

Service Summary Sheet

Directorate	Environment Directorate		
Year	2023-24	Quarter	Quarter 3 (1 st October to 31 st December 2023)

Benchmarking *with local authorities/nearest neighbours*

Energy, Sustainability & Climate Change

Waste PI's are reported quarterly in arrears in line with the national reporting timeframes for the Defra WasteDataFlow data base. Quarter 2 outturns are therefore included in this summary sheet.

- In the first 2 Quarters 44.0% equated to 29,013.84 tonnes, comprising 11,672.94 tonnes of dry recycling (paper, cardboard, plastic, cans and glass) and 17,243.43 tonnes of green waste. (The remaining tonnage relates to items sent for reuse). Difference of 97.47 tonnes attributed to green waste from street scene and parks.

Recycling collections were affected by breakdowns and availability of vehicles. Recycling is having to be completed by overtime crews or after the normal collection day. This leads to recycling being missed as material is transferred into the residual stream.

Improvements in the recycling collections have been implemented by revision of rounds and the reduced reliance on comingling wastes in restricted streets by using 2 vehicles to pick up separate but compatible fractions. This is hoped to be increased further when guidance is published by DEFRA on "Simpler Recycling", the introduction of mandatory food waste collection (and associated new burdens funding), the delayed Deposit Return Scheme & Extended Producer Responsibility.

Dudley's recycling rate is 44.0% for the year in comparison to the family group average of 41.5%. We continue to educate and encourage our residents to recycle.

- In Quarter 2 Dudley landfilled 1,349.43 tonnes (3.92%) a drop from Q1 1,516 tonnes(4%).

More material was sent to Landfill than expected although reducing. This is in main the result of the HWRC waste being sent to landfill rather than being processed through the EfW plant. The Operator of the EfW controls the input and there is other waste that is prioritised over the HWRC waste.

	Q2 2023/24	
	Dudley	CIPFA Family Group Average
% household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	44%	41.5%
% municipal waste landfilled	3.92%	5.6%

- Estimated output for Q3 from EfW is 6,481MW (19,482MW YTD). Plant had intermittent outages, totalling 12 days, due to tube leaks caused by failures in tube welds. There was an additional fault with Turbine overspinning, resulted in no electricity export for 17 days at the end of November into the start of December.

Transport and Highway Service

- For Quarter 3, 75% of capital spend on highways was achieved against a target of 75% resulting in performance being on target.
- For Quarter 3, the percentage of street lighting inventory that is LED is 39% and the target is 40%. From the start of the contract to the end of December 3,765 new LED lanterns have been installed.
- For Quarter 3, 23% (4,900) of gullies were cleansed as per annual programme, against a target for the quarter of 25%. Service delivery does fluctuate through the winter months due to the holiday period and weather related service issues but experience tells us that this deficit is regained during Quarter 4. In Q4 (26.01.24) we have YTD - 15,400 cleansed gullies(%). This is on track to achieve the target for Q4.
- For Q3,Highways Inspections completed on time 4.66% inspections were completed against a target of 5%. A total of 1,160 safety inspections were completed in the third quarter.
This is slightly down from the 1,221 completed within the second quarter of the year but still above the first quarter figure of 1,177 safety inspections.

Neighbourhood Services

- For Quarter 3, 25.97% of trees have a valid tree inspection against the target of 16%. Higher than target figure due to employment of contractors to survey Nature Reserve trees.
- For Q3, 614 fly-tip reports were received with 2,039 (YTD) reports. There has been an decrease of 63 instances of deposited waste between Q2 and Q3. We have ambitions to fully exploit all options open to address fly-tipping such as hidden cameras and proactive work required to investigate rogue waste operatives etc. The focus of the waste enforcement team currently has an emphasis towards other areas of responsibility such as accumulation of waste on private property.
- For Q3, 63 fly-tipping investigations were conducted 276 (YTD). There were 42 less enforcement actions this quarter than last . It is difficult to evaluate enforcement actions and compare with other quarters as the work involved in each report differs greatly.
- For Quarter 3, the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) issued for parking offences was 1,528 (4,937 YTD). The YTD has decreased by 1,339 when compared to the same period in 2022/23.
The reduction in PCN's coincides with a reduction in Enforcement staff since April 2023. Borough wide parking review, including enforcement outsourcing options is to be included in the Environment Directorate Transformation Programme for 2024/25.

Overview of service delivery

Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

- HWRC – 6 month contract extension agreed with HW Martin to end Sept 2024. A project team has been set up to oversee delivery of short-term contract tender with a term of 2+1+1+1 years for implementation from 1st Oct 24. This will allow sufficient time to consider longer term strategy for the Borough's household waste recycling facilities.
- For the Power Purchase Agreement Flex Contract - Our achieved price has considerably beaten the average blended price in a falling market for year one. Achieved price (on 7th December 2023) - £117.97 MWH. Average blended market price - £112.92 MWH.
Hedging strategy workshop delivered by Laser in mid-Dec to inform strategic approach to hedging for 2024/25. Final strategy and PPA income budget signed off by Council's Hedging Strategy Board and shared with Laser.
- For Award Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS) contract – Full tender written for the collection of WUDS from Dudley controlled depots. Items maybe collected from fly-tips, house clearances or from pop-up events.

Bulky service to be retained by Council as part of 'MyDudley' self-serve package.

Waste Management and Transport Operations

- Pop-up site at Lister Road Depot is on Saturday, 8.00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. every fortnight from 1st April 2023.
- Simpler recycling requires weekly collections of food waste for most households across England by 2026. We have received a letter of DEFRA advising of funding to set up a food waste collection service, options are being considered.

Transport and Highway Service

- DMBC involved in regional meetings to support Local Transport Plan development and providing pipeline project and scheme details to support the Area Strategy development.
- Dangerous Structures Policy – A draft report has been produced
- Development of the Dudley Local Transport Plan (LTP) – The Dudley Transport Strategy will commence following the completion of the West Midlands Area Based Strategy work which is expected March 2024. The target completion for the Dudley Strategy is Sept 2024.

Enforcement Officers continue to respond to fly-tipping reports, carrying out investigations where evidence permits. During Quarter 3, Street Cleansing removed 39 fly-tips and 63 fly-tip enforcement actions were carried out. 7 Fixed Penalty Notices and 14 Legal Notices were served for fly-tipping offences during the quarter.

Neighbourhood Services

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) have delivered and completed the improvements on 5 of the 6 tennis courts, however we are still waiting for the nets to be installed at Huntingtree. The online booking system has gone live and is generating a small income. We are currently working with Procurement on procuring an operator to organise the tennis coaching sessions and to promote tennis across Dudley.

- The Play area project at Wordsley Park has been completed and the new play area is fully open. The play project at Hawbush is currently out to tender with a return date of mid-February 2024.
- 10 school visits in Q3, 28 (YTD) school visits have taken place at Nature Reserves. A target of 22 was set for 2023/24.
- 7,338 (YTD) volunteer hours have been recorded across Parks and Countryside Services. A target of 8,000 hours has been set for 2023/24.

Service Achievements

Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change

A new state-of-the-art system to manage the risk of potential fires in the Energy from Waste plant is set to reduce the authority's current premiums.

The plant has been running since 1998 at a time when fire regulations didn't require a full fire suppression system, with the rare small fires being extinguished manually. While small fires are an increasing risk at such plants, we have decided to upgrade its automatic detection and suppression system to mitigate the risk further still. Residents can help in this matter by recycling batteries and especially lithium batteries which are a known source of these fires. The system has been designed to fit the plant's specification and is currently being installed.

Recycle Week, Recycle Now and Dudley Council launched a fun mission for primary school children with the arrival of: The Big Recycling Hunt.

"The Big Recycling Hunt", the central theme of this year's campaign, shone a bright spotlight on "missed capture." The nationwide hunt aimed to engage children and families in the quest to find 'lost recyclables' that too often find their way into the rubbish bin. By focusing on commonly missed items such as empty aerosols, plastic cleaning product bottles, plastic toiletry bottles, plastic pots and tubs, and food tins, Recycle Now wants to foster a deeper understanding of recycling in the younger generation.

Local primary schools were invited to take part in a competition to design an advert to encourage adults to recycle. The winning design will go in the spring edition of Your Borough Your Home magazine.

In Dudley the authority will also be supporting Recycle Week by running another of its popular online composting webinars.

Dudley Council has launched a second consultation seeking people's opinions on a number of locations earmarked for small scale on-street EV chargers. The authority consulted on 53

proposed electric charge point locations in November 2022 and 37 sites which had majority support were chosen to host charge points to support the rollout for residents who do not have the option to have their own off-street charging facilities and to encourage people to use greener vehicles.

The council is now seeking views on a further 25 proposed locations for EV charge points as part of phase two of the scheme. The charge points charge at approximately 7kW which for many cars will provide a full charge in roughly six hours, making them ideal for overnight charging for residents.

Locations have been identified based on whether they are near to residential properties with no off-street parking, whether there is sufficient local power/grid capacity, whether there are adequate footpath and road widths, whether the locations are free from other street furniture and overhanging trees and whether there is minimum impact on existing on-street parking practices.

Waste and Transport Operations

The pop-up tip in Dudley borough continues to prove popular among residents with around 387 tonnes of waste been disposed of at the facility on Lister Road since it switched to opening twice a month at the start of April.

This total includes 102 tonnes of wood, 79 tonnes of bricks and rubble, and 50 tonnes of mattresses and other furniture. The ward with the most users of the pop-up tip in this period is St Thomas's where 1,317 bookings were completed from 1st October – 31st December 2023.

Waste care Team continued its trial of an electric vehicle for waste collection. The electric vehicle, a previous diesel vehicle that has been upcycled to run on electricity, is covering multiple rounds to help the local authority establish capacity and give the crews an opportunity to trial the new technologies.

Residents were able to book 6 extra fortnightly green waste collections between November and March. The paid-for service returns, with the extra collections available for £30. They will start after the usual free fortnightly collections – which run from spring to autumn – finish. Proposals have been put forward for a chargeable green waste service. If this goes ahead extra collections will stop.

Waste care team has provided thousands of plastic bottles, collected through the doorstep recycling service, to Queens Cross Network. Service users at the centre created poppies from the bottom of the bottles, following on from the success of a similar project last year. They have made 2,023 poppies to create a Remembrance display organised by ward members in Amblecote. Additional poppies have also been made for display at Queen's Cross Network. The section of the bottle which has not been used has been sent back to the waste care team for recycling.

Transport and Highway Services

Transport & Highway Services is investing £47,000 to introduce new traffic calming measures at the junction of Wollescote Road and Springfield Avenue, as well as additional

measures along the entire length of Wollescote Road as part of its local safety schemes programme.

The work includes narrowing the road to reduce speed at the junction as well as new road markings and warning signs, an upgraded zebra crossing and vehicle-activated speed signs.

Another local safety scheme has been installed on Swindon Road in Wall Heath, to address residents' concerns and evidence of motorists speeding. New road markings have been laid, as well as reflective road studs and additional warning signs to reduce speed and improve visibility in dark and wet conditions.

The scheme also includes a new footway linking Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Club and the nearby housing estate.

Funding has been secured from the Department for Transport to design and install cycle lanes on the A4123 Birmingham New Road from Tipton Road Junction to Castle Road Junction. Proposed work includes a segregated cycle route, new crossing points and alterations to the Canal and Caverns Trust entrance.

Work to upgrade traffic signals at 3 major junctions in Kingswinford took place. The work is part of a £1 million investment by Dudley Council to improve traffic flow and make it safer for pedestrians in Kingswinford and Wall Heath, particularly for children walking to school.

Dudley Council has brought in lining crews to carry out the essential work as part of its commitment to maintaining the borough's roads.

Lining crews have repainted nearly 68,000m of lining between the start of July and end of September. This includes repainting nearly 36,000m of double yellow lines and refreshing lines in Dudley town centre. Further work is underway in Stourbridge town centre and Quarry Bank. The lining in Halesowen town centre was refreshed earlier this year.

Dudley resident Elizabeth Hampton has been a road safety assistant at the local authority for the last two years. Although she was initially not a confident rider, she was supported by the road safety team and completed Bikeability levels one, two and three before becoming a qualified cycle instructor herself.

The safety team put her forward for the personal achievement award, which she won as part of the National Bikeability Awards. She is now an advocate for cycling and visits schools and community locations throughout the borough to share her passion to people of all ages and abilities.

Neighbourhood Services

Tennis courts have been re-opened at 6 borough parks following a £280,000 programme of improvements. Courts at Huntingtree Park in Halesowen, King George V Park in Wordsley, Mary Stevens Park and Wollescote Park in Stourbridge, Priory Park in Dudley and Silver Jubilee Park in Coseley have all reopened to players.

The facilities can be booked in advance at £5 per session and digital access technology will only allow access to pre-booked players.

A new £200,000 play area is being planned for an open space in Wordsley. It is part of the planning agreement when the development was approved in 2015 and will be funded entirely by the developer through the section 106 condition.

Parks Development have been working with the residents' group on the proposals and has drawn up detailed designs for a play area in keeping with the natural look of the site. It will include a toddler play area, exercise equipment, a sculpture trail, pathways and fencing.

This year the annual winter bedding programme has been expanded to include Sedgley's Bullring, where plants were bedded in October. Other parts of the borough will see four tier planters, which were installed earlier this year and planted with summer bedding, have winter bedding plants added.

Officers are visiting parks and open spaces with high numbers of reports of dog mess. The aim is to catch the culprits in the act and issue a £100 fixed penalty notice. Officers will also be handed out dog mess bags to remind dog walkers to clean up after their pets.

Opportunities for improvement

- Heads of Service and Group/Team Managers have worked together to deliver Phase 2 of the restructure for the Environment Directorate.
- The Directorate has lost 9.8 days per FTE in quarter 3 (April 2023 – December 2023), which has decreased from 15.6 days lost per FTE in quarter 3 (April 2022 – December 2022). Heads of Service continue to work closely with their managers and HR colleagues to address sickness absence rates in order to seek improvement.

Any additional information relating to performance

- Environment Directorate Leadership Team have worked together to deliver Phase 2 of the restructure for the Environment Directorate. Phase 2 was implemented by 1st November 2023.
- There continues to be significant financial pressures in the Directorate, caused by a number of factors including:
 - Inflationary pressures such as fuel and utility / energy costs / pay
 - Agency cost to cover, sickness, annual leave, bank holidays and additional rounds within front line services.
 - Increasing R&M costs of the EfW plant.
 - Reduced PPA and commercial income due to availability of EfW plant.