

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **4th October 2021**
Report Subject: **Waste and Recycling Performance 2020-21**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. J. Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**
Report Submitted by: **Matthew Stent, Service Manager Neighbourhood Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
14/09/21	16/09/21	23.09.21			04/10/21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide the Members of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee with an update of waste and recycling performance outcomes for 2020-21.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The report summarises the waste and recycling performance data for 2020-21 **[APPENDIX 1]**. In both 2018/19 and 2019/20 we exceeded the WG statutory recycling targets of 58% [achieving 59.26%] and 64% [achieving 65.31%] respectively, this year, we have maintained that success and exceeded the target of 64% once again, attaining 64.29%. This has been achieved through the hard work and dedication of the Waste Team as a whole [officers, wardens and the frontline staff], working in partnership with WRAP and with support from the Communications Team, Performance Team, Senior Management, the Elected Leadership and most importantly, the residents of Blaenau Gwent, in what has been one of the most difficult years in recent history. That being said, through careful prioritisation and engagement with our workforce, we have been able to maintain all Waste & Recycling collections throughout the Pandemic.

2.2 The current Pandemic has thrown up significant challenges throughout, and it is a testament to the Frontline Staff, who have continued to maintain services in such difficult circumstances. It has also meant we have seen a significant change in how many of our residents manage their waste, so a special thanks must go to them also. Through resolve and resilience, we have been able to overcome these challenges together and adapt the way we work to still achieve this success.

2.3 All local authorities are required to report their waste data to Welsh Government. The data reported is for all the waste which the Local Authority collects, known as municipal waste.

2.4 Waste data is collected via various methods (e.g. Contract monitoring, weighbridge tickets) on a monthly basis and is collated and validated internally by the Corporate Performance Team. All waste is reported where possible

until it has reached a compliant final destination through the various contractors and processes required.

2.5 Waste data is reported to Welsh Government quarterly via Waste Data Flow. Waste Data Flow is the web based system for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government.

2.6 Waste Data Flow is designed for local authorities:

- to allow faster and more accurate data collection of municipal waste statistics, more regularly and efficiently;
- to enhance their local data management for reporting and strategic planning purposes; and
- to offer them streamlined access to performance benchmarking with other authorities.

2.7 Waste Data Flow allows the Welsh Government:

- to monitor progress towards national and local targets;
- to produce National Statistics on municipal waste; and
- to provide an evidence base to guide government policy.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 Option 1 to accept the information in the report [**Preferred option**].

3.2 Option 2 to consider the information contained within the report and provide challenge and/or further action for consideration to make improvements.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

Corporate Plan Priorities

The improvement of waste and recycling performance supports the Council Priority '*Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities*' in particular '*to increase rates of recycling to enable us to achieve national targets*'.

Statutory Responsibilities

Local Authorities in Wales have been set statutory recycling targets through the Wales Waste Measure 2010, and failure to meet the targets will result in a financial penalty from Welsh Government.

Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

Waste and recycling services support the Well-being objective '*Blaenau Gwent wants to look after and protect its natural environments*' by using our resources in a fair and sustainable way.

5. **Implications Against Each option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)**

The Local Authority may continue to face financial penalties from the Welsh Government if it fails to achieve the statutory recycling targets. These are currently £200 per tonne below the recycling tonnage required to achieve the target, 64% for 2019-20, rising to 70% in 2024-25.

The Local Authority currently pays for the treatment and disposal of black bag waste. The greatest disposal cost in the budget is for the black bag waste and the income we receive from the sale of recyclate helps to support the service but does not offset the cost. As residents recycle more of their waste, the money spent on waste treatment and disposal will reduce and the income gained from the sale of recyclate may increase, however, this is very much dependant on market forces [It should be noted that we only get income from the kerbside collected recyclate – for all other waste streams we have to pay for the collection, disposal and processing costs]. Any savings achieved against black bag disposal have been utilised to pay for the additional resources required to continue with the side waste enforcement at kerbside, additional Wardens, the black bag sorting at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and the continued implementation of the “Keeping up with the Jones’s” behaviour change campaign. These factors as well as our continued strong performance has created ongoing budget pressure/service demands that we have to resource, resulting in year on year over spends within the service area. Recycling habits have changed significantly throughout the Borough since 2015, yet the budget has not.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

There is a risk that the Local Authority will continue to face financial penalties from the Welsh Government if it fails to achieve the statutory recycling targets.

Failure to ensure that there is robust monitoring of Council services carries with it a number of significant risks:

- Undetected and unaddressed decline in service performance and the quality of provision; and
- Negative impact on the reputation of the Council.

Regular monitoring of waste and recycling performance is a key element in ensuring that the Council knows its services well and is able to support and intervene appropriately.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no Human Resources issues associated with this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

In direct comparison with 2019/20 data, 2020/21 data shows a slight drop in our performance with a decrease of 1.02 percentage points. The total municipal waste figure has slightly increased by 188.94 tonnes, this increase is due to an increase in composting tonnages and a reduction of reuse, recycling tonnage.

6.1.1 Recycling Targets

	2019/20	2020/21
Quarter 1	62.24%	62.17%
Quarter 2	64.95%	65.94%
Quarter 3	69.69%	63.06%
Quarter 4	63.66%	65.53%
Annual	65.31%	64.29%

6.1.2 In 2020/21 we saw a shift in tonnages of different waste streams as a result of the Pandemic. Certainly tonnages have increased at kerbside because of the stay at home orders issued during the pandemic and changing buying habits at home. These trends have created significant operational issues which we needed to overcome, cardboard in particular, was a problem and continues to be so. We saw a 36.66% increase in the amount of cardboard being collected at the kerbside; this was something our collection vehicles were not designed for. Yet, we expect this trend to continue, so will factor this into our collection rounds and future vehicle specifications.

6.1.3 The decrease in tonnages at the HWRC are as a result of closing the site during Lockdown 1 and residents have continued to recycle at kerbside.

6.1.4 Enforcement activity around our Side Waste Policy and “Keeping up with the Jones’s” behaviour change campaign not only relaxed, but stopped altogether from March 2020 – August 2020 due to safety and staffing issues as a result of the Pandemic.

6.1.5 Residual Waste

There has been an increase in residual waste collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

Kerbside

	2019/20	2020/21
	9799.549	11149.552

In comparison there has been an increase of 1350.003 tonnes (13.78%) of residual waste collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

HWRC (New Vale)

2019/20	2020/21
783.191	521.797

In comparison there has been a reduction of 261.394 tonnes (33.38%) of residual waste from New Vale HWRC in 2020/21.

Composting Recycling

There has been an increase in food and garden waste collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

Food

2019/20	2020/21
3225.45	3726.52

In comparison there has been an increase of 501.07 tonnes (15.53%) of food waste collected in 2020/21.

Garden Waste

2019/20	2020/21
1719.147	1739.161

In comparison there has been an increase of 20.014 tonnes (1.16%) of garden waste collected in 2020/21.

6.1.6

Dry Recycling

There has been an increase in kerbside dry recycling, noticeably a significant increase in the tonnages of absorbent hygiene products (AHP) collected in 2020/21.

Kerbside

2019/20	2020/21
5090.408	6564.174

In comparison there has been an increase of 1473.766 tonnes (28.95%) of dry recycling collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP)

2019/20	2020/21
553.24	655.24

In comparison there has been an increase of 102 tonnes (18.44%) of absorbent hygiene products (AHP) collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

HWRC (Recycling)

2019/20	2020/21
3869.76	5661.068

In comparison there has been a decrease of 2628.502.31 tonnes (46.43%) of dry recycling from the HWRC.

HWRC (Reuse)

2019/20	2020/21
97.614	29.850

In comparison there has been a decrease of 67.764 tonnes (69.42%) of reuse from the HWRC.

6.1.7 **Welsh Local Authority Comparison**

2019/20 Overall

2020/21 Overall

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1			1		
2			2		
3			3		
4			4		
5			5		
6			6		
7			7		
8			8		
9			9		
10			10		
11	Blaenau Gwent CBC	65.31%	11		
12			12		
13			13		
14			14		
15			15		
16			16		
17			17		
18			18	Blaenau Gwent CBC	64.29%
19			19		
20			20		
21			21		
22			22		

6.1.8 2019/20 Dry Recycling Only

2020/21 Dry Recycling Only

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1			1		
2			2		
3	Blaenau Gwent	49.42%	3		
4			4		
5			5		
6			6		
7			7		
8			8	Blaenau Gwent CBC	46.98%
9			9		
10			10		
11			11		
12			12		
13			13		
14			14		
15			15		
16			16		
17			17		
18			18		
19			19		
20			20		
21			21		
22			22		

6.1.9 2019/20 Composting Only

2020/21 Composting Only

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1			1		
2			2		
3			3		
4			4		
5			5		
6			6		
7			7		
8			8		
9			9		
10			10		
11			11		
12			12		
13			13		
14			14		
15			15		
16			16		
17			17		
18			18	Blaenau Gwent CBC	17.20%
19			19		
20	Blaenau Gwent	15.55%	20		
21			21		
22			22		

6.1.10 The statutory recycling target for all Welsh local authorities is set at 64% for the next 3 years. **The efforts of the residents of Blaenau Gwent have been instrumental in our improved recycling performance**, therefore, the continued support of residents and businesses is required to continue to reduce the amount of non-recyclable waste sent for disposal and increase the amount recycled in Blaenau Gwent.

6.1.11 It's important to recognise that even with all the difficulties this year has thrown at us, we have seen a cultural change in Blaenau Gwent. For years, we languished at the bottom of the League Table when it came to recycling, and yes, our performance had dropped slightly in 2020/21 due to changes in trends, HWRC site closures and relaxed enforcement, as a result of Covid, as mentioned above, but we have still exceeded the target set by Welsh Government.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

Increased involvement from our communities as residents recycle in line with service requirements to achieve national targets.

6.3 **Involvement** (*consultation, engagement, participation*)

Through the public engagement sessions, the public have been consulted and their views have been sought regarding the impact of the side waste enforcement policy.

6.4 **Thinking for the Long term** (*forward planning*)

In line with the Councils agreed Waste Management and Recycling Strategy 2018-2025, we will continue to seek to identify actions needed to ensure that not only are fines avoided but crucially that service users and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the aims of the service, the actual services to be provided by the Council, the education and engagement activities it can undertake to promote these, the Council's future plans to meet its aspirations and statutory requirements and how it will work together with residents, partners and neighbours to meet wider goals and agendas.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

Improved waste management at a local and national level can help reduce our Ecological footprint, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impact, therefore preventing problems from getting worse.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

Waste Services continue to work closely with the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) through the Collaborative Change Programme to further develop and improve the service to achieve future targets. WRAP and Welsh Government support the implementation of side waste restrictions and behaviour change campaigns.

6.7 **Integration**

6.7.1 Our Waste Collections service is made up of an Integrated Frontline Service, at the outset of the current Pandemic, all non-priority service staff were redeployed into our Priority 1 Service areas, this included Waste & Recycling collections, this has allowed us to maintain all of our collection services throughout the Pandemic.

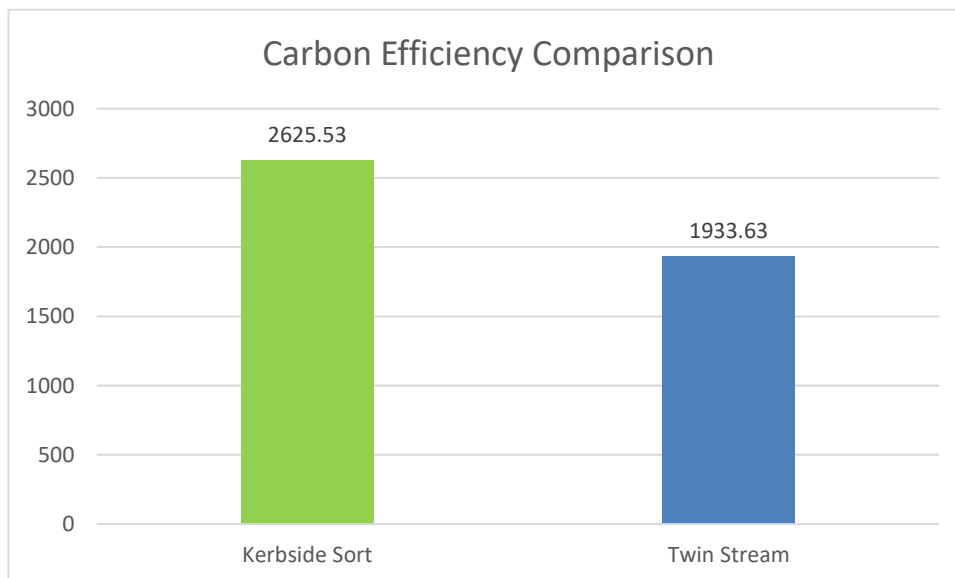
6.8 **Decarbonisation and reducing Carbon Emissions**

6.8.1 A WRAP issued report entitled “The Climate Change impacts of Recycling Services in Wales” documented the increased carbon benefit of a kerbside sort collection service when compared to a Twin Stream (Co-mingled) collection service.

The report produced the following assumptions;

- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Kerbside Sort = 2569 tonnes CO₂e Carbon benefit
- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Twin Stream = 1892 tonnes CO₂e Carbon benefit

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Collected recycling tonnage	2581.77	2455.868	2436.824	2745.572	10220.034
CO ₂ e Carbon Benefit – Kerbside Sort	663.26	630.91	626.02	705.34	2625.53
CO ₂ e Carbon Benefit – Twin Stream	488.47	464.65	461.05	519.46	1933.63
Difference	174.79	166.26	164.97	185.88	691.90



6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment** *(complete an impact assessment to consider how the decision might help to reduce the inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage).*

6.9b **Equality Impact Assessment** *(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)*

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The performance of the waste and recycling service will be monitored by the service on a monthly basis, including, but not limited to:

- Changes in residual waste tonnage collected;
- Changes in tonnage of recyclables and food waste collected;
- Recycling performance;
- Financial position;
- Number of residents presenting side waste;
- Number of residents issued with Section 46 notice;
- Number of residents issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice; and
- Survey results.

Highlight reports on progress will be provided through the internal CCP Board Meetings.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Waste & recycling Performance Annual Report 2020/21 [Appendix 1]*