

# Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**

4th October, 2019

## **MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following item(s) will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 5.15 pm on Tuesday, 8th October, 2019.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

### **AGENDA:**

- 3** (a) Waste Collection Update (Pages 1 - 8)

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<b>Subject:</b>	Waste Collection Update
<b>Date:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director City & Neighbourhood Service Department
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Siobhan Toland, Director City Services John McConnell, City Services Manager (Resources & Fleet)

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	<b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	<p>To provide an update on Waste Collection issues, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>progress on actions included in the high level Waste Collection Improvement Plan, including the domestic and commercial efficiency reviews;</li> <li>issues around missed bins city wide and proposed actions to address problem areas;</li> <li>information in relation to the 'wheelie box' pilot launch;</li> <li>organic waste collections and the impact on operations.</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note the progress in relation to the performance improvements within the Waste Collection Improvement Plan to date, and recognise the ongoing work along with associated timescales.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endorse the procurement of a review of our Fleet needs, to help inform a fit for purpose sustainable Fleet Strategy which is aligned to the corporate ambitions of the Council. Relevant out workings of this review will be shared with the Working Group on Climate Crisis.</li> <li>• Note the planned actions around addressing the issues of missed collections across the city, the upcoming kerbside wheelie box pilot scheme and the impact of increased tonnages of organic waste in 2019.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<p><b>Key Issues</b></p> <p>3.1 <b>Waste Collection Improvement Plan</b> As outlined in the report of 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018 the Logistics Manager and his team have continued to focus on the waste improvement action plan. In terms of domestic collections, all domestic operational crews have gone through a challenge process, whereby individual productivity on a daily basis has been discussed and improvement plans agreed where necessary. This will now become a normal function of efficiency management whereby performance will be challenged on a regular basis.</p> <p>3.2 In terms of commercial collections the data collection exercise has been carried out and plans are currently being formed as to how this can be best taken forward. In recent years, however, there has been a fall in revenue for the Council from commercial waste collections, arising from more competition, loss of business to regional contracts and an increase in the provision of free or reduced rate services to churches, charities and educational establishments. There are concerns that this could at some stage undermine the economic feasibility of this service and work is underway to see whether there is value in developing an alternative model.</p> <p>3.3 To underpin these initiatives and to drive through continuous improvement, there is still a requirement to keep under review the levels of resources for the Waste Collection service and this will be considered under the City Service Fleet and Resource Transition Programme and estimating processes etc.</p> <p>3.4 <b>Missed Bin Collections</b> Turning to the issue of missed bins, this item has received increased scrutiny over the past two years as the new Resources &amp; Fleet City Service, has been established and throughout the summer of 2019 in particular. One of the priorities in Waste Collection is</p>

	<p>to ensure that the number of missed bins are kept to a minimum. It is worth reminding members that on average we collect approximately 154,000 bins a week, so the percentage of missed bins is less than 0.5% although we appreciate the impact even this has on people.</p>
3.5	<p>Recently, the number of missed collections has increased as a result of several factors, the main one being restricted access to streets due to parked cars. Although difficult to quantify, Waste Collection believes this to be a mix of residents parking in their own streets and commuters parking just off main arterial routes and then using public transport to continue their journeys to and from work.</p>
3.6	<p>The number of missed bins reported to the Council’s Call Centre spiked over and following the July holiday period, and although Waste Collection has strived to reduce this as quickly as possible, this has not been resolved quickly enough, mainly due to resources being diverted to cope with the increased demands for compostable waste collections outlined below. (See 3.11 to 3.17). Latest figures suggest that levels are now reducing towards the previous year’s figures.</p>
3.7	<p>There is a continual emphasis on ensuring that the service is capable of maximising first time collection rates. To counteract the increasing levels of missed bins, a “Task Force” made up of the Waste Collection Manager and two Assistant Managers has been set up to consider alternatives to address the levels of missed bins being experienced. Several approaches have been identified, and being implemented or will be explored as part of the Improvement Plan, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness with squads about missed bins using the data - core staff have been instructed to make every effort to get bins emptied “first time, every time” but, should this not be possible, to promptly communicate difficulties.</li> <li>• “If the lorry can’t get to the bin, can the bin get to the lorry?” Council Health &amp; Safety officers are working with Waste Collection to consider the frequency and distances involved to bring bins from agreed collection points to the vehicle, whether there is a recommended “maximum distance” an operator can be asked to pull a bin. This remains a work in progress as there is no definitive HSE, Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum (WISH ) or other guidance on this and individual risk assessments would be required taking into account road conditions, length of travel, weight of bins, etc. This would be a major undertaking to achieve, and the effects on route efficiency also need to be understood.</li> <li>• What would be the cost of additional staff to offset the above and reduce operator fatigue to provide longer pulls?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selective targeting (e.g. missed Assisted Lifts) as a priority – discussions are underway with the individual crews on how best to introduce a new system of recording missed assisted lifts.</li> <li>• Better use of ICT with the first draft of “heat maps” being used to identify difficult areas but this is dependent upon access to critical staff members or additional technical support.</li> <li>• Feasibility of introducing a second Restricted Access (RA) Squad to target known inaccessible streets although this would require additional resourcing.</li> <li>• Longer-term, amending the fleet to have a better fit-for-purpose (i.e. procuring narrow body and/or 18T refuse collection vehicles; an initial step has been taken to order 8 x 26T narrow body RCVs which are due to delivered in April/May 2020. These should be capable of accessing narrow streets more easily and positively impact upon missed bins).</li> <li>• Close dialogue is maintained with Road Service regarding the installation of double-yellow lines and enforcement, and higher level discussions have been held about adopting alternative approaches – such as red or blue lines, clearway zones etc, but these have been deferred pending reestablishment of the Assembly. This is an action raised previously at committee and we will write to the Department for Infrastructure formally to update them on these challenges, the impacts, and seek to get support and action from them on how to address.</li> </ul>
3.8	<p>All of the above work and our work around the Departmental transition and improvement project for Resources and Fleet Services, is underpinned by the Corporate Customer Improvement Programme. This work is ongoing and further reports will be presented at future meetings.</p>
3.9	<p><b><u>Development of a Fleet Strategy</u></b></p> <p>Due to the ongoing technological advances and interest to have a cleaner and greener fleet, balanced with a need to look at the types of vehicles we require in the future, that meet operational delivery plans based on the Waste Framework, it is recommended that we comprehensively review our Fleet needs to help inform a fit for purpose, sustainable Fleet Strategy, which is aligned to the corporate ambitions of the Council and will be of wider benefit to the City.</p>
3.10	<p>Although we have internal expertise around fleet management and the future needs under the waste framework, there is recognition that there is a need for some specialist knowledge. It is proposed that the Council will need to procure additional external support to assist us in developing a future proofed Fleet Strategy which reflects current</p>

market trends, evolving technological advancements and meeting legislative requirements, assessing the economic impacts and options for introducing the strategy from the existing to a future need for Belfast City Council. We will be procuring this service as soon as possible from within existing budgets.

3.11

### **Organic Waste Collections**

Over the previous two years, the tonnage of food/compostable waste generated over the summer for the last two years increases by 50% and 62% respectively, compared to the following winter months, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Domestic Organic Weights – Summer V Winter

	<b>2017 Spring &amp; Summer 04/17 to 09/17</b>	<b>2018 Spring &amp; Summer 04/18 to 09/18</b>	<b>2019 Spring &amp; Summer 04/19 to 09/19<sup>1</sup></b>
Total Shipped at Glenside	12020 Tonnes	12199 Tonnes	12866 Tonnes
	<b>Autumn &amp; Winter 10/17 to 03/18</b>	<b>Autumn &amp; Winter 10/18 to 03/19</b>	
Total Shipped at Glenside	7403 Tonnes	8114 Tonnes	

3.12

The current wet and warm summer of 2019, combined with food waste, has resulted in the highest month on month recorded figures to date, with an expectation of tonnages for the six summer months March to September 2019 to be in the region of 12866 Tonnes. See Appendix 1 – ‘Organic waste tonnages 2017-2019’.

3.13

Typically, due to the additional weight in individual bins during the summer, bins take longer to load, and lorries fill at a faster rate, requiring a second ship. This has meant utilising the existing finite resources to work additional hours to support service delivery. This in itself has a further knock on effect on services and logistics planning and therefore there have been impacts on the service’s ability to react to pressures in retrieving missed bins in good time on the other waste streams. As a result of the increased tonnages, during this year’s summer months much of the organic waste collection routes have not always been completed within normal working hours, and this has placed a heavy demand on additional working arrangements. For example, in the months April – September 2019, a total of 12,866 Tonnes of domestic organic waste

<sup>1</sup> Last two weeks Sept 19 estimated

	<p>(brown bins) has been collected. Nominal capacity for this waste stream is approximately 9,555 tonnes for the comparable period. This will require reviewing our working arrangements and our existing waste policies.</p>
3.14	<p>Recognising the pressures that the increased tonnages are placing on the service and the likelihood that the tonnage presented is likely to continue to increase year on year, the Waste Collection team are currently exploring options on how to maximise resource availability going forward into next year, and as part of the Resources and Fleet Transition Programme, proposals may be brought forward in relation to this as part of the estimating process for 2020/2021.</p>
3.15	<p><b>Kerbside Wheelie Box Pilot</b></p> <p>Members will recall the update provided at last months' meeting of this committee regarding the Pilot. The Kerbside Wheelie Box Pilot is due to commence on 30th September, 2019. Capital funding of £622k has been received from DAERA to acquire two vehicles and all associated bins and materials for the project.</p>
3.16	<p>The scheme will increase the capacity of collections for recyclable materials by providing a weekly collection service whilst encouraging residents to recycle more with the provision of a smaller black bin. New bins have been delivered to residents throughout September 2019 and an intensive communications campaign has been undertaken. This has included door knocking, leafleting and will continue post project launch with roadshows and staff on the ground answering queries.</p> <p>It should be noted that there will be an increased requirement for an additional squad to deliver the kerbside box pilot, due to the increased segregation of waste at source (kerbside), and the fact that this trial will deliver a weekly rather than a fortnightly service to residents. These costs, however, are partially mitigated as the proposed area is on the pilot purple box glass collection scheme, with partial resources transferred from this activity to the wheelie-box scheme. In addition, we expect that income from the improved quality of the materials and increased landfill diversion will help offset the additional operating costs. It is expected therefore that the pilot will be nett cost neutral, assessment of this will be kept under review.</p>
3.17	<p>As part of the wheelie box pilot, data will be gathered to evaluate whether the envisaged outcomes are being realised. It is proposed that reviews of initial data will take place after 6 weeks and then after three months. Resources and Fleet would propose to present these initial findings to the P&amp;C Committee at a date soon thereafter.</p>



3.18	<p><b><u>Financial / Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>Consultancy support for the Fleet Strategy will be provided from within existing budgets. Any future route optimisation rebalancing exercises and asset implications arising from the implementation of the Waste Framework may however result in financial and resource implications at a future date.</p> <p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>At this time there are no equality, good relations or rural needs assessment implications associated with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 - Organic waste tonnages 2017-2019

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