



Agenda Item 7



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Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report for:	Strategic Planning and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Title of report:	Q4 Neighbourhood Operations Services Update
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Robin Bromham , Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Operations
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	
Background papers:	None
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	NI = National Indicator CSG = Clean, Safe and Green Service

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Corporate Priorities	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery Climate and ecological emergency
Wards affected	All
Purpose of the report:	1. To provide Members with the performance report for quarter 4 and progress updates for Neighbourhood operations
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	1. For information only.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the performance outcome for Neighbourhood operations during the fourth quarter (January to March) of the financial year 2023-24.
- 1.2 The performance report has a total of seven reported indicators. Two reflect a National Indicators; NI 191 for the kilograms of residual waste (non-recycled) produced by each household every year, and NI 192 for the percentage of household waste recycled. The others are local indicators.
- 1.3 The report also outlines progress on key initiatives and projects.

2 Performance Indicators

WR02 Household Recycling Rate

- 2.1 The indicator measures the materials collected for recycling and composting as a percentage of the total household waste stream. DEFRA will not be releasing quarter 4 until July. This figure mirrors the National Indicator NI 192. The provisional recycling rate for the third quarter is 52.4% which is an increase of 3.4% from quarter three from the preceding year at 49%.

There are seasonal variations in the household recycling rate, and in boroughs such as Dacorum the amount of green garden waste collected is a key influencing factor during the green waste subscription months.

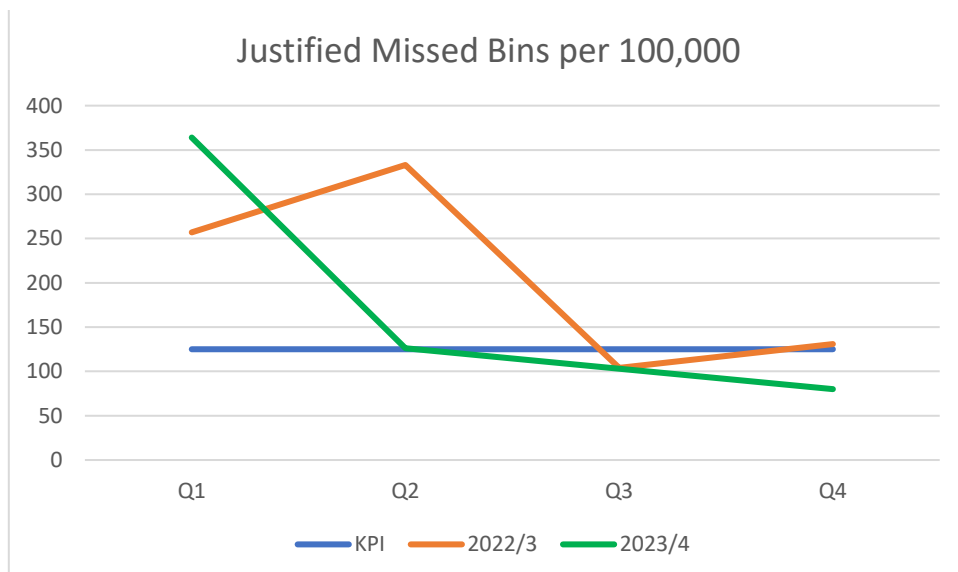
WR03 Kilograms per household of residual waste collected

- 2.2 This is a measure of the amount of non-recycled household waste collected by weight and mirrors the National Indicator NI 191. The 'waste data flow' figures that we provide DEFRA for quarter 4, amount in Kg per household, is not available until July 2024, however the third quarter shows the provisional average figure is 93.33 kg per household which is a 11.67 Kg per household decrease from quarter three from the preceding year at 105.00 kg per household.

This figure could be influenced by the cost-of-living crisis with households purchasing less commodities resulting in a lower waste per household or a slight increase in recycling.

WR01 Reports of missed bins per 100,000 collected

- 2.3 This is a local measure of service performance for Waste Operations based on reports of bins not emptied on their allocated collection day. The figure for Q4 was averaging 80 which is an improvement year on year with 22/23 Q4 reported average at 133 missed bins, which is one of the lowest figures achieved by the service.



The reports of bins not emptied on their allocated collection day has reduced year on year, this is partly due to the small turnover of staff within the waste collection service ensuring a professional and knowledgeable workforce it maintained along with a more proactive regular monitoring undertaken by the waste supervisors.

CSG02 Percentage of Fly tips collected within the set timescale of 7 days

2.4 The Clean, Safe and Green (CSG) service carry out the council's fly tip removal operation.

In Q4, 508 fly tips were reported and 493 (97%) of these were cleared within the 7-day target, which is a small decrease of 1% on Q3 when 516 fly tips were reported and 505 (98%) were cleared within the 7-day target. For comparison in Q4 last year, 433 fly tips were reported and 413 (95%) were cleared within the 7-day target.

This is the second quarter in a row that the target has been met and follows on from an internal change in the CSG management structure with one supervisor is now responsible for fly-tip removal rather than it being the responsibility of area supervisors, which seems to be aiding performance.

Numbers of fly-tips remains high and CSG continue to work closely with colleagues in Regulatory Services to try and reduce the overall number.

CSG05 Graffiti Removal – Percentage removed from Dacorum Structures within 7 days

2.5 The Clean, Safe and Green (CSG) service carry out the council's graffiti removal operation.

In Q4, 35 reports of graffiti were received and 33 (94%) were cleared within the 7-day target, which is the same as in Q3 where 66 reports of graffiti were reported and 62 (94%) were cleared within the 7-day target. For comparison, Q4 last year, 27 reports of graffiti were received and 25 (93%) were cleared within the 7-day target.

The trend in the number of graffiti incidents reported remains consistent with previous years with high numbers in Q3 and a reduction in Q4.

Of the two incidents in Q4 that went over 7 days, one of these was due to an administrative error and the other went over the target period while we were awaiting a disclaimer from a third-party property holder, which is outside our control.

ECP 09 – Number of High Risk Food Inspections achieved within the Quarter

2.6 The percentage of high risk (A-D) food inspections/interventions achieved in Quarter 4 2023/24 was 86.57% which is slightly lower than the quarter 3 when performance was 92.54%. The KPI takes into account what is due and what is done but does not account for premises that have ceased operating so the figures that are used to calculate this percentage include closed premises. There were 15 closed premises in quarter 4 and if these were removed then 116 out of 119 (97.5%) open premises would have achieved their high risk food inspections/ interventions and so the target for this KPI would have been met. The team will continue this approach of keeping the closed premises in the calculation of the KPI as removing them would cause difficulties in workplace planning due to the uncertainty of what premises will close in the year. However, commentary will be used to explain how many premises have closed and how this has affected the overall performance.

RS01 – Number of Public Space Protection Orders and Littering Fixed Penalties Served

2.7 The number of Fixed Penalties served in Q4 is a reduction on the last quarter. This is down to 482 from 751. There is currently a high level review of environmental enforcement being undertaken in relation on how enforcement is carried out with more emphasis on behaviour change and awareness.

3 Key Projects and progress update

Green Waste

- 3.1 Green Waste (Garden waste) paid subscriptions went live on 1st March 2024 and the current subscription rate is slightly higher at 31307 compared with the same period for the preceding year at 30959.

The 2024 data indicates that the subscription forecast would most likely achieve the same outturn as 2023 at approx. 35,000.

Arboricultural contracts

- 3.2 The contracts (2x general arboricultural lots, 1x woodland lot and 1x tree planting lot) have now been awarded with two companies (both respected in the arboricultural industry) being successful in two lots each. These new arrangements, along with changes being made to the council's Tree Management Database (TMD), should allow works to be dealt with in a more efficient manner and allow better communication with councillors and residents. The contractors are required to use the contractor module of our TMD, which will allow works to be issued as they are generated and the contractor to close in real-time after completion, which will aid performance management.

River Gade restoration

- 3.3 On Friday 24 May, the Environment Agency confirmation that their Full Business Case had gone through the assurance process, and they have been given the green light to proceed with the project. Officers are now awaiting a final programme of works, which if received will be brought to the meeting. It is likely some enabling works will happen in June with the main works commencing in late-July/beginning of August. Officers are mindful that this is the busiest time of year in the park, so will be working closely with the Environment Agency to mitigate any risk both physical and to people's enjoyment of the park.

Green Flag Award and Anglia in Bloom

- 3.4 All our sites have now been judged for Green Flag Award and we await the results, which will be announced in late July – our existing Green Flag Award sites are Bunkers Park, Canal Fields, Chipperfield Common, Tring Memorial Garden and Water Gardens. We entered a new site this, which was Gadebridge Park. In addition to Green Flag Award, the council has also entered three parks into Anglia in Bloom (regional Britain in Bloom competition) this year – the three parks are Gadebridge Park, Water Gardens and Tring Memorial Gardens.

Playground Refurbishment Programme

- 3.5 Tenders have now been awarded and the projects will be delivered in two phases as outlined in the presentation to the committee in March. The first phase commences imminently with completion by the school summer holidays – the sites in phase one are Croft Meadow, Flaunden, Tower Hill, Woodhall Farm. One scheme was move forward from phase two (Apsley Lock) meaning five schemes will now be completed as part of phase one. The remaining phase two site is Durrants Hill. The schemes for Miswell Lane and Warners End Valley were put back out to tender and are due back in late June

Within each of the schemes awarded to date, there is inclusive equipment proposed in each scheme – officers are keen to build on this with any future schemes as well as including access to and from playgrounds.

Verge Hardening Policy

- 3.6 A draft policy/framework is now drafted and will be presented to a future meeting for comment before being formally adopted. The programme will now be called Parking Solutions Programme (or similar) to move away from the negative connotation of the definition of verge hardening, which can be perceived as not environmentally friendly.

SANG Delivery

3.7 Following recent interviews, an appointment has been made to the SANG Delivery Officer. This role is key in delivering the commitments that have been made under SANG to support future housebuilding in the borough. We are awaiting confirmation of a start date but their initial focus of work will be to commence delivery of SANG obligations at Bunkers Park and seek the necessary permissions to commence works at Chipperfield Common.

Gadebridge Park Splashpad

3.8 Following some refurbishment works to the surfacing, the splashpad opened in early May and will be operational 7-days a week now until September. In spite of the unseasonal weather attendances at the facility have been good.

Regulatory services

3.9 Officers from Regulatory Service undertake a variety of service requests and dealt with 892 service requests in Q4, the vast majority of which are dealt with informally.

3.10 Officers have been updated the current Contaminated Land Strategy to bring the strategy in line with current regulations and best practice. Changes included a more streamlined version and updated in line with current best practice. This has been benchmarked with other authorities.

3.11 The Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System return has been completed and returned to the Food Standards Agency. The authority reports on resourcing and is benchmarked against other authorities on performance with regard to statutory functions within the food service. All high-risk inspections were completed by the team within the statutory deadlines. 54 Unrated inspections remain outstanding most of these businesses were not yet operating. 125 new businesses were registered within the borough in 23/24. The service issued 238 written warnings, served 1 hygiene improvement notice, carried out 1 voluntary closure and 1 Emergency prohibition order.

3.12 Officers are currently drafting the update Air Quality Action Plan and Air Quality Status Report for 2023 and an update will be presented at Scrutiny in the Autumn.

4 Options and alternatives considered

No options to consider, for information only.

5. Consultation

A number of projects and initiatives are developed and implemented through consultation with partners and stakeholders. This includes for example the EA led project for the restoration of the river Gade and the development of the Air Quality action plan

6. Financial and value for money implications

All activities and initiatives are monitored through the Council's financial monitoring frameworks

7. Legal implications

This is an update report and there are no direct legal implications to consider

8. Risk Implications

Risks are continuously monitored through the Council's corporate risk management framework

9. Equalities, Community Impct and Human Rights

This is an update report and there are no direct implications

10. Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and well being, community safety)

This is an update report and there are no direct implications

11. Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)

This is an update report and there are no direct implications

12. Conclusions

The new structure for the Neighbourhood Operations Directorate has now been embedded and is reporting a generally positive trend for its KPIs. There is positive progress in implementing the capital and other programmes including improvement of playgrounds, SANG delivery, the river Gade restoration and the formulation of a policy for a Parking solutions programme. The Green waste scheme is still proving popular and is well subscribed.