



Subject:	Waste Collection Update
Date:	4 th December 2018
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Director City Services Tim Walker, City Services (Resources & Fleet) Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To provide Members with an update in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) the processes and procedures that continue to be implemented to enhance the waste collection service;(ii) the actions included in the high level Waste Collection Improvement Plan, which has been developed to address productivity and performance issues; and(iii) the call handling procedures used in relation to waste collection requests for service -and in particular call, waiting times during August 2018.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• note the continued interventions implemented to maintain the performance improvements of the waste collection service, together with progress in relation to

	<p>the actions included in the Waste Collection Improvement Plan, and the Organisational Development Unit review of the commercial waste function.</p>
2.2	<p>Members are also asked to note the processes and actions that have been implemented to improve call handling in relation to waste collection calls and the proposed future, enhanced and innovative approach to customer focus across the council.</p>
2.3	<p>As Members will be aware, it was previously agreed that future update reports would be provided on a three monthly basis. Given the positive impact interventions introduced to date have achieved to improve the performance of the Waste Collection Service, the Committee is asked to approve the recommendation that, future Waste Collection update reports be presented to Members on a six monthly basis.</p>
3.0	Main report
	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><u>Waste Collection Customer Call Handling and Management Interventions</u></p>
3.1	<p>The volume of waste collection calls directed into the Customer Contact Centre have returned to normal levels (approximately 11,000 calls per month) as a result of the management interventions and improved processes which have been implemented during the past fifteen months.</p>
3.2	<p>Over the course of a full year the Council completed 8.5 million domestic waste collections. Of these collections, around 12,000 can be attributed to missed collections which were due to a number of reasons, including unrepresented waste receptacles, restricted vehicle access, vehicle breakdowns and unforeseen circumstances such as snow and ice.</p>
3.3	<p>Management information reports continue to be generated, which enable targeted and timely operations to be carried out and proactively deal with service requests in relation to missed bins and missed assisted lifts.</p> <p>The production of comprehensive daily waste collection analysis reports by assistant managers and operational squads continue to provide accountability, improved communication and increased productivity, which supports prompt resolution of customer enquiries.</p>
3.4	<p>Resolving accessibility problems on some waste collection routes remains an issue. Given the access difficulties of certain locations it will take some time to achieve sustainable</p>

solutions. Discussions are ongoing with the Transport NI Enforcement Team to explore viable possibilities which include installing double yellow lines, enforcement action and adjustments in collection times. Additionally, options in relation to using smaller RCVs on specific collection routes are being considered, as these vehicles have the ability to manoeuvre more easily on challenging routes, but this is dependent upon the availability of the limited number of these types of vehicles.

3.5 Members will be aware that the current waste collection fleet is aged, frequently resulting in vehicle breakdowns, which will impact negatively on collections. Options are being explored, where possible, to replace vehicles on a like-for-like basis with modern alternatives, and will include hybrid vehicles in due course.

3.6 Regular communications between the senior management forum, the waste collection management team and the trade unions continues to take place, which ensures that priority issues are considered and addressed in a timely basis. This process supports the delivery of a high quality, responsive and flexible service which meets customer need.

Waste Collection Improvement Action Plan

3.7 Having started in the Council over the summer, the Logistics Manager continues to focus on the waste collection improvement plan. An update in relation to the key actions required to address productivity and performance issues, is detailed in the following points.

- The review in relation to the administrative support arrangements for waste collection operational staff, is continuing. Time spent on the ground supervising waste collection operations by operational staff remains at an increased level and will continue whilst the squad productivity initiatives are implemented for the remainder of 2018-2019.
- The information gathered in relation to waste collection squad productivity is now being discussed with individual squads and improvement plans have been identified on an individual squad basis for many of the squads. This review covers all types of waste - general, recyclable and food/ organic. This phase is due to complete in January 2019. Where possible incremental improvements are being introduced immediately, with a final improvement plan to balance all routes to follow. Thus may necessitate some further changes to collection timetables in order to maximise efficiencies.

- A review of Commercial Waste productivity is underway. Base data is being collected and sent to the route optimisation software provider for input. The results will be analysed by the Waste Collection Management team and an action plan will be drawn up to implement any agreed efficiency improvements.

Customer Contact Centre Call Handling August 2018

- 3.8 Following a query raised at the August 2018 Committee in relation to waste collection customer call waiting times, enquiries have been completed to explore the reasons attributing to increased call handling times.
- 3.9 Members should note that, during the period April to August 2018, the Customer Contact Centre received an exceptionally high number of calls in relation to bulky waste collections, and wasps. During this period, the volume of bulky waste collection calls increased by 57% and the volume of calls regarding wasps increased substantially, resulting in call answering delays.
- 3.10 It is acknowledged that requests for service regarding wasps are seasonal, generally peaking in August and therefore can explain the significant escalation in such service requests during this period. Additionally, the particularly warm weather during the 2018 summer period, is likely to have contributed to a greater increase in wasp -related calls this year.
- 3.11 The call duration time in relation to dealing with wasp related service requests is considerably longer than other types of service requests, with an individual call duration lasting up to ten minutes. As a result, during August 2018, call durations were of considerable length, with the Customer Contact Centre operatives being occupied for longer periods of time than normal, subsequently leading to longer call handling times for all calls.
- 3.12 At this point, immediate corrective action was taken and a voicemail was activated explaining to customers that, potentially the call waiting time could be up to twenty minutes. To proactively improve customer call experience, customers were invited to leave a voice mail message or where appropriate, directed to Council's website, to access their service request.

3.13	This issue has subsequently been resolved, with the volume of all calls received by the Customer Contact Centre and call handling times returning to normal levels (as outlined in 3.1).
3.14	In order to proactively avoid similar delays recurring in the future, from 15 October, all calls in relation to wasps have been transferred to the Pest Administration Team.
	<u>Proposed Future Customer Focus Approach</u>
3.15	Members will be aware of the Corporate Customer Focus Project established to review current customer contact channels and structures, with a view to defining a future corporate approach to customer contact and ultimately enhance customer experience.
3.16	An extensive programme of internal and external engagement, as well as wide-ranging research, has informed the development of draft guiding design principals, which if agreed will be used to shape options for delivery and will provide a frame of reference for future decision making in relation to customer focus. These design principals focus on a consistent joined up corporate approach, underpinned by customer service standards which are customer centric to enhance customer experience, whilst improving the efficiency of our processes to support the scale of growth required to meet the Belfast Agenda.
	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u>
3.17	At this time there are no negative financial or resource implications associated with this report. Any future route optimisation rebalancing exercises and asset implications arising from the implementation of the Waste Framework may however result in financial and resource implications at a future date.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.18	At this time there are no equality, good relations or rural needs assessment implications associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.