

**Report to:** Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**Report of:** Director of Environmental Services

**Report No:** ESSC/09/15a

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**Report Title:** **Departmental Performance Update – Q1 2015/16**

**Confidential /  
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 Q1 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:

- Slight increase in residual waste collected due to additional street cleansing activity
- Increased collections of bulky waste leading to less flytips
- Missed collections remain low
- Council Fleets' CO<sup>2</sup> emissions reduced by over 111 tonnes
- Maintained cleanliness levels across the borough
- Anti-social behaviour reduced by 13%
- Acquisitive crime following a downward trend
- School Meals average approx. 7,930 meals per day
- Health & Safety incidents reduced by 30% in 12 months
- Award won by Bolton Market on energy efficiency

**Recommendations:**

The Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the performance update set out in this report

**Decision:**

**Background Doc(s):**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader / Executive Cabinet  
Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monitoring Officer

**Date:**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This report summarises the performance outturn for quarter 1 of 2015/16 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 significantly over the next few years 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 waste away from the residual waste stream and recycle as much as possible. In July 2015, the Council approved plans to reduce residual waste further and increase recycling by exchanging all 240 litre grey bins in Bolton for slimmer 140 litre bins between June and November 2016. This, complemented with targeted behaviour change programmes, is one of the department's main strategic priorities. During this quarter, the amount of residual waste collected has seen a slight increase of 0.88kg per household compared to the same quarter last year, standing at 119.81kg per household this quarter. This slight increase is due to a small increase in the tonnage of street cleaning waste collected as additional resources are put into maintaining cleanliness standards. The recycling rate has seen a 1.3% reduction this quarter compared to the same quarter last year, which was 42.4% and currently stands at 41.1%. The reduction is a result of a decrease in the tonnage of food and garden waste collected and the extra street cleansing activity. Despite the slight dip in the waste and recycling performance figures, the Service remains on track to meet its stringent savings and performance targets by 2017.

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

- 50:50 Split Recycling Vehicles - In April, the service took delivery of 11 new twin pack recycling vehicles, which are ergonomically friendly with lower noise levels and improved fuel economy. Initial feedback from the crews relating to these vehicles is positive.
- Name the New Recycling Trucks - High-profile campaign delivered, aimed at primary school children to name the new recycling vehicles. 566 entries in total were

received and *Recycleriffic* and the *Greedy Green Machine* are among the newly named trucks which will be collecting residents' recycled rubbish.

- Commercial Waste Leaflet - A new commercial waste leaflet has been produced and distributed to promote commercial waste collections, business-based recycling and responsibilities and duty of care as a business. The leaflet is being used by Council Enforcement and Recycling Officers when speaking to businesses.
- Recycling Billboards - The billboards located at Bolton Market are now complete, which promotes food and garden waste recycling, buying local produce at the market and the benefits of purchasing environmentally friendly compost
- Recycling Promotion - Produced new recycling promotional material in partnership with the Bolton Council of Mosques (BCOM), aimed at advising residents on food waste recycling during Ramadan, which was sent to all Mosques in Bolton and was also published in the BCOM newsletter
- Slim Your Bin Campaign – This campaign encourages those residents who are fully recycling, to swap their current grey bin for a smaller one, in order to protect the environment and to take up less space at home. 100 households have requested a 'slimmer' bin during this quarter, taking the total number of households which have swapped to date to an encouraging 1,867. With effect from Friday 10 July, all residents will receive a 140 litre grey bin when they place an order for a new or replacement bin saving approx. £1.25 million per year in waste disposal costs.
- Bulky Waste - Waste that is too large to be accepted by the regular waste collection provision is known as 'Bulky Waste'. The contract for this service was awarded to Bolton Community Transport Furniture Service (BCTFS) in September 2014. BCTFS is a registered charity, selling reused and new furniture in order to provide transport services for those in need in the local community. The number of bulky waste collections has increased from 343 at the start of the new arrangement with BCTFS to 636 collections during this quarter. This increase is very encouraging as historically, this type of waste would normally be found in illegal flytips around the borough. In addition, the percentage of bulky waste collected which is either reused or recycled has also seen an increase from 28.18% to 34.81% during this quarter, resulting in less waste being disposed of in landfill or by incineration.
- Introduction of Automated Meter Reading Units - United Utilities (UU) has developed a water meter reading solution that operates by attaching a 'data collecting' device to 40 Council waste vehicles. This will collect readings when vehicles pass by properties with a passive read meter. This is proving extremely useful for UU in understanding water consumption, identifying customer issues, such as leaks on their property and ultimately aiding water efficiency for customers. This will entail no extra work for our staff but will generate an income of £6,000 per year.
- Missed Collections – Missed collections remain low, standing at 2,235 this quarter, which equates to 0.002% of over 1 million bins that would be available for collection over the period
- Fleet CO2 Emissions - A reduction in CO2 emissions helps to minimise pollution and reduces the impact of transport on the environment. This quarter, the Fleet Management Service has begun to monitor the CO2 emissions emitted from every Council vehicle and has seen a reduction of over 111 tonnes of CO2 emissions this quarter compared to the same period in 2014/15

### **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 first LEQ survey result of 2015/16 shows an average litter pass rate of 95% across the borough, which is above the community strategy target of maintaining performance over 90%.
- 2.5 Members have allocated additional resources of £1.3m over 2 years to maintain cleanliness levels across the borough and to further develop the behaviour change programme. This has enabled the department to employ additional staff and equipment to carry out a deep clean of the borough in spring and now have dedicated 'Gateway' teams to ensure that the main routes across the borough are at an acceptable standard regarding litter. The funding has also enabled the service to further develop skills within certain street scene teams in key areas across Bolton, which has led to 52% of issues reported within this quarter being effectively dealt with through education or enforcement activity. 32 prosecution case files have been produced with a view to prosecution during this quarter, 11 of which have been brought about by the new Behaviour Change Teams. The bulk of the prosecutions relate to back street waste, fly-tipping and littering type offences.
- 2.6 The department has employed a specialised Trade Waste Officer during this quarter, who has concentrated on targeting businesses which are not disposing of their waste correctly, offering advice and where necessary issuing cautions and fines. The main area of activity is focussed on food premises.

### **Cleaner & Greener - Low Carbon**

- 2.7 Bolton Vision reports on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions across council operations, comprising of emissions from street lighting and council buildings & accommodation. The Bolton Vision target was originally baselined in 2010/11, using the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme calculation, plus an additional tonnage for 'transmission and distribution' of electricity. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) required local authorities to re-calculate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions' figures for 2010/11, due to changes in methodology:

<b>Original Bolton Vision Baseline 2010/11</b>		<b>Re-calculated Bolton Vision Baseline 2010/11</b>	
Buildings and Accommodation	29,536	Buildings and Accommodation	24,747
Street lighting	7,920	Street lighting	9,022
	<b>37,456</b>		<b>33,769</b>

- 2.8 The calculation for 2013/14, using the same methodology as used in Bolton Vision target setting 2010/11:

Buildings and Accommodation	31,678
Street lighting	9,097
	<b>40,775</b>

- 2.9 There have been several changes in the reporting of emissions over 'Phase 1' (2010/14) of the CRC scheme which have resulted in the Bolton Vision baseline and subsequent years' outturns not being objectively comparable.
- 2.10 In 2011/12, a roll-out of Smart Meters (AMR) installed during the year, qualified those sites for inclusion in the calculation. 168 additional properties produced an additional 3,393 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. In 2012/13, smaller sources of electricity supply (known as 03-04 profile classes) were added into the calculation.
- 2.11 The only comparable years in terms of buildings and accommodation emissions would be 2012/13 with 2013/14 as the CRC criteria was the same for both years. This showed a 2,587 CO<sub>2</sub> tonnage decrease, due in part to the investment, improvement and disposal of council stock. The CRC calculation, a statutory requirement, is calculated by Manchester City Council on Bolton's behalf and is based on the period 1 April to 31 March each year. It has to be submitted by the last working day in July. Year 1 of 'Phase 2' of the CRC will be reported in quarter 2 and will make two further changes in methodology:
- All schools and academies which are centrally funded will be excluded.
  - Street lighting will be included.

### **Community Safety Partnership**

- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 Since a large peak in 2013, **anti-social behaviour** has reduced by 13% over the last year and currently stands at 13,813 reported incidents. **Arson**, a challenging issue for the borough, has seen reductions in recent years with primary and secondary fires reducing by 7% compared to the same period last year. The total number of crimes in this quarter has increased by 12% compared to Q1 last year, despite a drop in crime since 2012. This is due in the main to an increase in **violent offences** (increased by 44%) and sexual offences (increased by 42%). Further analytical work is currently underway on the rise in violence, to determine how the Partnership responds to this issue. However, the increase reflects the Greater Manchester trend with evidence at a national level suggesting that some of the latest increases in sexual offences are likely to be a result of high-profile cases such as Operation Yewtree, having an impact locally on reporting. This rise shows an increased confidence to report sexual offences. Furthermore, a renewed focus on the quality of crime recording by the police in the light of the on-going inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) into crime statistics, and the UK Statistics Authority's decision to remove the National Statistics designation from recorded crime, may have led to improved compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in police forces.
- 2.14 **Acquisitive crime** has largely followed a downward trend since 2012. During this quarter, burglary offences decreased by 2%, robbery by 18%, and vehicle offences by 11% when compared to last year. Domestic abuse offences rose by 25% compared to last year. Research highlights that domestic violence has, historically, been vastly underreported to the police and increases are seen as a positive step identifying a greater number of victims who can access support services. Like sexual offences, **domestic abuse** has been subject to HMIC inspections which have resulted in increased activity and enhanced front-line training to police officers. Domestic abuse and violence is a complex and cross cutting

issue that affects health, social care, housing, crime outcomes. Bolton's Domestic Abuse & Violence Strategy has worked to coordinate multi-agency responses to this issue. This includes seasonal campaigns to increase awareness and the support services available. It has also focused services outside of the Criminal Justice System, particularly within health, to identify and support victims that may not have come to the attention of the police. This issue is a key priority for the Be Safe Partnership which prioritises safeguarding high risk victims while improving delivery models to intervene early.

- 2.15 **Hate crime**, like domestic abuse, is underreported with a 9% increase seen over the last year. In Bolton, hate crime follows a similar picture to that at a national level where race related hate crimes make up the largest portion of crime reported to the police. Hate crimes can be an important 'signal crime' to measure tension and cohesion within communities. Partnership work in this area involves actively encouraging victims to report incidents. This will be strengthened further via the development of a local Hate Crime Strategy and Action Plan, co-ordinating partnership activity in this area.

### 3.0 Departmental Strategic Priorities

#### **Bolton/Wigan Partnership**

- 3.1 The Bolton & Wigan Partnership proposal aims to achieve savings of £2m (per council), through the joint delivery of large parts of the environmental services provision across both councils. In order to maximise the opportunities for savings and to maximise the available capacity to implement any changes required, a phased approach to delivery has been developed. In essence, this allows for a series of "quick wins" in phase 1, followed by a programme of service-by-service change to deliver the savings projected for phases 2 and 3. In order to identify the phase 1 quick wins and to allow planning of further opportunities in phases 2 and 3, a series of "enablers" have been identified which should yield some savings in the early stages of implementation. The key areas being examined are fuel, stores, vehicles, food procurement, general procurement and efficiencies from implementing technological solutions. Mapping of these enablers has resulted in a number of efficiency opportunities being identified.
- 3.2 In addition, in order to understand current provision in each authority, (so that proposals for future delivery models can be developed), senior officers in both authorities have completed Policy Framework Templates for all of the in-scope services. This allowed a comparison of service provision between the two partners, which in turn will lead to proposals for the new service models and an assessment of any associated savings and impacts. An update report on the Bolton/Wigan Partnership Development Work is due to go to Executive Cabinet Member in October 2015.

#### **Community Services**

- 3.3 Most of the external works from the refurbishment at **Bolton Market** such as the installation of bollards and line marking have now been completed. However, there are still a number of outstanding issues and on-going maintenance. Market Management are liaising with Highways and CPS colleagues to complete the project. All shops are now rented and the overall occupancy remains high. All food traders except one now hold Level 3 Food Hygiene certificates, which the new Market Management have set as a minimum requirement and Market staff are supporting the trader to ensure they meet the required standard at their next inspection. The Market won the 'Love Energy Savings Innovative Saver Award 2015' for the cardboard recycling baler which reduces landfill and waste disposal costs.

- 3.4 A new monthly Artisan Market has been established at **Heaton Fold Garden Centre** which aims to increased footfall and revenue to the garden centre. The new weekend café has been well received but takings are lower than expected and this will be monitored. There have been 3 new referrals from Adult Services.
- 3.5 The **Bereavement Services** Manager and the Head of Service have applied to join the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) which will enable Bereavement Services staff to benefit from the ICCM's professional advice and training courses. During the summer months, the Service makes the best use of our limited staffing resources to maintain the grounds to a satisfactory standard. There are seven permanent staff employed on cemeteries covering burials and maintenance on over 150 acres of land at 8 council cemeteries (Tonge, Heaton, Astley Bridge, Farnworth, Horwich, Blackrod, Westhoughton and Heaton Cemetery Extension). The Service is also required to maintain closed churchyards at Dean Church, Horwich Parish Church and St James' New Bury. During the summer, the open grassed areas are mowed on a 20 day cycle which is the standard for parks and open spaces within the Borough. Cemetery maintenance requires more labour intensive strimming during the summer period. The Service invests more hours into cemetery maintenance with an additional 4 x cemetery maintenance staff across the cemeteries and also use Community Payback teams at Westhoughton and Blackrod cemeteries. During the first quarter, the Service experienced some problems with vehicles / machinery and staff sickness, which resulted in some complaints in relation to Astley Bridge and Farnworth, which were both addressed by the end of quarter one.
- 3.6 Unprecedented increases in **school meals** numbers this year can now be reported. The final term to July 2015, of Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) completes year 1 of the initiative in the academic year. Financial year end figures show a new set of values since the introduction in September 2014 for key stage 1 pupils including:
- Uptake of the new benefit has averaged 7,930 meals per day in Key Stage 1 which is 49.2% of the primary school meals trade.
  - Statutory free meals have averaged 3,905 meals per day or 24.2% of the total trading.
  - The paid customers in key stage 2 have the discounted £1.25 meal funded by Public Health and this equates to 26.6% of the total meals.
- 3.7 Importantly, the average uptake across the sector for the new UIFSMs is 88.1 %. This reveals that Bolton as a borough exceeds the 87% government target which determines funding levels for the benefit. From this, managers can identify those schools who are not hitting the 87% target and there is focused support for these schools available to try and increase the take up. The Service will be offering advice to schools to help them tackle the under-performers to reduce the risk of reduced funding. The School Meals team members are especially pleased that original estimates of the increases have turned out to be exact with a 15% estimate for increased trade and 350,000 more meals anticipated last spring for the 14/15 academic and financial year.
- 3.8 The average uptake for the whole sector is 74% of roll with an average of 19,411 meals per day from a total on roll of 26,113 pupils. Last year, the average daily primary meal numbers were 15,785. This is excellent in terms of improved performance standing at 23% for the year. To compare with the previous year's performance pre UIFSM, the increase is as follows:
- 15.5% increase of total uptake at 74% ( 2013/14 - 64.1 % )
  - 11.6% increase in the number of meals or 354,387 additional since September ( compared to 13/14)



- In term 3 – Q1 of 2015/16, there is an expectation of a further 170,000 more meals allowing for the seasonal downturn at 4%.
- Anticipated total additional meals for the next 3 terms (i.e. full financial year) is 525,000 primary meals more than before the new benefit.

- 3.9 The £1.25 discounted key stage 2 meal has had confirmation from Members that it will continue at this price until December 2015 and with the intention of a further review.
- 3.10 The electronic technology project was progressed from March 2015 and in Q1 Cypad was installed from mid-May with all primary schools at the transition position from June. Training was completed for all primary and field managers. In addition, a new framework contract for e-technology for monitoring is now. This development will remove future need to procure this important technology by letting complicated contracts which are expensive and time-consuming to prepare.
- 3.11 BHEYS (Bolton Health Early Years), the joint project with the Health Improvement Team for nutrition support for pre-school nursery children, has continued to be successful this year, with 7 nurseries completing and reporting good feedback on nutrition awareness and compliance for nursery refreshments. Ten more nurseries have signed up from September 2015. The School Meal Service's role in this excellent scheme is to provide menu planning training and meal compliance support to the nurseries so that they meet government standards. The nurseries pay for this provision.

### **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 quarter 1:
- Illicit tobacco - Operation supported by GMP; tobacco sniffer dog and Immigration partners. An amount of illicit tobacco was discovered, totalling 381 packets of cigarettes and 44 packets of tobacco. Of these, 92 packets of cigarettes and 5 packets of tobacco were counterfeit. Fines resulting from prosecutions: £10,000 (£5,000 for the Trade Mark offences and £5,000 for Consumer Protection offences) and ordered to pay £1,758 in costs plus £120 victim surcharge.
  - Taxis - The approved garages private hire and hackney carriage vehicle testing resulted in 136 vehicles being suspended during the quarter. Defects included tyres worn down to the cords, brakes not working, seatbelts missing and excessive corrosion of suspension.
  - Reviewed Regulatory Service and partners processes for tackling child sexual exploitation following the Rotherham Report. Identified robust measures to be implemented. Multi-agency action plan prepared to improve areas where necessary.
  - Food safety - Advice on new legal requirements in relation to food standards legislation has been provided to over 1,000 businesses, including manufacturers and caterers. Caterers are now required to be able to identify the 14 specified allergens contained in the foods they sell and be able to provide this information to customers. Allergens include mustard and celery as well as more easily recognisable ones such as nuts and eggs.

### **Highways and Engineering & Town Centre Public Realm**

- 3.13 The council continues to progress strongly against its **town centre regeneration** plans across a number of fronts. The overall Master plan is being delivered by colleagues in the Development and Regeneration Department and covers a range of physical developments, new builds and improvements to the shopping offer across various locations in and around the town centre. Complementing this work is the ambitious public realm scheme on Newport Street being delivered by the department, which is pivotal as this area represents a key gateway linking the new interchange into the wider key shopping zones.
- 3.14 The original plan was for the scheme to start the build process on site in advance of the Food and Drink Festival with the programme due to take around a year to complete. However, following the continued growth in the Food and Drink Festival and the unprecedented demand from traders, the decision was taken to halt the work following the initial first phase 'strip out', in order that Newport Street could be used as a trading site thus maximising the available space.
- 3.15 Whilst this planned delay has pushed back the start date, Highways and Engineering have progressed a number of elements such as putting in place the planned lighting test bed near the Octagon Car Park as well as stripping out much of the street furniture in preparation for the work to be able to commence after the Food and Drink Festival. Once the work commences, the Council remains confident the scheme will be completed as soon as possible and is being overseen by a multidisciplinary project team.
- 3.16 The council continues to progress strongly with our **LED street-lighting programme**. The aim of which is to reduce electricity costs and the organisation's carbon footprint, whilst improving lighting which will have both a positive impact on the fear of crime and road safety. To date, 3,150 units have been installed with less than 20 complaints having been received, all of which were concerned with the intensity of the light. All these complaints have now been addressed through installing plates, re-adjusting the lanterns & dimming lighting levels remotely through the mobile solution system. The project delivery arrangements amongst our suppliers, logistic and installation partners, continues to perform at the desired optimum levels. Current activity is focused in Heaton, Tonge & Westhoughton areas.
- 3.17 Highways Services has successfully completed the major highway works to facilitate the Logistics North development, currently Bolton's most important enterprise venture. The scheme was funded mainly through a successful bid by Highways to the Department for Transport, through the national Pinch Point Fund, with the developer providing additional private sector investment, totalling £2.1m. Highways Services has also successfully tendered to provide reactive and capital drainage works for Bolton at Home. This will help to retain skills and give further business opportunities to the Service.

### **Civil Contingencies**

- 3.18 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the council has a statutory duty to have contingency plans in place to ensure the borough's resources and staff are equipped to deal with a crisis situation effectively, while continuing to provide the usual day-to-day services of the Council. The Act classes local authorities in the same category as the police services, fire brigade, health authorities, environment agency, ambulance services, coastguards and port authorities. In an emergency situation the Council will provide support to the Emergency Services, co-ordinate the work of the voluntary sector, warn & inform the public, provide humanitarian assistance, provide community leadership and lead the recovery

phase. Bolton is also supported by the Greater Manchester-wide Civil Contingencies Resilience Unit, which assists in the delivery of various strategic functions. During this quarter, the Team has:

- organised and delivered its bi-annual multi agency 'Introduction to Civil Contingencies' course to over 30 staff from across the council, the emergency services and local voluntary responders
- delivered presentations to local voluntary groups to help them prepare for the winter months
- organised and delivered a multi-agency training exercise as part of the Iron Man Bolton event
- delivered a Chief Officer 'Response Arrangement' training, including a visit to the Command Module at Greater Manchester Police Force's Head Quarters
- reviewed the overarching Emergency Management Plan
- produced the newly created Bolton's Emergency Welfare Plan, which incorporates the Rest Centre Plan and the Supporting People Plan

#### **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 was tasked with finding £1.7m of savings in 2015/16; 100% of this target is anticipated to be achieved. Revenue expenditure is projected to underspend against the budget by £109,000 after planned reserve movements. There is one main revenue variances for the Albert Halls which closed in February for refurbishment works and the revenue impact of this closure has been planned for. Capital expenditure for the quarter was £3.199m against a revised programme of £30.647m. The highways capital programme at quarter one has an available budget of £14.810m whilst the non-highways capital programme for 2015/16 has an available budget of £14.810m. The Department has a projected general reserve of £213,536 for the end of the year.

##### **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 department is continuing to deliver a programme of training and site assessments to ensure that all services operate in a safe environment. The department has reduced the number of staff related incidents, which currently stands at 39 during this quarter. This is a reduction of 30% compared to Q4 2014/15 and a 7% decrease compared to the same quarter last year, which highlights the importance of tailoring mandatory health and safety training to meet departmental needs.

### **Managing Sickness Absence**

- 4.4 Staff absence within the Department in quarter 1 is 3.5 days per FTE, compared to 3.2 days at quarter 1 last year.

<b>Average Days Sickness Per FTE in 2015/16</b>			
<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>
3.5 days per FTE			

- 4.5 The increase has been largely seen in Community Services with a number of staff absent with Musculoskeletal / Neck or Back problems and Stress related issues. However, attendance is being monitored closely by the management team.
- 4.6 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 44 on-going long term absence cases, 41 of which are front line operational roles mostly within the Community Services division. The Department has undertaken significant management action on attendance during the quarter:
- 91 informal counselling meetings have been held compared with 97 in the same quarter last year
  - 48 OH referrals
  - 5 warnings were issued
  - 3 medical incapacity dismissals have been made compared with 1 dismissal in the same quarter last year
- 4.7 All current cases, both long and short term are being managed in line with this framework.

### **Requests for Information**

- 4.8 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 59 FOI/EIR requests during this quarter; a decrease of 33 from the previous quarter, which illustrates the positive work carried out by the council to continue routinely publishing more information online. 98% of requests were answered within the legal deadline. Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department has allocated over 254 hours of officer time on requests during this quarter.

### **Departmental Complaints**

- 4.9 During quarter 1, 98 formal complaints were received by the department, 89 (91%) of which were responded to within standard (14 calendar days). 6 complaints progressed to appeal during the quarter and there were a further 6 appeal cases on-going from previous quarters.

Division & Service Area	Number of complaints received	Number answered in standard	Number progressed to appeal
<b>Community Services</b>			
Bereavement Services	4	3	1
Supported Employment	1	0	0
<b>Highways and Engineering Services</b>			
Highways and Engineering	17	15	1
Parking Services	9	9	0
<b>Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services</b>			
Neighbourhood Services	16	16	0
Regulatory Services	6	5	1
<b>Waste and Fleet Management</b>			
Waste and Recycling	44	40	3
<b>Cross-cutting</b>			
Services within both Environmental Services and Development and Regeneration	1	1	0
	<b>98</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>6</b>

- 4.10 The Waste and Recycling Service received approximately 45% of the complaints received by the Department in quarter 1. 35 of the 44 complaints received by Waste and Recycling related to the level of service provided; 4 of these were upheld (i.e.: the investigating officer found in favour of the complainant) and 15 were partially upheld. Remedial actions included site visits by Team Leaders, alterations to information on Bartec and reminders being issued to crews.
- 4.11 Of the remaining complaints, 1 was upheld and 1 was partially upheld; both of these related to collection crews and resulted in Team Leaders speaking to the staff involved and letters of apology being issued. The majority of the remaining complaints were attributed to Highways and Parking Services (27%), and Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services (22%) respectively. As with Waste and Recycling, the majority of complaints against Highways and Engineering Services related to the level of service. Of these complaints, 15 in total, 6 were upheld and 2 were partially upheld resulting in minor works being undertaken and some alterations to street lights.
- 4.12 Parking Services received 9 complaints, 1 of which was upheld and 3 were partially upheld; each of these was referred back to our Parking Enforcement Contractor to be dealt with under their policies and procedures as they related to the behaviour and/or decisions of their staff. 12 of the 16 complaints received by Neighbourhood Services related to unsatisfactory service; 2 of these were upheld and 2 were partially upheld, resulting in teams returning to site to complete work, an additional site inspection and an explanation of current service levels being provided to one complainant. None of the remaining complaints received by the service were upheld, nor were any of the complaints (6 in total) received by Regulatory Services.
- 4.13 5 complaints were received by Community Services. 4 of these related to Bereavement Services; 2 were upheld and 1 was partially upheld resulting in additional resources being deployed to carry out grounds maintenance works. A further complaint related to

Supported Employment and was upheld, resulting in some minor repairs at Heaton Fold. 1 complaint concerned unsatisfactory service from a number of services within both Environmental Services and Development and Regeneration, and a request to meet with the respective Directors. Neither aspect of the complaint was upheld. 4 compliments were received during the period. These related to exemplary customer service from a member of staff in Bereavement Services and customer satisfaction with the installation of LED lighting, fly tip removal and the bulky waste collection service.

## **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:

- Slight increase in residual waste collected due to additional street cleansing activity
- Increased collections of bulky waste leading to less flytips
- Missed collections remain low
- Council Fleets' CO<sup>2</sup> emissions reduced by over 111 tonnes
- Maintained cleanliness levels across the borough
- Anti-social behaviour reduced by 13%
- Acquisitive crime following a downward trend
- School Meals average approx. 7,930 meals per day
- Health & Safety incidents reduced by 30% in 12 months
- Energy efficiency award given to Bolton Market

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 The Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the performance update set out in this report.