

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

REFUSE AND COMMINGLED RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

To make services more efficient, the Council has revised the collection arrangements for its refuse and commingled recycling services for the beginning of December 2010, from a 5 day week service to that of a 4 day week service. The changes, whilst having an impact to some 22,000 properties within the Borough, has been introduced satisfactorily, despite problems during December with snow and ice. The next stage of the revision of the service will see the green waste collections move from at present a Monday to Friday service, to that of a Friday and Saturday service, to enable the optimum use of vehicles in the fleet. This change to green waste collections is due to be introduced late February/ early March.

ADVERSE WEATHER EFFECTS ON REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

For much of December and into early January, the effects of snow and ice on collections schedules has been an issue, particularly with a small number of properties, some of which will have undergone nearly 6 weeks without a collection of the recycling waste and up to 3 weeks for the collection of refuse. Access has been restricted to these areas, with roads and back streets being inaccessible due to the snow and ice, in particularly hilly areas. An additional problem has been residents cars being left at entrances to streets restricting access for collection vehicles, due to residents not being able to access their property or their usual parking site. Despite the weather conditions, the services have not though been cancelled for any day. The Council and its recycling contractor have continued to work during the Bank Holidays and during the festive period to remove the refuse and recycling, with excess waste being taken as a one off. A number of compliments have been received for the efforts of the collection teams, which has seen some of the working from 7am to 7pm, in the removal of refuse and recycling.

BULKY WASTE AND REPLACEMENT BINS

Following the introduction of charges for bulky waste collections and replacement bins, numbers of bulky waste requests have dropped by approximately 75%, with fly-tipping not seeing an increase to date in additional reports. Replacement bin requests have also fallen by approximately 66%

DARWEN TOWER REPAIR

A Darwen company (WEC) has offered to construct and erect a new dome for Darwen Tower to replace the one that was blown off in the gales on the night of 11 November 2010. The replacement dome will be of similar appearance to the previous one although its construction will be in powder coated stainless steel rather than wood. The replacement will take place as soon as possible.

A public subscription collection for its repair and upkeep is taking place in Darwen Market and local businesses and shops and so far this has raised in excess of £500.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING

Environmental Permitting is an area of work undertaken by the Public Protection service which is not often highlighted. It is however an essential element of the way the Government controls pollution produced by industrial processes, and PPS specialists are key players in ensuring that complex technical processes carried out by the 50 permitted

processes in the Borough are maintained in a way which minimises pollutants discharged into the atmosphere and comply with legal requirements. The types of processes which are regulated range from Waste Oil Burners to Wallpaper Factories and these premises are subjected to an annual inspection visit which ensures that procedures are being followed. These inspections are currently being carried out by officers of the PPS.

EWOOD PARK

A during match inspection has taken place at Blackburn Rovers to check they are complying with the requirements of their safety certificate which is issued to them by the Section. The inspection covered a wide range of health and safety issues including car parks, turnstiles and other external areas; arrangements for dealing with emergencies including exit routes and communication systems.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Work is ongoing with public health specialists within the Care Trust Plus and Lancashire Trading Standards on 3 schemes aimed at reducing ill health within the Borough:

1. The Ask Campaign where salt cellars are removed from tables in cafes to try and reduce the amount of salt being added to food without it first being tasted
2. The Tips on Chips campaign aimed at reducing the amount of salt poured onto portions of fish and chips by replacing the 17 hole cellar tops with 5 hole tops
3. The Recipe 4 Health campaign which will give a certified award to food businesses offering healthy options on their menus.

Cutting down on salt lowers blood pressure and reduces the risk of stroke and heart disease.

26.7% of the population of Blackburn with Darwen are estimated to be obese.