

Note

Date received: 10 March 2019

Time:

MCC Waste and recycling collections update

As I am sure you are aware the new collections started last Monday. These are one of the biggest operational changes that Monmouthshire has undertaken for waste collections. At a resident level this was the introduction of a separate glass collection service, at an operational level this was the full remodelling of our collections and bulking systems.

To give this some context, we collect from approximately 44,000 households and that used to equate to 102,000 collections per week. From March 4th we have reduced this to 80,000 collections per week but included separation of all the materials streams to minimise reprocessing costs. Over the course of the fortnightly collections cycle we will have carried out 160,000 collections and all have them were changed for March 4th. We used to keep three material streams separate we now keep six separate.

We have had a number of teething problems, some within our control and some outside of our control. I've highlighted the main issues below and what we are doing to rectify them. We have learnt many lessons regarding changes on this scale but hopefully I won't have to use this new knowledge again for many years.

There's been several teething problems with the new vehicles. We had planned for this, it always happens, but they came thicker and faster than we could ever have expected. We will be seeking compensation back from the manufacturers but recognise that doesn't help the residents that had collection issues this week. The crews worked on well past their normal working hours with some out until 7pm. They are at the front line for our residents and I can not thank them enough for their commitment, dedication and professionalism. Residents that took

their bags and boxes back in by 3pm either reported a missed collection or are holding on to them for this week. We are expecting it to be busy and heavy and will ask residents to leave bags out until 6pm this week.

The changes to the routes and how that feeds into My Council Services were complex and there were some inconsistencies between the two. We couldn't operate two collections calendar systems in the run up to changes. As such "Alerts" related to the old collections details in some areas and this conflicted with the info in the leaflet. People who received their new collections day letter and then checked the web before the 4th would also have seen their old collections info, this was compounded further with the complexity of the mapping data. The mapping issues also affected a small number of the collection route maps and although the residents had their correct collection day letters it didn't pull through to the crews maps. Some residents put their waste out at a communal collection point or at the rear of their property which has a different post code. In some circumstances this may be collected by different lorries on different days, this is an iterative process and we will work with those small numbers of residents to find the best solution. The vast majority of people who followed the info in the letter received a collection as normal. These issues are mostly internal and we have worked to debug the system ready for this week's collections.

Some residents missed the "March on .." media attention that's been given to the introduction of the glass boxes and didn't report that they had not received a box until after the 4th. Some boxes went missing from doorsteps during the initial deliveries as they are highly prized as shed and attic tidies. We have delivered boxes in the evenings and on the last two weekends so hopefully this is now rectified. We have made boxes available in the Hubs for next week and will monitor this going forward to ensure it is a workable solution for hub staff.

The Contact Centre and Hubs have been extremely busy with enquiries on the recycling review and also with garden waste permit renewals. We removed some of the self-service forms in a bid to resolve some of the box delivery and mapping issues but this put additional pressure on the phone lines. We have extra resources to cope with demand this week and we are reopening the self-service channels and creating

additional self-service forms. Please encourage residents to report issues through the My Monmouthshire portal so we can manage and resource demand efficiently and effectively. If they are wanting additional info they can also use Monty as all the FAQs are available.

We know that many residents believe waste collections are the only service the council provides for them. We understand how fragile this symbiotic relationship can be and how altering any part of it can be perceived as a personal affront. Please ask them to bear with us and give your positive support for the collection crews, contact centre and hub staff who are doing their very best at the front line to get the issues resolved. The recycling review will improve our recycling services and minimise costs going forward. Changes on this scale can't be phased in operationally but this is part of a long term solution that requires these big changes.

If you would like myself or the team to attend meetings and events to update you and the public on progress let me know. We will be happy to come along and provide all the information we have and listen to residents' concerns.

Thank you in anticipation of your continued support