

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE

14 June 2023

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

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 WASTE CONTRACT - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

To report on performance of the Waste Contract against a suite of Key Performance indicators.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 As part of the ongoing monitoring & management of the Waste Contract, currently delivered by Urbaser, a suite of Key Performance Indicators is measured and areas for improvement identified. This is in addition to day-to-day management of the contract through site inspections; health & safety checks; spot checks on crews; and morning, midday, and end of day updates on collection progress.

1.1.2 As recommended by Members of this Committee on 7 July 2022, and subsequently approval by Cabinet on 7 September, the Overview & Scrutiny – Cabinet Protocol established that the Scrutiny Work Programme will have, as a standing item, Key Performance indicators relating to the service areas covered by each Scrutiny Select Committee. A corporate suite of KPIs to cover all service areas is also being reported to meetings of each relevant Scrutiny Select Committee.

1.2 Key Performance Indicators

1.2.1 The data included within this report for each Key Performance Indicator is for the period April 2022 to March 2023, with comparative data for April 2021 to March 2022, together with percentage variance when compared with the 2021/22 performance. The exceptions are for those relating to recycling & composting performance, where the data for April 2022 to December 2022 is the most recent audited data available. These are shown in comparison with the same period in 2021, again with the percentage variance.

1.2.2 Narrative for key issues is provided below this table:

Description	April 2021 - March 2022	April 2022 – March 2023	%age Variance in Performance
Completion of scheduled collections (%age of rounds completed on scheduled collection day)	88.7%	97.8%	+10%
Missed Collections – total number of reports	14,954	13,217	-12%
Missed Collections - % of jobs not actioned within SLA - (24 hrs)	100%	100%	0%
Formal complaints – (inc. Intents to default) - Refuse & Recycling	525	274	-48%
Formal complaints – (inc. Intents to default - Street Cleaning	128	214	+67%
Complaints (inc. missed collections, bin returns, pull outs, etc.) – total number	15,765	13,957	-12%
Green Box Requests – total number	3,026	3,565	+18%
Green Box requests - %age of jobs not actioned within SLA - (5w/days)	41%	27%	-34%
Bin Requests (inc. new properties, replacements & repairs) – total number	6,227	9,760	+57%
Bin Requests (inc. new properties, replacements & repairs) - % of jobs not actioned within SLA - (5 w/days)	59%	37%	-37%
Bulky Collections (inc. fridges/freezers) – total number	2,838	3,660	+29%
Bulky Collections (inc. fridges/freezers) - % of jobs not actioned within SLA - (scheduled collection date)	18%	19%	+6%
Fly Tipping – total number of incidents reported	819	836	+2%

	April-Dec 2021	April-Dec 2022	%age Variance in Performance
Recycling Performance – total % of waste recycled or composted	45.46%	49.36%	+9%
Recycling Performance - % of waste recycled	21.94%	21.49%	-2%
Recycling Performance - % of waste composted	23.52%	27.87%	+19%
Total waste collected (tonnes)	36,995	37,489	+1%
Kerbside Collections:			
Recycling (tonnes)	16,815	18,504	+10%
Food waste (tonnes)	2,640	2,033	-23%
Garden waste (tonnes)	6,061	8,416	+39%
Refuse - black bin (tonnes)	20,180	18,984	-6%

1.2.3 Members will recall that in 2021 there was significant disruption to collections, caused by staffing issues experienced by Urbaser due to the national shortage of HGV drivers and the ongoing impacts of Covid at that time. Such was the disruption that recycling collections had to be suspended for a collection cycle in June, and subsequently garden waste collections were suspended from late July 2021. These issues are reflected in the “Completion of scheduled collections” performance of 88.7% (excluding Garden Waste from late July) in the 2021/22 reporting period, compared with 97.8% in 2022/23 following the reinstatement of the Garden Waste service. The 2022/23 performance was adversely impacted by the bad weather experienced in late 2022. Performance in April 2023 has averaged 99.5% daily completion of rounds.

1.2.4 The overall number of individual missed collection reports has reduced by 12% when compared with the previous year. Given that there are around 514,000 scheduled refuse, recycling, food waste & garden waste collections in each month, there would have been approximately 6,168,000 scheduled for this reporting period. This equates to a missed collection rate of 0.21% in 2022/23 compared with 0.24% in 2021. We will continue to work with Urbaser to further reduce the rate of missed collections, particularly for vulnerable residents on our assisted collection service, and for repeat misses at the same property.

- 1.2.5 The %age of missed collections completed within the SLA is difficult to assess, as currently the back-office system does not always recognise when missed collections have been completed by the same crew who missed it on the collection day, or if they have been completed by a different “missed collection” crew. Urbaser are currently looking into this issue with the systems, but until this is resolved, TMBC will continue to report using the data that is available.
- 1.2.6 The number of formal complaints relating to collections has also continued to reduce compared with last year, from 44 per month to 23 per month. These complaints will include issues such as poor bin placement, spillage of waste, repeat missed collections, behaviour of crew, alleged mixing of waste, etc. The client team will continue to carry their schedule of proactive monitoring & spot checks and ensure that Urbaser also monitor “hot spot” properties.
- 1.2.7 Now that collections have generally stabilised, Urbaser have been instructed to refocus on some of the other aspects of the contracted services such as street cleansing, litter & dog waste bins, delivery of containers within the contract SLAs, and the closing down of completed service requests in a timelier manner.
- 1.2.8 The number of formal complaints relating to street cleaning issues has increased from 11 to 19 per month. The main issues reported have been about unemptied litter & dog waste bins, of which TMBC service 1,150 and 600 across the borough respectively. One of the main causes for litter & dog waste bins being missed is when Urbaser have a staff change on the regular emptying routes. Any staff covering these works were not as familiar with the locations as the usual staff and were regularly missing bins which did not have a specific location attached to their worklist, particularly when bins are located on footpaths, recreation grounds and the Country Parks, for example.
- 1.2.9 In order to assist in addressing this issue, officers have now allocated a “What 3 Words” location to the majority of the bins. This app can then be used to pinpoint the exact location of the bins when they are scheduled to be emptied, as well as used by residents to report any overfull or damaged bins. The dog waste collection vehicle now has a dedicated member of staff on it, who is also training another operative on the round to ensure continuity when one is off. The trained bin installing operative has also now been released from some of his other duties and is now able to keep on top of new or replacement bins that are raised through an Additional Works instruction.
- 1.2.10 Due to the number of bin requests increasing, particularly over the last year with new builds being completed, Urbaser are currently bulking up bin orders to deliver them by area, including carrying out deliveries on Saturdays. This includes each month’s Garden Waste bin requests from new subscribers. This is considered more efficient than carrying them out in order of the request being made, which leads to increased mileage & driving time. As such, some deliveries have to be

made outside of the current SLA. Due to the significant increase in the numbers of containers being ordered since the start of the contract, Urbaser are currently in the process of employing a third-party contractor to assist in deliveries & retrieval of containers.

- 1.2.11 Members will note that the number of incidents of fly tipping has seen a small overall increase compared with the previous year. In the first three quarters of 2022/23, there had been an average reduction of around 10% compared with the previous year, but in March 2023 there was an increase compared with March 2022. Although TMBC continues to have one of the lowest levels of fly tipping in Kent, it remains a significant issue for both Members & residents particularly in “hot spot” areas.

Authority	Total Incidents
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	721
Sevenoaks District Council	801
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	836
Dover District Council	985
Ashford Borough Council	1177
Swale Borough Council	1547
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	1666
Dartford Borough Council	1995
Gravesham Borough Council	2148
Thanet District Council	2278
Maidstone Borough Council	2391
Canterbury City Council	2750

- 1.2.12 Since mid-October 2022, a third-party contractor has been employed on a 12-month pilot basis to carry out fly tipping & littering investigations & enforcement action. A review of their performance to date is being reported separately to this meeting. Officers will continue to work with local partners such as the Police, KCC’s Intelligence Unit and fellow district councils to deliver further initiatives aimed at deterring fly tippers, educating residents about their Duty of Care responsibilities to ensure their waste is disposed of legally and increasing the number of enforcement activities, such as Operation Assist where waste carriers are stopped, and their documentation checked. Such initiatives in the borough have previously resulted in the seizure of vehicles, issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices and act as a deterrent through the awareness of increased levels of enforcement. For example, on the latest Operation Assist on 24 April 2023, one unlicensed scrap metal carrier had their vehicle seized, notices issued for lack of waste carrier documents and a referral made to Licensing Services for potential action for breach of scrap metal regulations. Another scrap metal collector was issued notices for the production of relevant documents (subsequently received) and another referral to Licensing. Six stops resulted in intelligence reports being

logged with KCC's Intel Unit which collates & shares information about potential offenders with all other Kent district councils.

- 1.2.13 The KPIs relating to tonnages of refuse & recycling can only be reported for April to December 2022 as at the time of writing this report Officers had yet to receive the Quarter 4 data from the Waste Disposal Authority, Kent County Council. However, it is pleasing to note that there has been an increase in the percentage of waste collected for recycling or composting compared with the same period in 2021/22. In order to help maintain this level of performance and to improve it, further promotional & engagement activities will be implemented in addition to those already taking place & planned for the future.
- 1.2.14 Members will note that food waste tonnages have also dropped significantly, as have refuse bin tonnages. This would indicate that although residents continue to use the separate food waste collections as opposed to using black bins for food waste, there is likely to be less food waste being generated. Experience elsewhere would appear to show that as food waste becomes more visible to residents by them separating it from general waste, awareness of the amount being thrown away increases and affects residents' behaviours in a positive manner. The economic situation is also likely to be impacting on food waste arisings, as well as other material streams. This will continue to be monitored as these factors are likely to impact on recycling performance not just in Tonbridge & Malling but elsewhere in Kent and nationally.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The measuring & monitoring of Key Performance Indicators complies with the legal obligations of the Waste Contract with Urbaser. The continued monitoring of recycling & composting performance will assist in delivering the Council's obligations set out in the legally binding Inter-Authority Agreement between the Council and Kent County Council (KCC).

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The monitoring & management of the performance of the Waste Contractor, Urbaser, will assist in delivering value for money for the Council and its residents.
- 1.4.2 Improved recycling & composting performance, and reductions in black bin waste will assist in maximising the potential of the Performance Payments received from KCC.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 Contractual performance is monitored at varying frequencies and varying levels, from the three daily update briefings to monthly Operational and Steering meetings.

1.6 Policy Considerations

1.6.1 Community

Background papers:

Nil

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