

# REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & OPERATIONS

COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
CHIEF OFFICERS: Strategic Director  
of Environment & Operations  
Thursday, 25 January 2024

## Build happier, healthier and safer communities

### Waste and Recycling

#### Waste composition study findings - What are we throwing away?

It is important that the Council has a good understanding of what residents are throwing away through their rubbish and recyclables bin collection service, for service planning and development, especially in light of new and existing legislation being introduced with waste and recycling.

To understand this better, as in previous years (2014, 2018, 2021), a waste analysis took place in October and November 2023. The key findings from the waste analysis we have undertaken are as follows: -

Burgundy bin (household waste) – as in previous years, food waste makes up the largest element in the burgundy bin at almost 42% which is higher than the national average per household. This is slightly down on the 2021 study (almost 44%), with edible food comprising 24%. About 14% of the bin contents contained recyclables that could have been recycled in either the grey or blue bins.

Grey recycling bin (mixed glass, cans and plastic) – glass and plastics made up the largest element of the bin.

Blue recycling bin (clean paper and card) – the main grades of paper/card made up 80% of the bin.

The Council will use the findings to help plan for government proposals to introduce new recycling collections for food waste and plastic films. The findings will also be useful as part of the future procurement of waste disposal and recycling processing contracts which are due for renewal in 2026.

#### Waste Enforcement

The Environment team continue to progress with a zero-tolerance approach to waste and flytipping offences. An update on prosecutions this financial year has seen a slow down in the courts progressing cases, with a number of cases backlogged, but once they have been submitted, they will not become statute barred – out of time – and will be heard at some point in the future. This financial year we have seen: -

- 38 successful prosecutions through the courts. For the whole of the last financial year there were 99 successful prosecutions.
- At present, there are 213 outstanding cases with the Magistrates team or progressing through the Council's Legal Services team for prosecution. Some of the cases with the Magistrates relate to 2022/23 financial year but have not yet been heard.

- 63 Fixed Penalty Notice's paid. For the whole of last financial year, there were 69 FPNs for waste and flytipping issued.

### **Waste and Recycling Service – Above and Beyond**

A crew of 4 staff from our waste and recycling service, were driving along Lower Eccleshill Way, when they noticed a young girl in distress on the motorway bridge. The staff parked the vehicle and quickly rang the emergency services. They climbed the banking of the bridge on to the motorway. She was clearly in distress and was threatening to jump. Thankfully the crew members took a hold of her and pulled her from the opposite side of the barriers on to the motorway where the Police promptly arrived within minutes and took care of the situation.

The crew members were shaken by the incident and are now receiving full support. Due to their quick thinking and heroic actions the young girl is now getting the help and support she needs.

### **Public Protection and Environmental Health - Seizure of Illicit e-cigs**

The Trading Standards Team seized a large quantity of illegal e-cigs in an intelligence-led operation in November 2023.

The operation, which was supported by the Police and a sniffer dog supplied by Trading Standards North West, netted illegal e-cigs with a street value estimated to be around £500,000 from a storage location in Blackburn. £20,000 in cash was also seized by the Police, and this has been passed to the Council pending investigation by an Accredited Financial Investigator. Enquiries are ongoing.

### **Parking Services – Income**

Parking Services income has been adversely affected over the last two financial years due to the pandemic, however we are for the first-time seeing usage and income levels return to pre-pandemic levels. Over the first 6 months of this financial year, income from Pay and Display is around 98% of the income generated pre-pandemic, with the number of vehicle movements being around 96% of pre-pandemic levels.