

Joint Waste and Recycling Committee

Date	-	26 March 2021
Report of the	-	Lead Director, Averil Price
Subject	-	Service Performance Update

Recommendation: The report be noted.

Report Author: Madeleine Gorman, Joint Waste Contract Manager

Introduction

1. This report offers commentary on the standards of service performance achieved through the Joint Waste Contract for the period December 2020 to February 2021 and compliments the information provided by Biffa in a separate item at this meeting.

Local Performance: Hastings Borough Council

2. Collection performance in Hastings throughout the last period showed an improvement compared to the previous, with our per 100,000 missed bin rate falling from 139 to 110, bringing it within the contract target. While missed bin reports were slightly higher over Christmas, this is not uncommon for the time of year, and not considered indicative of general service provision.
3. Officers continue to work with Biffa supervisors to address service issues and drive improvement, which in most cases results in a high quality, reliable service for our customers.
4. It should also be noted that HBC has been very pleased with Biffa's management of staff absences locally throughout the pandemic, which has resulted in minimal service disruption despite challenges.

Local Performance: Rother District Council

5. As usual Christmas and New Year schedules were altered and garden waste collections were suspended to accommodate the bank holidays. Biffa teams did an excellent job and collections went well and according to plan.
6. Biffa 'missed bin collection' volumes have been consistently better than target, and the contractor has been providing a good overall level of service despite the COVID-19 challenges and peak waste tonnages following the Christmas and New Year period.
7. Absence levels related to COVID-19 have been erratic but closely monitored by both officers and contractor, and have averaged at around 10% during January and February. We are very pleased with Biffa's commitment to maintaining service levels during this difficult period of extreme cold weather on occasion and sickness.

8. Rother officers continue to work with Biffa to improve the quality at our recycling centres. It seems residents continue to be reluctant to use the Household Waste and Recycling Site (HWRS), preferring to dump their rubbish at our local sites. We hope this situation may improve when the East Sussex County Council's HWRSs operate on a more normal service level later this year.
9. Meanwhile, the high contamination levels continue in some sites, as does the low level but persistent domestic fly tipping at several sites. Work is ongoing to improve materials collected at these sites. We are looking at installing temporary CCTV cameras (on a rota around the most impacted sites) as well as providing an officer presence which will be a joint effort with our compliance officers and Environmental Health team where enforcement action is needed at problematic sites. We will ensure social media messages and 'My Alerts' communications publicise our work, and Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued when appropriate.
10. Our thanks go to Councillor Lynn Langlands for her support and campaigning in trying to improve the quality of materials deposited at the Ravenside bring site.
11. The closure of some of our less used bring sites will commence in March with all of the 13 sites identified for closure benefitting from local kerbside recycling collections.

Local Performance: Wealden District Council

12. Collection performance over Christmas and New Year was good with low levels of missed bins. This has generally remained the case since, although there have been spikes in missed bins occasionally where staff absences for both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 related reasons has impacted. On those occasions Biffa have made a concerted effort to recover missed collections at the earliest opportunity to minimise disruption to customers. Attention is required however to reverse a trend towards increasing missed assisted collections. Increased servicing frequencies for recycling bring sites in the north of the District is also needed to prevent situations where the containers fill to overflowing.
13. Biffa's resilience to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic continues to be effective with all services continuing to be deployed. Staff absence levels continue to be closely monitored and both the Council and Biffa are concerned that future community testing requirements may have a negative impact on performance and could even have the impact of potentially increasing the risk of transmission between collection crews if Lateral Flow Device tests are required to be performed at the depots.
14. Container deliveries continue to be managed effectively and within the required service level agreement.
15. Street cleansing performance, as measured through the street cleansing survey, have been maintained with all targets being achieved. Issues have been identified where cleansing work has not been completed to a sufficient standard and these are being managed with the local operational management. Increased levels of complaints are being received regarding

roadside litter in rural locations with high speed roads. These are being addressed with the locations having been scheduled for cleansing with permits granted by the Highways Authority to use traffic management to protect the workforce. Staff resources for street cleansing have been impacted by COVID in recent months with critical services such as waste collections prioritised. With increasing levels of vaccinations and lessening cases of the virus among the population we anticipate a return to stable staffing levels with the capability to rectify outstanding cleansing work.

16. Performance for fly-tip clearance remains good with numbers of incidents reducing to a more normal level after a surge was experienced with the effects of COVID-19 and lockdown likely to be a contributory factor.
17. Despite a short term issue where lids for sharps boxes were temporarily unavailable, clinical waste collection performance has generally been reliable.
18. Bulky waste collections performance remains consistently good.

Performance Assessment : Authorised Officer

19. Biffa continues to meet Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets and is performing very well across all services. The pattern of service performance since the start of the Contract has been considered by the Partnering Board and two KPI targets have been revised (improved) as follows:
 - The target for missed collections has been reduced to 96 per 100,000 (from 120 per 100,00).
 - The target for missed assisted collections has been reduced to nine per 100,000 (from 10 per 100,000).
20. Progress with the actions and activities identified in the Annual Service Improvement Plan has also continued albeit at a slower pace than originally intended (due to the need for management focus on COVID-19 priorities).

COVID-19 Financial Impact

21. Procurement Policy Note 04/20: Recovery and Transition from COVID-19 sets out information and guidance for public bodies on payment of their suppliers. PPN 04/20 follows earlier guidance (PPN 02/20) which the Partnership used to develop a Contract Variation and reconcile Contract payments against services provided in the March to May 2020 period. The impact of COVID-19 has continued and the principles agreed by all the parties for the previous Variation are being used to reconcile liability for costs incurred since May last year.
22. The additional cost for each council will be reported to the next meeting.

UK Environment Bill

23. Unfortunately the UK Environment Bill has not progressed through Parliament as expected and it is unclear when the new legislation will be enacted. The main implication concerns the deadline for any new services to be implemented and while some industry experts believe the deadline to

implement food waste will still be 2023, others disagree and believe the deadline will be extended to much later (up to 2026).

24. With reference to previous reports to this Committee, the new legislation will have significant implications for the Councils which will need to be considered together with other council ambitions and objectives in due course.

Risk Register

25. The Contract Management Group (Authorised officer, Supervising officers and Biffa managers) are actively managing four “amber” risks as follows:

- (i) COVID-19 related staff absence which continues to be monitored daily.
- (ii) COVID-19 related financial risk which is being managed through the Contract Variation process.
- (iii) UK Environment Bill: the requirements of which are expected to have significant impact on waste services.
- (iv) Client Health and Safety compliance: COVID-19 travel restrictions reduced client officer monitoring during 2020. This risk will be reviewed and action taken to mitigate it.

Averil Price
Joint Waste Partnership Lead Director

Risk Assessment Statement

No risks arise from the recommendation of this report.