

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET –14 JUNE 2016

Recommendation from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 April 2016:-

Environment Services Third Quarter Performance 2015/16 (Minute 63)

The Committee considered the report of the Director (Finance and Operations) and accompanying presentation which combined Environment Services information and Serco's customer satisfaction performance for Quarter 3.

The Serco/WHBC partnership has been established in accordance with Council policy and was monitored in accordance with the agreed Monitoring Framework. There were no new policy implications arising from this report.

The Committee were informed that an overall satisfaction rate of 76% had been achieved for Q3, the key points of which were –

The total refuse to landfill had reduced in Q3 to approximately 45 kilograms/resident which was better than the quarterly target of 50 kilograms/resident.

In Q3, the total recycling rate had decreased to just below 49%. The composting rate had decreased slightly, which was typical of this period. It still remained higher than the dry recycling rate, although this had also marginally increased in the quarter. Satisfaction of the recycling and composting collection service had both slightly decreased to 75% and 79%, respectively.

The total number of missed bins has increased this quarter, compared to the previous quarter. Missed bins include customer-reported missed and dropped roads by Serco due to vehicle breakdowns, staff shortages and blocked access.

Satisfaction with the refuse collection service had decreased this quarter to 77%. Satisfaction on refuse collection could be negatively affected by the policy of not returning for the first missed bin and issuing orange sacks. This policy was originally introduced at the start of Alternate Refuse and Recycling Collections (ARRC) to discourage inappropriate use of this service. However, after five years of ARRC it was considered that this policy had served its purpose.

Satisfaction had increased for greens and open spaces, and planters and shrub beds. Satisfaction decreased marginally to 72% for grass verges, hedges and shrubs and decreased for cleansing to ~70%.

Concern was expressed about grounds maintenance crews undertaking grass cutting which resulted in 'cut up' litter being left behind. Concern was also expressed about the amount of spillage that was left in the road after bins had been emptied. The Committee were informed by Sharon Connor (Serco) that with regard to grass cutting of verges, crews should litter pick areas before grass cutting and that every refuse collection vehicle had a broom which should be used to sweep up any spillage.

With regard to Missed Bins, whilst Members were pleased to note that around 52% of total missed bins were returned for within one day disquiet was voiced about the quantum of bins that had been missed which had badly affected certain parts of the Borough such as the High Dells area of Hatfield. Many of these bins had been missed because of vehicle breakdowns or driver shortage which was not the fault of residents.

Officers informed that Committee that Serco had returned for the majority (86%) of the missed bins within 3 days and that while problems had continued during January 2016, the figures for February and March had showed an improved performance. The Head of Environment advised that a number of issues had been raised with Serco at a meeting earlier in the day and that they would be looking to take remedial action including by reviewing the training needs of their staff. Sharron Connor (Serco) reported that some measures had already been taken including the introduction of a 'narrow access round' on Wednesdays. Also that 3 different sized freighters were now being used including smaller vehicles but problems caused by inconsiderate parking persisted.

A number of individual complaints having been raised, Members were reminded that these should be reported via the contact centre in the first instance.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and the Cabinet be requested to recommend the updated policy with regard to the use of orange sacks to the Council for adoption.

(Note: Please click on link below to access the Appendix).

http://democracy.welhat.gov.uk/documents/s943/2016.04.04_Item%2015_Env%20Serv%20Performance%203rd%20Qtr%20-%20App.pdf