
TRANSFORMING COLLECTIONS IN RECYCLING SERVICES

Reason for the Report

1. To provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider the proposals contained within the Cabinet report titled 'Transforming Collections in Recycling Services', prior to it being received at the Cabinet meeting on the 12th November.
2. The draft Cabinet report sets out the two main proposals within the paper as:
 - *To inform Cabinet of the changes to the waste and recycling collection programme which will shift from a five day, two shift service, to a four day, one shift service from February 2021.*
 - *To seek approval of the communication and media plan proposed to inform residents of the implications of the new four day collection service on residential collection timetables.*

Background

3. The Council currently operates a five day, two shift system for waste collections; 6am to 2pm and 2pm to 10pm. This system was introduced in 2008 to accommodate citywide food recycling collections to improve Cardiff's recycling performance. The double shifting approach was designed to enable additional collections without the need to introduce new fleet, and to limit any significant increase in budget requirements relating to fleet.
4. In addition to the above, Bank Holiday Monday collections create changes to the collection timetable for all residents with collections taking place Tuesday through to Saturday.

4. Cardiff Council is the only Welsh Local Authority to operate a two shift collection model for waste and recycling.
5. The drawbacks of the five day, two shift model are:
 - Collection of Waste and Recycling is Monday to Friday between 6am and 10pm. This is a large collection window for bags and receptacles to be in the Street Scene, and means collections take place in non-daylight hours with heightened health and safety risks for frontline officers and the public.
 - Connect 2 Cardiff (C2C) closes at 6pm so does not support the service, albeit there is a move to all concerns being managed digitally.
 - Vehicles maintenance can be difficult due to the long working hours.
 - The long working hours do not support use of electric vehicles.
 - Productivity of the service is low due to the shift hours not supporting vehicle utilisation in terms of collections and disposal.
 - A two-shift model breeds a culture of missed collections and revisits as subsequent shifts can pick up any work dropped by the previous shift.
 - On Bank Holidays the collection days change for all residents and a backlog is often created.

The Proposed New Approach

6. As such, the proposal is to move to a four day, one shift model to provide a more efficient collection service with better vehicle utilisation and a consistent all year round timetable. Collections will take place in a single shift between 6am and 3.45pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. There will be no residential collections of recycling and waste on a Monday.
7. The key benefits of the four day, one shift model are:
 - Waste and recycling will be off the streets by 3:15pm;

- Collections in winter will be safer, as they will predominantly take place during daylight hours;
 - Productivity in the service will improve as the longer shift complements vehicle utilisation in terms of collections and disposal.
 - No residential waste and recycling on Mondays will mean there will be no need to change resident collections days following a Bank Holiday Monday.
 - Although Officers will work longer hours, they will have three rest days each week, promoting good work life balance.
8. To complement the changes a restructure of the management and support team is taking place, this it is hoped will provide a focus on the utilisation of real data to control service provision and help to reduce missed collections.
9. The new approach will also require 'round rebalancing' to address the growth in property numbers in wards across the city as housing development has taken place over time.
10. The changes to service delivery outlined in the draft Cabinet report are cost neutral in relation to revenue budgets, although there will be some one-off costs relating to compensation payments for changes to employment contracts, voluntary severance payments, resident letters, media messaging, C2C costs and education/enforcement costs absorbed within the service area.
- 10a. The extra lorries and different shift patterns would mean the number of staff required to deliver the service increases to 150. The service currently operates with 130 full time employees working on the service and will be aiming to recruit an 20 additional employees to enable the Council to deliver the service in the coming months. There will be no compulsory job losses.

Issues

11. An additional 24 fleet refuse collection vehicles will be required to deliver the changes. Initially, these will be provided on spot hire. The Council currently operates

39 refuse collection vehicles, and the intention is to increase the size of the fleet to 68 refuse collection vehicles (including fleet reserves not required when spot hiring) moving forward.

12. In order to implement the new work pattern, changes to the terms and conditions of all officers currently working in collections will need to take place prior to February 2021. Staff have been consulted. A Trade Union ballot took place from 2nd October to 16th October 2020, which provided a positive result in favour of the changes and creating the basis for a collective agreement.
13. In addition to staff, the changes will mean collections of recycling and waste will change for a significant number of residents across Cardiff. **Appendix A** shows the changes to the ward collection days, and the estimated number of properties in each ward. In total, there will be changes to the collection days for over 85,000 properties.
14. In some wards it will be necessary to develop some operational boundaries, to maximise efficiencies i.e. some streets may be collected on a different day to the rest of the ward area. These arrangements are already in place within certain wards. For example, streets within Creigiau/St Fagans are collected with Ely. The wards being reviewed for additional operational boundaries are Splott, Heath and Penylan. This information will be reflected within targeted letters to each property and will display correctly on the digital services.
15. There is a fundamental link between street cleansing and refuse collections and, therefore, the predominantly bag based inner wards are collected earlier in the week to enable cleansing activities on collection day and the following day. The wards collected on Friday are predominantly receptacle based, and so litter issues are normally limited and do not normally require street cleansing work on the following day.
16. A review will be undertaken to determine which wards would best be able to support the transition in terms of being able to access waste in property frontages, and where additional resource from cleansing and environmental enforcement can be applied in this short changeover period.

Communication and Media Plan

17. The majority of communication and media work will commence towards the end of January. It will also be in line with the digital channels being updated, to show the new collection days for each area. The key components of the communication plan will be:
- A letter to every resident explaining why the changes are taking place and what it means to them in terms of their collections day.
 - A leaflet reminding residents of the correct items to place into green recycling bags/garden waste containers.
 - An insert / postcard that encourages residents to keep the information on the changes to hand, i.e. it will be able to be placed on a noticeboard, fridge or boiler.
 - Targeted social media in dedicated focus areas.
 - Information within the 4 core Hub buildings
 - Digital information – Cardiff website, Cardiff Gov app, Bobi chat bot (132,000 residents searched their collection dates via these services during the COVID-19 changes over a four-week period).

Way Forward

18. The Cabinet Members for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment has been invited to attend the meeting. He will be supported by the Assistant Director for Street Scene.

Legal Implications

19. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to the Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those

recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

20. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

21. The Committee is recommended to:
- (i) Consider the information in this report and the information presented at the meeting;
 - (ii) Determine whether they would like to make any comments, observations or recommendations to the Cabinet on this matter; and,
 - (iii) Decide the way forward for any future scrutiny of the issues discussed.

Davina Fiore

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28th October 2020