

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

2 March 2015

Report of the Director of Street Scene & Leisure

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 WASTE & STREET SCENE SERVICES UPDATE

1.1 Christmas Collection Arrangements

1.1.1 We previously reported to the Board the proposed arrangements for refuse & recycling collections over the Christmas and New Year period. Members will be aware of the general approach taken regarding the refuse and recycling collection service in previous years, which aims to:

Keep disruption to an absolute minimum;

Provide minimal suspension to green waste collection service, while recognising the need to ensure that no properties go more than 15 days without a black bin collection;

Maintain the green box recycling collections throughout the holiday period;

and

Provide notification to all residents in a variety of formats.

1.1.2 As Christmas Day fell on a Thursday this time, it was necessary to temporarily suspend the green waste service on that day for a short period. This ensured that residents who missed a collection on Christmas Day did not go for more than 15 days without a black bin collection. Details of these arrangements were delivered to households in their annual recycling calendar, delivered in October, and a follow up Christmas bin hanger delivered in December. The information was also made available on the Council's website and via a media release.

1.1.3 These arrangements worked well, with only a very small number of complaints received, which mainly related to the green waste suspension. We are currently discussing with our contractor preferred collection arrangements for Christmas 2015, with Christmas Day falling on a Friday this year.

1.2 Green Waste Best Practice

- 1.2.1 TMBC's collection system has been recognised in a published article on Best Practice in garden waste collections. The article appears in the Autumn edition of "Organics Recycling" and was researched and written by the consultancy Organic Resource Agency (ORA). When TMBC were originally researching and planning our green waste service, ORA assisted in providing research into the small number of similar local authority collection schemes in operation at that time, and in developing a Best Practice guide based on our services. This guide then became a useful resource for other local authorities interested in developing their own recycling services.
- 1.2.2 The article specifically highlights TMBC's effective management of contamination in the green waste collected. The authors interviewed both TMBC officers and the management at New Earth Solutions, who manage the Blaise Farm composting facility. Reference is made to TMBC's communications with residents; training of the collection crews; and the measures put in place to deal with the occasional higher level of contamination. A copy of the article is provided at Annex 1.

1.3 Green Waste Container Trial

- 1.3.1 Late last year, Veolia raised concerns about the types, condition and number of containers residents are using for their green waste. Residents are currently issued with a green-lidded wheeled bin by us, with a second one provided on request. Additional sacks of green waste can also be presented for collection. Veolia noted that some containers, such as builder's bags and old style dust bins were causing problems from a Health & Safety perspective. A survey was carried out and presented to officers by Veolia's Health & Safety Manager..
- 1.3.2 As a result of the survey findings it was agreed that a more standardised container for any additional green waste would improve matters and help to alleviate safety concerns. A trial of providing residents with Veolia approved, green "hessian" bags that they can use in addition to their green-lidded bin(s) has been agreed. During the trial, if residents have used "inappropriate" containers, their green waste is collected, but an advisory card and a sample of the green sacks is left. To date, the trial has seen a number of residents ordering a second green-lidded bin or green sacks. The trial is currently being run on just one refuse collection round so that the impact of additional bin/sack requests can be assessed prior to any further rounds being included.

1.4 Award for Dog Warden Services

- 1.4.1 For the third year running, TMBC have been awarded the Community Animal Welfare Footprints Gold Award for Stray Dog Services from the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals (RSPCA). The award reflects the Council's commitment to dog welfare over and above the statutory requirements, as well as our Dog Warden Lorraine's personal and professional commitment and dedication in her role as dog warden and promotion of responsible dog ownership.

- 1.4.2 There are three categories in the Stray Dog Services Award, bronze, silver and gold. The Council won the Gold Award by showing that, as well as maintaining high standards of service for dealing with stray dogs, the service it provides goes beyond the call of duty by offering an out-of-hours collection service as well as by the provision of kennelling services, by providing micro-chipping for stray dogs before they are returned to their owners or re-homed and by running pro-active initiatives to encourage responsible dog ownership.
- 1.4.3 The award was recognised at a reception held in London on 3 December. The Leader and the Portfolio Holder attended, together with the Dog Warden and the Operations Manager of Ward Security, her employer.

1.5 Recycling Site Signage

- 1.5.1 A full survey of signage at our 50 recycling bring sites was carried out at the end of last year. The results indicated that the majority of existing signage was in poor condition and required replacing. The sites with heaviest usage by the public were identified and new signage has been installed. The remaining sites are likely to see new/replacement signage being installed in the next financial year.

1.6 Reporting of Fly Tips & Rubbish-related Issues

- 1.6.1 Members of the public can use a number of channels to report fly tips and rubbish-related issues. Although the majority are made to the Waste & Street Scene Services team, they have historically also been reported to Kent County Council's Highways Services; KCC's Community Wardens; TMBC's Environmental Protection team; the Community Safety Unit; and the now-defunct Clean Kent team.
- 1.6.2 This can lead to many instances of multiple reporting and a number of separate investigations being started and visits made to the same incident by different officers. In order to reduce this duplication, we will be reminding residents, community groups and parish councils that Waste Services should be the main point of contact for fly tip & rubbish-related issues. Following our investigation, if not our responsibility or we then find that another body is best placed to deal with the issue we will then pass the report on and inform the reporter as to which relevant organisation or TMBC service is dealing with their enquiry.
- 1.6.3 We would encourage reporters with internet access to use the relevant online form at www.tmbc.gov.uk/do-it-online. This makes it easier for us to pass reports to the relevant Waste & Street Scene officer, or where appropriate forward on cases to the relevant body. The forms contain all of the required information for further investigation. Alternatively, reports can be emailed to waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk or telephoned to (01732) 876147.

1.7 Legal Implications

- 1.7.1 None

1.8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.8.1 The costs associated with these arrangements and initiatives are contained within existing budgets.

1.9 Risk Assessment

1.9.1 The failure to provide effective and efficient front line and high profile services could result in criticism from residents and impinges directly on their view of the Council and their satisfaction with services delivered.

Background papers:

Nil

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