

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 10 th October 2023
Report Subject	Missed Collections and Fleet Reliability
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a request from the Environment and Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee in relation to missed waste and recycling collections, this report provides an overview of the issues that can cause collections to be regularly missed, with particular focus on fleet reliability within the Streetscene and Transportation portfolio. The report outlines the policies in place for missed collections and summarises the performance and reliability of the council's fleet vehicles and identifies key issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report in relation to service performance for missed waste collections and fleet reliability.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT
1.01	Streetscene and Transportation provide kerbside collections for waste and recycling to over 72,411 properties in Flintshire. The service operates over 6 days (Monday to Saturday), which equates to around 12,074 properties serviced per day for recycling and 6,037 for residual waste collections. Each property will typically be visited by a minimum of two vehicles per day, one for either black (residual waste) or brown (garden waste) bin collections and one for recycling and food waste. This excludes medical waste and Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) collections.

1.02	<p>On rare occasions, we do experience missed collections just like any other local authority, which can be down to various reasons; however, we always do our best to keep this to a minimum and the crews are required to report any collection issues on the rounds so that they can be addressed on the scheduled collection day. However, it is recognised that missed collections causes an inconvenience to residents, as well as avoidable work for officers in terms of responding to service requests and complaints.</p> <p>Missed collections can be attributed to a range of operational issues such as sickness absence, road closures, traffic congestion or obstructions preventing access to properties, bad weather, customer error and incorrect items being presented, vehicle breakdowns or staff performance. Nevertheless, the collection crews take pride in their work, and it is the intention of every crew member to ensure that all collections are completed by the end of each day.</p>
1.03	<p>Residents are advised to report missed collections either through the website or via the Contact Centre and to verify whether the bin, bag or container has genuinely been missed, they are asked to confirm the following information: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the bin was placed out by 7am on the morning of the collection at the kerbside (where your property/drive meets the pavement/road) (Place it out the night before if necessary and safe.) • Whether the correct bin/container was placed out for collection and whether it was placed out on the correct scheduled collection day • Whether the materials were sorted into the correct containers and whether the bin/container contained items that shouldn't have been in the bin (contaminated) • Whether the correct compostable food waste bags were used for the caddies to ensure that contamination does not occur • Whether the bin was not too heavy, or the lid was properly closed • Whether there was any side waste presented <p>Providing that the above information can be satisfied positively then a missed collection may be reported to the Council.</p>
1.04	<p>There are different policies in place for dealing with missed bins, bags or containers depending on the type of waste presented and reasons for the missed collection.</p> <p>Where a black bin, brown bin or food waste has been genuinely missed because of service failure, we advise that we endeavour to return and collect it within 24 hours of notification.</p> <p>Following Cabinet approval in July 2017, we do not return for reported missed recycling collections and householders are expected to place the recycling out for collection on the next scheduled collection day or take items to their nearest household recycling centre (HRC). The missed recycling collection is then noted against the property.</p>

1.05	<p>There is a process in place for improving services to those properties that report a repeated missed collection, which requires waste supervisors to visit the property on the next scheduled collection day, the crew is educated on the location of the containers to avoid future issues and the property is placed on a monitoring schedule for several weeks until the waste operations manager is satisfied that no further issues are encountered.</p>																																										
1.06	<p>Once reported, missed collections are logged via the internal Customer Relationship Management system (CRM).</p> <p>The number of missed collections reports recorded via the CRM between 01/04/22 and 31/03/23 was 9,646, which equates to an average of 31 missed collections per day across 23,134 planned collections by property per day and across 24 operational rounds, so around 1 missed collection per round per day.</p> <p>Based on the total count of missed receptacles reported, these figures demonstrate a successful collection rate of 99.95%</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">2022-2023</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Properties:</th> <th></th> <th>No. of Weeks</th> <th>Total Number of Planned Collections</th> <th>Total Number of Receptacles Emptied</th> <th>Total Count of Missed Receptacles Reported</th> <th>% Receptacles Missed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Recycling (x4 receptacles)</td> <td>Weekly</td> <td>52</td> <td>3,766,932</td> <td>15,067,728</td> <td>3,935</td> <td>0.03%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black Bin (x1 receptacle)</td> <td>2-weekly</td> <td>26</td> <td>1,883,466</td> <td>1,883,466</td> <td>3,550</td> <td>0.19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Garden (x1 receptacle)</td> <td>2-weekly</td> <td>21</td> <td>635,985</td> <td>635,985</td> <td>2,161</td> <td>0.34%</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Total</td> <td>6,286,383</td> <td>17,587,179</td> <td>9,646</td> <td>0.05%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>*30,285 properties for garden waste in 2022-2023</i></p> <p>The percentage of missed collections when compared to the total number of collections across all waste streams (excluding AHP) is low, accounting for 0.05%.</p>	2022-2023							Properties:		No. of Weeks	Total Number of Planned Collections	Total Number of Receptacles Emptied	Total Count of Missed Receptacles Reported	% Receptacles Missed	Recycling (x4 receptacles)	Weekly	52	3,766,932	15,067,728	3,935	0.03%	Black Bin (x1 receptacle)	2-weekly	26	1,883,466	1,883,466	3,550	0.19%	Garden (x1 receptacle)	2-weekly	21	635,985	635,985	2,161	0.34%	Total			6,286,383	17,587,179	9,646	0.05%
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1.07	<p>Members of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested information on fleet reliability in relation to missed waste and recycling collections.</p> <p>Reliable fleet operations are crucial for ensuring the smooth functioning of all departments and services within the Council. Fleet reliability directly impacts service delivery, efficiency, and customer satisfaction.</p> <p>This report focuses on assessing the status of fleet reliability for waste and recycling services, and specifically concentrates on fleet age, reliability, and options for replacement, whilst acknowledging that we are currently moving into the procurement of a new fleet contract, and additional costs on the basis that we need to replace some fleet vehicles in the next two years.</p>																																										

1.08	<p>To compile this report, data was collected from various sources, including fleet management systems, maintenance records, and vehicle telematics systems. The data analysis covers the following key aspects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fleet Age: reviewing the purchase date of the vehicles in the groups in question. b. Vehicle Downtime: examining the frequency and duration of fleet vehicles' unscheduled downtime, including breakdowns and repairs, along with the scheduled maintenance. c. Available Fleet: reviewing the available fleet against the operational need. Note: To cover the impact of maintenance and repairs downtime, the contractor provides additional vehicles to the fleet to cover interruptions. d. Vehicle Utilisation: analysing the utilisation patterns of fleet vehicles, including average mileage and average daily usage.
1.09	<p>Based on the analysis conducted, the following key findings have been identified:</p> <p>a. Fleet Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling Recovery Vehicles (RRVs) x 16: Average age – 6 years <i>(The two oldest RRVs are owned by FCC, which were procured with WG grant funding and are 8 years old. These two vehicles are being replaced by 2 no. Electric-RRVs – newly arrived)</i> • Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) x 11: Average age – 6 years <i>(There is one 11-year-old vehicle, which is provided by the contractor at their expense for contract support, other contractor support vehicles are considerably younger)</i> <p>The industry standard renewal period for these types of vehicles is around 5-9 years. Not all vehicles will age in the same way or will have been treated uniformly, so an average age of the fleet balances the impact of the outliers.</p>
1.10	<p>During a review of the fleet by the Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) in April 2021 for ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) transition, it was acknowledged that the majority of the Flintshire HGV fleet, which included the waste and recycling vehicles, would not anticipate being changed until after 2024. It was recognised by WGES that Flintshire's fleet was a comparatively modern fleet with a low average age and reflected the contractual arrangements with our fleet contractor, who provide the vehicles under seven-year lease arrangements.</p>
1.11	<p>b. Vehicle Downtime</p> <p>There are a range of reasons why a vehicle would not be available to the operational service, which is known as downtime, and this unavailability can fluctuate due to planned or unplanned maintenance, including service intervals being at 6-weekly intervals, repairs, accidents, parts replacement or driver/vehicle violations.</p>

1.12	<p>The waste vehicle fleet is made up of 11 operational vehicles and a review of the first five months of 2023 (January-May 2023) shows an average downtime of around 150 hours per month for all vehicles i.e. 13.6 hours of downtime per vehicle on average per month, and a peak over the last 5 months of just under 250 hours, i.e. less than 23 hours of downtime per vehicle on average in April 2023. Although, it needs to be noted that one vehicle may have contributed heavily to the monthly figures beyond the average figures.</p>
1.13	<p>Similar analysis has been carried out on the recycling vehicle fleet, which is made up of 16 operational vehicles and this shows an average downtime of less than 300 hours per month for all vehicles i.e. 18.75 hours of downtime per vehicle on average per month, and a peak over the 5-month period of around 350 hours i.e. less than 22 hours of downtime per vehicle on average in May 2023. Again, individual vehicles may contribute beyond the average on occasions.</p>
1.14	<p>c. Available Fleet</p> <p>As well as the operational fleet vehicles available to deliver the service, the contractor provides additional support (spare) vehicles to key operational services such as waste, recycling, sweeping and gritting operations. These are permanently dedicated spare vehicles available to the services to support planned maintenance (servicing and MOTs) and other reasonable factors for downtime, which the contractor is required to maintain in readiness and for immediate service.</p> <p>However, the contractor is not required nor expected to provide additional support vehicles for unreasonable downtime events, such as insurance write-offs or driver violation issues that cause vehicles to be unavailable for service.</p> <p>In terms of the additional support vehicles for waste and recycling services, three spare vehicles are provided for waste collections and two spare vehicles are provided for to recycling collections.</p> <p>These vehicles are available 24/7, but for the purposes of showing the additional vehicle support, only 10 hours per day Monday to Saturday have been considered for the calculation of monthly availability below, which reflects the workforce availability and shift patterns:</p> <p>10 hours x 6 days x 4.3 weeks = 258 hours per month x 3 waste support vehicles = 774 hours additional support (waste collections)</p> <p>10 hours x 6 days x 4.3 weeks = 258 hours per months x 2 recycling support vehicles = 516 hours additional support (recycling collections)</p>
1.15	<p>When removing the downtime of these vehicle for these services the remaining availability is as follows:</p> <p>Waste: 774 hours – maximum downtime (April 2023 = 41 hours) = 733 hours additional support per month (waste collections)</p> <p>Recycling: 516 hours – maximum downtime (January 2023 = 53 hours) = 463 hours additional support per month (recycling collections)</p>

1.16	<p>When comparing the downtime demand against the contract support (spare) vehicle availability we can see the following:</p> <p>Waste: Downtime Demand = 150 hrs average (250 hrs peak) Vs contract support availability = 733hrs <u>At least 480 hours monthly surplus</u></p> <p>Recycling: Downtime Demand = 300 hrs average (350 hrs peak) Vs contract support availability = 463hrs <u>At least 160 hours monthly surplus</u></p>
1.17	<p>d. Vehicle Utilisation:</p> <p>This includes the analysis of the fleet vehicle telematics data relating to utilisation levels between the operating hours of 7am to 5pm, which reflects the working patterns of the collection services. It is evident from the telematics data available that the vehicles average a utilisation level of greater than 72% within these hours, which equates to 7.2 hours of the vehicle moving, with the rest of the hours being attributable to breaks and tipping times.</p>
1.18	<p>There are vehicles that have averaged below this figure, and these have likely been affected adversely by maintenance issues, but it is clear that those vehicles that remain available have covered the full operational service need for 16 recycling vehicles and 11 waste vehicles, when including the availability of spare vehicles.</p>
1.19	<p>Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude from the above analysis that there are no reliability issues beyond normal operating issues at this time, and the operational services are supported by additional spare vehicles on site within the coverage of the contract and within the parameters expected and anticipated.</p>
1.20	<p>On rare occasions, operational issues may overlap and these are covered by the contingency measures at the cost of the contractor, such as additional hire vehicles (these may take a couple of hours to mobilise or with more bespoke and specialist vehicles, possibly a day or so to put in place), but these are exceptional circumstances that exist alongside other factors, such as parts availability, driver availability, road closures, staff turnover and other issues that are hard to predict and difficult to mitigate against on a daily basis beyond that already done so and described above.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None – this is an operational performance report requested by members of the Environment & Overview Scrutiny Committee.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	None – this is an operational performance report requested by members of the Environment & Overview Scrutiny Committee.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	With the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Regional Transport Strategy

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Chris Goddard, Streetscene Service Manager Telephone: 07867 192311 E-mail: christopher.goddard@flintshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Contact Officer: Barry Wilkinson, Highway Network Manager Telephone: 01352 704656 Email: barry.wilkinson@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None