

**Executive Member for Environment
Decision Session**

3 December 2018

Report of the Corporate Director for Economy and Place

Waste Resilience Update

Summary

1. The front line waste service provides residential waste and recycling collection services to residents. It has faced particular challenges over recent months and this report details the steps taken to address the challenges and options to increase further resilience.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member:
 - a) Note the update provided in this report.
 - b) To approve Options B; develop a driver apprentice scheme.
 - c) To request officers work with to develop proposals for a more generic multi-functional workforce.

Reason: The Council Plan has a key theme of ensuring that residents receive reliable services, this report details waste services performance in that regards and what can be done to improve reliability.

Background

3. The front line waste service provides residential waste collection services with over 2 million recycling collections as well as 2 million residual collections per annum and over a million green waste collections each year. The cost of collection is approximately £0.71 per collection. The costs per household compare well. The APSE figures show that the annual cost of Waste Collection per

household is £47.07 compared with the national average of £64.43 and the APSE family cost of £61.85

4. The performance of waste collection has two primary indicators. Uncompleted rounds and missed collections. Uncompleted rounds are when the crews are not able to complete the days work before the end of their shift, these are bins that have not been emptied and we know we have failed to deliver the service, this usually affects a whole street. Missed collections are when we are unaware we have not delivered the service and it is an error on our part.
5. The Council has 2 main ways of customers letting us know when there bins have not been collected; via a call to the customer centre and a call being logged for a missed bin, or by making a complaint to CYC where the reason for the complaint is a missed bin. Customers can in circumstances log the same case by the two different routes.

Based on information collected by the customer centre in 2017/18 CYC collected 99.89% collected on time. In 2016/17 CYC collected 99.84% on time

6. The service is highly regulated with strict rules about the times and breaks that drivers particularly must take and the amount of waste a vehicle can carry safely. The fleet of vehicles used are also controlled by the operator's license requirements.
7. Improving the resilience of the service will ultimately improve the performance of the service that residents experience. Learning from the challenges the service has faced and the decisions made.
8. Staff engagement is increasing to improve morale, but the additional management action to control the service such as the management of sickness whilst welcomed by some staff is not universally welcomed
9. The Service was impacted at the beginning of the year by the adverse weather nicknamed 'Beast from East' the poor driving conditions made driving dangerous which affected some collections. In normal weather condition when we miss a collection we give a date of when we will return to collect. We managed this in the same way as many other authorities and did not guarantee a

return date given we did not know when the weather would improve. We did however, deploy refuse collection staff to clearing the city of snow to help alleviate the impact of the weather on the community.

10. Green Waste is a seasonal service that creates a peak and trough in terms of staff resource requirement given the seasonal nature of the service which reflects the growing season.
11. Like services across North Yorkshire and indeed the whole country we are currently affected by a shortage of LGV (HGV) drivers, which impacts across the whole logistics and transport sectors. Despite having spare driver capacity this has meant that on some occasions; primarily due to sickness absence, we have not had enough drivers to get all our waste rounds out collecting bins.
12. In terms of mitigation and the steps taken already to improve resilience are as follows;
 - i) The Council has prioritised residual waste and box recycling services as statutory services mandated by public health acts. In practice what this means is that green waste drivers have been moved to fill gaps in residual and box recycling services. The consequence is that green waste services have been the most affected.
 - ii) Improved management of sickness absences with proactive early interventions, with a corporate approach to long term sickness absence being developed.
 - iii) We have trained loaders as LGV(HGV) drivers from within the service.
 - iv) Appointed a new Head of Waste with operational experience and created a new Waste Operations Manager role.
 - v) We are reducing the use of agency staff by recruiting direct as Council employees and offered full season appointments.
 - vi) We are working through in between Christmas and New Year for both Waste and Recycling to minimise the impact that catching up on those services has had in previous years.
 - vii) Held recruitment/open days in early September at Hazel Court with an accelerated application process and filled 10 driver posts.

- viii) Consulted people through the process to understand what the barriers to working for CYC may be. One of the initial findings is that staff are expected to attend Hazel Court before Park and Ride starts. The Council does not currently offer a parking space in line with our policies to reduce car commuters which precludes many who live outside the immediate city.
13. Over the coming months the following will further improve resilience.
- i) All drivers are being migrated to driver/loaders job descriptions allowing us to over recruit drivers but deploy them as loaders if we have too many drivers.
 - ii) IT investment is being made to improve knowledge, data. It will guide drivers around the rounds flagging issues but also accurately record uncompleted rounds. It will also improve the links to the CRM and thereby customer service and performance management. The anticipated implementation is during 2019/20
 - iii) The majority of the current fleet will need replacement over the next few years. This is an opportunity to review the fleet in terms of resilience by standardising vehicle types and manufacturers which should ease maintenance. The majority of the current vehicles are due to be paid for at the end of this financial year and work has started to specify the fleet. New vehicles are expected to arrive in 2020.

Options

- 14. More fundamental options to increase the resilience of the service do exist, but they have wider impact.
- 15. Option A - Investing in additional crews would mean that during normal operations the crews would not need to work their full 37 hours to complete the work. It would however give extra contractual hours for the services to ensure that it has greater flexibility than currently to ensure collections are made.
- 16. Option B - Develop a driver apprentice programme within Waste to train drivers, it would need training fee claw back arrangements in

terms of tie in so that staff we trained were retained by the Council. This could be launched in 2019.

17. Option C – Reviewing services to create a more generic multi skilled workforce so that it can be deployed where it most needed. It would also help with redeployment for sickness returns. It is estimated will deliver in 2020.
18. Officer recommendation is that Option A is over resourcing and not prudent management as it is not cost effective in light of ongoing public sector finance constraints. Extra staff resource would manifest itself as reduced productive hours of the work force due to the task and finish basis of the contacts. Option B should be progressed and authority to implement delegated to the Assistant Director of Transport, Highways and Environment in consultation with the Head of HR. Option C could be explored and proposals developed but would need further consideration once the work has been completed

Council Plan

19. This report is supportive of the following priorities in the Council plan in addition to the One Planet York principles the Council champions:
 - A focus on frontline services
 - A Council that listens to residents

Implications

20. The following are the identified implications.
 - **Financial** – Any budget change impact will need to be considered as part of the budget changes
 - **Human Resources** – Changes to terms and conditions would need to be considered in light of the collective agreement.
 - **Equalities** – No issues have been identified but any changes to waste collections would need a full impact assessment to be undertaken.

- **Information Technology (IT)** – Investment into Waste Services back office IT is within this years programme and a defined priority by the Economy and Place Directorate.

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**Report
Approved**



Date 22/11/18

Wards Affected: ALL

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None