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| Briefing Paper  to  Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Place)  on  20 July 2021 |
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| **WASTE & RECYCLING UPDATE** | |

**1. SUMMARY**

1.1 This briefing paper gives Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Place) an update on the Council’s Waste & Recycling services.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The areas in this paper are bullet-points for Waste & Recycling.

**2.2 Recycling Quarter 1**

* The out-turn contamination figure for recycled waste for the first 2 months of 21/22 is averaged at 15.25% with monthly reports of 15.6% and 14.9%. This falls short of the MRF input specification of 5% contamination but is an improvement on contamination rates which we have seen recently. Veolia undertake the testing of recycled loads coming into the MRF. The input specification reports show the level of contaminants.
* The first 2 months of the data that is available shows that glass contamination has dropped from an average of 11% to 5.8%.
* The low reported contamination levels from the sampling coincides with sharp drop in the number of loads rejected by Veolia. None have been reported in the last 3 months.
* There have been some communication messages on social media to raise the profile of contamination which have targeted some of the key materials.
* Recycling waste collected for Q1: **1791.24 Tonnes**

**2.3 Residual Waste Quarter 1**

* Residual Waste collected for Q1: **6910.72 Tonnes**
  1. **Garden Waste Quarter 1**
* Currently have 15463 customers
* Garden Waste collected for Q1: **2073.68 Tonnes**

**2.5 Glass Collection**

* Glass collections have been very successful with very few bins being rejected and participation rates and tonnage collected exceeding our expectations.
* Everyone had received their first collection of glass by the 28th May and although there was a back log of glass that residents had stored prior to the scheme launching that was collected in those first collections, we are still collecting over 87% during the second collections.
* Glass collected from the bottle banks has dropped 378.47 tonnes to 140.66 tonnes from April – June (63% decrease)
* Kerbside glass collected for Q1: **640.28 Tonnes**

**2.6 Brown Bins**

* Suffered from global shortage of raw materials for plastics as delivery of garden waste bins the manufacturer was 9 weeks. Temporary garden bins were issued to allow people to access the service and we have started replacing these with the brown wheeled bins.
* Working to refund all residents affected from the suspension last year. Those that paid via Direct Debit were done initially and there has been manual refunds for customers that completed the form on line or sent one in the post. Some anomalies to finalise but a significant majority of refunds have now taken place.

**2.7 Government Consultation**

* Response was submitted for the consultation on proposal to make household and business waste collections more consistent.
* A number of proposals have been put forward including the weekly collection of food waste, free garden waste collections, expanded list of acceptable recyclable materials, and separating their collection, and improving recycling from non-household premises (trade waste) including food waste where appropriate.
* The timescales are tight with schemes expected to be implemented during the 2023/24 financial year. For local authorities like MDC and our neighbours throughout Nottinghamshire that are tied into a long term waste disposal contract, then food waste would be expected to be implemented as soon as contracts allow but this will be between 2024/25 and 2030/31.
* There have also been consultation documents for a deposit return scheme, an extended producer responsibility scheme and a waste prevention scheme.

**2.8 Staffing**

* Currently working to a full establishment for front line staff and we have recently appointed Sharna Youngs as our new Customer Liaison Officer and are currently working on a start date. Sharna has been working in the contact centre for the last 6 years and we look forward to welcoming her into the team. This post had been vacant since the start of June.
* We are still working in a Covid safe manner however we were able to move to 3 people sharing a vehicle on the 24th May which was a significant step in returning to normal. Nearly every member of the waste and recycling workforce have had both vaccinations and Covid related absences have been very low.
* We are still using a number of agency staff, as we would normally over the Summer months to cope with the additional garden waste rounds and to better cover for annual leave within our own workforce.

**2.9 Tidy Together**

* Waste and Recycling helped supported MDC’s Tidy Together campaign and over 3 weeks we collected bulky waste from 757 addresses and we collected WEEE from 172 addresses
* Consideration will now be given to extending the free collections to the designated deprived neighbourhoods, to encourage more responsible disposal of waste and reduction of fly-tipping in these locations.

**3. COMMENTS OF HEAD OF SERVICE**

The Waste and Recycling team had been hit hard by the Covid restrictions around vehicle sharing, and as such it was a significant benefit when the guidance relaxed sufficiently for us to return to a more normal operating practice. The team are still working hard to provide services despite some staff absences and less-experienced agency staff supporting the crews.

The potential changes to services as a result of the Environment Bill would be far reaching and will require significant changes to our own procedures and household behaviour to deliver effectively. Ongoing discussion and scoping will continue with our partner authorities across the County, in advance of firmer guidance and a timeline from central government.

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