

**Committee:** Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Wards: All

**Subject:** Update report on Phase C contract (waste, street cleaning and grounds maintenance)

Lead officer: Graeme Kane, Assistant Director, Public Space

Lead member: Cllr Ross Garrod and Cllr Nick Draper

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**Recommendations:**

A. Members are asked discuss and comment on the contents of the update report.

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**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report is to update Members on the start of the new contracts procured by Waste Services through the South London Waste Partnership (SLWP). The procurement was commonly known as Phase C and included two lots. Lot 1 for waste collection and street cleaning services. Lot 2 for greenspaces and grounds maintenance. Lot was awarded to Veolia whilst Lot 2 was awarded to iDVerde.
- 1.2. The contracts have started successfully with little disruption for residents and customers. There have been some isolated issues relating to missed collections and street cleaning but these are being managed by the client team in conjunction with the contractors. A further, more detailed report, is intended for the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel in November 2017. It can also be arranged for either contractor to attend future Panel meetings to provide updates on contract performance.
- 1.3. Further work is being undertaken to prepare for the roll out of the new waste collection service in October 2018. The intention is for these plans to be the subject of scrutiny by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel in February 2018.

**2 DETAILS**

**2.1. Mobilisation**

- 2.2. The new waste collection and street cleaning services delivered by Veolia began on 3rd April. Over the previous weekend Veolia implemented their operational model including: new uniforms; training; some new vehicles; livery for new and existing vehicles; installing ICT to the depot and in-cab technology; and preparing the depot for their operations. The service was delivered from the first day without any delays or disruptions to normal waste collection and street cleaning operations. Both the LBM Waste Contracting and Commissioning Manager and Assistant Director for Public Space were

at the depot from 5am to support the roll-out and demonstrate LBM's continued commitment and interest in the service.

2.3. iDVerde began delivering the new grounds maintenance contract on 1st February. This roll out went equally well with the new provider delivering their services without disruption.

2.4. **Contract Management**

2.5. Ahead of 1st April, a new division called Public Space, led by a new Assistant Director, was created to provide the client function which manages and monitors the new contracts.

2.6. Given the contracts were successfully procured in partnership through the South London Waste Partnership (SLWP), formal contract management is carried out by the SLWP with the close involvement of the individual borough teams. Regular contract meetings are held together with daily liaison by the client teams to resolve specific issues and continually improve working practices. There is a strong ethos of partnership working between the client and contract teams to deliver high quality services for our residents. The commitment and approach of the Veolia and iDVerde Contract Managers and their teams has been encouraging for a successful partnership and contract.

2.7. **Neighbourhood Client Officers (NCOs)**

2.8. A new team of three Neighbourhood Client Officers (NCOs) forms part of the Public Space division. The NCOs are responsible for monitoring and managing the new contracts on a daily basis. Each NCO is responsible for monitoring performance and resolving issues in their allocated wards. The NCO team have settled in very well and have become familiar with their wards and the local issues within them. They are also getting to know their ward Members, resident's groups and other stakeholders through regular communication and site visits. They are also building strong relationships with their counterparts within Veolia and iDVerde so they can resolve issues in partnership.

2.9. **Summary of performance: Veolia**

2.10. **Residential waste collection:** There have been no major service disruptions since the new operation began and on the whole, residential waste collections have gone well. The crews are operating to the same routes and the collection schedules have not changed. Owing to the new in-cab technology, together with the new reporting function on the LBM website, more accurate data is becoming available. This will enable missed collections and households not presenting waste on the day or time of collection to be identified more easily. This information is being used to target any failures to collect waste and continually improve the service.

2.11. The garden waste service has been operating well for the circa 8,000 customers and the number of members continues to rise. However, there is evidence of missed collections, some of which are repeat misses, which, once reported by the resident, are investigated to rectify the immediate error and resolve any underlying problem. This remains a focus for the team and in-depth analysis of repeated missed collections is being carried out to identify issues before they escalate.

- 2.12. **Street cleaning:** The contract is based on a required standard of cleanliness across the borough rather than on a required frequency. The contract requires all streets to be maintained to the required level and for Veolia to return any failing streets to this level within 2 hours of notification in a town centre and 24 hours in a residential road.
- 2.13. Monitoring and inspections, together with reports from residents and Members, indicate that the standard of street cleanliness in the town centres has improved since the new contract. Some residential streets are also looking better but there are some pockets where concern remains. These streets are under close monitoring and the focus of attention for the NCO team. Veolia are responding well to these concerns.
- 2.14. Following some initial teething problems with litter bins being emptied regularly, they are now being emptied according to the required specification. The contract requires a full or overflowing litter bin to be emptied within two hours of being reported. Cleansing of the town centre litter bins (required quarterly) began at the end of June, specifically ahead of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships.
- 2.15. Green street cleaning sacks were causing some concern when they were being left out overnight, which should not be the case. This was raised with Veolia and improvements have been noted.
- 2.16. The number of recorded fly-tips across the borough has increased significantly since March. This is unlikely to reflect a significant increase in incidents and is much more likely to be a result of improved reporting and data capture by the new in-cab technology. Monitoring of fly tip clearance has indicated that the majority are being cleared within the required 24-hour response period. However, there have been some disappointing instances where this has not been the case. This is being addressed with Veolia. The NCOs are also working closely with the LBM Environmental Enforcement Team to address fly-tipping through communication with residents, in-depth investigation of fly-tipped material and issuing of enforcement notices.
- 2.17. **Commercial Waste Service:** The commercial waste service delivered by Veolia is operated by a separate team to the residential service. All administration and customer service for the service should be carried out directly by Veolia. The contract is structured in such a way that LBM should have little or no involvement in the delivery of this service.
- 2.18. Of the circa 8000 customers, the vast majority have received their scheduled service. However, there has been some disruption to this service owing to a change of crew and driver personnel which has left gaps in knowledge about the collection rounds and location of bins at individual businesses. Following the Easter holidays, nine of the 108 schools on the service experienced difficulties together with some community centres. This was rectified with significant involvement of the client team. Disappointingly, there are some isolated incidents of repeated missed collections which the client team is resolving with the Veolia Commercial Manager and liaising with the businesses or organisations affected. Some customers have also raised concerns about the difficulty in contacting the commercial service contact centre operated by Veolia which has been raised through formal contract

management channels. This continues to be a focus of monitoring and management by the client team.

- 2.19. **Integration with Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system:**  
The contract with Veolia provides the opportunity to integrate their operational management system (Echo) with LBM's CRM. The client team have access to all the data in Echo, which is updated in real time by the collection and street cleaning team as well as the office-based supervisors. For example, a report of a missed bin entered by a resident through LBM's website can be delivered to a driver within minutes and they can return to the missed bin before returning to the depot. This speeds up response times and reduces administrative overheads.
- 2.20. The system also enables easier and more accurate reporting by the crews and by residents which generates useful data for monitoring and management purposes.
- 2.21. **Summary of performance: iDVerde**
- 2.22. The summer is a demanding time for parks maintenance and grass cutting. However, iDVerde have successfully delivered a high quality of parks and grounds maintenance across the borough. There are very few concerns reported in relation to grass cutting or litter in the borough's parks.
- 2.23. Work is on-going to fully integrate the ICT systems related to booking pitches and park's venues as well as enabling residents to report park related issues through the LBM website. In the meantime, residents are able to make bookings and to report issues through the existing channels.
- 2.24. **Ways for the public to report incidents**
- 2.25. Residents, and Members, are able to report incidents or service failures in a range of ways.
- 2.26. They can use the Report It function on the LBM website:  
<http://www.merton.gov.uk/doitonline/report-it.htm>
- 2.27. The website enables residents to report easily a range of service requests including:
- Missed recycling or waste collection
  - Litter and street cleaning problems
  - Abandoned cars
  - Graffiti
  - Fly-tipping
- 2.28. Residents can also telephone the Merton Council Contact Centre: 020 8274 4901.
- 2.29. By using these channels, the reports reach the contractor and client team as quickly as possible so problems can be solved as efficiently and effectively as possible. This also ensures all resident reports are logged in CRM and any repeat issues can be identified before they become bigger problems.
- 2.30. **New waste collection service roll-out in October 2018**

2.31. Plans to roll out the new waste collection service will begin in earnest in the coming weeks. This will be a project that is developed in partnership with Veolia and LBM. It will include a stakeholder engagement plan together with a robust communication plan together with the usual rigour associated with good project management. There is a great deal to consider including the different housing types across the borough which will influence the type of waste collection solution to be offered. The delivery of bins and any phasing of the start dates will be carefully considered by the project team. It is the intention for the roll out plans to be the subject of scrutiny by the Environment Scrutiny Panel in March 2018. It can be arranged for a representative of Veolia to attend the meeting to present their plans for the roll out.

2.32. **Lessons from London Borough of Sutton**

2.33. The roll out of the service in Sutton has attracted a great deal of attention. Their experience was a result of their specific situation which included: the need to deliver new boxes to all households; introduction of a food waste service; and the timing of the roll out which coincided with the mobilisation of a new contract and the integration of the new ICT systems. Whilst the situation in LBM will be very different, lessons from Sutton's experience are being gathered and analysed through the SLWP and will inform LBM's plans.

**3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1. No decisions are required as a result of this report.

**4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

4.1. No formal consultation was undertaken to produce this report.

**5 TIMETABLE**

5.1. Further updates on the contracts are within the proposed Forward Plan for the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

**6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. There are no implications as a result of this update report. Any financial, resource and property implications are managed as part of the usual contract management procedures already in place.

**7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. There are no implications as a result of this update report. Any legal and statutory implications are managed as part of the usual contract management procedures already in place.

**8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. There are no implications as a result of this update report. Implications for equalities and diversity are considered as part of the usual operation and delivery of the waste and street cleaning services.

**9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. There are no implications as a result of this update report.

**10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. There are no implications as a result of this update report. Health and safety considerations and risks managed as part of the usual operation and delivery of the waste and street cleaning services.

**11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

11.1. No appendices are included.

**12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. No specific background papers relate to this report.