

Report to Neighbourhood and Community Services Select Committee



SCRUTINY



Date of meeting: 15 September 2015

**Subject: Scope of Review of Waste and Recycling
Collection Arrangements**

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Committee Secretary: A Hendry (01992 564246)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That Members consider the scope of the Review of the Council's Waste and Recycling Collection Arrangements.

Report:

(1) The Council's contract with Sita, its previous waste, recycling and street cleansing contractor, came to an end after a seven year period on 3 November 2014. The process of awarding a new contract began in 2013, with competitive dialogue chosen as the procurement methodology, in recognition of the scale and complexity of the contract.

(2) At the final tender stage, all the remaining contractors bid on both a five-day collection and a four-day collection basis. The most advantageous tender, in terms of price and quality, was submitted by Biffa Municipal Ltd, who were appointed by Council in May 2014. The contract mobilisation and handover went well and Biffa performed satisfactorily during the period from November 2014 up until May 2015, during which time they were operating the previous five-day collection arrangements.

(3) However, following the switch to the four-day collection schedule and the introduction of new vehicles and technology on 12 May, it quickly became apparent that the contractor was struggling to provide the service required of them. Over a period of several weeks, an unacceptably high level of missed collections were reported and the service is yet to fully stabilise. The Council's Environment Portfolio Holder, believing that it is very important to establish the reasons behind this service failure, not only to help in rectifying any ongoing problems and achieving an acceptable level of future service, but will also help in identifying any lessons for the Council, with respect to the letting of other major service contracts.

(4) To this end, the Environment Portfolio Holder formally requested that Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertake a review on his behalf, the outcomes to be formally reported back to Cabinet. Overview and Scrutiny Committee subsequently agreed the request and determined that the Neighbourhoods and Communities select Committee was best placed to undertake the review by virtue of their Terms of Reference.

The Review Process

(5) Given the likely level of both Member and Public interest, particularly with respect to the introduction of the revised 4-day collection arrangements, it has been proposed that an additional meeting of the Select Committee will be dedicated to this single subject. Given the current Working Programme of the Committee, the availability of external contributors to the review and to allow a period of time for the contract to fully stabilise, a date of the 17 December 2015, has been identified.

(6) In order to ensure that the review focuses on the main issues that Members may wish to explore, this report seeks to establish the scope of the review and how the meeting will be practically undertaken.

(7) In order to stimulate discussion, a proposed draft format is outlined below. Members are asked to comment and identify any other issues they would like to be addressed. In addition to the Environment Portfolio Holder and the Council's Lead Officers on Waste and Recycling, it is intended that Senior Representatives of Biffa Municipal will be present along with Len Attrill, the Consultant from White Young and Green, who supported the Council through the procurement process. They will be invited to give evidence and answer questions at appropriate intervals.

Proposed Structure and Scope of Review

It is proposed that the review is broken down and undertaken in 4 parts, covering the following issues and allowing for questions.

Part One – Procurement Process

- i. Why the Council elected for Competitive Dialogue;
- ii. The Procurement Process and Key Considerations;
- iii. Contractors' Service Improvements identified through Competitive Dialogue;
- iv. Rationale behind the adoption of 4-Day Collection;
- v. Final Tender Evaluation and Award.

In attendance White Young and Green.

Part Two – Mobilisation and First 6 months of Contract

- i. Mobilisation in run-up to Contract Start Date November 2014;
- ii. Operation of 5 Day Service during initial 6 months;
- iii. Procurement of new fleet and depot relocation;
- iv. Preparation for Service Change to 4 Day Collection;
- v. Communication/Information to residents.

In attendance Biffa Municipal.

Part Three –

- i. Revised Arrangements from the 12 May 2015;
- ii. Problems encountered by Residents. Type and Scale;
- iii. Operational issues faced by Contractor;
- iv. Remedial Actions and Recovery Plan;
- v. Current Performance of Contract and Future Prospects.

In attendance Biffa Municipal.

Part Four – Conclusions and Key Recommendations

On the basis of what has been identified through the review process, to reach a set of conclusions around what could have been done better and to recommend any key considerations with respect to how the Council could improve procurement and implementation of any future major service contracts.

Public Participation

Given that in the 2 month period from the 12 May 2015, the Council was in receipt of 17,000 enquiries regarding approximately 5400 missed collections, it is not unreasonable to expect a considerable amount of public interest in the review. In order to maximise participation, whilst at the same time avoiding unnecessary duplication, it is proposed that the review meeting is publicised and residents are asked to register an interest in asking a question in person/or in writing, with an indication of what they would like to ask. Thereafter, depending on the response, a decision will be taken on how the practicalities will be managed. However, it is the intention that residents will have the opportunity to attend and address questions.

Timing

The meeting is planned to commence at 7.00 p.m. with 50 minutes allowed for each Part with Questions. This would allow 30 minutes at the end to identify key findings and recommendations. The meeting to conclude by 10.00 p.m.