

Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny - Select Committee 22 March 2017



Subject:	Modernisation of Waste and Street Services
Committee:	Select Committee – Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Date:	22 March 2017
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Leaves, Cabinet Member for Strategic Street Scene and Environment
CMT Member:	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
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Purpose of the report:

This document sets out the context for the Street Scene and Waste Services Policy and illustrates how it has been developed collaboratively with a wide range of Stakeholders. It will also detail how it will be communicated to the public once it is approved.

Background

A plan for modernising the Waste and Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Services was presented to the Place and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel last 5th October 2016.

The plan to modernise the service recognised the need for it to become more efficient and for the separate functions to join up to work as a more holistic delivery of cleansing, recycling and waste collection and grounds maintenance. This aligned service would more effectively manage the public spaces and streets and work towards a cleaner, greener city. A Business Case to deliver the plan was approved by Cabinet on 8 November 2016.

Key aims are to increase the rate of recycling across the city to 40% by 2020 (rising to 50% by 2034) and reduce the overall waste generated in brown bins through awareness raising and education campaigns which help people to make smarter choices, generate less waste and recycle more of what they do generate.

Many areas of the country have shown that it is possible to achieve high levels of recycling from the municipal waste collections, and many have used reduced household collection frequencies as a driver for change. However, there is no national one-size solution to optimize waste management solutions. Every area has to adopt the best combination of practices to suit local circumstances.

Strong communications and clear campaigns are important factors, together with consistent awareness and education for all sections of the community and front line staff. The publication of a Street Scene and Waste Service Policy will form the basis on which communication about the service can be formed.

The creation of a policy which sets out how the service will be delivered for Plymouth is recommendation 5 in the approved business case. A request for an Executive decision to approve the policy will be submitted once the Scrutiny process has been satisfied.

Development of the Policy

The Street Scene and Waste policy has been developed by collating input from across a wide range of key stakeholders including Members across all parties, frontline workers within the service, Supervisors and managers within the service, and associated departments for example Legal Services and Public Protection Service. This has been in the form of workshops structured to gather the issues and opportunities to improve the service from the perspective of staff and councillors, and considered both detailed, specific issues in the city, and consistent problems that affect a wider area.

It has taken account of detailed analysis and engagement including:

- Review of feedback from customers made via Firmstep, with 567 responses in the last 12 months reviewed
- Review of the responses to relevant questions in the 'Time for Big Decisions' Consultation questionnaire which was completed in September 2016.
- Review of previous drafts of Waste policies in Plymouth
- Review of Policies in other local authorities in our CIPFA family group and authorities deemed to excel at engagement on waste issues.
- WRAP (Waste Reduction and Participation) national best practice guidance – the 'Waste Commitment'
- Series of workshops with Service Team Leaders, Staff focus groups and regular reviews of drafts by Team Leaders and Managers
- Input and reviews from Legal Services and Public Protection services to ensure a policy would be sufficiently robust against which to take enforcement decisions.
- Series of 7 Ward Councillor drop-ins in November/December to capture key issues which would need to be addressed within the policy.
- Regular updates and amendments made with Portfolio Holder.
- Discussion at Shadow Portfolio Holder meetings.
- Update at Labour group meeting on progress and development of the policy.
- Reviewed by CMT

Delivery of the Service in Line with the Policy

Work has commenced with Team Leaders and Managers to review working practices which will be required to ensure the service is delivered in line with the policy. The service has been through a re-structure which has brought all the roles across the separate functions together and looked at how they should work differently, what new roles are required and what needs to be addressed.

A training and development plan is being developed to ensure that staff understand their new roles, know what is expected of them, and that they have the skills, knowledge and support to make the change to their working practices. Regular workshops with Team Leaders and frontline staff to develop this work will commence on 8 March.

Communication of the Approved Policy

Once the policy is approved the intention is to:

- Publish the policy on the Plymouth City Council Website, so our residents understand what to expect from the service and what their responsibilities are
- Update Members of the policy decision and its journey via Member's Toolkit
- Update the information on the relevant sections of the website and public Frequently Asked Questions to help answer questions from the public and minimise the need for residents to call or visit Customer Services
- Brief Customer Services staff on the content of the policy, so they can deal with public queries at the first point of contact
- Train Street Scene and Waste Service staff on new ways of working and also ensure that they have the right information so they support residents who have questions.
- Update council staff of its approval via Staffroom – many of our staff are also Plymouth residents and are also advocates for the council
- Issue a press release as part of the overall communications build up to the changes to collections for refuse, recycling and garden waste from 8 May 2017
- Update our partners (particularly housing management companies and Registered Social Landlords.

Equality and Diversity

Two Equalities Impact Assessments (EIA) have been carried out, one for the workforce the other for customers and partner organisations, this ensures clarity of adverse impact and mitigation actions.

Summary of Equalities Impact Assessments – Customer and Partner

Data from the 2011/2012 census has been used to conduct the assessment, with the main actions to ensure consideration is given the needs of all resident regardless of protected characteristic are:

'Collect and collate information from partner agencies to identify current assisted collection users who will continue to require support.'

'Engage with partner agencies such as PCH, Plymouth University and the NHS trust(s) to promote and support project / service communication and education plans.'

Formalising the Street Scene and Waste Services policy for Plymouth, giving clear guidance on the responsibilities of residents, as well as setting customer expectations of the service will enable a clear and fair enforcement policy.

Summary of Equality Impact Assessment – Workforce

September 2016 establishment data has been used to conduct the assessment.

The main impact on employees will be a slightly longer working day. To ensure the impact does not adversely affect one particular protected characteristic, all employees will continue to be assessed for their needs via the management team. Flexible working requests and purchase of additional annual leave remain as options to ensure staff can achieve a good work life balance.

Recommendation:

Recommend that the committee notes the policy appended to this report as an appropriate response to Recommendation 5 of the approved business case.

‘Recommendation 5: Development of efficient Waste Collection and Recycling Policy and customer service standards, which will ensure a high quality and consistent standard of service to meet the needs of this growing city.’

Published work / information:

[Approved Business Case for the Modernisation of Waste and Street Services](#)

[The Household Waste Collection Commitment | WRAP UK](#)