

Report presented to Parish Chairmen's Group- Tuesday 14 March 2017
Civic Amenity Vehicle Service - Update

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Parish Chairmen with a progress report on the Civic Amenity Vehicle service, which underwent service modifications at the end of July 2016 to manage costs and increase recycling.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Civic Amenity Vehicle (CAV) service is incorporated into the waste and recycling services contract and on 25 November 2014 a report was presented at the Parish Chairmen's meeting, on the provision of discretionary services in parished areas.
- 2.2 This report referred to services such as the CAV and noted that as a result of unprecedented funding pressures in recent years, the Council would need to consider how these services would be delivered in the future.
- 2.3 In 2015/16 a working group of non-executive Council members and parish/town council representatives was established to look at the full range of possibilities for continuing the CAV beyond 2015/16 within the available budget.

3. Modified Service

- 3.1 Subsequently, to meet the agreed service scope, it was agreed that the cost of the CAV would be shared between the Borough Council and the parishes served by it, and that the service be adjusted to either a fortnightly or monthly alternate collection of domestic and garden waste (compostable) from week ending 31 July 2016.
- 3.2 Officers visited every scheduled location in advance of the service change to talk to residents about the new service and leaflets and posters were deployed with the assistance of parish clerks. The Council's website provided updated details of the next scheduled collections.
- 3.3 During their visits officers observed that the vast majority of the waste collected was classified as being domestic residual and utilised to supplement the weekly kerbside collection, incorporating recyclable material, with nominal amounts of bulky waste and garden material entering the vehicle.

- 3.4. In addition, from talking to users it was apparent that the service was being utilised by commercial operators and non-Borough residents and those identified as commercial operators and non-Borough residents are being turned away from using the service.
- 3.5 The response from those residents using the service has been positive, many of whom were unaware that the vehicles' waste was only being sent to landfill.
- 3.6 The introduction of CCTV cameras on the vehicles has provided useful assistance to the drivers in deterring bad behaviours, (noting that the cameras have not been used to resolve any issues to this point), whilst enhancing the safe systems of work for the driver.
- 3.7 There has been a significant amount of material being disposed of through the CAV services. During the period August 2015 – February 2016 1026 tonnes of waste were collected and sent to landfill through the CAV. During the same period following the change to the CAV services, the total waste collected was 288.81 of which 73.60 was collected as separate garden waste for composting and 215.21 tonnes went to landfill.
- 3.8 The following table summarises the waste tonnages by month collected between 31 July 2016 and 28 February 2017.

| Waste / Dates | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Total Waste | 15.76 | 52.18 | 47.22 | 41.24 | 34.95 | 29.40 *** | 30.24 | 37.82 | 288.81 |
| Garden waste | No Service | 21.30 | 15.50 | 14.12 | 6.44 ** | 4.30 | 1.44 | 10.50 | 73.60 |
| Landfill waste | 15.76 * | 30.88 | 31.72 | 27.12 | 28.51 | 25.10 | 28.80 | 27.32 | 215.21 |

Key

- * *weekend of the 30 & 31 July only*
- ** *fire at North Farm household waste disposal site*
- *** *condensed service over the Christmas period*

4. Behaviour changes

- 4.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's recycling rate in 2015/16 was 46%. It is anticipated that with the contribution of the CAV garden waste and reduction in residual waste collected the rate will be closer to the 2020 target of 50%.

- 4.2 The garden waste collected by the service has made a really good contribution to the recycling rates, even though it is clear from the collection data that the vehicle is not being fully utilised in the winter period.
- 4.3 It is hard to draw any firm conclusions as to where the material not now being presented at the CAV is being disposed of, but it is believed that raising awareness of what was happening to material going in to the vehicle and reducing the frequency of collections has created positive changes in behaviour. Also the level of garden waste collected may well be reduced due to the recent dry weather conditions. It is likely that a combination of the following behaviours has occurred:
- Commercial operators are being deterred from using the domestic service
 - Neighbouring borough/district residents are being deterred from using the service
 - Residents are re-using items of waste / packaging etc
 - Residents are reducing the number and types of consumables / foods being purchased
 - Supplementary use by residents of the household waste disposal sites
 - Enhanced use by residents of the alternate weekly household kerbside collection
 - Improved residents' use of the Borough-wide bring banks
- 4.4 The service changes have not resulted in an increase in reported fly tipping. Last year officers recorded 978 fly tips from across the Borough, whilst so far this year there have been 875 (March not included) reported cases. In addition, the data shows that there has been no increase in the fly tip tonnages during the adjusted period.
- 4.5 The table below captures the recorded fly tip tonnages for the past four years, whilst also highlighting the tonnages since the modified service was introduced.

| Month / Year | 2016-17 - tonnes | 2015/16 tonnes | 2014/15 | 2013/14 |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| April | 6.48 | 5.22 | 5.42 | 7.08 |
| May | 5.44 | 3.90 | 8.28 | 6.96 |
| June | 9.04 | 4.40 | 3.52 | 4.56 |
| July | 4.42 | 5.22 | 4.24 | 6.00 |
| August | 2.80 | 3.76 | 2.02 | 4.80 |
| September | 3.56 | 5.08 | 3.30 | 3.54 |
| October | 2.10 | 6.74 | 6.74 | 4.50 |
| November | 2.92 | 7.42 | 3.40 | 4.12 |
| December | 3.72 | 6.48 | 4.28 | 5.08 |
| January | 1.70 | 7.08 | 6.98 | 7.70 |
| February | 3.15 | 2.34 | 3.82 | 3.34 |
| March | 0.00 | 6.98 | 5.52 | 4.18 |
| Total tonnages | 45.33 | 64.618 | 57.52 | 61.86 |

Source – KCC waste transfer station data

- 4.6 Enforcement officers are continuing to schedule un-announced monitoring visits across all CAV locations to check compliance and coach residents about what the vehicles can and cannot accept whilst deterring commercial operators and non-residents. This will be supported by regular promotional campaigns to inform residents of the benefits of recycling and minimising waste.
- 4.7 The Contract Services Manager has met representatives of all the partaking parishes since the changes, to discuss the service schedule, performance data and to receive feedback on the modified service, which to date has been very positive and reaffirms the feedback received by the users of the service at the weekends.
- 4.8 A suggestion from the meetings is a request to reduce the garden waste CAV collections during the winter period in exchange for additional non-recyclable waste CAV collections. This is something that can be fed back to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group (see paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2).

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The modifications to the Civic Amenity Vehicle service have been implemented extremely well with the help of all concerned. With the support of residents and input from parish/town councils we have seen significant reductions in the total waste collected and we are now able to send the garden material collected for composting rather than to landfill.
- 5.2 To maintain the behaviour changes that have been made we will continue to push the recycling message via targeted campaigns to residents. Officers will continue to monitor the service and performance data for any trends and feedback to the individual parish councils.

6 Next Steps

- 6.1 The new household recycling and waste collection service contract is due to start at the beginning of April 2019. The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a Task and Finish Group to review the service options leading up to the new contract award in the autumn of 2018. The Task and Finish Group has met a number of times and Cabinet will be asked to consider its findings at the Cabinet in April.
- 6.2 Amongst its recommendations, the T&F Group has recommended that a) Kent County Council, Ashford Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council be approached to discuss the feasibility of providing a Household Waste and Recycling Site to serve

areas of each borough; and b) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the current review of the Civic Amenity Vehicle service after input from the Parish Chairmen's meeting on 14 March and subject to the progress of discussions resulting from the recommendation above.

- 6.3 Cabinet will be asked to consider the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's at its meeting on 13 April; consequently officers therefore are not proposing to alter the service other than to consider reducing the garden waste collections as suggested earlier in the report.

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