

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Environment & Community Safety briefing

Subject: Update on Green Waste Club

Date of meeting: 5th February 2014

Report by: Head of Transport & Environment

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose

- 1.1. Portsmouth City Council, working with its main contractor, Biffa, introduced a new garden waste collection service in April 2013. The chargeable 'Green Waste Club' (GWC) is run on behalf of the council by Biffa, as an optional part of the council's waste collection contract that commenced in October 2011.
- 1.2. This report is an update on the rollout of the Green Waste Club, indicating the following
 - 1.2.1. Number of users of the scheme
 - 1.2.2. Any operational changes since the scheme was agreed
 - 1.2.3. Tonnage of garden waste recycled to date, and any impact on recycling levels

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Members acknowledge the progress of the Green Waste Club and support the further promotion of the campaign.

3. Background

- 3.1. Before April 2013, the options for disposing of domestic garden waste were:
 - 3.1.1. Portsmouth Recycling Centre (for composting)
 - 3.1.2. Monthly, seasonal garden waste collection days at two locations (for composting)
 - 3.1.3. Bespoke chargeable refuse sacks (for energy recovery with residual waste)
 - 3.1.4. Home composting
- 3.2. Following a decision taken by the council, officers stopped distributing the bespoke garden waste sacks for inclusion in residual waste prior to the launch of the GWC. The final garden waste collection points occurred on 3rd March 2013, and were used as an opportunity to publicise the new scheme. The disposal options for garden waste are now:

- 3.2.1. Portsmouth Recycling Centre (for composting)
- 3.2.2. Chargeable Green Waste Club (for composting)
- 3.2.3. Home composting

3.3. Biffa's GWC runs in four other areas. Their services were used as a template for Portsmouth, with a dedicated website (www.greenwasteclub.co.uk) and call centre signing up customers and dealing with reports of service failures such as missed collections.

4. Green Waste Club Service

- 4.1. Customers are supplied with a brown, 240 litre wheeled bin that is emptied fortnightly. Customers with limited storage space for the wheeled bin have the option of a smaller 120 wheeled bin or annual supply of 25 x 75 litre compostable paper sacks.
- 4.2. The first 5000 members of the scheme are charged a reduced rate of £30 per bin per year. Those who want disposable sacks, and cannot have a bin, are charged £38 for a supply of sacks.

5. Implementation of the service

- 5.1. The Green Waste Club launch has gone well, providing Portsmouth residents with a dedicated collection service for the composting of garden waste.
- 5.2. Almost 3,500 customers have signed up to the Portsmouth GWC by mid-October 2013. In the 5 months from April to August 2013, combined garden waste arisings from the GWC and Portsmouth Recycling Centre at Port Solent were 278 tonnes higher than the equivalent months in 2012. It is anticipated that the annual impact in recycling rates will be approximately 0.5%.
- 5.3. Missed collections and complaints have been minimal, and no extra administrative input from council officers has been required to support the service.
- 5.4. Further operational details are shown in Appendix 3

6. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

- 6.1. No comments

7. Head of finance's comments

- 7.1. A saving of £7,500 in operational cost by ending the free green waste drop off collections was approved at the City Council budget meeting in December 2012. No further disposal savings are being seen from the diversion of waste from the drop off points to the Green Waste Club as the disposal methods for the green waste collected and hence the costs per tonne are the same.

7.2. The tonnage information for the first five months of operation of the Green Waste club indicates that has been an overall increase of 278 tonnes being collected as a result of this new waste stream. The increase can be partly attributed to the removal of chargeable refuse sacks that were collected from individual households and then disposed of at the Energy Recovery Facility (ERF). Other increases are as a result to the Green Waste Club. Disposal savings achieved by diverting waste from the incinerator to the composting site are currently £1.79 per tonne. Therefore, only minimal disposal savings are being forecast.

7.3. However, diverting waste from the ERF does increase the City Council's spare capacity at the incinerator. This 'spare capacity' can either be sold to other local authorities or will absorb additional demand from future developments, such as the regeneration of Tipner.

8. Head of legal, licensing & registrars' comments

8.1. No comments

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Signed by (Head of Service)

Appendices:

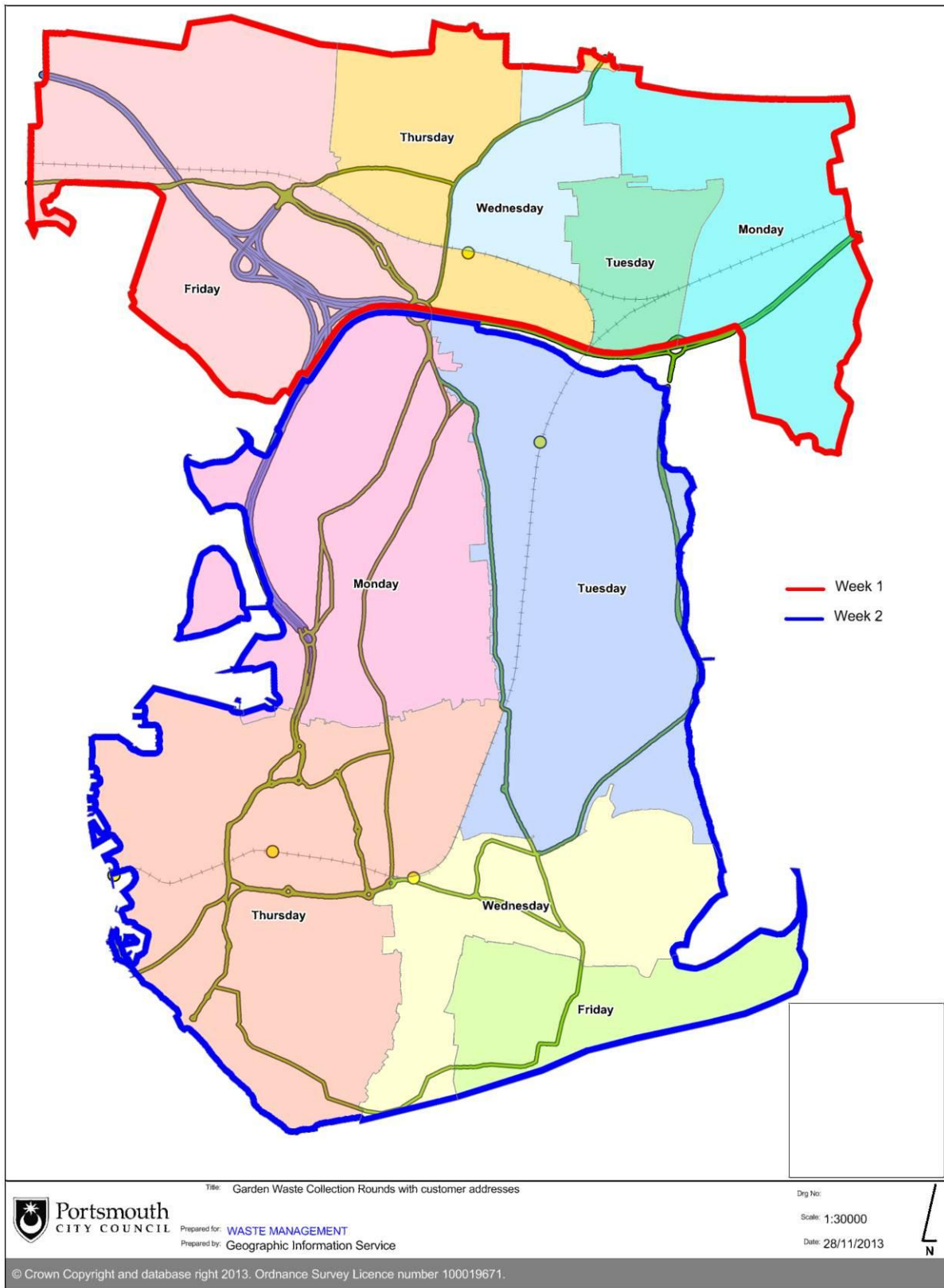
- Appendix 1 Green Waste Club Portsmouth round map
- Appendix 2 Green Waste Club customer map
- Appendix 3 Operational details

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

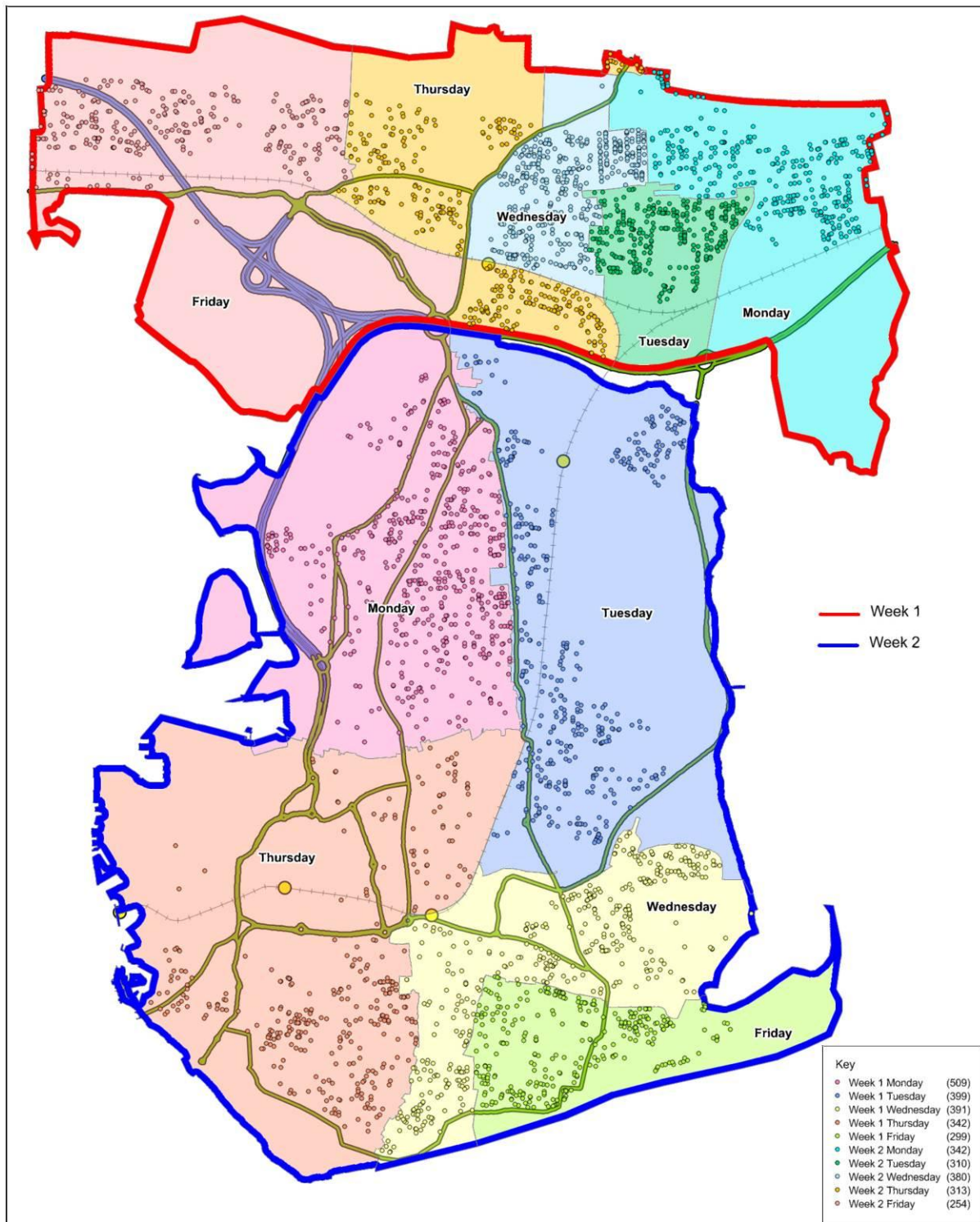
Title of document	Location

Appendix 1: Green Waste Club Portsmouth round map





Appendix 2: Green Waste Club customer map



Title: Garden Waste Collection Rounds with customer addresses



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Prepared for: WASTE MANAGEMENT
Prepared by: Geographic Information Service

Drg No:

Scale: 1:30000

Date: 28/11/2013



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Appendix 3 - Operational details

Customer numbers and operations

A waste survey carried out by the city council in 2011 suggested around 5,000 households would be interested in paying for a kerbside garden waste collection. 3,488 customers have signed up to the service as of 18 October 2013. Although the number of customers has not yet reached anticipated levels, there has been a steady number of new customers joining the club each week (see fig. 1, below).

Figure 1



Collections were originally scheduled across four working days (every Tuesday and Wednesday over a fortnight). When the service began, the increasing numbers of customers made it difficult to fulfil all the collections. Biffa decided to change the rounds to operate Monday to Friday over a fortnight, smoothing out the crew's workload and leaving some capacity for future additional subscriptions. Biffa wrote to all existing customers explaining this, and the change took place in mid-April with no disruption. The current distribution of customers across the city can be seen in Appendix 2.

Of the 3,488 GWC customers, 116 opted for the compostable paper sacks (3% of total customers). No problems with the composting of the garden waste enclosed within paper sacks have been reported to the Waste Collection team by the disposal site.

Communications

The GWC has been promoted widely by both Biffa and the city council, with advertisements for the scheme appearing in the council magazine Flagship, in banner adverts on the council internal and external websites, and Biffa crew members placing GWC cardboard hangers on the handles of recycling wheeled bins across the city. Biffa also distributed bin hangers several weeks into the service in areas of the city that have predominantly large gardens to reinforce the promotional message. Biffa plan further communications in early 2014, highlighting the remaining 'early bird' subscriptions to further increase customer numbers.

Tonnage of garden waste collected

The city is now split into 10 rounds in a week 1 and week 2 configuration (see appendix 1 for map). Tonnages from week 2 properties are marginally lower than week 1, probably due to week 1 properties - all in the north of Portsmouth - having bigger gardens than their counterparts in the south.

On average, 16 tonnes of green waste was collected each week from April to mid-October, peaking in October at 24 tonnes. The peak tonnage occurring at the end of the summer suggests the GWC will collect a larger amount of garden waste in 2014, as the service continues to attract more customers.

Figure 2 shows figures for all garden waste collected for composting from April to August in 2012 and 2013. This indicates an additional 278 tonnes of green waste was processed during this period since the launch of the GWC. Portsmouth Recycling Centre green waste tonnages dropped slightly in July and August 2013 compared to the equivalent months in 2012, possibly as more customers joined the GWC.

Figure 2 - Green waste tonnages comparison

	2012/13	2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14
	Portsmouth Recycling Centre Garden waste	Portsmouth Recycling Centre Garden waste	Garden waste collection days	Green Waste Club	Total	Total	Difference
Apr	166.2	221.2	12.5	44.2	178.7	265.4	+86.64
May	330.2	323.7	8.2	77.4	338.4	401.1	+62.66
Jun	328.1	362.4	13.3	81.4	341.4	443.8	+102.42
Jul	341.1	276.3	17.8	87.3	358.9	363.6	+4.74
Aug	327.7	287.1	17.1	79.3	344.7	366.4	+21.65
Total	1,493.3	1,470.6	68.9	369.6	1,562.1	1,840.2	+278.11

The disposal cost of garden waste is paid for by PCC.

Customer satisfaction

Missed GWC collections are low in number, averaging 5 per week, as can be seen in fig. 3.

