

26 July, 2016

Alternate Weekly Collection (AWC) Update – July 2016

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr C. Jones - Clean and Green

Executive Summary:

At the Cabinet meeting on the 16 December 2015 it was agreed to implement Alternate Weekly Collections (AWC) with residual waste collected alternate weekly 140 litre wheeled bins (with larger bins provided for larger families) with a scheduled commencement date of 3 October 2016.

Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested updates on the progress and communication prior to the launch of the new service.

This report details the progress of the implementation to date.

Background papers:

- Cabinet 16 December 2015: Agreement to introduce Alternate Weekly Collections for residual waste.
- Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8 March 2016: Alternative weekly collections of residual household waste Implementation and Communication Plan.

Reason for scrutiny:

To enable the Panel to review and comment on the implementation of the new service in order that any recommendations can be considered by the Portfolio Holder for Clean and Green services.

Resource and legal considerations:

There are no resource or legal implications with this report

Citizen impact:

The new changes in the collection service are borough wide and will have an impact on larger families. This will be mitigated by households of 4 or more receiving a larger bin and households of 3 or more receiving a larger bin if they can demonstrate a genuine need.

Environmental impact:

There is no environmental impact as a result of this report.

Performance management:

There is no direct impact on performance management as a result of this report.

Equality Implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment for service change has been carried out and was attached to the December 2015 Cabinet Report.

Consultation:

Consultation on communication arrangements has taken place previously with focus groups and service users.

Recommendations:

1. Note the contents of this report

Report

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report is to update members on the implementation of alternate weekly refuse collections (grey bins emptied every other week), taking place in October 2016.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 All Members have been previously updated about the roll out of the alternate weekly refuse collection service via an All Member Briefing Note on the 9 May 2016.

2.2 The Standard Service

- 2.2.1 Members were advised the standard service for individual properties from October 2016 will be:
- 140 litre grey wheeled bin for residual waste (rubbish which cannot be recycled) emptied every other week.
 - 240 litre green wheeled bin for dry recycling (specific items only as defined by the Council) emptied every other week.
 - 240 litre brown wheeled bin for garden waste, emptied every other week on a seasonal basis.

2.3 Capacity of Bins

- 2.3.1 Members were advised that in acknowledgement of residents' concerns about the size and capacity of the grey wheeled bins, policies around issuing bigger bins for families had been revised. Residents can request additional capacity based on the number of people in permanent residence at the property.
- 2.3.2 When additional capacity is authorised the existing wheeled bin will be exchanged for a larger wheeled bin free of charge.

2.4 Larger Bin Applications

- 2.4.1 Members were advised that prior to October 2016 there would be a communication campaign and residents would have the opportunity to apply for a larger bin if they met the revised criteria.

2.5 Changes to Collection Days

2.5.1 Members were advised that there will be changes to collection days for grey rubbish bins and green recycling bins, effective from the beginning of October 2016.

2.5.2 Grey and green bins will be emptied on the same day as follows;

- Green recycling bins will be emptied first.
- Grey rubbish bins will be emptied later in the day.

2.5.3 Collection of brown (garden waste) bins will continue unchanged until the end of October 2016, when the service ceases for the winter. Collection days may change when the service recommences in April 2017 but this will be dealt with separately.

2.6 Communication of the Changes

2.6.1 Members were also advised that from mid August to September every household will be sent more information about the new collection service, including a calendar that explains which day of the week their bins will be emptied on.

3.0 Update on Larger Bin Application Process

3.1 Bin Applications

3.1.1 Legal Services have confirmed that under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority, has a statutory duty to collect household waste from all domestic properties in its area. Under Section 46 of the above act, the Council can use its discretion to specify what 'receptacles' (wheeled bins/bags) should be used for recycling and waste collections, and that a charge can be made for the specified containers.

3.1.2 The Council carried out a consultation process in order to assess the size of the bin which would be appropriate for each household. The Council then incorporated the feedback from the consultation into its Waste Collection Policy which specifies the types and size of bins available to each residential household. The Council does have discretion in the size and type of bins that can be provided to each residential household. However, the Council has to be consistent in the way in which it exercises its discretion in order to avoid challenge.

- 3.1.3 Having looked at the steps taken to date, on the basis there is consistency in the way in which officers have exercised their discretion it cannot be seen how this would be challengeable.
- 3.1.4 Communications and applications for larger bins commenced on the 9 May 2016. All households were sent a leaflet telling them the service will be changing, advising of the criteria for having a larger bin and explaining how to apply for a larger bin.
- 3.1.5 A web based application process has been developed for residents to apply on line at their own convenience and has proven to be very popular.
- 3.1.6 A dedicated Contact Centre has been set up specifically to deal with enquiries about the new collection service and telephone applications for larger bins. The number for this is 01922 654141.
- 3.1.7 For guaranteed delivery of larger bins before October 2016, applications were required before the 13 June 2016.
- 3.1.8 Although the application deadline has passed residents can still apply either by telephone or on the internet but it is not guaranteed the application will be processed before the commencement of the new service.
- 3.1.9 Some late applications have been processed and will be included in the delivery schedules for larger bins
- 3.1.10 The number of calls received and applications processed are detailed below.

Monday 9 May – Friday 1 July

	Total	w/c 9-05-16	w/c 16-05-16	w/c 23-05-16	w/c 30-05-16	w/c 06-06-16	w/c 13-06-16	w/c 20-06-16	w/c 27-06-16
Telephone Calls									
Calls Received	5207	900	685	831	797	907	559	288	240
Calls Answered	5049	844	681	780	784	892	554	281	233
Larger Bin Applications									
Online Applications	17875	8607	2065	1898	2166	2112	663	221	143
Telephone Applications	3041	593	445	502	476	559	297	97	72
Total Applications	20916	9200	2510	2400	2642	2671	960	318	215

3.2 Approval of Applications for Larger Bins

- 3.2.1 From the 20,916 applications received, 19,582 larger bins have been identified for delivery. The breakdown of larger bins is detailed below.

- 16597 No 240 litre grey bins - For households of 4 or more,

Households of 3 with a child under 3 years of age or who produce medical waste

- 563 No 360 litre grey bins - For very large families or households who produce medical waste
- 2422 No 360 green bins - For households of 6 or more or Households who produce medical waste packaging

3.2.2 It should be noted that applications and larger bin deliveries will not tally. One application may require two bins to be delivered or the application may be declined.

3.2.3 It should also be noted that an increased number of applications have been received from households that produce medical waste via the existing medical waste application process. These applications are being dealt with separately.

3.3 Declined Applications

3.3.1 From the 20,916 applications received, 2,778 applications for a larger bin have been declined. The majority of declined applications were from households who do not meet the criteria for a larger bin or from families of 3 who have not demonstrated a genuine need of requiring a larger bin.

3.3.2 Communication to advise residents their application has been declined commenced on the 21 June 2016 and is being done by e-mail or telephone. Residents are being told they will not receive a larger bin and asked to try the new service. Households of 3 are being contacted first, and the majority of those contacted via email are being sent the message below.

Thank you for applying for a bigger bin.

Based on the information you have given we are unable to provide you with a bigger bin because you have told us there are 3 people in your household. Households of 3 people are only able to have a bigger bin if they can demonstrate a genuine need for additional room to dispose of their rubbish.

While you may be disappointed with this decision, we have found that many of our residents with 3 in their household using a 140 litre grey rubbish bin believe they will be able to manage their waste when recycling effectively. We therefore encourage you to try the new service when it starts in October.

If after trying the new service you are not able to manage your waste please contact us.

- 3.3.3 The remaining unsuccessful applicants will be also contacted by e-mail or telephone, but the message will be amended appropriately.
- 3.3.4 Of the 2,778 applications that were declined 2,508 households (90%) had been contacted up to Monday 11 July 2016 and advised that their application had been declined.
- 3.3.5 Up to Tuesday 12 July, 107 recorded responses by email challenging the decision had been received.
- 3.3.6 All 107 responses are being reviewed. Anyone providing additional information that demonstrates a genuine need for a larger bin will have a bin delivered, but this may not be before the implementation of the new service in October. Anyone raising an additional query will be responded to via email. Residents who are still unhappy and have not demonstrated a genuine need will be given the option to complete a Tell Us complaint for further consideration.
- 3.3.7 Up to Wednesday 13 July, 29 Tell Us complaints have been received regarding applications for a larger bin. It is proposed that for anyone who raises a complaint via Tell Us, a waste audit will be carried out, when a final decision on the provision of a larger bin will be made.
- 3.3.8 Based on the number of declined applications to date, and households that have challenged the decision of not receiving a larger bin, it is anticipated that the current resources will be sufficient to carry out any necessary waste audits before the implementation of the new service. Waste audits are scheduled to begin w/c 25 July.

4.0 Press Enquiries

- 4.1 One press enquiry has been received from the Express and Star on the 23 June 2016, regarding the larger bin application process.
- 4.2 The Council's response was as follows.

Councillor Jones Portfolio holder for Clean and Green stated: "This application process was started in early May so it could be managed in advance of an October start date and we have received over 20,000 applications of which nearly a quarter were from three member households."

“Where these families have demonstrated a genuine need the service will be providing a larger bin.

“We have begun the process of informing those people whose applications have been declined and in most cases those residents have agreed to try the new service and to recycle more. We will be informing all residents over the coming weeks of the outcome of their application.

“We are encouraging all residents to make better use of all their waste options including using their green bin for recycling more effectively.

“Naturally we do have processes in place for those unhappy with the decision and ultimately households can undergo a waste audit to assess their needs.”

5.0 Delivery of Larger Bins

- 5.1 The roll out of deliveries of larger bins is planned to commence Monday 1 August 2016 and will take 8 weeks to complete. Bins will be exchanged on current scheduled collection days.
- 5.2 All properties receiving a larger bin will be notified the day before their new bin is delivered via a leaflet through their door.

6.0 Future Communications

- 6.1 An information pack about the new collection service will be delivered to all households in the borough that receive a wheeled bin collection. Deliveries of the information pack are scheduled to commence mid August and take 5 – 6 weeks to complete.
- 6.2 The information will include an explanation of the new refuse collection service, a calendar explaining which day of the week grey and green bins will be emptied, and any changes to bin collections over the Christmas period. Further details of the information to be provided in the Communications Pack are available separately.

7.0 Transition to the new Service

- 7.1 Arrangements for the transition from weekly collections to a collection every other week are being prepared.
- 7.2 During the transition to the new service and due to changes to collection days the interval between scheduled collections will be longer than 14 days for some households. Arrangements are being made to mitigate the impact on the households affected.

- 7.3 During week commencing 26 September 2016 all green and grey bins will be emptied, even if the green bins were emptied the previous week.
- 7.4 Due to the change of collection days approximately 20 000 households will have between 15 and 18 days between scheduled collections during the first two weeks of October 2016. Additional arrangements will be made for households affected by this. Residents will be informed via a separate communication leaflet that they can place 2 black bags of rubbish out for collection with their grey bin.
- 7.5 Fifteen new Refuse Collection Vehicles have arrived, ready for the implementation of the new service. The old vehicles will be kept operational to deliver the additional collections required.

8.0 Implementation

- 8.1 Implementation of the new service is scheduled to take place w/c 3 October 2016

9.0 Financial Impact

- 9.1 The implementation of the new waste service is planned to deliver estimated revenue savings of £921,000 per year, with £520,000 savings in 2016/17 due to a part year affect.
- 9.2 It is estimated "one off" implementation costs of £171,600 will be required to cover additional communications, additional contact centre support, additional resources for recycling education and waste audits, the delivery of larger bins and additional operational resources to support the transition into the new service.
- 9.3 The estimated capital cost of procuring larger bins based on current applications is circa £317,000
- 9.4 The new service is therefore currently anticipated to deliver savings in the current financial year.

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