

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE ON 23 MARCH 2021

PART A : INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Annual Review of the Combined Cleansing Services Contract

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DATE: 23 March 2021

EXTN: 37955/37688

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides members of the Overview Select Committee with an annual performance review for the Council's Combined Cleansing Services Contract and will include a presentation from Biffa Municipal Ltd, the Council's current contract provider

This report includes an overview of the scope of operations delivered by Biffa, how the contract is managed and outlines how Arun District Council and Biffa have worked in partnership to deliver services during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Overview Select Committee are asked to;

1. Note the information contained within the annual update report for the Council's Combined Cleansing Services Contract.
2. Recognise the significant efforts of front-line Biffa staff and Biffa management delivering the Arun contract under extremely challenging circumstances since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. BACKGROUND:

1.0 Introduction & background

- 1.1 On the 1 February 2017 the Council commenced a new three year plus optional three year Combined Cleansing Services Contract (CCSC) with Biffa Municipal Ltd. Biffa were awarded the contract following a competitive tender process.
- 1.2 The contract was extended following Cabinet approval in December 2017 for a further three years. This decision was based a number of key factors including;
 - Retention of a high performing and cost-effective service

- Extension would provide cost certainty until 2023, supporting the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Retention of current service model for refuse/recycling collections

1.3 The annual contract value is approximately £4.5m. This delivered an approximate saving of £400,000 on the previous contract, which aligns with the Council's 2020 Vision and supports the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

1.4 This report is intended to provide members of the Overview Select Committee with a summary of how the current contract operates and current contractual performance. NB this is not a report which considers future service delivery options or wider waste strategy. This will be reviewed with members at an appropriate point as part of the future contract retender process.

2.0 Scope of the Combined Cleansing Services Contract

2.1 Refuse Collection Service

Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows waste collection authorities to determine their methods and frequency of collection, with which residents must comply.

The current contract provides Arun residents with a weekly refuse collection for approximately 75,000 properties. Residents are free to put their waste out in black sacks, dustbins or a privately owned wheelie bin. The weekly limit on refuse collected from one household is 5 black sacks which is roughly the equivalent of one 240 litre wheeled bin.

2.2 Recycling Collection Service

The contract provides a fortnightly mixed recycling collection for approximately 75,000 properties. This is a co-mingled collection which includes provision for;

- Yoghurt, cream and soup pots, ice cream and margarine tubs, food and ready meal trays, fruit/vegetable punnets, cosmetic pots and tubs
- Fruit juice cartons, long life milk cartons, smoothie cartons, other cardboard cartons
- Food cans, drink cans, pet food cans, empty aerosol cans
- Coffee jars, drink bottles, sauce bottles, jam jars
- Aluminium foil, foil containers
- Newspapers, magazines, food packaging sleeves, envelopes, junk mail, cards, wrapping paper, telephone directories, catalogues, egg boxes, cereal boxes
- Drink bottles, milk bottles, shampoo bottles, detergent bottles, washing up liquid bottles (not bottle lids)

Each household is supplied a 240 litre recycling bin. In purpose-built flats and for houses of multiple occupation alternative containment options including bulk bins are provided for residents to use. Approximately 500 properties across the District that are unsuitable for a wheeled bin receive a sack collection service, with the majority of these in Arundel.

All kerbside recycling is sent to the West Sussex County Council operated Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Ford.

2.3 Street Cleansing

The scope of Street Cleansing Services encompasses;

- Cleansing of 400 miles of road
- Emptying and cleaning of approx. 619 Litter Bins and 468 Dog Waste bins
- Cleansing of specified beaches for which Arun have responsibility, foreshores, promenades and coastal walks
- Cleansing of all Arun District Council Car Parks.

It is a contract requirement that Biffa undertake all operations at a frequency to maintain Cleansing standards based on an output performance standard. All roads are 'zoned' based on priority, which is determined by usage, and type. These are graded and judged as per the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse (COPLAR).

It is a contract requirement to keep all Town Centre (Zone 1 areas) free of weeds. The responsibility for weed control in all other areas of the district and public highway lies with West Sussex County Council as the Highways Authority.

Dog & Litter bins on this contract are numbered for ease of reporting. It is intended that contact details will be placed on all bins within the near future for ease of public reporting.

2.4 Public Conveniences

The contract provides a Cleansing service for all of the Council's public conveniences. A seasonal attended service operating between the 1st June through to 6th September is provided for some public conveniences in Arundel, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton.

2.5 Small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) collections

The collection of WEEE was introduced as a new service with the current contract. This is a weekly collection with residents invited to leave items out in a small carrier bag next to their refuse. Biffa vehicles have cages fitted to enable the separate collection of these items.

2.6 Green Waste Services

A fortnightly collection of garden waste operates throughout the year, Biffa established and provide this service on behalf of the Council. The scheme known as the 'Green Waste

Club' begun in 2005 and continues to grow in popularity with over 23,500 subscribers currently and increase of over 2,000 on the previous year.

The green waste collected is taken to the Woodhorn Group in Tangmere and can be purchased as part of the Earth Cycle range of composting products available to buy locally.

2.7 Clinical waste

The Council provides a weekly clinical waste collection service for residents. This includes the support and registration and is for collection of needles and syringes, offensive and infectious waste and is in line with all relevant laws and legislation.

This service is carried out by specialist clinical waste contractor Medisort, who are based in Littlehampton, on behalf of the Council. It was awarded as part of a West Sussex County wide framework agreement.

This service undertakes approximately 1500 collections every week.

2.8 Street Washing Service

A new street washing service was introduced as part of the contract. This operates five days a week and generally focusses on public realm areas within Bognor Regis and the public realm/seafront areas of Littlehampton, including Riverside Walk. The service is flexible in its deployment and also utilised across other areas of cleansing for example for bin washing and localised clean ups.

2.9 Bulky Waste Collection Service

A chargeable on-demand separate collection of bulky waste takes place. This service has been rebranded and advertised to residents through Biffa with bookings through a dedicated contact centre. Discounts are provided on the collection of multiple items and this will be promoted further in the forthcoming year.

2.10 Fly tipping

Biffa remove fly tipping through the contract as part of the Street Cleansing requirements. This allows for an efficient and reactive service when instances of fly tipping are reported to the Council.

Whilst it is not relevant to a report focussing on contractor performance, the issue of fly tipping and initiatives to combat it are currently the focus of West Sussex Waste Partnership discussions.

3.0 **The challenges of operating the CCSC during a global pandemic**

3.1 Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the service has seen an unprecedented increased demand on all collection and street cleansing services.

3.2 Refuse services have been unaffected throughout the Covid-19 pandemic with a minimal impact to recycling and garden waste collection services during the first few weeks of the

first national lockdown. Therefore, Biffa operated the service throughout the peak of the pandemic, with no extra cost to the Council. Based on a national report compiled by Adept, there was significantly less disruption to services in Arun both in terms of frequency and duration compared to the average of other local authorities.

- 3.3 National trends from a Local Authority survey undertaken during 2020 indicate that from March 2020 most Local Authorities were reporting greater than usual waste arisings across many waste streams. Notable exceptions included bulky waste, street sweepings and commercial waste. The breakdown of Arun's waste trends are shown below and are in line with National trends where 90% or more of Local Authorities surveyed have reported increases across these waste streams between 0 – 20%.

Table 1 – Summary of year-to-date tonnage increases (April 20 to January 21)

Material	Percentage increase	Tonnage increase
Comingled Recycling	8.3%	922.51
Black bag waste	10%	2342.00
Green waste	6%	503.99
Litter	14%	38.45

- 3.4 Staffing levels have fluctuated during the pandemic. Absence due to Covid-19 symptoms and self isolation peaked at 30% of the workforce at the end of March /beginning of April 2020. Biffa introduced a number of safeguards and control measures with staff to ensure their Health and Safety. They have followed industry best practice Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum (WISH) guidance and actively sought to support staff as key frontline workers.
- 3.5 Business Continuity Plans have been revised throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and are continually under review in relation to any potential service disruption.
- 3.6 Foreshores had unprecedented visitor numbers as lockdown eased which put a strain on the service. Whilst there was a 15% rise in litter, the effect in busy locations was more profound and service priorities were adjusted accordingly.
- 3.7 Whilst not directly related to the performance of Biffa it is worth noting that Arun's littering enforcement services provided through East Hampshire have been largely switched off throughout the pandemic.

4.0 Contract Management

4.1 Arun District Council Cleansing Team Structure

The contract is managed by the Cleansing Service. The Cleansing Operations Manager (Daniel Cox) has overall responsibility for liaising with Biffa over the day to day running of the contract, including agreeing variations to work.

Monitoring of contract standards and troubleshooting for street cleansing is predominantly undertaken by the two Street Scene Officers. The District is split in two (East/West) with each Inspector responsible for the proactive monitoring of contract standards and to resolve and investigate all enquiries in relation to street cleansing, litter and fly tipping. The Inspectors also undertake monitoring at weekends in order to ensure standards are maintained during peak times.

Enforcement related issues are dealt with by a dedicated Street Scene Enforcement Officer

The service has a Street Scene Co-ordinator that is responsible for dealing with abandoned vehicle reports, liaising with Sussex Police to deal with them through Operation Crackdown.

The team has recently employed a Senior Cleansing Service Officer, who working alongside the Projects Officer, oversee the day to day running of the service with Biffa including the resolution of service complaints. In addition, they co-ordinate the introduction of new services to the District, working on campaigns and education initiatives to improve recycling and inevitably make the District cleaner.

4.2 Contract meeting structure

The Council requires that the Contractor attends the following meetings with the Council to ensure smooth service delivery and effective management of the Contract.

- Monthly Contract Valuation Meeting to agree Contract payments and Contract performance.
- Monthly Contract Operations Review between the Cleansing Operations Manager at Arun and the Business and Operations Manager at Biffa. Resolve operational issues and plan joint initiatives/projects.
- Monthly Waste collections meeting;
- Monthly Street Scene Meeting
- Monthly Health and Safety Meeting that includes workforce and Trade Union representatives
- An annual review to evaluate overall performance, service proposals, initiatives and health and safety and environmental standards;
- A 6 monthly review of operations and strategic planning between the Group Head of Neighbourhoods, Environmental Services & Strategy Manager, Cleansing Operations Manager and representatives from Biffa up to regional director level.

4.3 Dealing with resident enquiries & complaints

All resident enquiries & complaints are managed through the Council's Contract Management System, with the majority of these being dealt with at the first stage through Arun Direct. This provides a log of all contact relating to the Cleansing service. Customer

enquiries are managed through this system with a record of actions taken, including when issues have been rectified. The system is used to run off monthly reports on the number of enquiries and key performance indicators

5.0 Performance measurements

5.1 Corporate plan & Service Delivery Plan indicators

A number of indicators which link with the performance of contractual operations are included within the Council's Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plans

5.1.1 Corporate Plan - Household waste sent for recycling and composting 19/20 Target 50% Actual 43.04%

This is an improvement overall on the combined recycling and composting rate of almost 1% over the previous year. This is made up of a dry recycling rate of 26.76% and composting rate of 16.28%.

5.1.2 The year to date information for 20/21 suggests there will be a decrease in overall recycling rate by up to 1% due to the additional tonnages of residual waste collected during the pandemic. This figure will be ratified as part of the final Corporate Plan Indicators submission.

5.2 **It should be noted that the targets for recycling, composting and residual waste per household are influenced by factors beyond the direct performance of Biffa. Major factors include waste disposal and processing streams introduced by West Sussex County Council, and the waste collection model operated by the authority which in turn dictates or influences resident behaviour.**

5.3 Biffa routinely undertake a customer satisfaction survey maintain the following statistics for the contract that are reviewed regularly. The latest took place in November/December 2020 and had a total of 2251 responses. The results showed high satisfaction levels with the services run.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Total
Refuse collection	65.17% 1,467	31.94% 719	2.00% 45	0.80% 18	0.09% 2	2,251
Kerbside recycling	45.27% 1,019	37.23% 838	14.93% 336	2.13% 48	0.44% 10	2,251
Street Cleansing	16.84% 379	46.56% 1,048	24.03% 541	10.40% 234	2.18% 49	2,251

6.0 <u>H&S management & review</u>		
6.1	Health and Safety compliance and monitoring is both a Council and Biffa priority. This is reviewed on a monthly basis, at the Health and Safety at Work meeting with the workforce and Trade Union representatives.	
6.2	A full annual Health & Safety compliance review is undertaken by the Cleansing Operations Manager.	
6.3	To assist with Health and Safety monitoring the whole collections fleet is currently being fitted with 360 degree cameras.	
7.0 <u>Biffa presentation</u>		
7.1	Damien O'Neill from Biffa will present a PowerPoint presentation to members outlining the service structure in place at Biffa to deliver the Arun contract and provide an overview of Biffa as a company.	
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2. PROPOSAL(S): Members to note the contents of the report		
3. OPTIONS: N/A		
4. CONSULTATION: N/A		
Has consultation been undertaken with:		YES
Relevant Town/Parish Council		NO
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES:		YES
Financial		NO
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
6. IMPLICATIONS: N/A		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: N/A

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: None