

Report to: Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18th August 2015

Report of: Director of Environmental Services

Report No: ESSC/04/15a

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Report Title: **Departmental Performance Update – Q4 2014/15**

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Non Confidential:**
(delete as approp)

(**Non-Confidential**) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose:

This report provides the Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee with an update on Q4 performance for the Environmental Services Department.

The Environmental Services Department remains on track to deliver its strategic and operational priorities for the Council. Highlights of the report can be found below:

- 1.6% increase in the borough's recycling rate compared to the same period last year
- Borough cleanliness stands at 94% pass rate
- 724 volunteers across the borough regularly cleaning up their local areas
- £1.3m of additional funding awarded to the department over the next 2 years to empower communities to improve their local environment.
- Reduction of 13% in anti-social behaviour
- Proposals continue to be worked up as part of the Bolton & Wigan Partnership to achieve savings of £2m to £3m
- The school meals uptake continues to increase, currently standing at over 20,000 meals delivered per day
- Over 500 street lighting units installed as part of the £5.5 million pound LED street lighting retro-fitting programme
- Reduction of 0.7 days in staff sickness compared to the same period last year.

Recommendations:

The Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment upon and challenge the performance update set out in this report

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

Signed:

Leader / Executive Cabinet
Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report summarises the performance outturn for quarter 4 of 2014/15 for the Environmental Services Department. The report summarises delivery against both qualitative and quantitative indicators, recognising the balance between hard and soft outputs taking into account the current financial pressures facing the organisation.

1.2 Within this report, progress is reported against:

- major strategic priorities for which the Environmental Services Department is responsible within the Council;
- progress around our operational priorities as the provider of a number of large front line and support services and
- conclusions and key messages.

2.0 Supporting the Council to deliver its strategic priorities

2.1 At a strategic level, the Department supports the Cleaner and Greener Partnership, the BSafe Partnership and the Town Centre Regeneration Programme, as part of the delivery of the Community Strategy. Key progress on our strategic priorities is highlighted below.

Cleaner Greener - Waste & Recycling

2.2 The cost of waste disposal is expected to rise by £7m to £23m per year in Bolton. The introduction of managed weekly waste collections in 2013 is part of a strategic waste diversion programme, where the primary aim is to divert residual waste from being disposed of in a landfill site. This, complemented with targeted behaviour change programmes, is one of the department's main strategic priorities. In 2014/15, residual waste decreased from 477.86kg per household to 463.93kg; a decrease of 13.93kg compared to the same period last year. The recycling increased from 37.3% to 38.9%, an increase of 1.6% compared to the same period last year.

2.3 In order to increase the amount recycled and reduce the amount of waste sent for disposal, the department has undertaken the following campaigns:

- *Door to Door Engagement* - From October 2014 to the end of January 2015, as part of a larger £30k Waste Resource Action Programme; we undertook a door to door engagement campaign to over 43,000 households. The campaign achieved the following positive results:
 - There was a positive response from the residents regarding the campaign and generally, a good uptake and understanding of the service.
 - Domestic waste in the grey bin decreased by 6.74%
 - 3,436 recycling containers were delivered to residents
 - 634 residents reduced the size of the grey bin from a 240 litre down to a 140litre
 - A further 1,078 residents registered to receive email messenger service
- *Right Stuff Right Bin Campaign* – In partnership with the Waste Disposal Authority, we undertook a campaign with the aim to decrease the level of contamination in the burgundy bin and increase the recycling rate in poor performing areas. Activity includes thank you tags on all bins recycling correctly and red tags on those which

weren't. Over the three collections, the number of red tags given out reduced considerably. The campaign was launched in April 2014 and achieved an increase in the amount of waste recycling and a reduction in the amount of contamination in the burgundy bin.

- *The Up & Forward Programme 2013-2015* – A two year programme aimed at improving recycling rates in hard to reach communities and was the first project of its kind to be funded in the UK. *Up and Forward* focused on improved communications with hard to reach groups across Greater Manchester with the aim to waste less and recycle more. The overall picture was positive. There was an increase in both participation rates and tonnages collected.
- *Slim your bin* – In July we promoted the campaign for residents to downsize their grey bin from a 240 litre to a 140 litre bin free of charge. To date, 1,061 residents have requested to downsize their grey bin.
- *Food Waste Recycling* – Delivered in partnership with Bolton Council of Mosques (BCOM) to produce a food waste recycling campaign over Ramadan. Posters were sent to all Mosques and featured in their newsletters. 24 Mosques also took up the offer to have recycling containers at the mosque for pulpables and comingled materials.
- *Bulky Waste Collection Service* – The contract for this service was awarded to Bolton Community Transport Furniture Service (BCTFS). The number of bulky waste collections has increased from 409 in 2013/14 to 515 in 2014/15. This increase is very encouraging as historically, this type of waste would normally be found in illegal fly tips around the borough. In addition, the percentage of bulky waste collected which is either reused or recycled has also seen an increase from 30.2% in 2013/14 to 37.7% in 2014/15 during this quarter, resulting in less waste being disposed of in landfill or by incineration.
- *Christmas tree Recycling* - This year we worked in partnership with Bolton Community Transport Furniture Services to recycle real Christmas trees for a charge of £10 and collected 1.12 tonnes of Christmas trees.
- *Marketing and Communications* – Waste and recycling has been promoted through Bolton Scene, Social Media and Gov. Delivery. We have also delivered recycling calendars to all households and stickered all grey bins with items that can be recycled in the recycling containers.
- *Unauthorised Second Grey Bins* – Recycling Officers have visited 719 properties this financial year, where crews had reported unauthorised second grey bins. 693 unauthorised second grey bins have been removed and affected residents have been encouraged to recycle their waste.
- *Requests for additional grey bins* – Recycling Officers received 507 requests for additional grey bins, of those, 51% received an additional 140 litre grey bin. The remaining households were encouraged to recycle their waste.

Cleaner & Greener Behaviour Change Programme

- 2.4 There has been recognition that continually cleaning up after communities and residents is not a sustainable or affordable approach to cleanliness. The challenge facing the Council is that the cost of the service is not sustainable. The Council and its key Partners took the

decision in 2010 to fundamentally shift away from just cleaning up after communities to introducing a behaviour change package aimed at altering residents' behaviours over the long term. The Behaviour Change Campaign continues to be hugely successful in not only influencing people's behaviours but also in reducing the levels of unacceptable litter. The targeted projects and campaigns have contributed to the annual Local Environmental Quality Survey (LEQ) result, which monitors the cleanliness levels. The LEQ result for 2014/15 shows an average litter pass rate of 94% across the borough, which is above the community strategy target of maintaining performance over 90%. In addition, during 14/15, the department issued 137 fixed penalty notices relating to litter offences and continues to proactively target grot-spot areas.

- 2.5 The number of Behaviour Change volunteers stands at an encouraging 724 at the end of the year who are involved in regular clean ups and litter picks in their local community, as part of the highly successful '*Love Bolton – Hate Litter*' campaign. This year has seen an increase in the number of people who are unable to help litter pick during the day, coming forward and offering to take on the job of keeping the area around their home free of litter in their own time. The department is delighted with this commitment to enhance local neighbourhoods and provides equipment and advice to anyone who shows an interest. Other initiatives delivered by the department include; the '*No Dog Fouling*' campaign, doorstep engagement focussing on backstreet waste, the '*Wheel It Back In*' bin fires campaign, the '*Food On The Go*' campaign and neighbourhood improvement schemes through the Community Payback Programme. The Behaviour Change Programme will continue to be developed in 2015/16 as part of an additional £1.3m of funding awarded to the department over the next 2 years and will assist the Cleaner and Greener Partnership to continue to empower communities to improve their local environment.

Cleaner & Greener - Low Carbon and Environmental

- 2.6 In Quarter 4, the council, working with the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and AGMA have been successful in securing funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change's **Heat Network Delivery Unit** for a Bolton Town Centre / Raikes Lane heat network feasibility study. The feasibility study will establish whether utilising the waste heat from the Raikes Lane Waste and Recycling Centre to heat buildings in Bolton Town Centre is technically and financially viable. This project provides the opportunity for Bolton to increase energy security, deliver affordable heat, attract business and development, and improve local air quality. The study will identify both the heat loads of existing buildings and the heat loads of any new development. £36,850 has been secured, two thirds of the estimated total feasibility study cost. The WDA has agreed to cover a third of the costs for the first stage on the basis that if we proceed to subsequent stages that the costs would be covered mainly by the council.
- 2.7 At the end of the financial and performance year 2014/15, there were 103 **sustainability champions** across Bolton Council and its Partners. In 2014/15, the council's champions have:
- Encouraged staff to recycle clothes in the month of July as part of a campaign organised by Scope.
 - Supported a sunflower growing competition as part of our 'Growing and Biodiversity' theme.

- Participated in study tours to Davyhulme Waste Water Treatment Works, Scout Moor wind farm, the Manchester Biospheric Project and a Materials Recycling Facility.
- Distributed Free Energy Saving Gadgets to colleagues as part of the Energy theme.
- There were 66 successful applications to the council's '**Cycle to Work**' scheme.
- Funding has been allocated to roll-out the **Carbon Literacy Project**.

Community Safety Partnership

- 2.8 An effective Community Safety Partnership is essential in enabling local communities to feel safe and free from crime and the fear of crime, all of which directly supports the development of a more cohesive, confident and thriving community. During 2014/15, the Be Safe Partnership re-established its overarching governance arrangements and strategic objectives. Priorities for the partnership are currently:
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour- including acquisitive crime and violent crime.
 - Narrow the crime gap between high and low crime areas.
 - Reduce re-offending and transform rehabilitation.
 - Prevent terrorism, tackle serious and organised crime and maintain public safety.
 - Improve confidence, with a focus on protecting vulnerable people.
- 2.9 A great deal of the Be Safe Partnership's current work is well established and on-going. This includes activity to tackle seasonal crime; ensuring the partnership is able to identify and respond to emerging threats; effectively utilising the new tools and powers available in order to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB); and continuing to support the most vulnerable victims of ASB. Be Safe will also be at the forefront of activity to ensure that Bolton has an effective co-ordinated community response model in relation to domestic abuse and violence; will assist in tackling Child Sexual Exploitation; will contribute to Bolton's programme as part of the national 'troubled families' policy; and will work to support 'adults at risk' and those with wider vulnerability to prevent them becoming victims of crime.
- 2.10 In relation to reducing re-offending and transforming justice for both adult and youth offenders, the partnership will lead on activity to advance restorative justice; improve management of offenders in the community and support their rehabilitation across a number of pathways. The requirement to establish a local response to the National Serious and Organised Crime Strategy, increasing community understanding of how serious and organised crime is tackled and how funds generated via the Proceeds of Crime Act are reinvested into communities is also a key priority for the partnership. Human trafficking, counter-terrorism and hate crime are further complex issues which Be Safe will play a part in tackling.
- 2.11 The headline performance data for 2014/15 compared to 2013/14 for Bolton is listed below:
- The total number of crimes increased by 8%. This was due in large part to increase in violent offences (which increased by 46%) and sexual offences (which increased by 58%)
 - Incidents of Anti-social behaviour decreased by 13%;
 - In terms of acquisitive crime, burglary offences decreased by 6%, robbery by 20%, and vehicle offences by 8%;
 - Domestic abuse offences increased by 43%;
 - Hate crime increased by 6%;

- Primary fires fell by 21% and secondary fires by 7% in this period.

2.12 The rise in violent crime and domestic abuse offences is considered to be due to the renewed focus on the quality of crime recording and is likely to have prompted improved compliance with national standards, leading to more crimes being recorded than previously. These improvements mark a decade of change with some of the most fundamental shifts in the approach to reporting and prosecuting. The increase in sexual offences is seen as being due to increased confidence amongst victims to report sexual crimes, especially historical offences, to the police.

3.0 Departmental Strategic Priorities

Bolton/Wigan Partnership

- 3.1 The Bolton & Wigan Partnership proposal aims to achieve savings of £2m to £3m (per council), through the joint delivery of large parts of the environmental services provision across both councils. This will contribute to the overall Bolton Council savings target of £43 million during the period 2015/17 and also feed into Wigan's budget savings proposals. Political approval to proceed with the options, including the development of a detailed business case for a Bolton & Wigan Partnership, was given by Bolton's Cabinet at its meeting on 16th February 2015. A similar approval was granted by Wigan's Cabinet on 19th March 2015. Both Bolton and Wigan Councils have already made significant budget reductions over the last 4 years resulting in a combined gross expenditure budget which is now circa £180m.
- 3.2 The Bolton and Wigan Joint Working Strategy proposes a three phase model structured around a collaborative agreement between the Councils with a single joint management team. The Joint Working Strategy will seek to incrementally secure efficiencies, align services and develop operational consistency over a two year period. On successful completion of each phase there will be an assessment of the level of benefits accrued for each Council, the potential level of benefits during the next phase and an opportunity to confidently secure the foundation of joint working with a renewed commitment to the strategy.
- 3.3 Further work has now been undertaken to analyse the synergies and opportunities across the services, in order to identify those services that should be brought into the partnership and those that are recommended to stay out of scope. The current position is that 38 services are in-scope, although it should be noted that the partnership retains the flexibility to reconsider whether services should be taken in or out of scope if circumstances change.
- 3.4 A number of important steps have been identified which will help to ensure that the detailed business case is ready for consideration by Elected Members in line with agreed timescales, and that members are able to take an informed decision about moving to the next stage of development. These steps will include:
 - Prioritising the various options within the 3-phase model
 - Agreeing programme and project management plans & securing resources for the various elements of the proposals; as well as clarifying the way forward. This will also help to manage the limited capacity available to deliver a substantial change programme.
 - Implementing risk management processes and assessments – including an overview of the key corporate and programme risks, as well as a series of actions to address the risks.

Community Services

- 3.5 The refurbishment programme at **Overdale Crematorium** is now complete. The East & West Chapels have been refurbished and abatement equipment fitted to the four cremators. Most recently a new state of the art music system has been installed in both chapels at Overdale Crematorium, offering a much improved customer experience and future plans include the ability to webcast from funeral services and offer a slideshow facility for families. In the past year, 474 burials (a slight decrease of 0.8% from 13/14) and 2,243 cremations (an increase of 7.4% from 13/14) were carried out.
- 3.6 The **Social Needs Transport** Service has carried out nearly 97,000 journeys supporting 342 adults / older people and delivered more than 35,000 meals as part of the Meal on Wheels scheme. The Service also transports 710 children with special educational needs to school/college each weekday during school term-time.
- 3.7 The new **Bolton Market** management team is now firmly established and they continue to effect positive change across the market. Staff continue to work closely with traders to provide advice on hygiene practices and standards are rising; all food traders are now expected to hold a Level 3 Food Hygiene Certificate. Trader compliance with market rules is increasing, resulting in a well presented venue and a better customer experience. A number of events were held at the market and were very well attended and a schedule of entertainment will continue in order to bring in new shoppers. Social media continues to flourish bringing the market to a wider audience. Rent arrears are being reduced and traders placed on repayment plans with close monitoring. Staff are working with traders to ensure they are in the most appropriate unit for their business with some traders moving to smaller units and others expanding their businesses. Occupancy remains high (over 90%) with continued interest from new traders resulting in a vibrant environment and a good mix of stalls. Snagging issues following the refurbishment continue to be addressed.
- 3.8 The **Albert Halls** has now closed to the public prior to the £6.5m refurbishment programme. The majority of the 41 staff affected by the refurbishment have been found a long term secondment position or have taken up the offer of VS/VER. The Service retains responsibility for the Queen's Park and Moss Bank Park Pavilion Cafés, six community centres and Mere Hall.
- 3.9 The **School Meals** industry experienced its biggest single growth spurt across England in September 2014, when the government introduced the Universal Infant Free School Meals Programme (UIFSM). The objective was to provide all key stage 1 pupils with a government-funded free school lunch on every school day. Primary schools received a flat rate £2.30 per meal based on an allocation of free meal uptake measured on the school census days in October 2014 and January 2015. The service performance in Bolton was already good to excellent in comparison with the region and the UK in formal benchmarking, scoring top position in primary meal uptake in all sectors, top in productivity (meals per hour) linked to the uptake levels and in general, positioned in the top quartile in 66% of 45 key performance indicators. This result automatically shortlisted Bolton School Meals as one of the 4 top performers across 129 benchmarking Councils in the UK taking part in the Association of Public Sector Excellence's Performance Networks. This is the 6th time of being shortlisted; Bolton has won on two occasions – the last in 2011.
- 3.10 The autumn term in 2014, as expected saw a marked increase in meal uptake in key stage 1 of the primary schools reporting approximately 2,700 more meals per day and raising the KS1 uptake as an average of 87% of the possible total meals, achieving the government target. The overall impact of the UIFSM across the sector averaged 74.5% over the two terms, which is a 14.8% overall increase. The key stage 2 (junior) meal uptake has seen a slight increase aligned to UIFSM of approximately 5%

- 3.11 Based on similar roll numbers to 2013/14 the previous year's numbers served were 18,300 per day. Daily meal numbers now post UIFSM top just over 20,000 per day across nursery, secondary , primary child meals and adult meals, (with only 2 terms of growth) i.e. a total of over 3.8m meals in 2014/15. There is an expectation to increase further when there is three terms of UIFSM in the next financial year. The service target is to reach 4 million meals in 2015/16 adjusted for feeding days.

Regulatory Services

- 3.12 Regulatory Services aim to provide high quality services directed towards protecting the public and environment, and making Bolton a fair and safe place to live and work. The service aim is to make a fundamental contribution to the maintenance and improvement of public health, quality of life and wellbeing. The following activity has been carried out throughout 2014/15:

- New licensing committee structure introduced to support Members' decision making for sensitive cases. Referrals made for safeguarding issues, sexual offences, domestic violence & drugs. This new structure has resulted in 15 drivers' licences being revoked.
- 6 operation days undertaken supported by Greater Manchester Police regarding illicit tobacco, resulting in 12.8kg of rolled tobacco and 33,640 cigarettes being seized. Plus £30,000 worth of successful prosecutions.
- Completion of the Annual Food Inspection Plan. All high risk food premises inspected .Compliant businesses receiving alternative lighter touch intervention.
- Successful migration of licensing data from Lalpac to Civica database completed, Civica now being used for all Licensing Team's work. Improved efficiency and cost saving.
- Retail Violence Initiative pro-active visits were made to bookmakers and mobile phone retailers to establish that operators were meeting the required levels of security for staff. Retail Violence Information Packs were issued and where necessary operators were written to with regard to any deficiencies in security or staff training in dealing with incidents.
- The approved garages private hire and hackney carriage vehicle testing process work has now been completed and is now a fully automated process, resulting in an improved service delivery and efficiency of the testing regime.

Highways & Town Centre Public Realm

- 3.13 In 2014, the council committed to undertaking a large scale **LED street lighting retrofitting programme**, incorporating a central management system, with the preferred suppliers being appointed in late 2014. This project which represents over £5.5 million pounds of investment is aimed at reducing carbon emissions and projected future energy bills and will see the council save an average of £700k per year during the term of the project. The physical installation phase went live in April in the Town Centre, Tonge Moor and Westhoughton wards. Progress to date has been strong with a "just in time" delivery process have been developed with our supply partners, that provides both strong business continuity as well as cutting down on the required storage space needed to support the project locally. So far the project has seen well over 500 units having been installed which is on target, with the only comments from the public being positive, mainly around the improved quality of the lighting which directly supports our supporting aspirations around improved road safety and perceptions around the fear of crime. In addition to the wider roll out the project is also now supporting in the introduction of an LED lighting solution as part of the town centre "gateway" redevelopment project on Newport Street including future suggestions for heritage lighting across Victoria Square. To date the project remains on time and on budget for full roll out to be completed within the next three years.

- 3.14 Progress with the **town centre regeneration** projects are also progressing strongly. The development of this project is being led by the Development and Regeneration Department with delivery of the public realm aspect being managed by Environmental Services. As planned the first phase of the stripping out of Newport Street, including the Elephants progressing well and was completed on time including a supporting communications plan. The service remains on track to commence the main physical paving work once the final project brief and the timing around the shop-front aspect of the project is finalised. However these dates are dependent on a range of other factors not least confirmation of the final project brief and the timing around the shop-front aspect of the project. However regardless of these issues the service is committed to developing and laying a trial area of the public realm in the next few weeks so the look and feel of the wider scheme can be appreciated before the project commences in earnest. A regular meeting takes place between the different stakeholders to ensure the project remains focused and on track.

4.0 Supporting the Council to deliver its operational priorities

- 4.1 This section gives an update on some of the major operational priorities.

Managing the Department's Budget

- 4.2 The Department's final outturn position for 2014/15 was a revenue underspend of £104k of its net budget, this has been transferred into a general reserve which the department carries forward into 2015/16. Capital spend for the year totalled £16.691m against the revised budget at quarter 3 of £19.915m. The main larger capital schemes which carry forward into 2015 include Highways' street lighting LED replacement programme, Albert Halls refurbishment programme and the final phase of Queens Park refurbishment. The Department had a target of £3.385m savings and efficiency reductions for the year which were fully achieved.

Health & Safety

- 4.3 Good Health and Safety practices are not just about being socially responsible but they are also important in the wider financial sense. This is particularly true regarding the services provided by Environmental Services, which by their very nature are front line, operational services which carry with them a high risk threshold. The number of accidents within the department this quarter stands at 61, which remains static from the previous quarter. The number of accidents is slightly higher this quarter compared to the same quarter last year, which stood at 58 accidents. The department is continuing to deliver a programme of training and site assessments to ensure that all services operate in a safe environment and continues to tailor mandatory health and safety training to meet departmental needs.

Managing Sickness Absence

- 4.4 Staff absence within the department in quarter 4 is 3.2 days per FTE, compared to 3.9 days at quarter 4 last year. This is largely due to significant improvements in absence levels within the Cleansing & Grounds, Building Cleaning and School Meals areas. Regulatory Services has the highest absence levels compared to last year, with a number of staff absent with Musculoskeletal / Neck or Back problems and Stress related issues. Management have however monitored attendance closely in this area, and all long term absentees have now returned to work with support and/or adjustments where necessary.

Average Days Sickness Per FTE in 2015/16			
Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
3.2 days per FTE	3.7 days per FTE	3.6 days per FTE	4.5 days per FTE

- 4.5 The Department continues to experience issues with long term absence, the principal causes of which are Stress related and Musculoskeletal / Neck or Back problems. At present there are 17 ongoing long term Stress or Musculoskeletal absence cases, 16 of which are front line operational roles mainly within Community Services – in addition there is 1 office based employee. The Department has undertaken significant management action on attendance during the quarter; 89 informal counselling meetings have been held compared with 78 in the same quarter last year and 42 Occupational Health referrals. All current cases, both long and short term are being managed in line with this framework

Requests for Information

- 4.6 The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and the Environmental Information Regulations Act (EIR) are Acts of Parliament that creates a public "right of access" to information held by public authorities. The Council has a legal deadline to answer all FOI/EIR requests within 20 working days, unless clarification or consideration of exemptions is required. The council also responds to Subject Access Requests (where an individual requests to see information held on them), within 40 days. The department received 92 FOI/EIR requests during quarter 4; an increase of 30 from the previous quarter, however, a reduction of 33 from the same period in 2013/14, which illustrates the positive work carried out by the council over the past 12 months, to continue routinely publishing more information online. 97% of requests were answered within the legal deadline. Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department has allocated over 395 hours of officer time on requests during this quarter.

Departmental Complaints

- 4.7 During quarter 488 formal complaints were received by the department, 72 (82%) of which were responded to within standard (14 calendar days). 10 complaints progressed to appeal during the quarter and there were a further 5 appeal cases on-going from previous quarters.

Division & Service Area	Number of complaints received	Number answered in standard	Number progressed to appeal
Community Services			
Albert Halls	1	1	0
Bereavement Services	2	2	0
Highways and Business Development			
Highways and Engineering	13	9	2
Parking Services	11	9	2
Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services			
Neighbourhood Services	17	16	0
Regulatory Services	9	6	2

Waste and Fleet Management			
Waste and Recycling	34	28	4
Cross-cutting			
Highways / Waste	1	1	0
	88	72	10

- 4.8 The Waste and Recycling Service received approximately 37% of the complaints received by the Department in quarter 4. 27 of the 34 complaints received by Waste and Recycling related to the level of service provided; 7 of these were upheld (i.e.: the investigating officer found in favour of the complainant) and 13 were partially upheld. Remedial actions included site visits by Team Leaders, alterations to information on Bartec and reminders being issued to crews. Of the remaining complaints, 3 were partially upheld; these related to a delay in the resident being able to get through to Access Bolton, crews decanting bins and miscommunication regarding the process for applying for an additional grey bin. The majority of the remaining complaints were attributed to Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services (30%), and Highways and Business Development (27%), respectively. 7 of the 17 complaints received by Neighbourhood Services related to unsatisfactory service; none of these were upheld, but an explanation of current service levels was provided to the complainant. 2 of the remaining complaints were upheld and 4 were partially upheld resulting in amendments to records, the provision of additional signage and clarification being provided regarding processes.
- 4.9 Regulatory Services received 9 complaints, 2 of these were upheld and 1 was partially upheld; as a result officers have received refresher training and the process for street trading applications has been reviewed. Several of the complaints were complex and required additional time for investigation; this was explained to the complainants and revised response dates provided. As in previous quarters, the majority of complaints against Highways and Business Development related to challenges to Penalty Charge Notices, none of which were upheld. The remainder of complaints related to highways safety concerns and to road closures; 1 complaint was partially upheld and a Team Leader met with the complainant on site to resolve the issue. A further complaint concerned unsatisfactory service from both the Highways and Engineering, and the Waste and Recycling services. Neither aspect of the complaint was upheld. 3 complaints were received by Community Services; 2 were upheld and 1 was partially upheld resulting in amendments to the website, improved access to a shared email inbox and a group no longer being permitted to hire a venue.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The Environmental Services Department remains on track to deliver its strategic and operational priorities for the Council. Highlights of the report can be found below:
- 1.6% increase in the borough's recycling rate compared to the same period last year
 - Borough cleanliness stands at 94% pass rate
 - 724 volunteers across the borough regularly cleaning up their local areas
 - £1.3m of additional funding awarded to the department over the next 2 years to empower communities to improve their local environment.
 - Reduction of 13% in anti-social behaviour
 - Proposals continue to be worked up as part of the Bolton & Wigan Partnership to achieve savings of £2m to £3m
 - The school meals uptake continues to increase, currently standing at over 20,000 meals delivered per day
 - Over 500 street lighting units installed as part of the £5.5 million pound LED street lighting retro-fitting programme

- Reduction of 0.7 days in staff sickness compared to the same period last year.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment upon and challenge the performance update set out in this report.