

Subject:	Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing Review	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	18 September 2013
Report of:	Director of Customers and Communities	Portfolio Holder:	Operational Services and Development Control
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes	Attached: Yes
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	It is recommended that members approve the service changes set out in Appendix 6 and summarised in 5.13, and reduce the budget for 2014/15 accordingly.
1.2	All future minor amendments to the proposals to be delegated to the Director of Customers and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is firstly to inform members of the results of consultation on the proposed changes to the Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing services, following the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Street Cleansing in 2012 and secondly to ask members to agree to the recommendations.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **Regenerating Rossendale:** This priority focuses on regeneration in its broadest sense, so it means supporting communities that get on well together, attracting sustainable investment, promoting Rossendale, as well as working as an enabler to promote the physical regeneration of Rossendale.
 - **Responsive Value for Money Services:** This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.
 - **Clean Green Rossendale:** This priority focuses on clean streets and town centres and well managed open spaces, whilst recognising that the Council has to work with communities and as a partner to deliver this ambition.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

Undertaking appropriate engagement and consultation on potential service changes is essential to help us understand the impact of potential changes and inform decision making. Importantly, this also reinforces a culture of engagement and empowerment, and will mitigate the risk of challenge.

There is a risk that results of engagement and consultation will be seen as a democratic vote. This is not the case. These results give us an indication of public opinion and help us to understand the impact of proposals on certain groups, so that we can mitigate the impact where possible, but residents agreeing or disagreeing with proposed service changes does not mean that they must or must not be implemented as a result.

Not reviewing the way that we currently run our services would leave The Council at risk of not being able to meet the challenges of the Medium Term Financial Strategy to make the £1.5m cuts required by 2015/16.

Reductions in staffing could lead to reduced quality of service. This is being mitigated as far as possible with a wider service review to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

5.1 In September 2012, as part of the Scrutiny work programme, members of Overview and Scrutiny reported on a task and finish group which had been established to look at potential savings to the street cleansing service, as part of the wider RBC savings review, in the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the need to make £1.5m budget cuts. The report, which details all of the recommendations, is attached at Appendix 1.

5.2 Following the recommendations, much work has been undertaken to review the refuse, recycling and street cleansing services, and consultation has taken place with a view to understanding the impact of the changes required following the recommendations made by the task and finish group. Consultation to date is set out in section 8.

5.3 In May and June 2013, RBC worked with a neighbouring council to explore any potential benefits which could be realised from working together either on a joint in-house refuse and street cleansing service, or a joint or separate out-sourced service. An external consultant was sourced via WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme – an independent, not-for-profit company) who provided their services free of charge to us. The report concluded that, in relation to a joint service:

“...given the level of service improvements and efficiencies currently planned, there appears to be limited clear benefits for RBC.”

The report also concluded that outsourcing would incur one off costs in the region of £40k to £75k, plus revenue costs of 8-10% in addition to the base position, to cover contractor profit. The report is not a public document due to it containing commercially sensitive information.

5.4 At the Cabinet meeting in June 2013, it was noted that concerns were raised regarding the Whitworth Town Centre Caretaker post being grant-funded and it was agreed that this matter would be looked into. Concerns were also raised regarding the ‘Clean Green Rossendale’ corporate priority. It was resolved that further consultation be approved. Papers and minutes of the meeting can be viewed at: <http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/769/cabinet>

5.5 At the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 24 June 2013, it was agreed that information would be sent to all members with regards to the proposed changes to litter bins. This information was sent to all members in August 2013. The Committee noted the actions proposed and taken as a result of the task and finish group. Papers and minutes of the meeting can be viewed at: [http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/748/corporate overview and scrutiny](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/748/corporate%20overview%20and%20scrutiny)

5.6 Following the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, a further member engagement session to discuss the task and finish group recommendations was set up for 29 July 2013 and all members were invited to attend. Sixteen members attended. Members were asked to join groups which were based around the Neighbourhood Forum areas, and were asked for their comments on the following proposals:

- Changes to the Town Centre Caretaker and litter picking service;
- Reduction in the number of litter bins – members were also asked to comment on proposals for individual bins in their neighbourhood forum area;
- Removal of bring sites;
- Changes to garden waste collections; and
- Changes to street sweeping.

The results of this consultation session are attached at Appendix 2 and the final proposed changes to litter bins are attached at Appendix 7.

- 5.7 The Director of Customers and Communities attended a closed session with Whitworth Town Council (WTC) on 11 July 2013 and shared the actions proposed and taken as a result of the task and finish group. It was clarified that the funding provided by RBC for this service is over and above the additional Council Tax which is collected in Whitworth and so is independent of that.
- 5.8 At the Whitworth Town Council meeting on 25 July 2013, it was resolved that:
- Council informs Rossendale Borough Council that it is happy to enter into negotiations with the Borough Council in relation to the elements of the street cleansing review which directly affect Whitworth and Whitworth Town Council, and asks that discussions are widened to consider all possible options in relation to the Whitworth Town Caretaker position, not just a potential cut to the grant currently received.*
- 5.9 A meeting of the Whitworth Town Council Finance Committee will be held on 11 September 2013, to confirm their preferred approach.
- 5.10 A number of questions around the task and finish group proposals were included in the Citizens Panel questionnaire which was circulated to around 750 residents, who are a representative sample of the wider Borough. In addition, it was forwarded to around 500 community contacts and was publicly available on the RBC website. The questionnaire ran throughout August 2013 and 403 responses were received. A copy of the questionnaire is attached at Appendix 3 and the results of the consultation are attached at Appendix 4. In summary, the proportion of respondents who agreed with the proposals were as follows:
- Make changes to the Town Centre Caretaker service – 67%
 - Change the contribution to the Whitworth Town Centre Caretaker – 65%
 - Reduce the number of street litter bins – 52%
 - Remove bring sites – 59%
 - Make changes to garden waste collections in summer – 68%
 - Introduce a charge for garden waste collections – 30%
 - Remove one pavement sweeper – 72%
 - Remove one road sweeper – 52%
 - Develop a more flexible policy on returning for missed bins – 74%
- 5.11 The results of these consultations have been used to inform the Equality Impact Assessment, which is attached at Appendix 5. The proportion of respondents saying that the changes would have a significant or moderate impact on them or their family were as follows:
- Make changes to the Town Centre Caretaker service – 23% (with a higher proportion of those aged 40-49 (31%) reporting an impact);
 - Change the contribution to the Whitworth Town Centre Caretaker – 8% (with a higher proportion of men (11%) and those aged 40-59 (13%) reporting an impact);

- Reduce the number of street litter bins – 39% (with a higher proportion of those aged 40-59 (46%) reporting an impact);
- Remove bring sites – 23% (with a higher proportion of those aged 40-49 (37%) reporting an impact);
- Make changes to garden waste collections in summer – 22% (with a higher proportion of those aged 40-49 (30%) reporting an impact);
- Introduce a charge for garden waste collections – 46% (with a higher proportion of those with a disability (54%) and those aged 40-59 (53%) reporting an impact);
- Remove one pavement sweeper – 19% (with a higher proportion of men (23%), those aged 40-49 (32%), those aged 60+ (23%) and those with a disability (27%) reporting an impact);
- Remove one road sweeper – 29% (with a higher proportion of those aged 40-49 (35%) and residents with a disability (39%) reporting an impact);
- Develop a more flexible policy on returning for missed bins – 19% (with a higher proportion of those aged 40-49 (28%) and those aged 50-59 (25%) reporting an impact).

5.12 Following the task and finish group recommendations, and the consultation outlined in this paper, a full list of actions taken and proposed has now been prepared. This is attached at Appendix 6. Members are asked to support these proposals.

5.13 In summary, the proposals, and their impact on resources, is as follows:

- Re-profile the Town Centre Caretaker service to generate savings of c£39,100;
- Renegotiate funding dedicated to the Whitworth Town Centre Caretaker Service, in accordance with the Whitworth Town Council wishes as per 5.8;
- Market Caretaker post to become full-time at a cost of c£5,000. This is reflective of the reduction in the TCC service and to allow the Market Caretaker to take on full responsibility for opening and closing all markets;
- Remove recycling 'bring sites' across the borough, and bring forward revised policies for the collection of garden waste, and missed bins. Collectively this will generate savings of c£66,500;
- Remove one cage truck and one post – generating a saving of c£30,500;
- Remove one pavement sweeper and one post to generate savings of c£34,000;
- Stand down one road sweeper to be used as a spare and remove one post to generate savings of c£64,000;
- Remove one supervisor post from the establishment to generate savings of c£30,000.

5.14 It is further proposed that new area based refuse collection routes are implemented, to enable staff to deliver an average of 20 hours of litter picking/deep clean time in the area they are in on that day (one day per fortnight). It is envisaged this project will be delivered late spring 2014.

5.15 The total savings to be generated from these proposals are c£266k - £273k.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 Financial impact is contained in the body of the report.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 No additional comments.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 8.1
- Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Street Cleansing – June to September 2012
 - Involvement of Management Team, supervisors, union and wider staff group – September 2012 to present
 - Engaged SKM Consultants - May 2013
 - Cabinet – 12 June 2013
 - Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 24 June 2013
 - Whitworth Town Council – 11 July, 25 July 2013, 11 September 2013
 - RBC Member Session – 29 July 2013
 - Citizens Panel – August 2013

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Following consultation on the recommendations of the street cleansing task and finish group, it is proposed that the refuse, recycling and street cleansing service is re-profiled and reduced, as set out in section 5.13.

Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection
Medium Term Financial Strategy – Achievement of Budget Reductions	wwwhttp://www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/769/cabinet.rossendale.gov.uk
Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing Review – paper to Corporate Scrutiny Committee, 24 th June 2013	http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/748/corporate overview and scrutiny
Citizens Panel Questionnaire	http://www.letusknow.org.uk/residentsurvey2013/