

Committee: Port Health and Environmental Service Committee	Date: 21 July 2020
Subject: Update on the temporary alterations to Cleansing Service activities in response to Covid-19	Public
Report of: Carolyn Dwyer, Director of the Built Environment	For Decision
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Summary

In response to the Covid-19 outbreak the Cleansing Service made changes to the services and activities it provides. This report provides an update on those changes, including two services that have been resumed (bookable bulky waste collections from individual properties and textile bank collections) and the activities that remain temporarily amended or ceased.

It details how Cleansing Service officers will continue to monitor footfall in the City, the reopening of businesses in the City, and changes to government guidance and Public Health England regarding “lockdown” rules and safe working practices in order to review the service provision on a daily and weekly basis. Further changes to services may still be required in response to staff shortages or to provide resilience for the most critical activities and regular updates will be provided to this committee.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Cleansing Service provides a range frontline services and activities, either directly or via its Waste Collection and Street Cleansing contractor, Veolia Environmental Services (VES). VES provide services and activities including the collection of all types of domestic waste and recycling, along with a wide range of street cleansing activities. These services have been provided by VES since 06 April 2019.
2. The Cleansing Service directly provides four attended public conveniences, located at Tower Hill, Paternoster Square, Royal Exchange and Eastcheap, along with four Automated Public conveniences and four Urilifts across the City of London. The Cleansing Service also provides a range of communications and campaigns aimed at promoting responsible behaviour in the City and increasing recycling and awareness of sustainability issues.

Current Position

3. In response to the Covid-19 outbreak the Cleansing Service made changes to these services and activities in order to ensure the health and safety of staff (both directly employed by the City of London Corporation and those employed to carry out activities on behalf of the City Corporation through contractors) and the wider public. Changes to services and activities were also required due to constraints and actions of suppliers, and to provide resilience for critical services such as waste collection, transfer and disposal should staff shortages place them at risk.
4. The changes to the services were detailed to this committee in two previous reports. The Cleansing Service has continued to review all activities that are currently not being provided (or provided in an altered form), in line with advice from government and Public Health England regarding safe working practices and public safety during the Covid-19 outbreak, and has been able to resume to the following two services:
 - Temporary cessation of bookable bulky waste collections from domestic properties.
 - Temporary closure of the textile collection banks.
 - Temporary closure of the Urilifts.
5. The collection of bulky waste will only be from outside the property and all soft furnishings will be treated with disinfectant before removal by crews wearing specialist PPE.
6. The following Cleansing Service activities remain changed:
 - Temporary closure of the four attended public conveniences.
 - Temporary closure of the Automated Public Toilets.
 - Cessation of the garden waste trial.
 - Cancellation of face-to-face recycling and sustainability campaigns and events.
 - Disconnection of the water supply to the City's ornamental fountains and water refill points.
 - Temporary changes to the street cleansing activities to provide a responsive approach that focusses on increased power washing and less manual sweeping during the day, along with increased washing activities at night.
7. An ongoing daily and weekly review will continue with Cleansing Services officers closely monitoring footfall in the City, the return and reopening of businesses in the City, and changes to central government guidance regarding "lockdown" rules and safe working practices.
8. Further changes to services may be required in response to staff shortages or to provide resilience for the most critical activities. Any further changes will be brought to this committee in a separate report.

9. These alterations will continue to be reported to the Gold Group and the Chair/Deputy Chairman of the Port Health and Environmental Committee who will be kept informed of proposed service changes throughout.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. During the Covid-19 outbreak the City of London Corporation has a paramount obligation to ensure the safety of its staff and the public. The changes to the services and activities detailed in this report will ensure the City Corporation still maintains its legal obligations under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 whilst reducing possible risks to its own staff, those of its contractors and the public.

Implications

11. It is not anticipated that these changes will incur any additional costs to the service for the functions outlined in this report to be resumed. However, there are likely to be significant additional costs and loss of income going forward, which will be recorded and reported to the Chamberlain's department as required and will be brought to this committee in a subsequent report.

Conclusion

12. The temporary cessation of many services remains necessary to ensure the health and safety of the City of London Corporation and its contractors' staff along with the general public during the Covid-19 outbreak. These temporary changes will be kept under review and services and activities will be reinstated as soon as it is safe to do so, in consultation with the City Corporation's strategic command structure and following government and Public Health England guidance.

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