

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee – 23 May 2018

Subject: Waste and Recycling Service Change for Apartments

Report of: The Director of Neighbourhoods

Summary

To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an update on service changes to waste collections from the apartment sector to achieve collection and disposal savings targets.

Recommendations

To consider and comment on the content of the report.

Wards Affected: All

Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Increasing recycling rates across the city will reduce Manchester's carbon footprint.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

None

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee discussed waste collection service changes in June 2016 and December 2016; reviewing the detail of the proposed changes for 4 bin households (implemented 2016/17) and future changes for residual collections from apartments. In October 2017, key findings were shared about the City's apartment sector, providing insight into resident behaviour and barriers to recycling.
- 1.2. The grey bin exchange programme implemented in 2016/17, affected 70% of Manchester households and resulted in significant reductions in the amount of residual waste collected and increased the rate of recycling for this property type to 50%. As a result of the service change, in 2017/18 the City spent £7m less on disposal than if it had done nothing. Around 50,000 households live in apartment style properties - this represents around 23% of the City's housing stock. Members are aware there is significant opportunity to increase recycling amongst this sector from the current average rate of 10% and reduce the amount wasted.
- 1.3. The majority of the City's future property growth will be in the apartment sector - the development of blocks in the City centre and fringe remains on an upwards trajectory. In 2018/19 it's expected that 4000 new units will be developed and around 75% of those will be in the City Centre. Beyond that it's expected that there will be significant apartment development in the Northern Gateway area of the City centre. By 2024 it is projected that circa 80,000 residents will live in the City Centre, currently the population stands at 50,000.

2. Background

- 2.1. The City Council has a saving target of £0.5m to be achieved from apartment sector collection and disposal arrangements over the next two years (2018/19 and 2019/20). Savings need to be realised from current apartment collection and disposal arrangements to deliver these targets and absorb further growth in this sector. The renegotiation of the Greater Manchester Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract for waste and recycling disposal facilities and the replacement waste levy will reduce the significant gains previously seen from diverting residual waste – meaning that it will be harder to secure the savings required. The detail of this will not be clearly understood until the end of 2018 when the new contract is let.
- 2.2. Members will be aware that it is intended to achieve this target by improving the recycling options and communications within the sector to promote recycling and limit residual capacity within apartment blocks so that it is equitable with 4 bin households. The Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee discussed in June 2016 how residual capacity from this property type should be set to reflect occupancy – particularly for purpose built private student hall blocks where units have single occupancy.
- 2.3. Since the last update to the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee in October 2017, a significant amount of work has been undertaken to calculate the amount of rubbish and recycling collected from each apartment

block; to identify and engage with the relevant Building Managers and Registered Providers and start to engage with residents about their recycling behaviour. This paper will provide detail of the work undertaken and the next steps to provide additional recycling capacity to buildings and reduce surplus residual capacity.

3. Update

- 3.1. **Weighing exercise:** Biffa have completed an exercise to weigh all existing residual and recycling containers in apartment buildings. This information has been used to calculate the performance of each building and identify where there is an in-balance in residual and recycling capacity. This process has identified a spectrum of performance across the sector, there is opportunity for all apartment buildings to improve recycling performance – however there are some buildings which are already performing well, without intervention, and have shown that the aspirations for the sector are reasonable and achievable. Some of the good practice from these buildings has now been shared with Building Managers and Registered Providers in a support guide which is available to all on-line. The results highlighted a number of buildings which have too much residual capacity which does not encourage apartment households to recycle.
- 3.2. **Building Managers and Registered Providers:** In quarter 3 2017/18, Officers met with Registered Providers and Building Managers to discuss the proposed changes to service provision – 44 attended these sessions. These sessions were well received by the sector and provided the opportunity for potential issues to be highlighted and for good practice to be shared. Information was also provided to those who were unable to attend. It's recognised that Building Managers have a key role to play in improving recycling at apartment buildings; one of the key aims of this project is to ensure they are engaged and supported to support this change.
- 3.3. **Bin infrastructure and signage:** As previously discussed one of the significant barriers to recycling in apartment buildings is insufficient recycling bin capacity and a lack of awareness amongst residents about what facilities are available in their building. This is further exacerbated by many apartment buildings having a considerable amount of capacity for residual waste - so it is not a necessity for residents to recycle in many buildings. In March 2018 a key decision was agreed to invest in additional recycling containers for the apartment sector, Building Managers and Registered Providers have been invited to submit requests for recycling containers, signage and associated materials.
- 3.4. **Communication and engagement with residents:** A letter and recycling leaflet was delivered to all apartments in March 2018, this letter encouraged residents to recycle more and to 'recycle right' – explaining which materials should go in each bin. The communication also encouraged residents to ask their building manager for any materials they may need to recycle more.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. **Procurement, delivery of bins and the logistics:** The procurement of recycling containers is in progress and the first delivery is expected in early June 2018. A

container delivery programme has been developed based on requests received to date and anticipated demand from buildings which are under capacity. These additional containers will be serviced by existing collection rounds, this is likely to cause some pressure in the short term and rounds will need to be rebalanced and collection days reviewed as the programme progresses.

- 4.2. **Communications plan:** A full communications plan has been developed to ensure all stakeholders understand the timescales for implementation of the service change and how to access further support if needed. Building Managers and Registered Providers are engaged in the process and will be informed in advance of changes being made – support will continue to be provided to drive a behaviour change. Apartment households have already received a general recycling leaflet and all residents will be written to in advance of any changes to recycling and residual waste capacity in their building - this will be supported with targeted social media messaging. The recycling canvassers will visit apartments to provide information to residents and materials such as split recycling bags to make it easier to separate materials in their apartment and carry it to the bin store. This resource will be prioritised to support buildings that need to improve recycling performance the most. The Contact Centre is engaged in the process and all staff will be briefed in advance of changes being made. The Councils webpage's have been updated to provide service information to apartment households. Following feedback from stakeholders Biffa will provide an administrator dedicated to supporting the apartment service.
- 4.3. **Implementation Plan:** The current residual collection service for apartments is provided by four collection vehicles. In order to ensure sufficient support can be provided to Building Managers, Registered Providers and residents before and after the service change – it will be delivered in a phased approach to focus on making collection adjustments for one vehicle at a time. The programme allows for a period in advance of the change to ensure buildings have the correct infrastructure and to engage residents. Following any changes, the service will be monitored and additional support provided as needed before the next phase begins. The first stage of collection changes will be made from 9 July – it is anticipated each phase will take between 10-12 weeks.
- 4.4. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The performance of each building and collection round will be monitored against the pre-service change baseline to track achievement of savings and improved recycling performance. Canvassers and crews will also closely monitor following adjustments to capacity to flag teething problems - further support will be available to building managers to step up communication and engagement with residents. Compliance options are also available if all other engagement and education interventions fail. Performance will be tracked by the Waste Performance Group.