

Subject:	Area Based Working Update report	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date:	20 th July 2015
Report of:	Head of Operations	Portfolio Holder:	Operational Services and Development Control
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the report for information.
1.2	All future minor amendments to Refuse/ Recycling service to be delegated to the Head of Operations in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update Overview and Scrutiny members following changes to the Refuse/ Recycling service during Q3 2014.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **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 Not reviewing feedback received as a result of changes may result in loss of confidence from staff and residents in the council as a supportive and understanding council.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 As part of both the Council's ongoing financial efficiency savings set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and continuous service improvement, the Refuse and Recycling Collection Service was reviewed and a move to area based working proposed, agreed at Cabinet in 2013 and further ratified at Cabinet July 2014. This project was implemented during Q3 2014 with changes effected within the Operations Service Area to introduce area based working, to enable flexible and balanced working capacity across the team / service provision.

5.2 Following the introduction of Area Based Working the following benefits have been, or are in the process of being realised:

- As all collection vehicles are in the same area on the same day, this has allowed crews and supervision to improve communication and provide a more consistent service.
- Aesthetically the appearance of the Borough has been improved due to specific areas only presenting bins on the nominated collection day within allocated zones.
- 2 Loaders from each vehicle are able to be redeployed on cleansing activities during periods when vehicles are travelling to and from tipping facilities.
- The new infrastructure enables improvements to the service to be carried out swiftly and with minimal impact, with the ability to continually balance collection rounds within an individual area.
- Through improved areas of operation and efficiencies, collection catch up arrangements can be applied quickly, resulting in fewer missed collections.
- It will improve the Council's ability to target waste reduction education and awareness campaigns.
- Area Based Working better facilitates targeted enforcement activity.
- Consistency of collection will assist the council in trying to achieve challenging national recycling and landfill targets.
- In addition Year on year savings achievable due to the seasonal reduction in Organic waste collections and less reliance on the back up round will amount to approx £60,000 per annum based on round requirements.
- Although there are additional factors than the introduction of ABW, fuel usage for October/November indicates 6,000ltrs less was used in 2014 in comparison to the previous year. This figure when applied to a full year forecast amounts to 36,000ltrs less fuel usage.
- Further savings have previously been realised as a result of operational changes to Street Cleansing which progressed based on the future introduction of Area Based Working and associated elements of cleansing delivered by waste operatives.

- 5.3 The communication plan (**Appendix 1**) worked very well and the statistics show that residents were clearly well informed as we did not get a vast amount of enquiries on changes. The lack of queries received on social media about when their new day was or that collections had been missed is tantamount to the success of the communication plan and how well it had worked.
- 5.4 This was the first time the Council had done a live social media FAQ. It worked well in that we were able to answer all queries we were sent and residents were satisfied with responses provided. It wasn't a busy session, but that is a demonstration of the effective communication on the changes and indicates that residents were informed sufficiently that they didn't need to ask much.
- 5.5 The social media and front of website countdown images worked well, though in future we may want to look at doing a shorter time period so it has more impact. The decision to run with just a press release and not pay for advertising worked well. We did get some confusion from the way the Lancashire Telegraph reported it, and we did complain to the editor about this, but on the whole it got us a lot of free coverage.
- 5.6 Both formal and informal feedback sessions were carried out with teams throughout the implementation to assess the impact of the changes. Over a period of the first 6 weeks various minor changes were implemented to rebalance specific rounds to enable even distribution across the rounds, with little or no disruption to services.
- 5.7 Initial like for like comparison indicates an improvement in recycling rates across the borough, With 36.69% recycled in April 2015 compared to 32.68% in April 2014. Data collected allows us to more easily identify areas which require further attention to increase recycling rates, with planned targeted campaign to be delivered in 2015/16.
- 5.8 Similar comparison of missed bins also show improvement, with a collection success rate of 99.972% in April 2015 compared with 99.969% in April 2014.
- 5.9 The changes have allowed up to 30 hours per week of litter picking to be carried out by waste operatives at targeted locations.

**COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:
SECTION 151 OFFICER**

6.1 Financial matters are noted in the report.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 No comments/issues

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 8.1
- Ongoing engagement with staff throughout the implementation.
 - Review of feedback received from residents and visitors.
 - Review of member and MP enquiries.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The roll out of Area based working from 7th October 2014 was anticipated to present challenges for a period of 4-6 weeks before bedding in. The reality was that following the initial 2 week period or first cycle of collections, the new system stabilised faster than anticipated. The main reason for this was the effectiveness of the plan and communications strategy combined with the application of staff and operatives. In order to fully analyse the impact of changes aside from financial benefits, comparative data will be interrogated to establish longer term gains on service surety and recycling increases.

Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection
July 2014 cabinet paper	http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/7483/item_c1_refuse_and_recycling_collection_route_review_area_based_working
Appendix 1 Communications plan	S:\General Folder\COMMUNICATIONS\COMMUNICATION PLANS\Area Based Working 2014\Communications Plan for Area Based Working Document 2014.docx