

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		PSEG/12/17
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	23 March 2017	
TACKLING THE ILLEGAL DISPOSAL OF WASTE AT RCHW CENTRES: PROGRESS REPORT ON OPERATIONAL CHANGES TO RECYCLING CENTRES (Minute 7/ 12 September 2016)		
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On 12 September 2016 (Minute 7) the Committee received a report setting out the call in and subsequent withdrawal of that call in by Councillor Chris Pond of decision FP/566/08/16 Tackling the illegal disposal of waste at RCHW centres (Recycling Centres for Household Waste).

A copy of the September committee report PSEG/18/16 setting out details on the decision and the call in can be found on the Committee Management System published on the Council's website via the following link: [September report](#)

As part of his response to concerns raised in the call in Councillor Walsh, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste, undertook to bring a full impact report back to the Scrutiny Committee six months after implementation of the decision for debate. By doing so he suggested that the Committee would have an opportunity to evaluate the impact of the decision before any further necessary refinements or amendments would be made to the policy.

Although it is only a little over three months since the changes were introduced, Councillor Walsh has provided a detailed progress report, which is attached at the Appendix to this report, and he will be attending the meeting to address the Committee.

### **Key lines of enquiry for today's meeting**

1. What changes to the RCHW Service were implemented in October 2016? These are set out in the attached briefing paper.
2. What has been the impact of those changes? These are addressed in the briefing paper under a heading of 'Nature of the Changes'.

3. Does the Cabinet Member consider that any changes are necessary as a result of the evaluation of his decision?

**Action required by the Committee:**

**The Committee is invited to consider the Cabinet Member's briefing paper on the outcomes of his decision to end the acceptance of certain waste materials at different recycling centres.**

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**Appendix (to committee report)**

# **Operational changes to recycling centres**

**Progress report to  
Scrutiny Committee**

**March 2017**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Report purpose**

During the decision-making process of 'FP/566/08/16 *Tackling the illegal disposal of business waste at Recycling Centres for Household Waste*', the Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste committed to undertake a review of the project's outcomes, with a view to openly evaluating whether any element of the decision had had any unintended negative impacts. The purpose of the review would be to identify whether any fine-tuning was called for.

### **Report summary**

With effect from Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016, a number of operational changes were implemented across Essex County Council's estate of twenty-one recycling centres for household waste (RCHW).

The primary objectives of the changes were to:

1. tackle and reduce the level of illegal disposal of business waste at RCHWs; and
2. reduce the overall traffic volume at our sites, and particularly our more constrained sites most of which were never designed to deal with the population growth Essex has experienced over the last 20 years; together
3. improving the operational 'up-time' of the sites and ensuring local access for the most commonly disposed of materials, whilst maintaining some disposal facilities for waste types for which Essex County Council has no legal obligation to provide

This report compares the tonnages of certain materials deposited during the period November 2016 to January 2017 inclusive with the same period 12 months previously. The materials tracked were those which feature regularly amongst disposals from small businesses and independent traders: soil, hardcore, wood, plasterboard, garden waste and residual waste.

The report also compares the traffic count across the two periods, with small sites seeing a 24% reduction in traffic and all but two large sites – which saw small increases - also seeing a reduction. Observing whether the migration of customers and their waste from small sites with more strict rules to larger sites offering the broadest service was a key feature of this review, and the outcomes confirm that larger sites have not experienced excess new demand.

The results have no other formal benchmark, as it was not possible to accurately estimate the incidence of business waste abuse prior to the changes being implemented, though spot checks indicated that many sites saw around a third of their waste delivered in commercial-type vehicles.

At the three-month stage, compared to the 2015/16 reference period, the changes indicate that a significant fall in both tonnages (a reduction of 5,564 tonnes (21.7%) of the tracked materials across the period) and traffic delivered to the sites.

All sites, with the exception of Maldon RCHW, saw a reduction in residual (non-recyclable) waste deposited, giving a total reduction of 2,125 tonnes (17.7%) across the three-month period. Maldon's increase was marginal (17 tonnes; 3%) and is explained by the district council's recent switch to a fortnightly collection of residual waste at the kerbside. Disposal of single black bags which could better have been managed at the kerbside is a recurring observation by site operatives which could, through further education of householders, improve traffic flows at RCHWs.

At 1,677 tonnes (27.5%), the reduction in wood is also noteworthy, though all materials monitored saw a decrease during the period.

Pitsea RCHW is notable in being the site, which despite significant support, has suffered from the most significant issues with unacceptable customer behaviour.

Vehicle numbers have reduced significantly but additional monitoring shows that more vans are used by private individuals carrying genuine household waste than originally perceived. This means that Veolia, the RCHW operations contractor, will have to ensure that staff at large sites continue to ensure that robust measures to screen for business waste, without hindering access to householders, continue to be implemented.

Site staff received the changes positively, but remain concerned at the small increase in level of verbal, and occasionally physical, abuse, which has accompanied the project at some sites. The health, safety and well-being of the frontline staff remains a priority for all involved.

## **Next steps**

The changes will continue to be monitored closely: a six month period of detailed tracking was established from the outset, though results to date suggest that no negative or unforeseen outcomes require any reinstatement of the pre-change regime and that the impact on householders has been minimal.

Instances of unacceptable behaviour remain the matter of most concern and ECC and Veolia continue to monitor and improve support to those sites most affected. This will remain an operational priority.

A further period of marketing and user education activity will be launched in the lead up to Easter and through the May Bank Holidays, traditionally the start of the peak season.

Additional operational changes that would help to facilitate the smoother running of the RCHWs will continue to be considered by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste as appropriate.

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### **Appendix 1 Customer leaflet explaining changes**

## 1.0 Nature of the changes

- 1.1 Over the last three years, materials data showed that whilst tonnages of some materials disposed of at RCHWs was reasonably static, tonnages of materials often associated with small businesses and tradespeople was seeing significant increases. The total tonnage of soil, hardcore, plasterboard and ceramics, for example, rose from 19,000 tonnes in 2012/13 to over 29,000 tonnes in 2014/15; a 53% increase. Over the same period, annual disposals of wood grew from 23,000 tonnes to 32,000 tonnes, a 40% increase.
- 1.2 Although RCHWs are required to accept all household waste, this is a defined term under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012 and does not include all waste types generated by a household. Wastes arising from home improvements and DIY are defined as construction and demolition waste rather than household waste; there is therefore no duty on the Waste Disposal Authority to accept this waste at any recycling centres. The applicable rule of thumb is that household waste is limited to those items one would normally take with you when moving house.
- 1.3 Tradespeople undertaking home improvement projects such as providing new kitchens, bathrooms or garden remodelling, have sought to avoid their waste disposal obligations and dispose of their waste illegally at RCHWs. This action passes on their legitimate business cost to the local taxpayers and has caused significant operational nuisance at many of our sites.
- 1.4 The changes were targeted at these materials most likely to be disposed of by businesses and the vehicles most likely to be used by them, to ensure that residents disposing of the materials they most often need to use an RCHW for retained unhindered access.
- 1.5 ECC's 21 RCHWs were profiled into two groups: 'small' sites which were those identified as being of a smaller size, having poorer access, propensity to unreasonable queuing or serving smaller, local communities. The remaining 'large' sites are those better able to manage higher volumes of traffic and waste.

**Table 1:** Distribution of sites by type

Small sites	Large sites
Dovercourt	Clacton
Kirby-le-Soken	Colchester
Lawford	Braintree
West Mersea	Saffron Walden



<b>Small sites</b>	<b>Large sites</b>
Witham	Chelmsford
Mountnessing	Maldon
Chigwell	Harlow
Waltham Abbey	Pitsea
Burnham-on-Crouch	Brentwood
South Woodham Ferrers	
Rayleigh (see 1.4)	
Canvey Island	

1.6 Key changes at small sites were:

- a. Prohibiting access by all commercial-type vehicles, including trucks, tippers, vans, car-derived vans, pick-ups and trailers with more than one axle.
- b. Ending the acceptance of some waste types which the Council has no legal obligation to accept from householders; these materials are soil, hardcore, gypsum-based products including plasterboard and dry wall lining, ceramics, including tiles and bathroom fittings, fitted kitchen units and worktops, and uPVC and wooden doors and window frames.

1.7 Key changes at large sites were the implementation of volume restrictions on those waste materials in 1.2 (b), applying the following limits will apply on a per household basis:

- a. in any 28-day period:
  - three wheelbarrow loads (one car boot full) of soil, hardcore, or gypsum-based products, including plasterboard and dry wall lining; and
  - one wheelbarrow load of tiles;
 and
- b. in any six-month period:
  - three large ceramic items, e.g. toilet or wash basin;
  - one uPVC or wooden window frame;
  - one uPVC or wooden external door;
  - three wooden internal doors; and
  - one load including any kitchen units

1.8 Rayleigh RCHW adopted a hybrid approach – a commercial-type vehicle prohibition as in place at the small sites, but material restrictions as per the large sites - following representations from Southend-on-Sea Borough Council suggesting that to adopt full ‘small site’ status would be incompatible with their recycling centre policies and promote cross-border disposals.

## 2.0 Change performance

### 2.1 Overall impact

Across the target group of materials (soil, hardcore wood, garden waste and residual waste) the changes delivered a **reduction of 5,564 tonnes** deposited at RCHWs across the first three months. This represents a 21.7% reduction in these materials.

The only site to show an increase in the period is Pitsea – the key large site in the south of the county that will have seen customers diverted – by virtue of vehicle type or waste material carried from several neighbouring small sites (South Woodham Ferrers, Canvey and Rayleigh). In spite of that additional pressure, the increase at Pitsea was only 95 tonnes (5%) across the six material types monitored, over the three-month period.

Pitsea continues to be targeted by small businesses, many of whom have resorted to threats and intimidation to secure disposal of their waste. The outstanding performance at Canvey will certainly have influenced the experiences at Pitsea, but ECC and Veolia continue to work hard to bring the staff and user experience at Pitsea in line with other sites.

**Table 2:** Year-on year tonnage change across target materials

Recycling Centre	Site type	Overall change (tonnage increase/reduction)
Pitsea	Large	95
Braintree	Large	-11
Maldon	Large	-83
West Mersea	Small	-101
Burnham	Small	-114
Dovercourt	Small	-165
Kirby-le-Soken	Small	-174
Saffron Walden	Large	-177
Brentwood	Large	-178
Lawford	Small	-190
Harlow	Large	-225
Chelmsford	Large	-231
Waltham Abbey	Small	-247
S. Woodham Ferrers	Small	-248
Witham	Small	-310
Mountnessing	Small	-370
Chigwell	Small	-394
Clacton	Large	-419
Rayleigh	Small	-460

Recycling Centre	Site type	Overall change (tonnage increase/reduction)
Colchester	Large	-468
Canvey	Small	-1,095
<b>Total</b>		<b>-5,564</b>

Small sites, in spite of implementing new rules with a much greater impact on customers, typically found the changes easier to deliver as they were 'black and white' in nature. Implementing the new rules at large sites requires significantly more staff attention, intervention and discretion. This has resulted in a less consistent implementation and increased levels of abusive behaviour from some customers.

## 2.2 Residual (non-recyclable) Waste

The total reduction in residual waste across the period was 2,125 tonnes; a reduction of 17.7%.

All sites have seen a reduction in residual waste with the exception of Maldon and Burnham, whose performance was impacted as a result of Maldon District Council moving to fortnightly kerbside collections.

The average reduction was 21%, so this has been applied to the table below to indicate which sites performed better or worse than the average. As anticipated, and with the exception of the Burnham facility, it is almost a clean cut between large and small sites. Some larger sites will always have struggled to achieve high reductions in waste, as their location will have seen them receive waste diverted from smaller sites with greater restrictions nearby.

**Table 3:** Residual waste tonnage change

	2015-16	2016-17	Change (tonnes)	Change (%)
<b>Maldon</b>	556	574	17	3.1
<b>Pitsea</b>	943	930	-14	-1.5
<b>Braintree</b>	853	832	-21	-2.5
<b>Harlow</b>	1113	1026	-88	-7.9
Burnham	154	139	-15	-9.8
<b>Boreham</b>	654	580	-75	-11.4
<b>Saffron Walden</b>	530	463	-67	-12.7
<b>Colchester</b>	1116	962	-153	-13.8
<b>Brentwood</b>	758	646	-112	-14.7

		2016-17	Change (tonnes)	Change (%)
<b>Clacton</b>	936	798	-138	-14.8
Kirby-le-Soken	231	184	-47	-20.5
Rayleigh	846	634	-212	-25
Dovercourt	243	178	-65	-26.6
Waltham Abbey	312	223	-89	-28.7
S. Woodham Ferrers	290	206	-84	-29.1
Mountnessing	350	246	-104	-29.7
Chigwell	450	314	-136	-30.3
Lawford	235	160	-75	-31.8
Witham	374	248	-125	-33.6
Canvey	999	531	-467	-46.8
West Mersea	86	31	-54	-63.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>12029</b>	<b>9904</b>	<b>-2125</b>	<b>-17.7</b>

## 2.3 Wood

At 1,677 tonnes (27.5%), the reduction in wood over the period is significant to ECC in terms of challenging business waste disposals and the impact they have on ECC and Veolia's haulage and disposal costs.

The increases at some sites are not surprising given the waste migration from local small sites to a nearby large site. In spite of this, in the instance of Pitsea and Canvey for example, we still saw a net decrease of 180 tonnes across the two sites, which is considered significant.

Clacton, Colchester, Rayleigh, Canvey, Chigwell and Mountnessing all show decreases by tonnage volumes. As large sites, the decreases at Clacton and Colchester are especially significant.

The increases at Lawford and Dovercourt, albeit small in tonnage terms, will need to be carefully monitored to ensure no impacting on capacity is experienced at those sites.

**Table 4:** Change in tonnages of wood

	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>Change tonnes</b>	<b>Change %</b>
Canvey	442	182	-260	-58.9
Colchester	707	460	-247	-34.9
Clacton	531	359	-173	-32.5
Rayleigh	393	238	-155	-39.4
Chigwell	257	114	-143	-55.7
Mountnessing	210	89	-121	-57.8
Boreham	505	395	-109	-21.7
Saffron Walden	247	162	-85	-34.4
Brentwood	372	298	-74	-20.0
Witham	200	126	-74	-36.9
S. Woodham Ferrers	171	103	-68	-40.0
Waltham Abbey	138	77	-61	-44.0
Kirby-le-Soken	102	54	-48	-47.4
Maldon	251	205	-46	-18.2
Harlow	501	462	-39	-7.8
Braintree	453	415	-38	-8.4
Burnham	89	57	-32	-35.6
West Mersea	0	3	3	-
Lawford	13	19	6	46.1
Dovercourt	30	38	8	27.6
Pitsea	483	561	79	16.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,094</b>	<b>4,417</b>	<b>-1,677</b>	<b>-27.5</b>

## 2.4 Hardcore

There are now no hardcore disposal facilities at the small sites. Some will have had part-filled containers left over from October disposed of in the first week of November's account. All small sites have recorded zero tonnage since then.

The total decrease in tonnage across all sites of 1,205 tonnes (35%) is significant and indicates that there has been a successful reduction in illegal use of the sites by businesses.

**Table 5:** Change in tonnages of hardcore

	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>Change tonnes</b>	<b>Change %</b>
Canvey	315.18	39.84	-275	-87.4
Mountnessing	150.82	19.34	-131	-87.2
Chigwell	138.38	48.8	-90	-64.7
Harlow	327.9	245.44	-82	-25.1
Witham	97.18	20.98	-76	-78.4
Waltham Abbey	95.42	22.88	-73	-76.0
Lawford	80.42	10.22	-70	-87.3
Dovercourt	60.78	0	-61	-100.0
S. Woodham Ferrers	92.48	39.38	-53	-57.4
Kirby-le-Soken	56.66	13.9	-43	-75.5
Rayleigh	209.16	167.84	-41	-19.8
Burnham	63.32	22.94	-40	-63.8
West Mersea	39.9	0	-40	-100.0
Colchester	269.26	231.94	-37	-13.9
Clacton	196.22	161.84	-34	-17.5
Boreham	242.36	208.96	-33	-13.8
Saffron Walden	132.22	106.84	-25	-19.2
Maldon	169.3	148.9	-20	-12.0
Pitsea	275.33	278.54	3	1.2
Braintree	198.89	206.66	8	3.9
Brentwood	224.74	235.02	10	4.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,436</b>	<b>2,230</b>	<b>-1,206</b>	<b>-35.1</b>

## 2.5 Soil

There are now no soil disposal facilities at the small sites. Some will have had part-filled containers left over from October disposed of in the first week of November's account. All small sites have recorded zero tonnage since then.

As a whole, the period saw an 82-tonne reduction (21%) in soil disposals. The tonnage variances are too small to be of great significance and follow the site trends seen for residual and wood.

## 2.6 Garden waste

All sites continue to accept garden waste, however there has still been an overall reduction in green waste disposal in the period of 348 tonnes (11%) which may reflect the success in preventing business access.

Overall performance was subdued following Braintree District Council's decision in 2016 to suspend kerbside collection of green waste during the three winter months, and this is almost certainly the reason for the increase in tonnage noted at this site.

**Table 6:** Change in tonnages of garden waste

	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>Change tonnes</b>	<b>Change %</b>
Clacton	430.48	339.56	-91	-21.1
Canvey	151.3	88.06	-63	-41.8
Lawford	167.44	116.04	-51	-30.7
Dovercourt	121.06	82	-39	-32.3
Burnham	74.08	47	-27	-36.6
Colchester	354.2	327.28	-27	-7.6
Kirby-le-Soken	153.28	131.14	-22	-14.4
Maldon	182.9	160.9	-22	-12.0
S. Woodham Ferrers	53.82	33.54	-20	-37.7
Witham	124.86	105.68	-19	-15.4
Waltham Abbey	36.04	19.06	-17	-47.1
Mountnessing	127.22	114.54	-13	-10.0
Rayleigh	118.08	105.9	-12	-10.3
West Mersea	63.48	60.94	-3	-4.0
Chigwell	40.04	41.22	1	2.9
Boreham	108.04	109.9	2	1.7
Saffron Walden	287.08	291.6	5	1.6
Brentwood	222.62	229.04	6	2.9
Pitsea	56.18	63.84	8	13.6
Harlow	210.42	218.22	8	3.7
Braintree	192.64	242.18	50	25.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,275</b>	<b>2,928</b>	<b>-348</b>	<b>-10.6</b>

## 2.7 Plasterboard

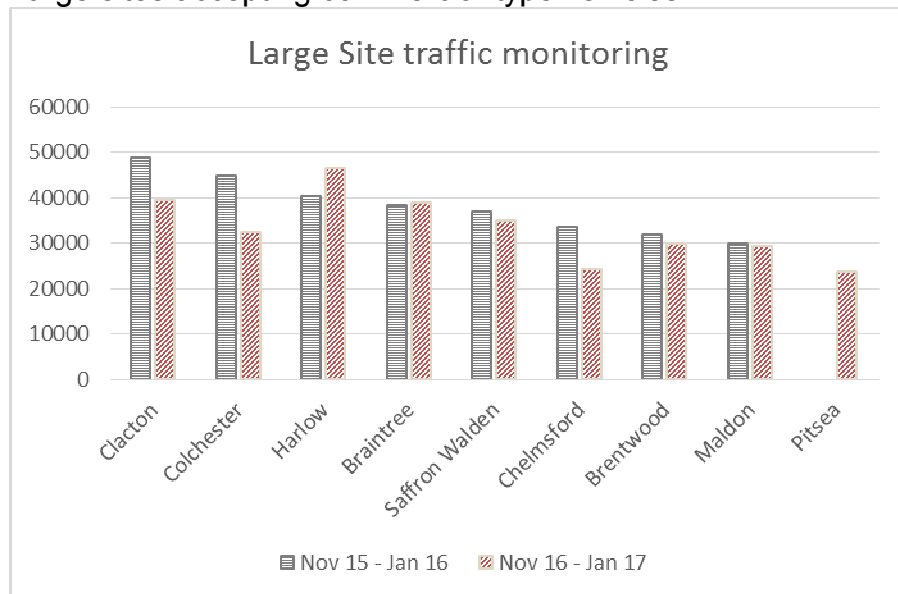
There are now no plasterboard disposal facilities at the small sites. Some will have had part-filled containers left over from October disposed of in the first week of November's account. All small sites have recorded zero tonnage since then.

As a whole, the period saw a 152-tonne reduction (41%) in plasterboard disposals; highly significant given the use (and disposal) of such material by tradespeople. The tonnage variances by site are too small to be of great significance and follow the site trends seen for residual waste and wood.

## 3.0 Review of site traffic

3.1 Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) data has been separated into two graphs in order to distinguish the large sites which permit commercial-type vehicles, from the small sites which do not. ANPR installation issues at two sites means that there is no historical data available at Kirby (15/16 & 16/17) and Pitsea (15/16).

### 3.2 Large sites accepting commercial-type vehicles



**Figure 1:** Traffic volumes at large sites

These sites are monitored to ensure that any migration of customers from small sites to the large facilities, caused by the changes does not then, in turn, generate demand or queuing issues at the destination.



With the exception of Braintree and Harlow RCHWs, all large sites have seen a reduction in the number of vehicles visiting sites in the review period. This is a positive outcome, as more sites could have shown an increase due to customers being diverted from small sites.

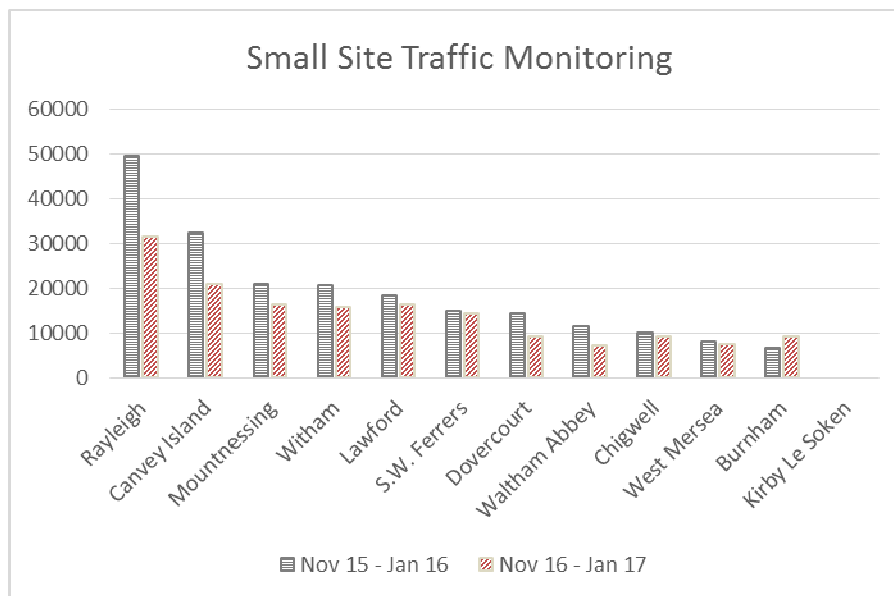
In respect of Pitsea, there is no available 2015/16 data for comparison purposes, though the tonnage performance would suggest that any change, increase or decrease would be marginal.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that local commercial waste transfer stations and skip operators have seen a noticeable increase in enquiries and demand ahead of and during the change period.

### 3.3 Small sites – commercial-type vehicles excluded

The smaller sites have seen a 24% reduction in user visits during the reference period, with Rayleigh and Canvey both showing a significant reduction in the number of vehicle movements. This equates to almost 50,000 less user visits in the period, thereby meeting a key objective of the project: to tackle the over-demand for some of our smallest and most constrained sites.

Maldon and Burnham saw slight increases in line with the changes made by Maldon District Council to their kerbside collections.



**Figure 2:** Traffic volumes at small sites

A particular issue at small sites had been the periods of time each day during which the site was closed for servicing by trucks or other large plant which requires the public to be excluded, e.g. removal of full containers.

Early indications are that this situation has improved. Rayleigh RCHW, for example, which has seen particularly high levels of daytime unavailability, saw closures drop from an average 3,000 minutes per month (c. 1hr 40 minutes per day) to between 850 - 1150 minutes per month (27 – 37 minutes per day) during the post-change period.

#### **4.0 Whole System Impacts**

##### **4.1 Transport**

A total tonnage reduction in excess of 5,500t in 3 months equates to approximately 650 avoided container movements, which in turn can be converted to an estimated 110 days' work for a driver and container haulage truck. Over the off-peak period this has reduced the workload and pressure on the transport team and there have been no transport related performance deductions applied on the contract.

The continuation of the current post-change performance will continue to deliver a positive impact at site level and ultimately to a long-term improvement in service delivery.

##### **4.2 Container Repairs and Maintenance**

Container repairs and maintenance is an ongoing requirement. Repair and maintenance has traditionally focused on the off-peak season, as demand for containers is so high during the summer. As a result of the changes, it will now be possible to carry out routine maintenance and repairs throughout the whole year, thereby improving the usable life of the containers. This proposal has been given to the transport manager as an action and the benefits should be seen during 2017/18.

#### **5.0 Site Staff Experiences: Compliance vs Poor Behaviour from Customers**

At a small number of large sites, there has been a significant increase in reports of unacceptable behaviour by customers. Pitsea RCHW has seen the worst instances of such behaviour.

The police have been called for some of the more serious issues. ECC managers have initiated, via Essex Legal Services, a dialogue with Essex Police to ensure that adequate support is provided where necessary regarding the abuse of staff carrying out this important statutory duty.

ECC is working with the contractor to ensure the right level of support to site staff remains in place. The safety of staff remains a priority for all parties.

## **6.0 Third party support staff**

### **6.1 Benefits**

As part of implementing the changes, a team of nine site support staff were deployed across the sites as an additional resource. The deployment has been provided for a 6-month period, commencing in November 2016.

The support staff became an integral part of the implementation process and feedback from regular site staff has largely been positive, especially with respect to support when challenging potential business waste customers.

### **6.2 Future support**

As we progress into the second half of the period during which support staff will be deployed, there has been a view by site staff that some sites no longer require the presence of support staff, whilst others are stating that support staff are of most benefit during the weekends.

The provision of support staff beyond the initial six month contract is currently under review.

## **7.0 Feedback from Site Staff**

### **7.1** Over the last three months, the contractor has engaged, individually, with as many staff as possible to discuss the changes. This approach has been well received by staff.

The views expressed below come in the context of many site staff feeling that both ECC and Veolia have generally provided better support to sites since the introduction of the changes.

### **7.2 Concerns**

Most notable is a feeling that more can and should be done in respect of providing a safe working environment. Some examples of this would include the following;

- Better response and support from Police
- The availability of body-worn security cameras
- Additional support staff

- Further customer service and dispute-handling training

In addition, there is a growing concern that as we move towards the peak periods, the levels of aggression are bound to increase. Anecdotal reports include those of staff receiving abuse out of hours within their local community.

## 8.0 Communications and public reaction

- 8.1 The changes were pre-empted with a substantial communications plan which included:
- Multiple press releases, together with Cabinet Member appearances on local TV and radio
  - Leaflets fully detailing the changes distributed at RCHWs from 10 weeks prior to launch date.
  - Leaflets and posters provided to libraries, and district and town councils
  - Social media campaign including a weekly blog tackling myths (identified from incoming complaints), together with frequent Facebook and Twitter posts offering information, advice and updates.

- 8.2 Residents have a number of routes to register their views.

- The Member Enquiries channel saw 40 enquiries from the point of the announcement in August 2016 until January 2017.
- The ECC Customer Service Centre saw an uplift in call volumes for RCHW-related matters in the first full month (November) and also in the busy post-Christmas period. These figures come, however, in the context of an average 180,000 user visits per month across our 21 recycling centres.

	<b>Aug-15</b>	<b>Sep-15</b>	<b>Oct-15</b>	<b>Nov-15</b>	<b>Dec-15</b>	<b>Jan-16</b>	<b>Feb-16</b>	<b>Total</b>
	344	262	293	269	397	270	316	2151
	<b>Aug-16</b>	<b>Sep-16</b>	<b>Oct-16</b>	<b>Nov-16</b>	<b>Dec-16</b>	<b>Jan-17</b>	<b>Feb-17</b>	<b>Total</b>
	343	326	447	528	408	497	469	3018
Change	-1	64	154	259	11	227	153	867

(Data capture is unable to discern general queries from complaints)

## **9.0 Impact on city, district and borough councils**

### **9.1 Fly-tipping**

During the consultation period, ahead of the formal decision, many local councils raised concerns regarding the perceived threat of increased fly-tipping as a result of the changes. ECC undertook extensive research into the experiences of other county councils who had made significant changes to their recycling centres, including closing parts of their estates, and none reported any impact on fly-tipping. Equally, ECC itself had not experienced any increase following closure of two sites in 2012.

ECC requested data from local councils relevant to the review period of this report. None of those who responded reported any material increase which could be associated with these changes. The county is currently suffering an epidemic of large-scale fly-tips by nefarious commercial operators, both in-county and emanating from the east London boroughs and these continue to prevail.

The only common themes amongst local council feedback were:

- a. an increase in larger fly-tips typical of large/multiple vans/tippers.  
Some councils have taken a robust approach to investigating these incidents and successful prosecutions are now being delivered.
- b. an increase in the fly-tip disposal of white goods, e.g. fridges and cookers. There have been no changes at any ECC RCHWs to cause this.

This outcome clearly breaks the perceived link between changes to the provision of waste services and the incidence of fly-tipping and reinforces the assertion that people are not minded to break the law in response to minor inconvenience.

### **9.2 Local services**

During the pre-launch period, businesses were advised that local council offer trade waste collections as part of their services. No local council reported a noticeable uplift.

Residents were also reminded of the kerbside bulky waste collections available from their local council. Again, no material change in demand was noted.