

28 March, 2013

Recycling and Contamination

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr T Ansell – Transport and Environment

Executive Summary:

This report updates the Scrutiny Panel as requested at the meeting in January on the current levels of contamination following the campaign that commenced in November 2012 to reduce recycling contamination across the whole borough.

As requested, the report details :-

- a) The tonnages of waste being sent to recycling;
- b) The tonnage of waste sent to landfill;
- c) The percentages of rejected recycling material left on the street and rejected by the councils contractor at the MRF;

And advises on the proposals to address :-

- 1. Batteries not being promoted as an item suitable for grey bins;
- 2. The Carers Network being contacted regarding assisting the Council with the recycling scheme
- 3. Panel Members' visit to Casepak.

Reason for scrutiny:

To respond to the issues raised at the Panel's meeting on 8th January 2013.

Recommendations:

That the Scrutiny Panel notes the information provided in response to the Panel's questions.

Background papers:

None

Resource and legal considerations:

Contamination levels, although reduced, continue to pose contractual concerns to the Council. Income levels are temporarily reduced and disposal costs increased.

Citizen impact:

There is no impact to residents who use the service properly. Residents who continue to contaminate their recycling bins will risk not having their bin emptied.

Environmental impact:

Recycling is better for the environment than disposal and complies with the Waste Hierarchy. High levels of contamination reduce the recycling rate.

Performance management:

The Council's recycling rate will continue to decline if contamination is not tackled effectively. The projected recycling rate for 2012/13 is around 41%, compared with an outturn for 2011/12 of 46.2%

Equality Implications:

None

Consultation:

Feedback from residents via the Contact Centre and the Encouragement Team has been taken into account in deciding when a bin is contaminated and in our efforts to get our message across to residents. Priority is now being given to specific areas where contamination of bins still remains relatively high.

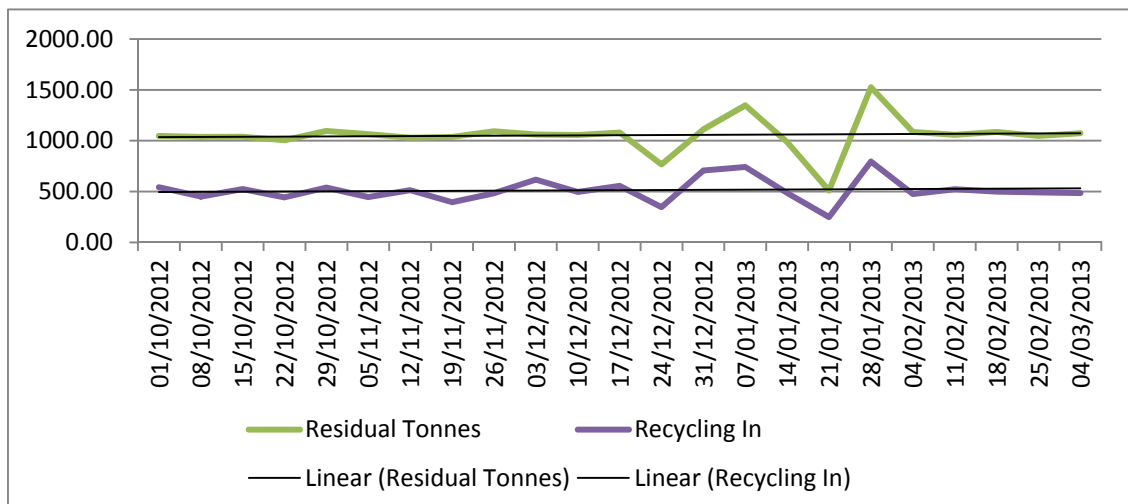
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Report

1.0 Tonnages of Residual Waste and Recycling

1.1 The tonnages of residual waste and recycling from October 2012 are detailed and shown in the table and graph below.

Week Commencing	Residual Waste (Tonnes)	Recyclable Material (Tonnes)
01/10/2012	1046.07	543.36
08/10/2012	1037.73	451.08
15/10/2012	1038.72	524.44
22/10/2012	1004.58	443.38
29/10/2012	1096.19	538.68
05/11/2012	1064.17	446.44
12/11/2012	1029.55	513.08
19/11/2012	1038.20	395.12
26/11/2012	1092.43	484.38
03/12/2012	1061.21	617.40
10/12/2012	1056.50	496.28
17/12/2012	1079.55	555.98
24/12/2012	767.83	346.80
31/12/2012	1111.49	707.12
07/01/2013	1348.05	741.64
14/01/2013	985.17	485.38
21/01/2013	510.58	250.06
28/01/2013	1525.27	795.44
04/02/2013	1086.51	475.64
11/02/2013	1057.51	522.72
18/02/2013	1086.57	500.12
25/02/2013	1046.73	491.58
04/03/2013	1073.99	485.86

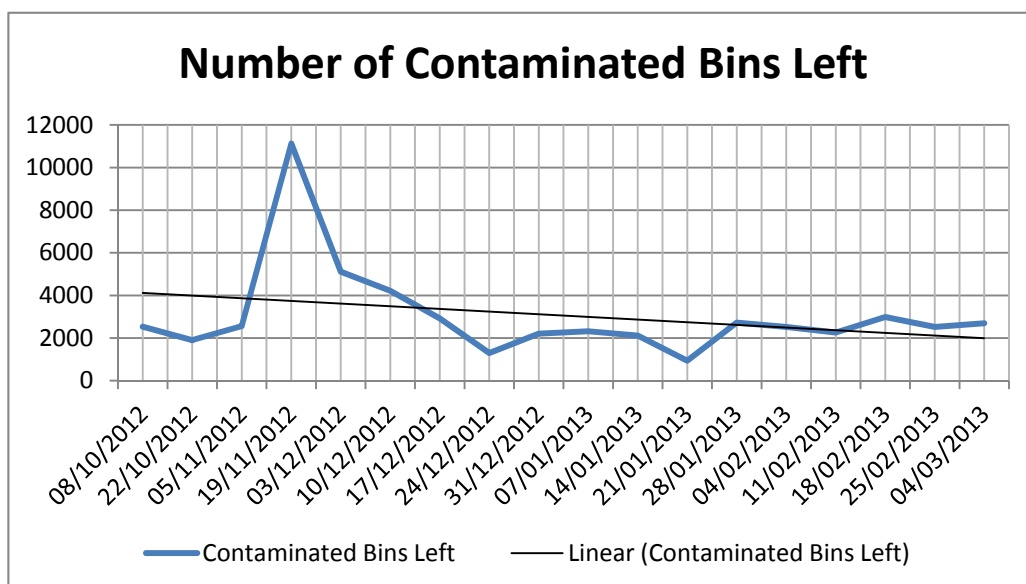


1.2 It can be seen that both tonnages have remained fairly constant, with slight increases other than over the Christmas period and when collections were disrupted due to severe winter weather.

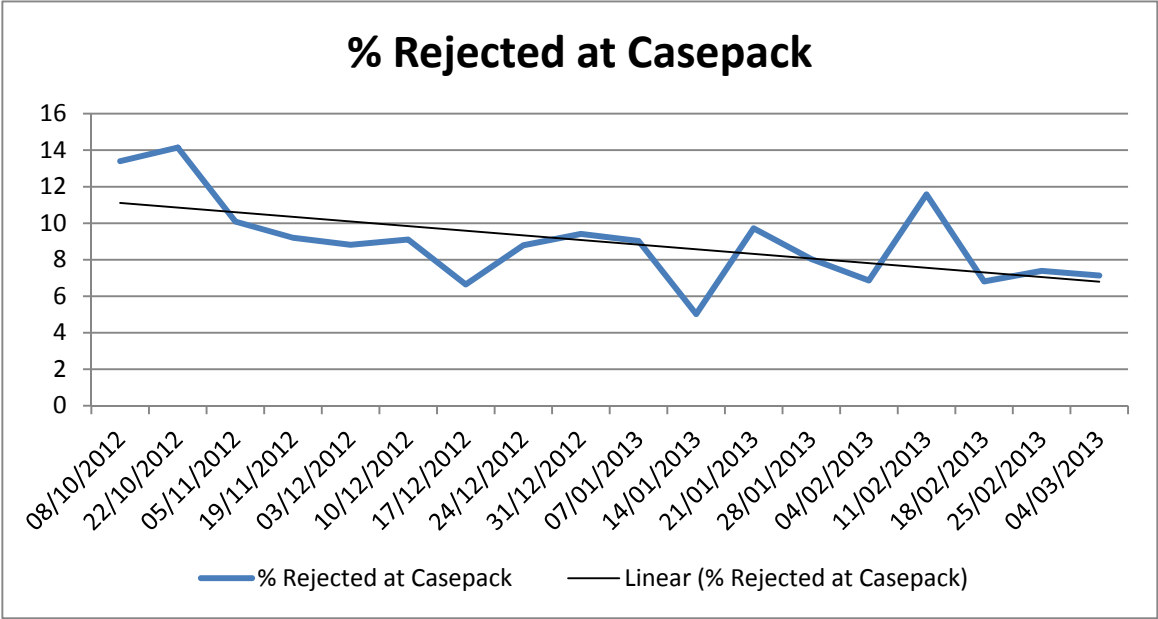
2.0 The percentages of rejected recycling material left on the street and rejected by the Council’s contractor at the MRF

2.1 The number of green bins left on the street due to contamination and the contamination rate identified by Casepak at the MRF since October 2012 is detailed in the table and shown in the graphs below.

Collection Date	Contaminated Bins Left	% Contaminated Bins Left	% Rejected at Casepack
08/10/2012	2534	2.52	13.4
22/10/2012	1902	1.89	14.14
05/11/2012	2555	2.54	10.09
19/11/2012	11131	11.08	9.2
03/12/2012	5112	5.09	8.82
10/12/2012	4220	4.2	9.11
17/12/2012	2927	2.91	6.64
24/12/2012	1299	2.19	8.79
31/12/2012	2203	2.71	9.41
07/01/2013	2320	2.31	9.03
14/01/2013	2117	2.11	5.02
21/01/2013	935	0.93	9.72
28/01/2013	2724	2.71	8.04
04/02/2013	2524	2.51	6.86
11/02/2013	2261	2.25	11.58
18/02/2013	2990	2.98	6.81
25/02/2013	2522	2.51	7.39
04/03/2013	2692	2.68	7.13



- 2.2 It can be seen from the data that, when we became more stringent with our criteria for not collecting bins, containing contaminated materials last November, there was a 2 – 3 month period when the number of uncollected bins increased. However, this quickly returned to the historic level of around 2,000 bins each week.
- 2.3 The Street Pride Education Teams are continuing to work in the areas of major concern, to reduce the number of bins left.



2.4 It can be seen from the above data that, since we became more stringent with our criteria for not collecting bins containing contaminated materials, the % rejection rate has dropped significantly from over 14% to around 8-10%. Although this is still high and needs to improve further, it is a big improvement.

3.0 Batteries not being promoted as an item suitable for grey bins

3.1 Batteries should be returned to retail outlets for appropriate disposal or taken to the HWRC. They should not be put in the rubbish bins for landfill as they can contain a number of substances harmful to the environment including cadmium and mercury. In order to divert batteries from landfill, new regulations under the Batteries Directive set strict targets for recycling. The UK's target is to increase recycling from 3% of portable batteries (2007 figures) to 25% by 2012 and 45% by 2016

3.2 Unfortunately, due to an oversight, the communications in the recent campaign, it did state that it was acceptable to dispose of batteries in the grey bin.

3.3 This has now been corrected and will be communicated borough-wide in the next major communication campaign later this year.

4.0 The Carers Network being contacted regarding assisting the Council with the recycling scheme

4.1 Street Pride are looking to contact the Carers and work with them and gain their support for their employees to support our residents with our recycling activities. In so doing, we will ensure they are aware of compliance issues relating to the Council's recycling scheme.

4.2 Contact has been made with 'Independent Living' and a meeting has taken place with the Carers' Group at The Crossing, St Paul's in Walsall. However, it is proving difficult to contact other groups within the Carers' network.

4.3 All groups will be contacted to arrange a visit where possible.

4.5 Additionally, we have identified a list of organisations which we will contact to see if they would like a presentation at one of their meetings. These groups include:-

- Age UK Walsall - formerly Age Concern and Help the Aged
- National Autistic Society
- Autism West Midlands
- Blakenall Local Community Over 50s forum
- Breathe Easy Walsall - support group for people affected by lung conditions including their friends, family and carers.
- Dementia Cafe Support Groups - Pathways 4 Life
- Friends of the elderly
- Grandparents Group at Stan Ball
- HumAnima
- In Touch England
- Kingsley Fellowship Klub, Pleck
- Midland Mencap
- Pleck Bereavement Group
- Rethink (mental health) volunteering opportunity
- Stroke and Heart Survivors and carers support group
- Walsall Over 50s Forum
- Walsall Voluntary Action
- Walsall Voluntary Action database
- Walsall Black Sisters Collective
- Walsall Disability Forum
- Walsall Service User Empowerment

5.0 Panel Members visiting Casepak.

5.1 A visit was arranged for Cabinet Members and Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Panel to visit Casepak, the Councils recycling contractor on the 31st January 2013.

5.2 Unfortunately, no members of the Panel were able to attend, but a DVD showing the plant in operation is available for any member wishing to see it.