

Report to Scrutiny Commission
Neighbourhood Scrutiny & Community
Involvement Commission



Waste Management Services Overview

Date of Commission meeting: 4th July 2018

Lead director: John Leach

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Geoff Soden, Head of Waste Services; Luke Crown, Service Development Manager
- Author contact details: geoff.soden@leicester.gov.uk 0116 454 6732;
luke.crown@leicester.gov.uk Direct line 0116 454 6741
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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The paper provides an overview of waste services provided by the City Council's Waste Management Services to the Neighbourhood Scrutiny and Community Involvement Committee and invites comments from Members.
- 1.2 The paper provides an overview of services, as well as highlighting some of the challenges facing the service.

2. Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an overview of the waste management services provided to residents of Leicester.
- 2.2 Services include weekly collection of refuse and recycling, clinical waste collection, bulky waste collection, provision of 2 household waste recycling centres which are all delivered through a 25 year Public Finance Initiative contract with Biffa Leicester. This includes over 13 million collections per year.
- 2.3 The contract includes the treatment and disposal of the waste collected, through the provision and operation of two treatment facilities. The contract collects, treats and disposes of 130,000 tonnes of waste per year (2016/17 figures).
- 2.4 The net budget for the services provided is £16.3 Million per year.
- 2.5 There are challenges facing the service include increasing tonnages as the City grows there are more houses and a greater population producing more waste.
- 2.6 In addition the legislative framework which governs waste is always changing and this is further complicated because of the uncertainty of Brexit and how this may affect future recycling and composting targets and other environmental regulations.
- 2.7 The report will be supported by a presentation during the Scrutiny Committee on the 4th July.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 NSCI Scrutiny Commission is asked to comment on the services provided and note the challenges facing the service.

4. Report/Supporting information:

- 4.1 Collection & disposal services** The Council provides a range of waste services to residents in Leicester, including refuse bin and recycling bag collections from all domestic properties. Other services provided include clinical waste collection, garden waste collection, recycling banks, two Household Waste Recycling Centres and a bulky waste collection. These services are delivered through a 25 year PFI contract in partnership with Biffa Leicester, which commenced in 2003.
- 4.2** A weekly refuse and recycling collection service is provided to 135,570 domestic properties (as of 2017) in the city. Biffa complete in excess of 13 million kerbside collections every year, with 99.96% refuse bins completed successfully first time in 2017/18.
- 4.2** Orange recycling bags are provided to houses in the city, while generally, communal recycling bins are provided to flats. Plastics, metals, cardboard, paper and glass are collected for recycling.
- 4.3** A bulk waste collection service provides householders with the opportunity to dispose of 5 bulk waste items every 2 months for free. It should be noted that the majority of council's now charge for bulk waste collections. Almost 38,000 bulk waste collections were completed in 2016/17.
- 4.4** An on request clinical waste collection service provides householders with the ability to dispose of sharps that they have used to self-administer their medication at home. The service also collects clinical waste from residents who are being treated at home by the NHS. Over 3,700 collections were made last year.
- 4.5** Two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) are provided at Gypsum Close and Freeman's Common for the disposal of a wide range of wastes from rubble to wood and green waste to textiles. Since the opening of the new Recycling Centre at Gypsum Close in April 2015, there have been over half a million visitors to site.
- 4.6** The LOROS Reuse shop provided at Gypsum Close continues to be extremely popular, with 218 tonnes of items reused or recycled in 2017/18. Approximately 350,000 items were given a second lease of life by being reused rather than recycled or disposed of. A trade waste facility is also provided for SMEs to make it easy for them to dispose of their waste responsibly – the customer base and the facility's popularity continues to increase.
- 4.7** A network of recycling banks is provided around the city, collecting paper/card, glass and textiles for recycling.
- 4.8 Waste treatment services:** Biffa maintains and operates the Ball Mill (a Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facility) which sorts the general waste collected from householder's black wheeled bins. The plant ensures that as much waste as possible is diverted from landfill. Ferrous and non-ferrous metals are extracted for recycling, while light materials such as plastics, cardboard and paper are removed and used as a fuel to create heat and energy. Food waste and other organic waste is also separated by the plant. The plastic, cardboard and paper that has not been recycled in the Orange Bags and placed in general

waste bins for collection has been contaminated with food and other general waste and as such is not of a high enough quality for normal recycling. C.65% of the waste received at the Ball Mill is diverted from landfill.

4.9 All of the organic waste extracted at the Ball Mill is sent to an Anaerobic Digestion facility at Wanlip, also operated by Biffa under the contract. The extracted food waste is mixed with water to create slurry, and is then screened and filtered to remove any remaining contaminants including paper, fabrics, glass and grit. The liquid fraction is then discharged into digestion tanks to produce biogas and eventually a soil conditioner. The biogas is used to generate electricity which then fed back into the national grid. In 2016/17 circa 30k tonnes of organic waste was delivered to the facility to be composted.

4.10 Recycling collected in orange bags is bulked and delivered to Materials Recycling Facilities. The materials are mechanically and manually sorted into separate waste streams for bulking and onward reprocessing into new products.

4.11 Environmental performance The Council achieved a recycling and composting rate of 40.3% and a diversion from landfill rate of 64.8% in 2016/17. Appendix D1 details the Council's performance to date.

4.12 This compares well with Biffa's contractual target for recycling and composting of 38.56%.

4.13 However last year (2017/18) Biffa suffered major breakdowns at both their Plants resulting in a significant reduction in recycling and composting performance. At this time the final performance has not been verified, but it is likely to be in the region of 35%.

4.14 Core service improvements to date: Since the commencement of the contract a number of improvements have been introduced, which are summarised in the table below:

2011	2012	2014	2015	2017
Introduction of orange recycling service to houses over 105,000 households	Introduction of orange recycling service to flats	Introduction of optional garden waste service	Opening of new Gypsum Close Recycling Centre, Reuse shop & Trade waste facility	Introduction of recycling to 390 flats at Aikman Avenue with new purpose built bin stores

Table One – Summary of service enhancements

4.15 Ongoing projects/service delivery improvements: In addition to the above further improvements to the service are being trialled.

4.16 Bulk waste collection booking enhancements: Worked with the Digital Transformation Team to provide an improved online experience for customers in

booking bulk waste collections through introducing instant collection day selection at time of booking. Introduced in May 2018.

- 4.17 Small electrical waste recycling trial:** Introduction of small electricals kerbside recycling to selected properties in the city under a pilot to test the concept in Leicester. If successful, a citywide roll out is planned.
- 4.18 Digital permit to tip:** Plans are being developed with the Digital Transformation Team to introduce a digital permit to tip, replacing the current paper system used at Gypsum Close Recycling Centres for vans and cars with trailers. The new system will increase efficiency and provide improved intelligence to prevent waste fraud.
- 4.19 University student waste campaigns:** Waste Management attended the De Montfort University and University of Leicester freshers fairs to engage with the new student intake. All managing agents of Halls of Residence were engaged with, with instructional leaflets and promotional emails provided to new students on the correct use of their communal recycling facilities. A student campaign was also conducted through social media reaching 12,844 students and resulting in 624 students being directed online to order orange recycling bags.
- 4.20** Working with the British Heart Foundation 6 banks have been installed in student areas on a temporary basis for 8 weeks to collect unwanted items from students so that they can be reused. In addition a trial is being undertaken on selected roads to provide a bulk waste service tailored to students leaving at the end of the academic year to tackle the annual end of academic year student waste clear out.
- 4.21 Promotional events and schools engagement:** Ongoing engagement in Leicester schools regarding the recycling services and the importance of recycling. Biffa have recently completed a refurbishment of the Ball Mill education suite to further enhance the offering to schools. So far this year 11 events have been attended at five different schools.
- 4.22** Waste Management are planning to attend a variety of events this summer to engage with residents on the use of the council's waste service. We recently attended the Riverside Festival and seven other events so far this year. We also organise groups to visit the Ball Mill.
- 4.23 Future challenges:** There are multiple pressures, including:
- Total wastes generated in the city are increasing annually, which is also mirrored at a national level. This has financial implications for the service – the more waste collected and disposed of, the higher the cost to the Council.
 - There are an increasing number of flats in the city. It is widely accepted that flats generally do not perform as well as houses in participating in recycling services. This is often due to a mixture of real and perceived barriers to recycling.
 - Increasing population and number of households.
 - Last year there were two significant breakdowns of the Wanlip and Bursom treatment plants. These resulted in the recycling and composting rate not meeting the contractual target of 38.56%. The actual figure is still to be confirmed but looks to be in the region of 35%.

- There have been complaints over the years regarding odour at times in the vicinity of the Ball Mall. Whilst Biffa has put in place certain measures to help mitigate concerns locally continue. The site is regulated by the Environment Agency (EA) who has not reported any recent breaches in the Company's Environmental Permit. The Council continues to respond to community concerns working with the EA and Biffa Leicester.
- Future changes in legislation may impact on the cost of the service. A recent change in law, for example, has meant increased cost of landfill tax applied to sand produced by the Wanlip Anaerobic Digestion process. Steps are being taken to try and mitigate this increased cost, but these may not be successful.

4.24 Finance: The City Council has a 25 Year Private Finance Initiative Integrated Waste Management Contract with Biffa Leicester Limited. The overall net budget for Waste Management is £16.3 million, although as noted in budget monitoring reports the budget has become insufficient in recent years. It is envisaged that funding will be realigned during 2018/19 within the overall resources available to the CDN Department.

5. Details of Scrutiny

The Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission scrutinise the decisions for Waste Management. The report will be presented to the NSCISC meeting on the 4th July 2018 by lead Councillor Adam Clarke.

6. Financial, legal and other implications considered by the Executive

6.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081

6.2 Legal implications

There are no implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report. There are however, for context, a few points to note:

- The report mentions changes in law. As a general rule, where these relate to the services of waste collection and disposal specifically, then the cost of compliance is a risk that sits with the Council.
- The services provided are a mix of statutory duties and non-mandatory powers. Where they are mandated there is little discretion in terms of cost recovery. This is a growing area of interest and there have been a number of high profile national issues, such as the charging for disposal of household DIY waste.

- The agreement with Biffa allows for the proper contract management processes to deal with the failure to meet the recycling target and other performance issues under the contract.

Emma Horton, Head of Law (Commercial, Property & Planning)

6.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

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The organic waste extracted at the Ball Mill is sent to the Anaerobic Digestion facility at Wanlip and the biogas produced is used to generate electricity. The electricity generated annually is approximately equivalent to the amount of electricity used by the Ball Mill.

Although not included in the scope of the council's carbon footprint calculation, treating the municipal waste produced by the city generates significant greenhouse gas emissions.

The future strategic direction of waste management in Leicester will be dictated by the EU Circular Economy Package that proposes a target to recycle 65% by 2030. It has been calculated that the implementation of the Package will also cut greenhouse gas emissions across Europe by between 2% and 4%.

Mark Jeffcote, Sustainability x372251

6.4 Equalities Implications

Waste Management services are effectively generic services provided to all residents irrespective of their protected characteristics. Service adjustments are generally made where residents may find it difficult to place refuse or recyclables out for collection.

Surinder Singh Equalities Officer tel. 37 4148

6.5 Other Implications

None.

7. Background information and other papers:

N/A

8. Summary of appendices:

N/A

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No.

10. Is this a "key decision"?

No

Table Two: Leicester City Council waste performance data

LCC rates	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
% Recycling	16.33	16.97	17.05	17.26	18.09	22.4	23.92	23.12	22.52	20.84	20.16
% Composting	10.88	16.42	13.62	22.58	22.4	19.45	17.55	19.93	12.09	20.56	20.14
Total	27.18	33.39	30.37	39.84	40.49	41.85	41.47	43.05	34.61	41.40	40.30
% Refuse Derived Fuel	7.23	8.63	12.38	0.03	5.76	27.64	27.36	30.21	40.82	30.01	24.53
% Diversion	34.41	42.02	42.75	39.87	46.25	69.49	68.83	73.26	75.43	71.41	64.83

Graph One: Comparison of Leicester with other cities

