

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN**

DATE: 25 MARCH 2021

REFUSE/ RECYCLING COLLECTION

The subscription process for the garden waste service has seen our biggest ever uptake for the £25 early bird offer (a saving of £5 on the £30 fee) with over 10,000 subscribers signing up to the service. Prior to this year's subscription, the highest number of subscribers for this time of the year was just over 9,000. During 2020, we eventually had over 14,000 subscribers sign up for the garden waste collections.

During the current lockdown restriction period, tonnages collected have significantly increased, with the crews collecting up to an additional 15% more general waste, as more people are at home. Despite this significant increased tonnage, during the recent period of bad weather, they have continued to complete their tasks, despite the elements and the increased workload.

The refuse and recycling crews visit all parts of the borough, so are an integral part of the community, the following two recent examples show how they do much more than remove waste and recycling.

Whilst emptying the burgundy general waste bins, one of the crews recently witnessed a car being driven erratically, as it had turned on to a nearby road and came to a stop. The crew knew something was wrong and rushed to car, but were unable to get any response from the driver. They acted swiftly by calling the emergency services, requesting an ambulance, whilst keeping the driver safe and comfortable until the emergency services had arrived. The paramedics who had attended have praised the crew for acting quickly, as the driver was seriously ill and needed emergency treatment and was lucky that they had acted the way they did. The driver's daughter also emailed to express her thanks for the swift actions of the crew.

Additionally, a second recent call was received thanking another collection team. The thanks relate to the crew and specifically the driver, who on each collection cycle, wave at the resident's young son, who has non-verbal autism. The son waits for the crew on collection day for when they come down the street. The crew wave at his young son and it "makes him smile so much". The father who made the call stated, "It's only a small gesture, but to my son it's huge! Please say thank you to them for him"

PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Public Protection continues to be heavily involved with covid-19 enforcement, and is preparing for the gradual reopening of businesses as we follow the roadmap. In the period January to March 2021 the Service has

- Carried out 772 compliance checks
- Dealt with 333 complaints
- Handled 47 requests for advice
- Carried out 297 doorstep test and trace visits
- Advised 32 businesses following an outbreak
- Reviewed compliance across faith settings

The work has been supported by the Corporate Health and Safety Team, whose assistance has been invaluable. The Health and Safety Executive has also carried out 168 telephone spot checks on businesses as part of our second tranche of HSE spot checks; where the telephone conversation indicates support is needed, a personal visit will be carried out by the HSE or Public Protection. In general compliance has been good but 1 FPN for £1000 have been issued for non-compliance.

Specific projects have been carried out in relation to the gym sector, and supermarkets, and one live investigation is underway where a warrant will be executed under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984.

The Food Safety Team has been able to recommence food safety inspections, and the Licensing Team is supporting the issue of support grants to the taxi trade. Public Protection is coordinating a multi-agency response involving the Police and officers from the Youth Support Team to address non-compliance amongst the public.

Work is now focussing the 12th April, when most retail will be opening (including licensed premises serving alcohol outdoors only). This period is expected to be extremely busy for Public Protection. The Service is also contributing to wider LRF work in the Business Compliance Cell to develop comprehensive advice and support resources for trade sectors.

PARKING SERVICES

The following Council Owned Car parks being used for Covid-Related services:

Old Bank Lane

Old Bank Lane car park since the 6th July has been used as a regional testing centre and has the capacity to provide up to 1000 tests per day.

Simmons St

Simmons St is being used as a vaccination car park for anyone who attending the vaccination centre based within Barbara CastleWay Health Centre.

Weir St and Penny St

Both of these car parks are being used as a vaccination car park for anyone who will be using the vaccination centre based within Blackburn Cathedral.

Bank Bottoms

This car park is the vaccination car park for anyone who will be using the vaccination centre based in Darwen Health Centre.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Car Parks

ANPR technology is being installed in Feilden Street MSCP and the new undercroft car park in Blackburn Town Centre and will be operational on the 15th March 2021. This technology will allow the car park to operate staff free with payment on exit via the number plate. It will allow longer operating hours with the car parks being managed remotely.