

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

The content of this report is tabled under S100B(4) Local Government Act 1972, as amended. This item is considered urgent due to the limited and time-critical availability of specialist route modelling services in August 2021.

Consideration of this item of urgent business at the Environment Committee is by reason of special circumstances stated above and which will be specified in the minutes. The Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency and cannot be deferred to the next meeting.

URN:

Report to: Environment Committee – 28 July 2021

Subject: Household Waste & Recycling Collection Round Review

Report by: Chris Silverwood, Director of Operational Services



RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Environment Committee:

- a) **Confirms its support to undertake a collection round review as set-out in the report.**
- b) **Agrees to underwrite the cost of up to £15,000 to undertake the review as a joint project between the council and its joint venture company Great Yarmouth Borough Services Limited.**
- c) **Requests the Director of Operational Services provide an update to the Environment Committee pre-implementation of this review.**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A comprehensive re-design of the alternate weekly domestic waste & recycling collection rounds across the borough of Great Yarmouth is required due to the current daily routes being imbalanced across the borough as a geographic area. The last collection round review is believed to have been undertaken in 2000 – 2005 and since then, the routes each collection vehicle drives and the number of properties each vehicle round services on a weekly basis is has become unbalanced. The introduction of the current domestic wheeled bin service in 2005/6 was applied to the existing rounds at the time.

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 Great Yarmouth Borough Services Limited, the council's Joint Venture Company with Norse Commercial Services is proposing to undertake, with council support, a route optimisation exercise to rationalise collection rounds for both the waste collection week and for the recycling collection week. The aim of the review is to ensure that each vehicle's payload, travel time to unload and return to the route and the number of properties served is equitable across the fleet and that crews working is optimised.

- 2.2 Absorbing the growth has made the rounds inefficient and currently requires two support crews to assist different crews to complete their rounds daily across the current eight collection rounds. Consequently, these support crews cover a lot of miles in a piecemeal and inefficient way due to new housing developments that now require servicing. From the residents' point of view, this has led to periodic collection failures due to support crews not having dedicated routes as such but moreover, they fill-in and help-out as directed. What is now needed is a set of rebalanced routes with properties numbers calculated to enable each crew to finish their round in a timely manner and as efficiently as possible and reducing the need for two full time support crews to be used every day.
- 2.3 Given there may be changes required by government as a result of its Resource and Waste Strategy UK (RaWS) consultation linked to its Environment Bill; e.g. the separate collection of food/organic material and recyclable material streams together with Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging are all under consideration. Members of this Committee approved the Council's submission to this consultation asking for any changes in collection services to be fully funded (9 June 2021 Minute 8).
- 2.4 GYBS is therefore proposing that a 3-Phase approach to this round review with Phase one being to rationalise, re-calculate and re-set each of the existing collection vehicle routes. Phases two to look at hard-to-access properties and Phase three may involve looking again at how collection services are carried out in light of any revised government direction.
- 2.5 Phase 1 will redesign collection routes and in doing so, the plan is to build-in capacity for growth in housing numbers informed by the Local Plan. Subject to government direction of the future of how household waste and recycling is collected, Phases 2 & 3 may then be required to look at the type of collection vehicles and what is collected from each household.

3. CURRENT SERVICE

- 3.1 The wheeled bin collection service that was implemented from 2005/6 served 45,019 domestic properties with a population of 92,500. In 2021, the service remains the same but the number of properties being served has increased.
- 3.2 As a reminder for members, the current collection service comprises of a household mixed residual waste and mixed recyclable materials collected on alternate weeks in 240 litre wheeled bins which residents are asked to pull out to the kerbside and present their waste for collection before 7am on their designated collection day:

- Collection days – Monday to Friday
 - Refuse & Recycling 2 x 240ltr volume wheeled bins
 - Standard 26 tonne Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV)
 - 3-man crew – a driver and 2 collection operatives
 - 600 properties are on weekly residual sack collection owing to access
 - There are 400 alternate weekly collections at hard-to-reach properties off the public highway i.e. down unmade or unadopted roads
 - An assisted collection service is in place on request whereby crews will pull bins out to the kerbside for residents unable to do so themselves.
 - All vehicles operate from the GYB Services depot Great Yarmouth
 - Waste and recyclable materials that are collected are tipped at Caister Transfer Station for onward haulage for disposal or sorting and recycling.
- 3.3 The current household property count (as at May 2021) shows there are now 48,200 domestic houses and 7,000 flats with a population of 99,336. Eight refuse collection vehicles each with a 3-man crew empty these bins each week including the 400 hard-to-reach properties not accessible by a 26 tonne RCV which are serviced by the smaller 7.5 tonne vehicles; the 400 properties remain on weekly residual sack collection.
- 3.4 Over the years, to mitigate the regular waste collections failing to complete their imbalanced routes due to growth, two extra support crews from the spare pool have been helping out daily. This uses two of the three spare vehicles; essentially as part of the main fleet. This then leaves only one spare vehicle to cover breakdowns, MOT's and vehicle servicing which impacts on the resilience of the collection service as a whole. The cost of the waste collection services as a whole is included in the existing Partnership Agreement fee paid by the council as client.
- 3.5 What this suggests is within Phase 1 of the review, the number of RCVs required is likely to remain the same at eleven i.e. the nine standard RCVs plus the two spare vehicles despite the increase of 3,181 households and a population growth of 6,836 in the last fifteen years. Continuing to provide the service however on an Adhoc arrangement which ties-up two of the three spare RCVs weekly, is not efficient and ultimately it is not sustainable.

4 REVIEW METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The scope of the round review will include all domestic waste collections undertaken in the borough from houses, flats, and hard-to-reach properties. In order to future proof the changes, route modelling will be informed by 2 years' worth of approved housing growth figures to avoid the rounds becoming immediately obsolete due to further housing growth.
- 4.2 The review will be carried out by a joint team made-up of council officers and GYBS officers using specialist consultancy support and route optimisation software which requires a substantial amount of information to be input into it before it can provide redesigned collection routes. Collation of this data is a significant piece of work and will include:
- providing full Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address information for every one of our 48,200 properties, 700 flats, 400 sack collections and 400 hard to reach properties
 - capturing collection day and schedule data
 - details of where all our assisted collections are located

- details of where schools and other premises to be avoided at certain times are located
- details of where facilities are located (depot and transfer station)
- detailed data about the fleet of vehicles, including collection capacities
- household information incorporating tonnages of waste generated and participation rates
- details of serviced commercial (trade) properties within domestic collection rounds
- balancing of the waste delivered to the waste transfer station to avoid all residual (black bin) waste delivered all on the same week

4.3 Essentially the round review will:

- Design and test new collection rounds using a routing software system to determine the most practically efficient routes. Drivers and crews will be fully involved in the testing.
- Maintain data accuracy as part of data transfer processes which will be used to populate the software.
- Develop a comprehensive communications plan to ensure that any changes to the day of collection are fully understood in advance by ward members and residents
- Liaison with trade union representatives and staff, including training pre and post implementation
- Consideration of business contingency arrangements to enable the smooth transition to new routes

4.4 The communication plan will be critical to the success of this review and will include key messages for all service users such as:

- the change (if any) in the bin collection day
- the estimated change to time of collection if the order of properties served changes
- the change in alternate weeks should the week 1 mixed waste or the week 2 recycling collection be impacted

4.5 The benefits that Phase 1 of this proposed round review will deliver are:

- Efficient and optimised waste & recycling collection routes
- Balanced up to date waste collection rounds with achievable workloads
- Reduction in fuel use and waste miles
- Reduction in agency staff spend
- Built in growth to include future developments
- Failure rate (missed collections) reduced by having dedicated and up to date rounds
- Phase 1 delivered within the existing Partnership fee paid by the council to GYB Services Ltd as its contractor arm.

4.6 It is anticipated that this review will take four months to complete and make ready for implementation. The timescale of this proposed review is therefore August to November 2021. Subject to members' agreement to underwrite the cost of this review for GYBS Ltd, officers will report back to this Committee in September 2021, ahead of implementing the changes.

4.7 Through the development of optimised routes and balanced rounds, GYB Services will be able to measure the success of the project through:

- Fuel use (decreased)
- Mileage (decreased)
- Numbers of missed bins (decreased)
- Staff agency spend (decreased)
- Opportunity saving in additional crew capacity
- 2 years of housing growth (at current rate) built-in

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As a Waste Collection Authority, the council has a duty to collect household waste & recycling under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 Section 45 with the definition of household waste being defined in section 75(5) of the EPA 1990 and the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/811), as amended.
- 5.2 Section 46 of the EPA allows local authorities to specify the type of receptacle household waste & recycling should be presented in for collection by its contractor. For the purposes of these statutory obligations, GYB Services Ltd provides the collection services prescribed by the borough council under this duty.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As the council's contractor arm and standalone company, GYB Services Ltd has estimated the total cost of undertaking this round review, including officer time as £31,000. This includes use of route modelling software, data transfer, consultancy services to GYB Services Ltd, the cost of implementing a public communications campaign and council officer time (communications and marketing).
- 6.2 As one of the two shareholders, Norse Commercial Services has requested that the council underwrites the cost of this round review to be undertaken by GYBS Ltd should the cost of the route modelling time not be covered by the revenue savings from the route optimisation exercise. The total financial risk totals £15,000 which is the cost of the route modelling element of the project.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 With the passage of time and the increase in the number of homes in the borough, the current waste and recycling rounds and routes are not efficient and are incurring unnecessary mileage. Neither are the collection services adequately planned in a logical format following optimised route maps.
- 7.2 By re-planning of all collection routes GYBS Ltd will be able to provide the council and its residents with a more reliable collection service on an alternate weekly basis, reducing miles travelled and fuel requirements.

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Yes
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Yes

Existing Council Policies:	Corporate Plan and Annual Action Plan 2020/21
Financial Implications:	As set out in the report
Legal Implications (including human rights):	As set out in the report
Risk Implications:	Yes – risk log will be prepared as part of project governance
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	N/a
Crime & Disorder:	N/a
Every Child Matters:	N/a