.
- 1.4.5 There will also be a range of promotional activities a few weeks before the 'early bird discount' expires, to encourage residents to benefit from the reduced charge.

## **1.5 Resources & Waste Strategy**

- 1.5.1 At the last meeting of this Board Members were advised that the Council had received a copy of the Government's new Resources & Waste Strategy covering the next 25 years.
- 1.5.2 The Government launched three major consultations in February 2019, with a closing date for response of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The consultations cover the Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Schemes and most relevant to this authority, Consistent Collections. In addition to these major consultations, the Government also plan to launch a consultation on increased charges for carrier bags at some point later in the year.
- 1.5.3 With regard to Consistent Collections, the Strategy contains an ambition to have more consistent collections across Council areas, which will be achieved by this Council from 30<sup>th</sup> September through the introduction of the new service arrangements. The Strategy highlights collecting a core set of dry recycling materials together with weekly food waste collections, once again in line with this authority's new approach. It is worthy of note that included in the strategy is an ambition to explore free garden waste collections, although the document does include a caveat of this being assessed to account for new burdens being funded appropriately.
- 1.5.4 Within the report to the last meeting of this Board it was noted that this Council would most likely respond to the consultations through the Kent Resource Partnership (KRP). For those Members new to the authority, the KRP is a partnership between all the District Council's in Kent and Kent County Council to help improve waste management in Kent. A copy of the KRP response, which was considered by the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and the Chair/Vice Chair of this Board, to the Government's three Consultations can be made available to Members upon request, and I have included the response on the Consistent Collections Consultation at **Annex 2**.

## **1.6 Legal Implications**

- 1.6.1 The Council has a legal duty to provide waste and street cleansing services. The new Waste Services Contract was undertaken in compliance with all current legislation, including Public Contract Regulations.

- 1.6.2 The introduction of the new service arrangements is considered to assist the Council in meeting its requirements under the Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2011, which are to provide separate collections where necessary to achieve high quality recycling.

## **1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.7.1 At the November 2018 meeting of this Board Members received a detailed financial appraisal of the new Waste Services Contract, and the financial implications have been reflected in the 2019/20 revenue budget. The total expenditure on the contract in 2019/20 is £4.1m.
- 1.7.2 The annual gross level of income for the opt-in garden waste service is forecast to be £550,000, which is based on a take up rate of 30%. For medium term financial planning purposes as mentioned in the report to the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board on 9 January 2019, it is assumed the inflationary increase in the contract sum over and above CPI is negated by a gradual increase in both the charge and the take-up of the garden waste service. In the long term, and with all other things being equal, the difference represents budget growth year on year.
- 1.7.3 The Council's Capital Plan incorporates £600,000 to reflect the need to purchase new garden waste bins and internal and external food caddies. A revenue budget of £100,000 has been approved by Council to fulfil the Operational Marketing Plan, funded in full from the Invest to Save earmarked Reserve.

## **1.8 Risk Assessment**

- 1.8.1 A Project Steering Group has been established by this Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council to oversee the implementation and ongoing management of the Waste Services Contract. The Steering Group is being managed in accordance with a formal Joint Working Agreement agreed by each of the Partners.
- 1.8.2 This authority is represented on the Group by the Head of Street Scene & Leisure. The Contract Partnership Manager reports regularly to the Steering Group on progress and any key issues are addressed.
- 1.8.3 Weekly meetings are being undertaken with Urbaser to ensure good levels of communication are maintained, and the Operational Marketing Plan will ensure residents are kept fully informed and encouraged to embrace the new service arrangements.

## **1.9 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 1.9.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has previously been reported to this Board and its recommendations have been implemented.

## **1.10 Policy Considerations**

1.10.1 Communications

1.10.2 Community

1.10.3 Customer Contact

1.10.4 Procurement

## **1.11 Recommendations**

1.11.1 It is RECOMMENDED TO CABINET that:-

- i) the representation on the Member Waste Contract Group for 2019/20 be determined;
- ii) a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Board on the Bring Bank service arrangements; and
- iii) the Kent Resource Partnership's response to the Government's consultation on the National Waste Resources & Waste Strategy be noted, and updates be reported to future meetings of this Board.

The Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Darren Lanes

Nil

Robert Styles

Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services