

Committee: **Place Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **17th October 2023**

Report Subject: **Waste and Recycling Annual Performance 2022-23**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Helen Cunningham, Cabinet Member - Place & Environment / Deputy Leader**

Report Submitted by: **Matthew Stent - Service Manager Neighbourhood Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
26/09/23	28/09/23	09.10.23			17/10/23	29.11.23		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
To provide the Members of the Place Scrutiny Committee with an update of Waste and Recycling Annual performance outcomes for 2022-23.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The report summarises the waste and recycling performance data for 2022-23 **[APPENDIX 1]**. In 2020/21 and 2021/22 we exceeded the WG statutory recycling target of 64%, achieving 64.3% and 64.9% respectively, in 2022/23, we have maintained that success and exceeded the target of 64% once again, attaining 66.71%. 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, Business Support, Performance Team, Senior Management, the Elected Leadership and most importantly, the residents of Blaenau Gwent, in what has been another challenging year.
 - 2.2 The Council's Waste & Recycling Strategy 2018-25 **[Appendix 2]** sets out how Blaenau Gwent will provide residents, local businesses and visitors with an efficient, smart and modern waste management and recycling service for now and into the future. The strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent's commitment to protect and sustain the environment through its well-being objectives. It also sets out how Blaenau Gwent aims to meet challenging Welsh Government targets, to avoid possible fines, whilst delivering improved services within a revenue budget which is increasingly stretched.
 - 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.

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 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 to 'Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable Connected 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.

Gwent Well-being Plan

Waste and recycling services support the Well-being objective 'where the natural environment is protected and enhanced' 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% from 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.

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.

5.5 **Health and Safety**

There are no Health and Safety implications associated with this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

In direct comparison with 2021/22 data, 2022/23 data shows a slight improvement in our performance with an increase of 1.84 percentage points. The total municipal waste figure has remained consistent with a slight decrease of 9.94 tonnes. Even though the total municipal waste figure has remained the same there has been a decrease in dry recycling and a decrease in residual waste.

6.1.1 Recycling Targets

	2021/22	2022/23
Quarter 1	66.51%	67.76%
Quarter 2	67.01%	68.29%
Quarter 3	63.47%	64.66%
Quarter 4	62.34%	66.32%
Annual	64.94%	66.78%

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 were reinstated following the Pandemic.

6.1.5 Residual Waste

There has been a decrease in residual waste collected at the kerbside in 2022/23.

Kerbside

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
11149.552	10244.398	9434.211

In comparison there has been a decrease of 1715.34 tonnes (15.38%) of residual waste collected at the kerbside in 2022/23.

HWRC

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
521.797	806.839	1150.948

In comparison there has been an increase of 629.15 tonnes (120.57%) of residual waste from New Vale and Roseheyworth HWRC in 2022/23.

Composting Recycling

There has been a decrease in food and garden waste collected in 2022/23.

Food

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
3726.52	3674.12	3573.21

In comparison there has been a decrease of 153.31 tonnes (4.11%) of food waste collected in 2022/23.

Garden Waste

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
1739.161	1672.390	1684.118

In comparison there has been a decrease of 55.043 tonnes (3.16%) of garden waste collected in 2022/23.

6.1.6

Dry Recycling

There has been a decrease in kerbside dry recycling, collected in 2022/23.

Kerbside

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
6564.174	5902.920	5388.640

In comparison there has been a decrease of 1175.53 tonnes (17.91%) of dry recycling collected at the kerbside in 2022/23.

Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP)

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
655.24	600.75	602.70

In comparison there has been a decrease of 52.54 tonnes (8.02%) of absorbent hygiene products (AHP) collected at the kerbside in 2022/23.

HWRC (Recycling)

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
3032.566	4262.122	4410.108

In comparison there has been an increase of 1377.542 tonnes (45.42%) of dry recycling from the HWRC.

HWRC (Reuse)

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
29.85	101.95	177.786

In comparison there has been an increase of 147.936 tonnes (495.60%) of reuse from the HWRC. This is in part due to the opening of the reuse shop (The Den) at Roseheyworth HWRC.

6.1.7 **Welsh Local Authority Comparison**

2021/22 Overall

2022/23 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	Blaenau Gwent	66.78%
10			10		
11			11		
12			12		
13			13		
14	Blaenau Gwent	64.94%	14		
15			15		
16			16		
17			17		
18			18		
19			19		
20			20		
21			21		
22			22		

6.1.8 2021/22 Dry Recycling Only

2022/23 Dry Recycling Only

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1			1		
2			2		
3			3	Blaenau Gwent	49.34%
4			4		
5			5		
6			6		
7	Blaenau Gwent	47.49%	7		
8			8		
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 2021/22 Composting Only

2022/23 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	16.84%
19			19		
20	Blaenau Gwent	16.78%	20		
21			21		
22			22		

6.1.10 The statutory recycling target for all Welsh local authorities is currently set at 64% and will rise to 70% in 2024/25. **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.

6.1.12 It's important to recognise that even with all the difficulties recent years 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. **These continued efforts by everyone involved means we are already well on our way to achieving the next target of 70%, both quarters 1 and 2 of this financial year see us at the 70% mark already** [figures yet to be verified by NRW].

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) 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.

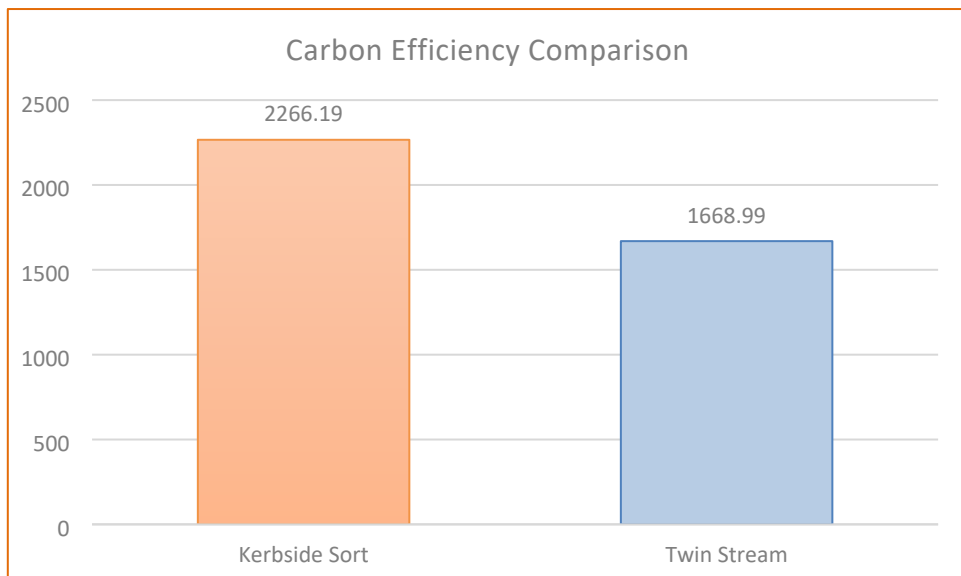
6.8 **Decarbonisation and reducing Carbon Emissions**

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	22/23
Collected recycling tonnage	2115.259	2143.722	2049.499	2512.810	8821.290
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Kerbside Sort	543.41	550.72	526.52	645.54	2266.19
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Twin Stream	400.21	405.59	387.77	475.42	1668.99
Difference	143.20	145.13	138.75	170.12	597.20



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.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

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