

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

**Date: 26th February 2019**

Wards: All

**Subject: Waste and street cleansing service performance report Oct – Dec 2018**

Lead officer: Anita Cacchioli - Interim Assistant Director Public Space

Lead member: Cllr Mike Brunt - Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Cleanliness

Contact officer: Charles Baker – Commissioning Manger Public Space

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### **Recommendations:**

- A. Members are asked to discuss the content of the report and provide officers with any comments regarding their experience, or reports they have received relating to the waste, recycling and street cleaning services.
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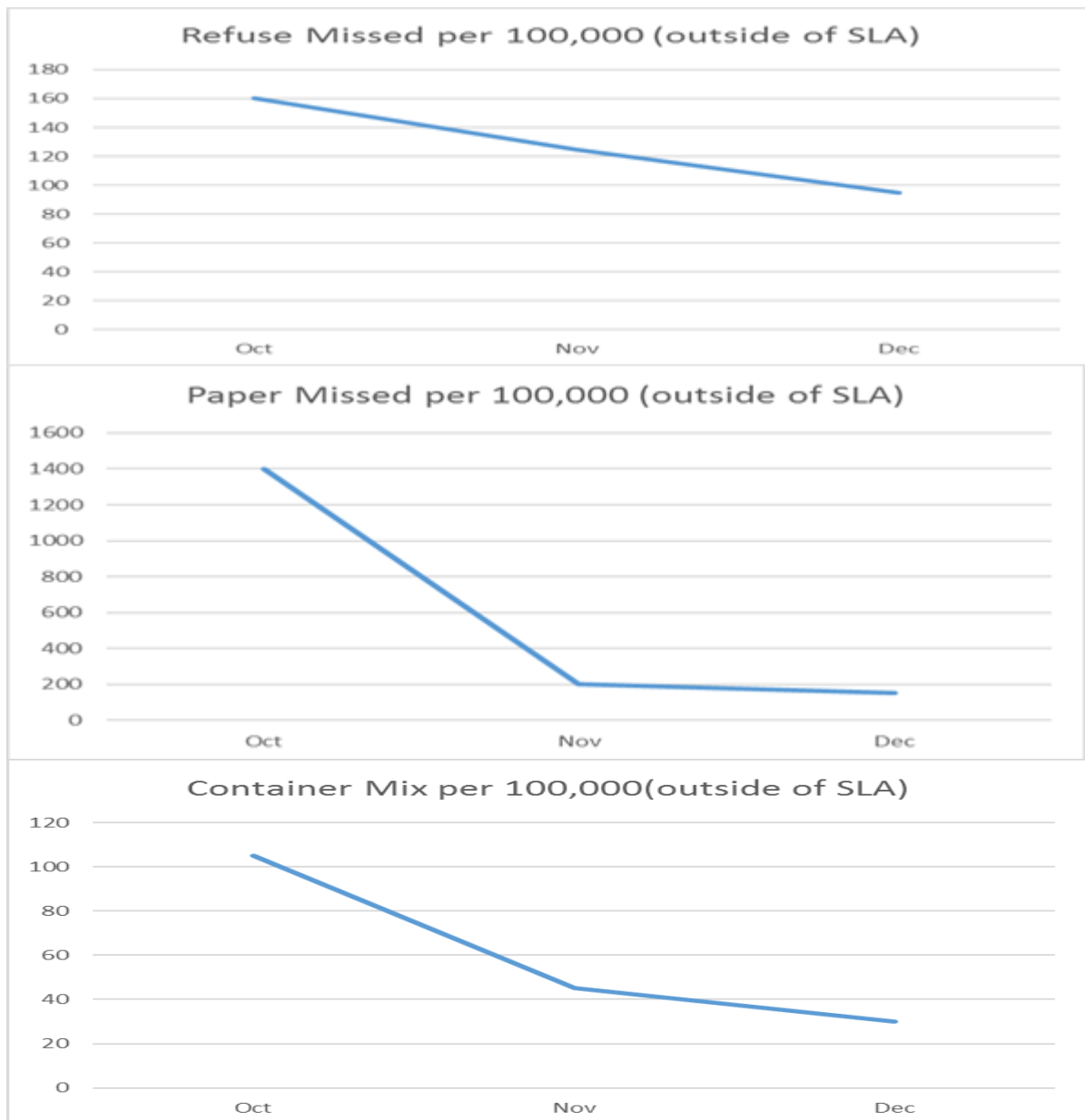
### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report is intended to provide Members with an update on the performance of the waste, recycling and street cleaning service following the role out of the new collection service in October 2018.
- 1.2. The contract is managed through the South London waste Partnership (SLWP) team. The Authorised Officer for the contract is the SLWP Strategic Partnership Manager and there is a separate Contract Manager for the Veolia contract within the partnership team. These roles are responsible for the management of the contract across all four of the partner authorities, LB Merton, LB Sutton, LB Croydon and RB Kingston. They are directed by the Management Group which consists of the appropriate Assistant Directors from each borough. Regular contract management meetings are held between SLWP, representatives from each of the boroughs and the contractor in order to oversee and progress the delivery of the contract.
- 1.3. The operational performance of the contract is overseen and managed in a number of different ways in order to maintain and improve performance for the benefit of our residents. Before the commencement of the contracts LBM created a new Neighbourhood Client Team consisting of three experienced Neighbourhood Client Officers (NCOs). Together, they monitor the contract through site visits and daily interaction with the contractors' Neighbourhood Environmental Managers, residents, stakeholders and local Members. They respond to customer requests, queries and complaints in order to resolve waste/ recycling collection, street cleaning or green space issues. They also gather intelligence and information and analyse data held in the Council's customer management system. In addition, they

have access to the contractor's operational management systems in order to determine what resources are being used in order to deliver the services and when. Through their work they are developing strong relationships with key stakeholders as well as intricate knowledge of the wards for which they are responsible. This helps them to pre-empt problems and resolve issues in order to avoid disruption and inconvenience to our residents.

## **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. The new waste collection service which was introduced in Oct 2018 impacted on every household in the borough and was one of the biggest changes in waste collection our residents have experienced in recent history with approximately 74% of households experiencing a change in the day of collection.
- 2.2. Overall the mobilisation of the collection service has gone well. The new collection service has started successfully with little disruption for the vast majority of residents and customers.
- 2.3. There are currently c68,000 kerbside properties which receive the new waste collection service, resulting in an average of 680,000 collections per month (excluding garden waste). In addition to this there are c16,000 flats, each receiving a weekly communal collection amounting to 128,000 collections per month.
- 2.4. **Waste collection**
- 2.5. Since the service change in October 2018 the response to missed refuse collections has been improving. The change in routes, rounds and collection methodology initially affected our contractor's ability to respond to missed collections within the 24-hour service level agreement (SLA). As expected, since this change, performance has continued to improve and is approaching pre-service change levels of less than 50/100,000 collections.
- 2.6. Since the changes in the recycling service were introduced, requiring residents to separate their recycling material into a wheelie bin for paper and card and a recycling box for plastics, glass and cans etc., the responsiveness of the paper/card collection teams to justified missed collections have improved dramatically.
- 2.7. The paper/card service comes under added pressure from some residents attempting to use their blue lidded recycling container as a second refuse bin. We are currently working with Veolia and have recently implemented a new contamination process which will see contaminated bins tagged and the residents advised on why the collection was not undertaken as scheduled.



2.8. **Recycling Performance**

2.9. Over the first 3 months of the new service we have seen a significant reduction (9%) in the overall volume of general waste being collected. This equates to a monthly reduction of 330 tonnes to landfill. The main contributor to this success is the increase in food waste participation which has seen an increase of 58% or 157 tonnes per month and continues to increase each month.

2.10. The Garden waste service remains popular with our residents and our customer base continues to grow. We currently have 8,906 customers compared to 7,500 last year. Over the last 3 months, following the introduction of the new service, we have collected an additional 526 tonnes (6%) compared to the same period last year.

2.11. The net impact of these changes has resulted in a 45% recycling rate for October. This will reduce over the remaining months due to a seasonal reduction in compostable waste, however, we are confident that the full year effect (2019/20) will see us achieve our stretch target

of 45% recycling performance and position us in the top quartile of all London boroughs.

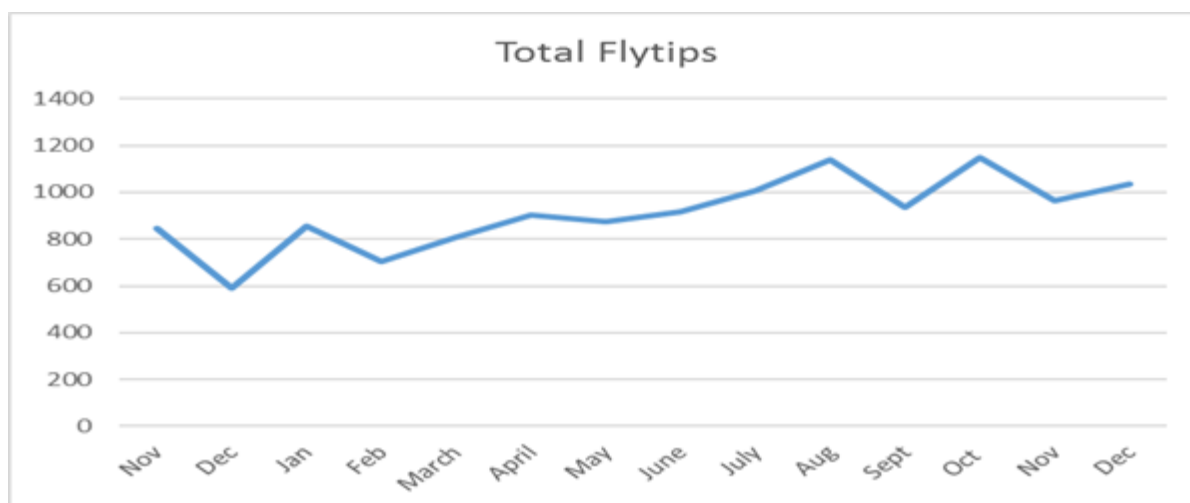
2.12. **Assisted Collection**

2.13. The 'assisted waste' collection service has been promoted as part of the direct communication to every household in advance of the service change. This was again promoted as part of the information pack which accompanied the new wheelie bins.

2.14. As anticipated we have seen an increase in the number of households requiring an 'assisted collection'. Each case is treated on its own merit and no medical assessment is required to be undertaken. To date we have 1003 households registered on the service compared to 544 households registered prior to the service change.

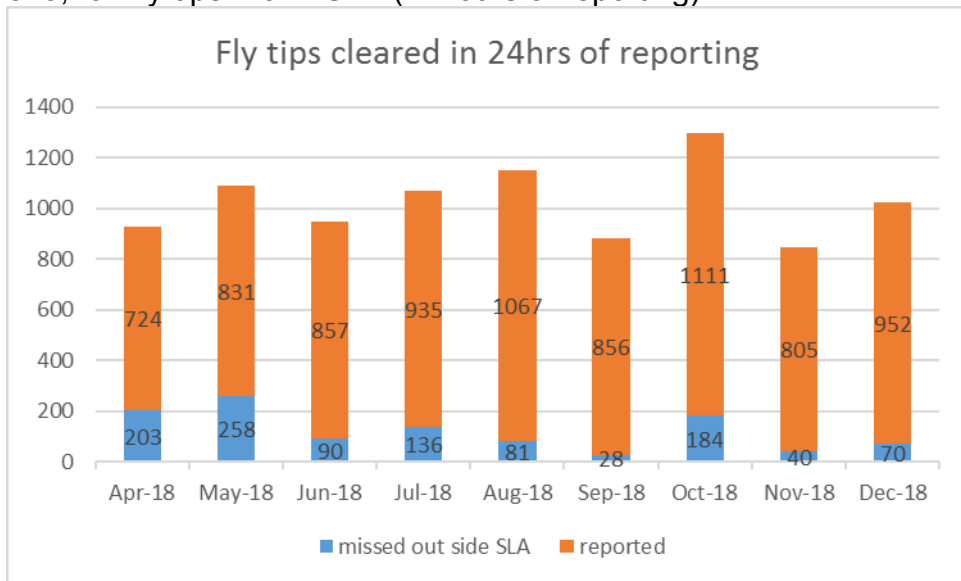
2.15. **Fly tipping**

2.16. Over the past year there has been a significant increase in the number of reported fly tips within the borough. The table below demonstrates the number of public reported fly tips since Nov 2017, when the service was fully integrated with our contractors echo system. There is correlation between the collection service change in Oct 2018 and the spike in fly-tipping activity



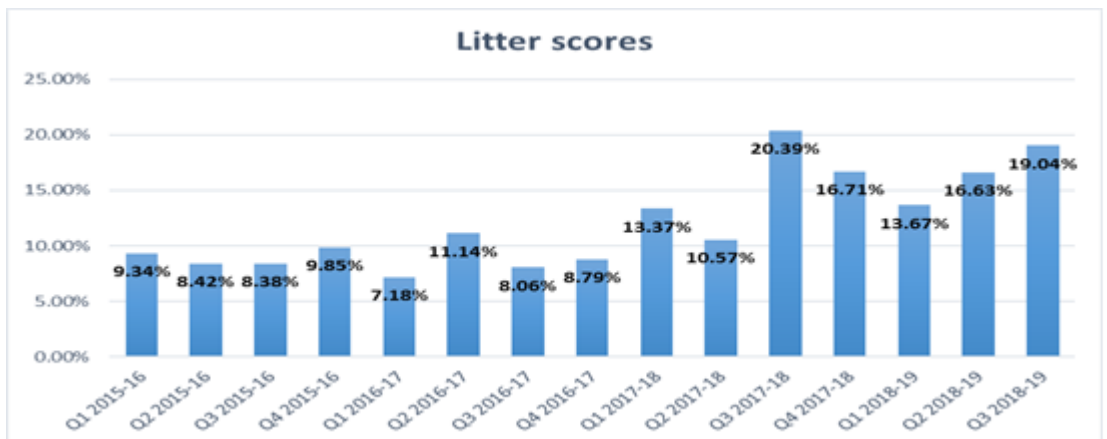
2.17. Our contractor's role in relation to fly tipping is to remove all reported fly tips on public land within the SLA time frame. The table below illustrates Veolia's performance improvement since April 18, the impact of the service change in Oct 18 and their ability to respond within 24hrs. In order to maintain the level of service required, Veolia have supplied additional resource, including two additional response teams, to assist in dealing with the increased volume of fly-tipping. In the three month period Oct – Dec 2018 Veolia have responded to 89%

of 3,162 fly-tips within SLA (24hours of reporting)

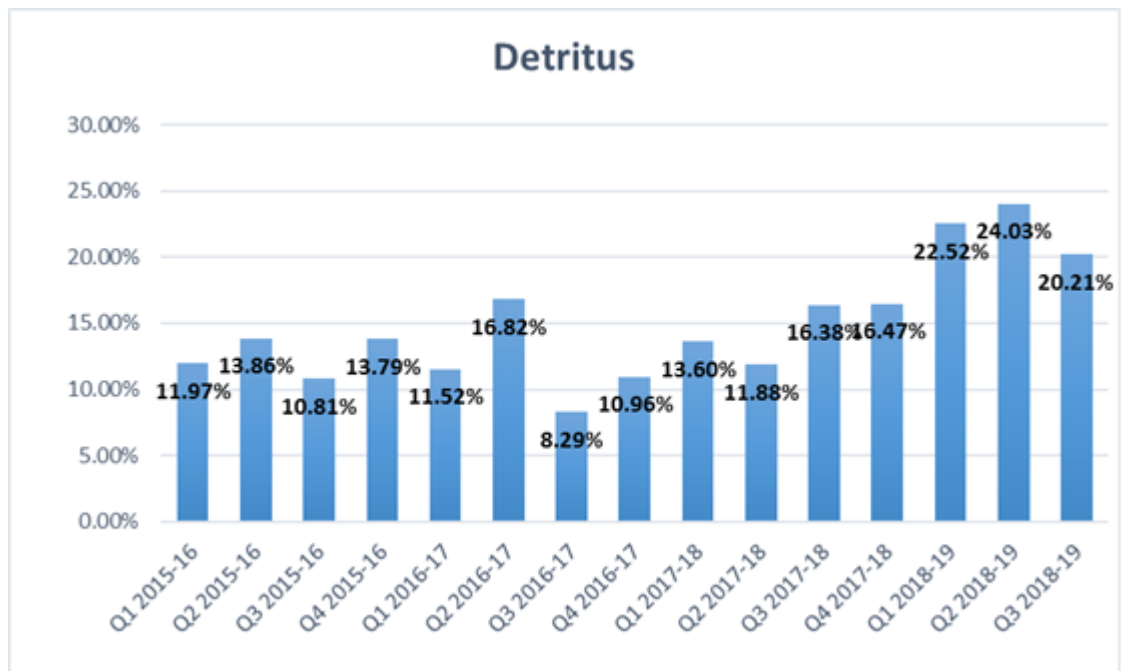


2.18. **Street Cleaning**

2.19. LBM's performance monitoring officer undertakes monthly and quarterly inspections at random across the borough to assess the level of litter and detritus separately. The data from these inspections provides an insight into the street cleanliness of Merton's roads over time. Anything graded B- or above is within the acceptable limits of the contract. The graphs below compare the results of these inspections over time. The scores are based on the former Defra National Indicator 195 for street cleanliness; LBM's performance target is less than 8.5% for litter and less than 13% for detritus; both of which are stricter targets than previous years.



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2.22.

Street cleansing continues to be an area of concern and has continued to be a focus for the client team, Veolia and residents. This includes the management of the street cleaning green sacks. These should be removed by the evening crews on the day of sweeping; this is not always happening and is being addressed by the client team with Veolia.

2.23.

Over this reporting period the full benefit of containerisation has not been realised. Throughout October and November, we continued to accept side waste, which resulted in spillage from the collection process, along with incorrectly presented waste sacks which have continued to be torn open by the wild life.

2.24.

Overflowing litter bins undermine residents' ability and commitment to disposing of their litter responsibly and bring down the overall condition of an area. It is disappointing therefore when the bins are not emptied frequently enough to avoid this occurring. Unfortunately, there have been incidents when bins have been overflowing. This remains a focus for improvement

2.25.

**Container Delivery**

2.26.

The main operational challenge has come from the delivery of the new wheelie bins and the significant demand for additional food waste and recycling containers. Disappointingly the delivery of the new containers was not completed in advance of the launch of the new service and as such c7,300 properties (151 roads) had not received their wheelie bins prior to the service change in October. The impact of this has meant that over 10% of our residents had not received their container and equally important the information pack which advised them of the changes to the service and if appropriate the new day of collection. This has resulted in waste being presented incorrectly but at no fault of the resident. Whilst some container requests are still outstanding, additional resources continue to be deployed to meet demand.

2.27. Following the changes in waste collection and the frequency of collection, we are pleased to see a significant increase in the number of requests for new containers (recycling box and food caddies). Although this had been anticipated and increased stock levels secured, the level of demand created a back log in deliveries. Following the role out of the new service we continue to experience a high level of demand for the recycling containers and an additional 14,971 requests have been received and delivered.

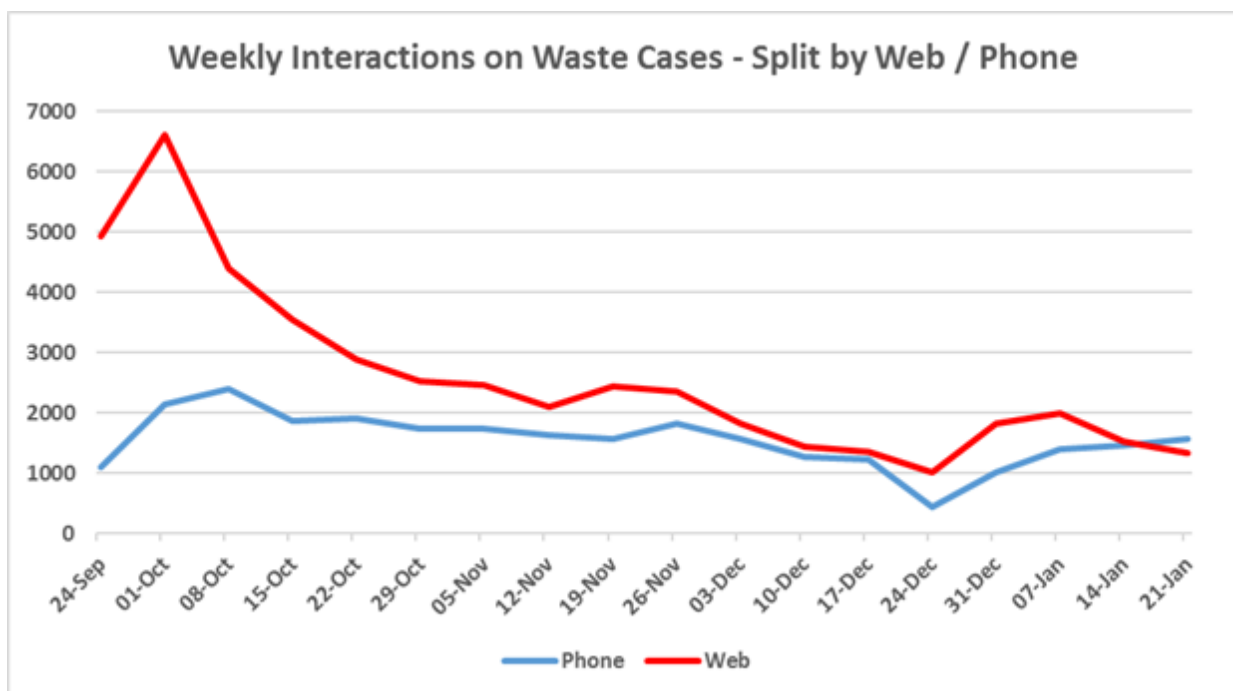
2.28. **Customer Contact**

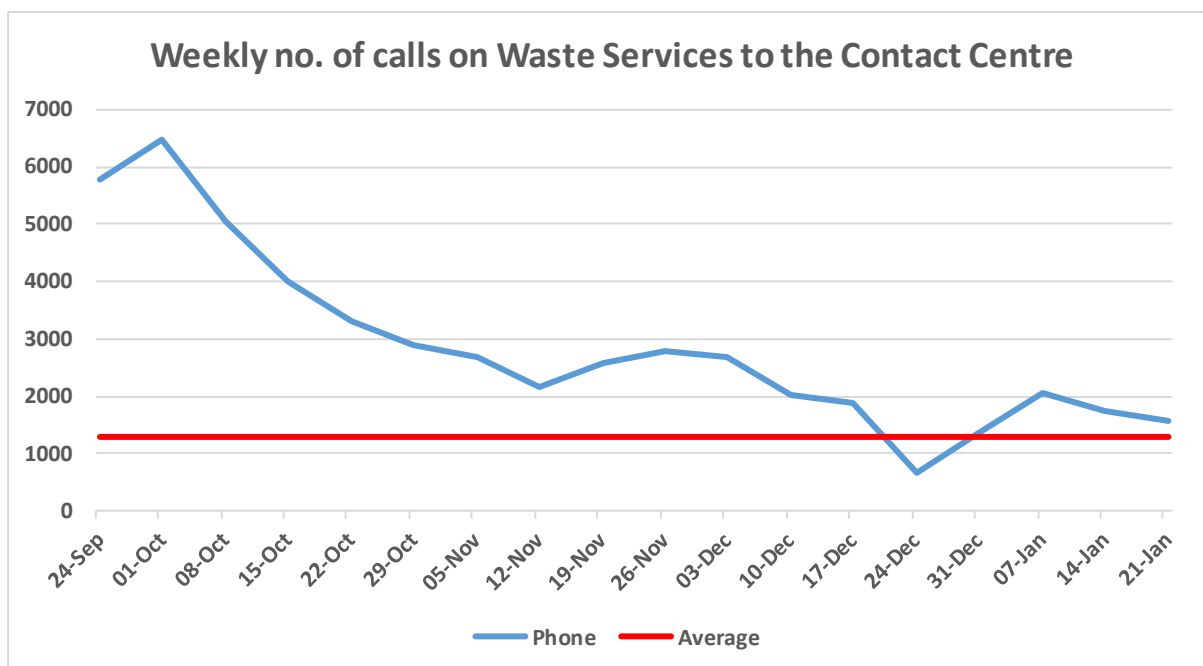
2.29. The Council provides a number of different mechanisms for reporting, including online via the Council's website, other online channels such as Love Clean Streets and by telephone through the Council's contact centre. This is in addition to written complaints and reports of service issues from Members.

2.30. Provision was made to have additional agency resource available to meet the expected increase in demand, following a lessons learnt exercise with colleagues from neighbouring Boroughs. However, no one anticipated the increase being nearly 500% more than the normal demand (on the busiest days within the Contact Centre).

2.31. The Council acknowledges that there remain areas where the online facility can be improved. The Council is undertaking a programme of work to enhance and improve existing online transactions, refine and increase the resilience of the technical functionality implemented, and deliver additional online transactions

2.32. The two tables below illustrate the continual reduction in the volume of calls taken by the call centre and web interactions for waste related request.





### 3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. As part of our internal review process we will assess and reflect on how the mobilisation went. A campaign evaluation has been commissioned and we will be undertaken to evaluate the lessons learned from the roll out of the new service. Date to be confirmed

### 4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. The mobilisation plan for the new waste collection service was developed following the lessons learned from the service change in Sutton.

### 5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The time table is contained within the report

### 6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None, for the purposes of this report

### 7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no legal and statutory implications as a result of this report.

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

- 8.1. There are no human rights, equalities or community cohesion implications as a result of this report.

### 9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no crime and disorder implications as a result of this report

### 10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no risk management and health and safety implications as a result of this report



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

- None

**12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1. None

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