



Subject:	Waste Collection Update
Date:	12 September 2017
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Assistant Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department

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

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To provide Members with a monthly update, on actions which have been introduced to improve the waste collection service, following the report presented to Members at 8 August 2017 Committee meeting.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The processes and actions which have been implemented to improve the performance of the waste collection service and additional planned activities to further enhance service performance.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p data-bbox="272 226 421 255"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="272 275 1002 304"><u>Customer Call Handling and Management Interventions</u></p> <p data-bbox="272 376 1465 757">It was evidenced in last month's report, that there had been a significant growth in calls coming into the Council's Customer Contact Centre regarding waste collections and whilst many of these were positive in nature, as they were related to the successful new '<i>No Food in Waste Bin</i>' initiative, the customer experience was not at the level we would have expected. To provide a context to this, from the 17 July to 25 August 2017, the Customer Contact Centre received 19,841 telephone calls and voice mails. A weekly breakdown of these calls and voice mails is included in Appendix 1 - Customer Contact Centre Telephone Calls and Voice Mails 17 July 2017 to 25 August 2017.</p>
3.2	<p data-bbox="272 831 1465 958">Given the large volume of customer calls in relation to waste collection, being received by the Customer Contact Centre in July, several actions have been introduced to improve the waste collection service as follows:</p> <ul data-bbox="331 1032 1465 2029" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="331 1032 1465 1211">• A review was undertaken to examine the processes involved in handling customer enquiries. This review considered the activities carried out from the call being received, the actions taken to deal with the customer enquiry, through to closure of the service request. <li data-bbox="331 1234 1465 1368">• This review allowed daily management information reports to be generated, which enabled targeted, timely operations to be put in place to deal with requests for service in relation to missed bins and missed assisted lifts. <li data-bbox="331 1391 1465 1626">• Following this, more detailed daily management information reports, by assistant manager and operational squad, were produced. This information clearly identified waste collection routes that were presenting issues following which accountability processes were introduced to improve communication between assistant managers and squads that has supported the resolution of ongoing difficulties. <li data-bbox="331 1648 1465 1783">• A supervisor log sheet was introduced, which identified all actions to be completed prior to the service request being closed down. This has allowed increased focus on performance of waste collection management and squads. <li data-bbox="331 1805 1465 2029">• The daily management information reports also highlighted access issues that had not previously been identified. As a result and in consultation with residents, increased attention has been focused on dealing with access issues, some of which have been resolved, whilst other more complex accessibility problems remain work in progress, to achieve long term solutions.

- A regular communications process has been developed with the waste collection management team and trade unions to ensure that focus is directed at operational outcomes.

3.3 During week ending 21 July a high volume of calls was directed into the Customer Contact Centre and, due to the nature of the customer enquiries, call durations were of considerable length. This resulted in call operators being occupied for longer periods of time than normal and those calls which were unable to be answered were abandoned or diverted to the voice mail system. Unfortunately, given the substantial calls being diverted to voice mail a system failure occurred, resulting in the voice mail service crashing. In view of this, no voice mail data was recorded during this week however this technical issue was resolved within a few days as calls levels reduced.

3.4 During week ending 28 July, again a significant number of calls and abandoned calls were recorded however as the number of calls being diverted to voice mail was less than the previous week, the voice mail system was maintained and voice mail data was recorded during this period. At this point, immediate corrective action was taken and the Customer Contact Centre resources were realigned to support the increased demand in relation to call handling. This resulted in an instant improvement for customers in relation to call experience.

3.5 As a result of management intervention and correction actions taken, we now see that during the period 31 July to 25 August, the data illustrates a continuous downward trend in the number of calls received and the number of abandoned calls (see in Appendix 1). At its highest level, the percentage of abandoned calls was 22.29% of all calls received during week ending 28 July. As at 25 August, the percentage of abandoned calls had reduced to 1.29% as a result of pre-emptive actions introduced. This downward trend is clearly demonstrated in the graph included in Appendix 1. Furthermore, from 10 August, no calls were diverted to voice mail, further validating that waste collection calls for service requests were reducing and processes and procedures introduced from 24 July 2017, to proactively improve performance, were having a positive impact.

3.6 Following trend analysis of the Customer Contact Centre call data, calls received into the Customer Contact Centre from 14 August onwards are comparable to typical call levels recorded in previous years.

It is recognised that, issues experienced as a result of the introduction of route

3.7	<p>optimisation, which would have been expected to be in by now, however remain ongoing. In order to also provide an independent view on the impact of route optimisation, Resource Futures was contracted by Belfast City Council to review the council's waste collection services in spring 2017, in order to assess the potential causes of the crews being unable to complete their allocated rounds and identify potential solutions that could be implemented to resolve these issues. The study findings indicated that the route optimisation project had been successful in achieving the expected outcomes, that is, to design waste collection routes in the most efficient way. The study did however highlight that the level of success had been limited, primarily by three key areas of concern in relation to squad performance and productivity and performance management.</p>
3.8	<p>The report has identified recommendations which are currently being assessed in consultation with staff and trade unions. These include proposed minor adjustments to existing routes.</p>
3.9	<p>An Action Plan is in the process of being developed which will include the recommendations from the independent study together with processes and procedures to deal with productivity and performance issues. Council's AGRS has been asked to undertake an assessment of the waste collection service. The recommendations of this assessment will also be included in the Action Plan. The Action Plan will be presented to Committee in October's waste collection Committee update report.</p>
3.10	<p>In terms of waste treatment / disposal arising from introducing route optimization and the food waste campaign, in the first quarter the Council increased its recycling / composting rate by almost 1,500 tonnes. The majority of which can be linked to the food waste campaign which is hoped will lead to a year end improvement in the recycling rate.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>At this time there are no financial or resource implications associated with this report. 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><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>

3.12	<p>At this time there are no equality or good relations implications associated with this report. 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>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 - Customer Contact Centre Telephone Calls and Voice Mails 17 July 17 to 25 August 2017.</p>