

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: WASTE MANAGEMENT REPORT ON SPECIAL UPLIFT SERVICE PERFORMANCE
From: HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT & ESTATES		
Date: 28 OCTOBER 2014	Ref: KW/HM/JB.	

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with an update on the performance of the special uplift service following the implementation of service alterations approved at the committee meeting of 28 January 2014.

2 Background

- 2.1 Members will recall that changes were approved at the above meeting to maintain the efficiency of the service, whilst at the same time addressing health and safety, recycling and financial issues. These changes were effective from 1 April 2014 in all areas, and the service is now being provided by means of a seven day operation.
- 2.2 The main adjustments to the service were:
- 2.2.1 The introduction of operational service requirements that would achieve compliance with the recommendations of a Health and Safety Manual Handling Review, conducted by Regeneration and Environmental Services Health and Safety Officer in May 2013.
- 2.2.2 The encouragement of increased use of the 7 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC), improving both overall recycling performance and reducing the gate fees then paid to processors for treatment and disposal.
- 2.2.3 The introduction of a revised charging policy, where uplift requests of a refurbishment or home improvement nature, would attract an averaged revised charge based on the true cost of handling such requests.

3 Considerations**3.1 Health and Safety Considerations**

- 3.1.1 It is already evident that the application of the health and safety considerations, such as the front of house collection, is having a very positive impact on reduction of the burden on employees. Overall health and safety incidents reported in the section have dropped from 35 in 2013 to 12 in the same period in 2014. Whilst it is too early to attribute this drop solely to the positive effects of the service alterations, it is assumed that a degree of the drop must be related to the change.
- 3.1.2 The location change, which is also being used widely in neighbouring authorities, greatly reduces carry distance and hazards for the crews thereby allowing more appropriate dynamic risk assessments to be conducted by the individual crews. This coupled with a monitoring of the weight restrictions is making the task safer and more efficient.

3.2 Operational Considerations

- 3.2.1 Whilst householders have up to now been given an actual day of collection, due to the improved efficiency this is now being met with confidence, e.g. most recent indications are that we are attending more than 95% of the uplifts on the day we have stated to the service user. The percentage of jobs completed in accord with the calendar bookings is also high with a consequent reduction in overall waiting times.
- 3.2.2 Larger jobs can also be managed more efficiently where they can be assessed for size prior to the visit. This is clearly demonstrated by 973 requests for Waste Management Services supervisors to visit between the periods of April to June 2014.
- 3.2.3 Initial problems however have been encountered in communicating the correct message to service users, but this situation has improved through the use of common instructions which are now in place across all areas of the Council, with the Council Website fully updated, and Contact Centre agents, First Stop Shops, back office staff and front line operatives having received refresher briefings on the new system.
- 3.2.4 As was stated in the initial report, bereavement uplift requests have been unaffected by these changes, in these cases, visits take place to offer the maximum assistance to address the service users needs.

3.3 Recycling Performance Impacts

- 3.3.1 Waste generation can be very seasonal in nature, and can also be heavily influenced by economic factors. However analysis shows that the tonnage collected by the uplift crews from April to June 2014 is 1677 tonnes compared to 2423 tonnes in the similar period last year, a drop of 746 tonnes. An element of this waste is now being taken away by contractors as commercial waste, and the Council is saving the gate fee in the region of £80/tonne and also the associated labour and transport costs.
- 3.3.2 Where this material is being segregated and delivered directly to the processors, the diversion rates will be much higher and therefore our overall recycling rates will increase. Householders when being advised of the potential charge in accordance with the revised policy for uplifts are taking action, by either arranging with the contractor at source to remove the material when the work is taking place, or by visiting the HWRC. For example from April to June 2013 17,863 special uplift requests were received. In the same period for 2014 15,716 requests were received.
- 3.3.3 The HWRC tonnages likewise have shown positive impacts in the implementation of the service alterations. For example from April to June 2013 wood equated to 1445 tonnes, rubble to 1144 tonnes and general waste to 5266 tonnes which equalled a total of 7855 tonnes. Over the same period in 2014 wood equated to 1575 tonnes, rubble 1185 and general waste to 5505 tonnes which equalled a total of 8265 tonnes. The more preferential wood and rubble recycle tonnage, which have greatly reduced gate fees, has therefore increased due to improved segregation.
- 3.3.4 From the evidence available from Protective Services and Land Management there is no noticeable increase in the tonnage derived from fly tipping. Analysis on fly tipped material over the period shows a total of 1172 tonnes this year compared to 1202 tonnes last year. There does not therefore appear to have been a significant increase in this problem, and in fact there has been a reduction in the reports of fly tipping with 783 recorded from April to June 2013 and 644 recorded from April to June 2014.

3.4 Financial Impacts of Charging Policy

- 3.4.1 Analysis of the impacts of the revised policy on charging remains at an early stage, as there has been considerable bedding in of the new arrangement. From analysis of the tonnage and financial profiles, it would appear that householders, when being advised of the potential charge in accordance with the revised policy for uplifts are taking action, by either arranging with the contractor at source to remove the material when the work is taking place, or by visiting the HWRC.
Actual income from charges for uplifts has increased from £167 to £1372 when the similar period to last year is compared, and it is expected that this will significantly rise as the year progresses.
- 3.4.2 If this waste is being taken away at the time of refurbishment by contractors, the Council will in effect, save the gate fee in the region of £80/tonne and also the associated labour and transport costs of the service. Alternatively the householder visiting the HWRC with the segregated material in essence would negate the charging element of £100/tonne.
- 3.4.3 This material when segregated at the HWRC can incur a much smaller gate fee from processors, or can realise an income stream in certain cases, e.g. mixed scrap sold on to processors at a current rate of £120/tonne. Conversely, scrap metal, taken to a processor as part of a mixed uplift, incurs a gate fee of around £80/tonne.
- 3.4.4 Whilst this increase in income is welcome, the actual value of the tonnage being fully diverted will be of more significance over time. If the tonnage drop in the period from April to June is sustained there is the potential for gate fees savings. However it should also be noted that these figures can be affected by seasonal fluctuations as identified in 3.3.1 above, and it is therefore too early in the process to determine any actual savings at this time.

4. Recommendations

The Committee are asked to note the content of this report, and:

- 4.1 to agree that the changes in special uplift policy have had a positive impact in terms of health and safety standards, and reaffirms its support of the new system;
- 4.2 notes that both recycling performance and financial impacts are also likely to be positive if the initial findings are maintained in the longer term;
- 4.3 notes the remedial actions taken since the introduction, to improve communications such that service users are provided with full access to correct information on their options for disposal of the material;
- 4.4 agrees to accept a further report to Committee on the matter in May 2015, when full annual health and safety, and provisional financial and recycling centre data will be available for its consideration.



KENNETH WILSON
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT & ESTATES