

Care For Your Area Services – Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation Review.

Care for Your Area is an umbrella organisation that provides a large number of different front line services. The scope of this review is to consider the following services: Refuse Collection, Street Cleansing, Horticultural Services, Urban Parks, Recycling Services, Markets, Public Conveniences and Workshops and Vehicle Maintenance. This review will consider each of these separate services in turn. Other services that fall within CFYA that are subject to previous and ongoing reviews include Commercial Waste Services, Highway Maintenance, Countryside Parks, Bulky Household Waste.

DOMESTIC REFUSE COLLECTION

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Description of Current Service	Who provides the service?	<p>This service is provided through an in-house service provision by Care For Your Area based at Cowpen Lane Depot, Billingham.</p> <p>This is a weekly refuse collection service to over 82,000 properties. 'No side waste' and 'one wheeled bin collection' policies were recently introduced.</p> <p>There are currently 14 refuse vehicles used to provide the service, 11 of which have one driver and two loaders. One vehicle, comprising one driver and three loaders, is responsible for the cleansing of 'back lanes' and associated properties.</p> <p>Two separate, driver only vehicles provide the service to farms and those properties that cannot be accessed by a conventional refuse vehicle.</p>

Baseline	History - how was the service formed and why does it exist?	<p>Refuse collection is a statutory function. Only a few years ago, Stockton's refuse collection service was judged to be extremely poor, with poor performance, outdated working practices, high levels of absenteeism.</p> <p>The service then underwent a 'Best Value' review and two subsequent Audit Commission inspections. The first Audit Commission inspection report (January 2002) judged the service as "fair, with promising prospects for improvement", whilst the second inspection report (October 2003) found the service to have improved dramatically in a relatively short period of time, achieving the best possible rating "excellent service with excellent prospects for improvement."</p> <p>Recently, the service underwent a significant workforce reconfiguration and modernisation exercise; with generic job descriptions and flexible working hours being introduced. It is now recognised as being one of the best performing refuse collection services in the country.</p>
Challenge	What influences impact on the service? (political, social economical, technological)	<p>Refuse collection is a statutory function. The authority now operates a multi-material borough wide recycling service and this has reduced the amount of waste in the domestic waste stream – refuse rounds have been reduced to reflect these lower tonnages.</p> <p>As recycling technologies (e.g. food waste, green waste) advance, further reductions in the domestic waste stream are possible. Waste is disposed of via the Energy from</p>

		<p>Waste Plant (EFW) at Haverton Hill. Major upgrade works have been undertaken recently and more are planned in 2011, meaning additional travelling time (and fuel costs) will be incurred as waste is diverted to landfill sites. As a result of this, further round reconfiguration will not be possible until the EFW upgrades are complete and full plant availability is guaranteed.</p> <p>Whilst vehicle technologies and efficiencies improve, wheeled bin collection methodologies remain fairly standardised throughout the industry, though a few Councils (such as Darlington) have not introduced wheeled bins.</p>
	<p>How does the service perform?</p>	<p>Stockton's refuse collection service is recognised as being one of the country's top performing services.</p> <p>The industry is measured by a '<i>missed bins per 100,000 collections</i>' indicator. (BVPI 88). BVPI 88 has not formed part of the national performance framework since 2001/02 when it was deleted from the list of Best Value Performance Indicators. Because this indicator was seen to add value in Stockton, it has continued to be collected and reported as part of a local Corporate Basket of indicators. Stockton's performance on this indicator has shown continuous improvement, from 2.90 missed bins per 100,000 collections in 2004/05, to 0.21 missed bins per 100,000 collections in 2010/11 (equivalent to just 9 missed bins over the course of the year).</p>

	<p>What does inspection tell us about this service?</p>	<p>The last Best Value inspection by the Audit Commission (October 2003) rated the services at the best possible rating of an “excellent service with excellent prospects for improvement.”</p>
	<p>What resources are used?</p>	<p>There are currently 40 operatives undertaking refuse collection duties with additional temporary staff providing cover for holidays and sickness absence.</p> <p>A detailed staffing structure is included within this report.</p> <p>In addition to these assets, there are a range of other resources used including buildings and services used at Cowpen Depot and a variety of specialist equipment.</p>
	<p>What assets are used to deliver the current service?</p>	<p>Refuse vehicles are the single most valuable asset the service uses. Contract hire for the Council’s front line Fleet remains the most economic and reliable means of vehicle provision.</p> <p>All vehicle purchases are subject to regular and rigorous procurement exercises to ensure best value is delivered at all times.</p>
	<p>Are there any limitations or barriers affecting the delivery of the service?</p>	<p>There has been significant disruption of service at the EFW plant within the last year or so. This has had a threefold detrimental impact on the refuse collection service:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles are diverted away from EFW in to landfill sites that are not suitable for refuse vehicles resulting in significant increases in maintenance costs

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landfill sites are not as close as EFW, increasing travel time, fuel consumption and costs. • Due to the additional travelling time, collection efficiencies are low; meaning further round configuration work cannot be undertaken until reliability at EFW is guaranteed.
	If the service is outsourced or provided by a third party, how are service standards monitored?	Service standards could, in theory, be monitored by means of the client (i.e. SBC) insisting upon certain performance standards that the contractor must abide by. In reality, and considering the experience of waste services that were outsourced until recently, there is little the client can do to control or enforce performance delivered by a wholly separate organisation, other than through formal proceedings. These are time consuming, costly and don't provide the customer with the immediate service improvements required.
	Could the service be provided through a different mechanism?	Some European countries only provide communal waste containers as opposed to doorstep collections. However the current arrangements, whilst not perfect, are the most practicable means of providing the service in the borough.
Customer Baseline	Who are the customers and what are their needs now?	There are over 82,000 properties in the borough and this figure is growing each year; this places pressure on the service as are no annual increases in base budgets to allow for property growth.
	How are service users consulted and how do	Residents are consulted on a regular basis

	<p>their views shape delivery?</p> <p>How satisfied are the customers?</p> <p>How do you communicate with your users?</p> <p>How are these services promoted/marketed?</p> <p>What do Viewpoint Surveys/ internal audit reports tell us about the service?</p>	<p>using a variety of methods, such as Ipsos MORI satisfaction surveys, telephone satisfaction surveys, attendance at Resident Association meetings and from Elected Members.</p> <p>Regular information is provided through Stockton News, press releases and the Internet on collection schedules and other important issues.</p> <p>Recent Ipsos MORI satisfaction survey results demonstrate a customer satisfaction rating of around 90% with the service.</p>
Customer Challenge	<p>Are there customers who could use the service but don't?</p> <p>Are there customers using the service who shouldn't be?</p> <p>Who are the customers of the future and what are their needs?</p> <p>What is likely to impact on demand for these services in the future?</p> <p>What do complaints/ compliments tell you about these services?</p>	<p>The majority of residents do use the weekly collection service provided, however our own knowledge suggests around 30% of residents choose to place their bin out for collection only once a fortnight.</p> <p>Working with planners and architects allows waste and recycling collection issues to be addressed during development design stages.</p> <p>Feedback from our customers demonstrates this service is highly valued by residents.</p>
Aims and Objectives Baseline	<p>Is the service required by statute?</p> <p>Is there a statutory level of service?</p> <p>Is the service responsive or proactive or a mixture?</p>	<p>Refuse collection is a statutory provision, though no statutory level of service (i.e. weekly, fortnightly etc) exists.</p> <p>Stockton has very modern working practices and procedures – such as flexible working hours and generic job descriptions. Further round re-configuration is expected once work</p>

<p>Challenge</p>	<p>Is the service needed?</p> <p>What would happen if the service was not provided either in whole or part?</p> <p>How would the service react to new pressures what capacity would be required to deal with additional / new demands?</p>	<p>is complete at EFW that will guarantee levels of reliability at the plant.</p> <p>The service is flexible enough to meet additional property growth and to adapt to any technological advances within the waste industry.</p>
<p>Aims & Objectives Challenge</p>	<p>Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services, etc?</p>	<p>The service can either be delivered through an in-house provision or through an outsourced private contractor.</p>
<p>Relevance / Context Baseline / Challenge</p>	<p>How does the service fit with the overall aims of the Council?</p> <p>How does the service contribute to key policy areas?</p> <p>What policies, plans and strategies impact on the service e.g. statutory, policy, function, other services?</p> <p>Are there any political judgements/decisions involved in determining the level of service?</p>	<p>The service contributes to both the Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan, through the following policy area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the Borough a cleaner, greener and more attractive environment. <p>The refuse collection is politically sensitive, as evidenced for negative reasons at several other Councils, including Leeds and Birmingham.</p>
<p>Financial / Resource Considerations Baseline</p>	<p>What are the costs of the service?</p>	<p>The domestic refuse collection budget for 2011/12 is £2,092,376 – the main costs are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries: £992,051 (inc on-costs) • Vehicle Contract Hire: £542,649 • Fuel: £288,734 (budget set before

	<p>Capital and revenue costs?</p> <p>What is the level of 3rd party expenditure?</p> <p>What contracts or other arrangements are in place (spend analysis)?</p> <p>What is the Councils commitment to contracts/other arrangements?</p> <p>Do you have any charging policies?</p> <p>How have Gershon efficiency savings impacted on the service and how was the service planning to meet future Gershon efficiency targets?</p> <p>How will the current financial climate affect the service?</p>	<p>recent price rises)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle Repairs and maintenance: £65,950 • Supplies and Services: £59,530 <p>Refuse vehicles are contract hired over a five year period and several vehicles were replaced in April 2011. All vehicles are subject to rigorous procurement exercises.</p> <p>The greatest risk to the financial stability of the service are those issues that are beyond any control – rising fuel costs and further shutdowns at the EFW plant, meaning waste is diverted to landfill sites. There is little scope to balance budgets should fuel costs continue to rise and landfill charges arise.</p>
<p>Financial/Resource Considerations Challenge</p>	<p>How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective overall?</p> <p>Do external contracts offer value for money?</p>	<p>The BVPI on cost of collection per household is no longer collected nationally, although our membership of APSE provides some useful comparative financial information.</p> <p>All external supplies and equipment are</p>

		subject to ongoing and regular procurement exercises.
Service Drivers	<p>What do we need to change and why?</p> <p>What are the main drivers of change?</p>	The service needs to ensure that collections are carried out as efficient as possible; this means reviewing collection days, ensuring collection routes are well-organised and that the workforce is well trained and motivated.