

CHILTERN & WYCOMBE JOINT WASTE COLLECTION COMMITTEE (JWCC)

Date

Contingency Plans – inclement weather

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RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Waste Collection Committee considers which collection recovery options are acceptable, in the event of service disruption caused by inclement weather.

1. Background

Recent spells of inclement weather have resulted in service disruption to waste collections.

Assessment of conditions has on occasion deemed it unsafe for the service to continue. Decisions to suspend services for health and safety reasons have been made collaboratively between the client and contractor.

Operating in icy/snowy conditions presents considerable risk to the public and operational personnel. For these reasons it has been necessary to suspend services.

Although seasonal, the likelihood that further inclement weather may affect waste collection services is highly probable. The likelihood that instances may occur more frequently should be taken into account.

It is necessary to review contingency plans that have been implemented recently, consider all options for service contingency available and potentially identify a preferred contingency method for service recovery.

2. Local area/health and safety

Substantial snowfall and sub-zero conditions have impacted the service on two occasions in the past four months. Whilst these recent weather conditions have been unusual, the chance of snowfall and icy conditions hitting the region is not uncommon.

In an area dominated by hills, road gritting treatment carried out by the Highway Authority prioritising A-roads and arterial routes around the town centres, ice/snow on side roads, rural areas and footpaths (left untreated) often remain hazardous.

In these situations the safety of the public and operational personnel must be our priority.

3. Decision making process and Service recovery

The client team work collaboratively with the contractor in deciding whether conditions are safe to operate in.

We assess conditions on the day, taking into account local conditions from across the region; look at snowfall; current and predicted weather conditions; conditions on side roads and underfoot; deployment of gritters and local gritting activity.

Priority must be public safety. Suspending waste collection services is not a decision taken lightly.

Disruption to services is not an easy position to recover from and is a decision we would rather not take. However, it is, at times, necessary and effectively communicating this decision and subsequent recovery is critical.

In situations when service is suspended, our aim and focus should be to minimise disruption and the inconvenience for those affected. It is preferable to recover the service as quickly as possible, to reduce its impact.

4. Contingency Plan – options

The table below presents options for five service recovery plans. Each plan highlights the pros and cons for adopting.

Plan	Detail	Pros	Cons
A	Suspend Garden Waste collections (also affects Food waste collections occurring at the same time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Free up resource to prioritise statutory waste collections of rubbish & recycling, used by <u>all</u> ii) Minimises disruption for a quick and clean recovery iii) Typically use of GW service during winter months is reduced iv) Terms & Conditions for GW service make allowance for disruption caused by inclement weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Subscribers to the chargeable service may feel aggrieved/ request compensation ii) We would be unable to collect food waste from the properties
B	Cancel all waste collections for areas affected by disruption (until next scheduled collection)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Removes the need for service recovery plan/ need to catch-up ii) Quick and clean recovery for prolonged period of service disruption iii) Remove excess waste on next scheduled collection iv) No return for reported 'misses' for areas affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Potential for public backlash and negative media coverage ii) Potential for increased reports of missed collections to be managed/ administrated iii) Control the amounts of excess waste collected iv) Operational impact collecting excess waste – heavier loads, increased tip frequency, longer working day/s and regulation of driving working hours v) medium/high scale service disruption

C	Use of Saturday/s to catch-up with collection day/s dropped in affected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) No disruption to waste collections, once conditions allow for safe resumption for majority ii) Minimises disruption to just those affected by the loss of collection day/s iii) clean recovery and easy to communicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Potential to cause frustration for residents delayed ii) Potential for increased reports of 'missed' collections iii) Limitations/conditions on disposal point availability for weekend tipping iv) Potential cost implications for overtime working
D	Run a revised schedule similar to bank holiday working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Only effective if disruption is no more than one day – minimal disruption or delay ii) Easy to implement iii) Service arrangements residents are familiar with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) not as effective if disruption is more than one day and would run into a second week of recovery ii) Limitations/ conditions on disposal point availability for weekend tipping iii) Potential cost implications for overtime working iv) All collections for all properties would slip by a day
E	Collect only from those roads that are accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Some properties receive a collection ii) Disruption might be reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Potential for increase in reportable accidents and near misses ii) Some properties will not receive a collection/ or experience a delay in collections. iii) Effectively communicating reliable service updates is a challenge iv) Monitoring and measuring progress is unreliable and could become arduous. Requires resource to administrate v) Is not clean or efficient and has the potential to create service failure if not managed effectively vi) Resource must be diverted to revisit roads not completed

5. Contingency Plan – scenarios

We've looked at 5 possible scenarios that might occur in the event of inclement weather. Each scenario has a recommendation for a contingency recovery plan.

Scenario	Description	Recommendation
1	Disruption caused by inclement weather. Waste collection services are suspended for no more than one day. Service suspension occurs Monday – Thursday.	C or D – subject to tipping conditions
2	Disruption caused by inclement weather. Waste collection services are suspended for no more than one day. Service suspension occurs Friday.	C or D – Assumption it is safe to resume service the next day (Saturday) and tipping facilities will be open (subject to BCC approval). Otherwise 'D' would impact all collections for the following week. Subject to tipping

		conditions
3	Disruption caused by inclement weather. Waste collection services are suspended for two days. Service suspension occurs Monday - Friday.	A – quicker recovery D – Would require two weeks to recover; in effect two working Saturday's. Longer recovery. All commodities collected. Subject to tipping conditions
4	Disruption caused by inclement weather. Waste collection services are suspended for three days. Service suspension occurs Monday - Friday.	A – quicker recovery
5	Disruption caused by inclement weather. Waste collection services are suspended for a minimum of four days.	B – Would be hard to recover from this position. 'B' is the cleanest recovery plan.

6. Conclusion

We have presented 5 probable scenarios that may result in short to medium term service disruption for waste collections.

These scenarios and recommended recovery plans are based on assumptions. Other mitigating circumstances might impact decision making when looking to implement a service recovery plan. It is therefore important to consider all options in changing situations and circumstances, when identifying an appropriate recovery plan.

It is important that we identify recovery plans early, to ensure timely and effective communication with customers and stakeholders. It is our aim to keep the public and our operatives safe. It is also our intention to ensure service recovery is quick and efficient as circumstances allow.

The operational decision on whether it is safe to conduct collections in inclement conditions must sit with the contractor, in discussion with waste officers. However, given the potential disruption to residents, it is useful to have the support of Cabinet Members with the recommended options that are highlighted above for each scenario..

We are looking to the JWCC to agree in principle to the recommendations presented in this report.