

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 22 December 2009

Subject: Environment Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mrs Mary Sartin **Item:** 8(d)

Recommending:

That the report of the Environment Portfolio Holder be noted.

Waste Management Service

We are now three and a half months into the new service and most of the earlier problems have been resolved and the service appears to be running quite smoothly. Several people within my own ward have made very favourable comments regarding the service we are now offering and hopefully other members have been aware of similar feelings within their areas. Recycling figures to the end of October indicate a recycling rate of 58% compared with the 43% we were achieving under the old scheme, however, I would just add a word of caution in that current evaluations indicate an end of year figure nearer to 54%.

Call numbers have reduced dramatically from the high figures which were being reached in the run up to, and during the early days of, the new service but have now settled down to a more normal level. With the Christmas holiday period now upon us I would urge residents to refer to their calendars for revised collection dates or to look for the information on the Council's website.

The assessment process has now been developed for the issuing of a second food and garden waste wheelie bin. Around 400 requests have been received and officers will contact these residents to arrange for an assessment. With this number of requests it will take some time to work through the list and I would ask residents to be patient.

Street Trading

Some local traders have approached the Environment and Neighbourhood enforcement team regarding the sale of Christmas trees from the roadside as they feel this is having an effect on their legitimate businesses. Officers have made some test purchases and as a result about five traders are being investigated.

Members' Visits

I am very conscious that I have not yet come forward with dates for visits to recycling facilities. I raised this issue again at the last Waste Management Partnership Board

and am now awaiting dates for the New Year from Sita. As soon as these are received they will be published in the Members' Bulletin.

Planning Directorate Staffing

After a period of considerable problems around staffing within the Planning and Economic Development Directorate several vacancies have now been filled. As some of these have been internal appointments there are still a few more posts to be filled. The staffing structure has now been published as part of the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel agenda for 5 January 2010. Any member who wishes to access this document can do so through the Council's website.