



Belfast City Council

Report to: Health & Environmental Service Committee
Subject: **Waste Management Service - Customer Service Standards**
Date: 18th January, 2010
Reporting Officer: Tim Walker, Head of Waste Management, Ext 3311
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Relevant Background Information

The Council's Corporate Plan 2008–11 commits to delivering "*Better Services*" by seeking to listen and deliver, solve problems and keep in touch with our citizens.

By 2011, the Council expects to have implemented a strategic approach to customer service which supports all aspects of how we work and what we aim to achieve.

In support of both the Council's and our own commitment to customers, the Waste Management Service has worked with both the National Consumer Council and the Corporate Communications Service to develop a set of Customer Service Standards and associated performance targets for publication on the Council's Website (see Appendix 1). It is proposed that these will be regularly monitored, independently checked and reported annually to the Committee.

Key Issues

The Service has 11 sites/operations in Belfast and is responsible for waste planning and the provision of recycling and waste treatment/disposal services. It is underwritten by the requirements of the Waste & Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 to "*...make arrangements*

- (a) *for the disposal of any waste collected or removed under Article 20; and*
- (b) *for the provision of places at which persons may deposit their household waste at all reasonable times free of charge and for the disposal of the waste so deposited."*

In terms of performance, during 2008-09 the Service was accredited for OHSAS 18001 (Health and Safety standard), ISO 14001 (environmental management standard) and ISO 9000 (quality management standard at the Waste Transfer Station). It was also locally and nationally acknowledged for the quality of services in the following awards ceremonies:

- National Finalist 2009 in the APSE Best Service team: Waste Management & Recycling
- Gold Green Apple Award, Irish Section, for Best Integrated Communications Campaign for Waste Week 2009

- Best Event at The Green Awards for “*Stitch & Style*”, beating the Guardian Newspaper and Sony
- Gold Award at the Northern Ireland Pride Awards 2009 for Integrated Communications for Waste Week 2009
- Awarded the “*Best Performing Kerbside Scheme in Northern Ireland*” at the Local Authority Household Plastics Packaging Collection Awards 2009
- A Certificate of Achievement Award for the Waste Fair from the West Belfast Partnership
- 13 British Toilet Awards

By taking the next step and publishing and monitoring a set of customer service standards, the Service is seeking to be more open and transparent and to be able to demonstrate the consistency and commitment to meeting and exceeding customer expectations. We will use the monitoring and management information generated in relation to achieving the customer standards to improve service delivery and to inform new proposals and approaches to waste management in Belfast.

Resource Implications

Successfully managing waste services for ratepayers can lead to both short- and long-term efficiency gains in terms of diverting waste from landfill to cheaper recycling and other waste treatment options and encouraging changes in attitude and behaviour amongst the public.

There are no immediate resources implications associated with implementing these Customer Service Standards, and the associated monitoring.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to approve these standards and the annual reporting cycle.

Decision Tracking

In line with the Council’s decision tracking policy, these recommendations have been allocated to a Council Officer; in this case Mr Walker, Head of Waste Management.

Key to Abbreviations

APSE – Association for Public Service Excellence

Document Attached

Customer Service Standards

Waste Management Service Customer Service Standards

Introduction

We are committed to providing a high standard of customer service to all residents in Belfast. We believe that you have the right to know what level of service you can expect from us all the time - even in those rare moments when things don't go as planned. This charter describes what we do and contains details of the standards of customer service that you can expect from us.

It is the aim of all the staff in Waste Management to:

- be welcoming, fair, courteous and respectful in dealing with all enquiries
- deliver a uniform and consistent service
- provide clear, concise and prompt communication on all correspondence
- perform product delivery within set targets, and
- embrace innovation and best practice.

Thank you for taking time to read this information, and if we fail to deliver on our promise, targets or commitment to you, we welcome your comments.

The services we provide:

- buying a bin
- public toilets
- household recycling centres
- recycling bring banks
- waste management helpline and support services
- abandoned vehicles
- asbestos collections
- promotion and education
- household waste assessments

1. Buying a new bin

Aim: To deliver a purchased bin within five working days of receipt of payment.

What you get: The bin will be delivered to your home, after we receive payment in full.

How can customers help us? Please make sure you give us the correct delivery and contact details (especially daytime contact number).

Target: To deliver 90% of purchased bins within five working days of receipt of payment. Web link: [How to get a new bin](#)

2. Public toilets

Aim: To provide public toilets which are clean, safe and accessible.

What you get: Public toilets all over the city that open according to publicised opening hours, except for automatic toilets which remain open twenty-four hours, and the retractable urinal at Shaftesbury Square in Belfast which opens 10pm-6am nightly.

What we don't do: We do not have responsibility for toilets not provided by Belfast City Council. All our toilets are marked with our logo.

How can customers help us?

You can help us maintain high standards by giving us feedback on our toilets via telephone, email or letter.

Target: To provide public toilets which meet standards set by the British Toilet Association. Web link: [Find your nearest public toilet](#)

3. Household recycling centres

Aim: To provide recycling centres across Belfast, keeping them in a clean and useable state for customers and ensuring they stay open as according to the published opening hours.

What you get:

- Easily accessible, state of the art recycling centres in the North, South, East and West of the city.
- Centres that have regular opening hours, are emptied and cleaned regularly.
- Knowledgeable recycling centre staff to give you advice, guidance and physical assistance on site when required on recycling.

What we don't do:

- Asbestos or waste from commercial enterprises at any of Belfast City Council household recycling centres.
- Large quantities of Brick Rubble Waste (over 40kg) at any Belfast City Council household recycling centre.

How can customers help us?

- Adhering to all site instructions.
- Putting recycling materials in the correct bank.
- Complying with any health and safety instructions on site or requests from staff.

Target: To make sure our household recycling centres stay open 90% of the time, excluding periods of refurbishment or forced closure. Web Link: [List of recycling centres](#)

4. Glass recycling banks

Aim: To provide glass recycling facilities in local communities, with the aim of diverting recyclable material from landfill. To make sure the sites are emptied at regular intervals, keeping them from overflowing and maintaining them in a clean and useable state for customers

What you get: Glass recycling facilities for clear, brown and green glass all over the city.

What we don't do: Recycling banks for other recyclable materials

How can customers help us? By (i) suggesting potential sites within the community that might be suitable for glass recycling banks (ii) leaving the site clean (taking away plastic bags and cardboard boxes) (iii) putting the correct type of glass in the correct bank and (iv) telling us about any untidy sites, particularly those that are overflowing.

Target: To ensure that in 95% of all cases there will be adequate space for you to deposit your recyclable materials at each location. Web Link: [List of bottle banks](#)

5. Waste Management Helpline & Support Services

Aim: To provide a pleasant, reliable and efficient service to all our customers, and satisfactorily deal with any queries or complaints received.

What you get: Staff to deal with requests for bins, recycling information, and to handle reports of abandoned vehicles or comments about the service. The helpline is staffed Monday to Thursday 8.30am – 5pm, Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm (excluding bank and public holidays).

What we don't do: We do not provide information on your bin collections. This is dealt with by Cleansing Services. You can find information on this by visiting www.belfastcity.gov.uk/wastecollections or by calling them on 028 9027 0230.

How can customers help us? By providing helpline staff with all the relevant details when making an enquiry.

Target: To (i) respond to 90% of calls within 15 seconds (ii) acknowledge written enquiries (email and letter) within 5 working days. Written responses will be dealt with within 15 working days of the date of acknowledgement.

6. Abandoned vehicles

Aim: To provide a reliable service for the removal of abandoned vehicles from the public highway and open land.

What you get: An enforcement operation that serves a seven day notice on offending vehicles, and a vehicle uplift and removal service following the seven day notification period.

What we don't do: We don't remove vehicles suspected of being used for crime or other antisocial activities. However we will work in partnership with other agencies in all circumstances where abandoned vehicles have been identified. If you suspect this is the case please contact the police immediately.

How can customers help us? Please notify us when you suspect a vehicle has been abandoned in your area. You can report this by calling us on 0800 032 8100.

Target: To (i) respond to reported abandoned vehicles within two working days (ii) remove abandoned vehicles within 1 working day of the expiry of the seven day notice. Web link: [Find out about abandoned vehicles](#)

7. Asbestos collections

Aim: We aim to collect small amounts of asbestos for householders who pre-book the collection by calling the Waste Management Helpline on 0800 032 8100 (asbestos is classified as a hazardous material and must be handled with care.)

What you get: An asbestos collection service for householders in the Belfast City Council area. We will send householders who contact us two asbestos collection bags which must be used to hold the asbestos. We will accept up to 120kg of asbestos but it must be enclosed with care in the bags we send you. Also, due to the specialised nature of the service, Waste Management can only arrange collections once per month. Asbestos product should not be broken up. Householders will have to provide appropriate plastic sheeting and seal packages.

What is not provided: We will not collect asbestos that weighs over 120kg and we will not collect asbestos that has been removed by a commercial contractor. Also, we will not collect asbestos outside the Belfast City Council area. If our contractor arrives to collect and your asbestos does not meet the requirements outlined we will reject the asbestos and you will have to arrange your own collection.

Target: To collect asbestos within thirty days of receiving your telephone or online request. In the interim period it is your responsibility to keep this waste safely covered in suitable asbestos storage bags or sheeting. Bags will be sent out within one working day of being requested. Web link: [Find out about asbestos collections](#)

8. Promotion and education

Aim: To promote the waste management hierarchy throughout Belfast and provide information on waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

What you get: Presentations and talks on recycling issues for interested groups (including businesses, schools and community groups). We also host and participate in a wide range of events.

How can customers help us? Ask us questions, suggest ways we could improve recycling and waste reduction initiatives in Belfast. We are happy to answer any queries you may have on recycling issues but we always want to hear your views. Please contact us on 0800 032 8100 or email wasteeducation@belfastcity.gov.uk

Target: To (i) answer you query immediately or within three working days of your question (ii) agree a date for recycling presentation or talk, within 5 working days of receiving the initial request. Web link: [Find out about waste education opportunities](#)

9. Household waste assessments

Aim: To educate, advise and facilitate householders who require extra help with their household waste.

What you get: A home visit from a Resource Advisor about household waste and recycling. A Resource Advisor will give information and advice on what is acceptable in each household bin. They can also do assessments which will show if additional bin capacity is required.

How can customers help us? If you think you would benefit from a home visit from one of our Resource Advisors regarding waste and recycling issues or feel that you are struggling with your bin capacity please make an appointment by calling 0800 032 8100. Our team will be happy to speak with you.

Target: To carry out an assessment within 10 working days of receiving the initial request.

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