

# Response to issues raised for Overview and Scrutiny Committee

June 2011

Question	Response
<p><b>ES2 - Residual household waste per household</b></p> <p>Q. A small improvement in residual waste - but not reaching the target. We should ask what is the financial implication in terms of extra landfill tax of not hitting the target?</p>	<p>There are no financial implications to Watford Borough Council because the disposal costs are met by Herts County Council</p>
<p><b>ES9 – Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arising which have been recycled</b></p> <p>Q. What does ES9 mean? Does it differ from ES3 (Household waste recycled and composted) because it talks about weight while ES3 is volume?</p>	<p>ES9 is the percentage of household waste (ES2) that is sent for recycling - so just glass, paper, cans, plastics, textile.</p> <p>ES2 (Residual household waste per household) is the total weight of waste collected per household and would include all the waste in the black bin, green bin and recycling boxes. This is a weight.</p> <p>ES3 (Household waste recycled and composted) includes greenwaste. This is like ES9 is a percentage. If you add ES9 and ES10 you will get ES3.</p>
<p><b>ES9 - Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arising which have been recycled</b></p> <p><b>ES 10 – Percentage of waste sent for composting including waste which has been treated through a process of anaerobic digestion</b></p> <p>Q. It looks to me as if the council is taking more share of waste in terms of composting and less in terms of recycling, and these figures cancel each other out, is that correct?</p>	<p>Yes it is correct and contributory factors are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. because the 'total' amount of waste collected in the denominator in both calculations when we collect high levels of greenwaste does have a slight negative impact on the recycling rate.</li> <li>2. since the introduction of cardboard and food waste in the composting collections, we have seen an increase in composting tonnages</li> <li>3. there is a national trend of lower recycling tonnages as the packaging directives start to impact</li> <li>4. there is a national trend of lower paper tonnages as more people use the internet for communications/transactions and instead of buying newspapers</li> </ol>
<p><b>ES4 – Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter)</b></p> <p><b>ES5 - Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of detritus)</b></p> <p><b>ES6 - Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti)</b></p> <p><b>ES7 - Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of fly posting)</b></p> <p><b>ES8 - Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of fly tipping)</b></p>	<p><b>ES4 – ES7 – street cleansing indicators</b></p> <p>The NI 195 data for 10/11 was surveyed and collated in accordance with the original NI guidance and the data downloaded to the Keep Britain Tidy (formerly Encams) web site, (<a href="http://cleanliness-indicator.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx">http://cleanliness-indicator.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx</a>), previously established on Defra's behalf as the NI calculation return mechanism. Both the original BV199 and NI 195 survey set up and input processes have been subject to previous performance indicator external audit and passed without qualification.</p> <p>The survey procedure has been adjusted for 11/12 to allow for quarterly surveying, as opposed to 4 monthly, maintaining the minimum annual sample requirement of 900 transects selected in accordance with guidance methodology and definitions including the use of national photographic grade standards and continued performance calculation via the download site.</p>

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<p><b>Q. E4 - E8</b> how are these figures obtained? How confident can we be in these figures?</p>	<p><b>ES8 – fly tipping indicator</b>  The data for ES8 is obtained by officers of the council and of Watford Community Housing Trust completing a form with details of the fly tip (ie. what type of waste, how big it is - 1 black bag / half a lorry load etc - and where it is etc) and the subsequent enforcement action taken (no action just cleared, letter sent, Fixed Penalty Notice issued, prosecution etc).</p> <p>Once a month all this data is then collated and checked for errors and then submitted to the Environment Agency via the software called Flycapture (weblink: <a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/library/data/41333.aspx">http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/library/data/41333.aspx</a>) This data is then weighted via an Environment Agency spreadsheet and used to generate the 'rating' for Watford (ie. effective, not effective etc) based on number and size of fly tips (and if going up or down) and number and type of 'enforcement actions' and going up or down.</p> <p>Given all the above we have a high level of confidence in these figures</p>
<p><b>CS4 - Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)</b></p> <p><b>Q.</b> This figure looks good, but does that mean the target was not ambitious enough? Or do we have a couple of 'bad' years coming up as a result of the state of the house building industry?</p>	<p>Number of affordable homes: note on targets - it can be difficult to predict which developments will be completed and which financial year completions will fall into as they depend on many factors which lie outside of our control. It is correct that we are not anticipating that the level of affordable housing development seen in 2010/11 will continue. Current prediction for 2011/12 is 118 units.</p>
<p><b>CS5 - Number of households living in temporary accommodation</b></p> <p><b>Q.</b> This looks quite poor, I think state of personal finances will be bringing more people into temporary accommodation, but could this be confirmed</p>	<p>Temporary accommodation: we are continuing to see an increase in homelessness applications and numbers in temporary accommodation. Yes, we anticipate that changes to housing benefit and a reduction in employment opportunities are likely to have an adverse impact and are continuing to monitor</p>
<p><b>PL1 - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' applications</b></p> <p><b>PL2 - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' applications</b></p> <p><b>PL3 - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' applications</b></p> <p><b>Q.</b> PL1 - 3 – can you specify what these are in the report? I imagine they are elapsed weeks</p>	<p>PL1 - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' applications  <b>% within 13 weeks</b></p> <p>PL2 - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' applications  <b>% within 8 weeks</b></p> <p>PL3 - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' applications  <b>% within 8 weeks</b></p>

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<p><b>Q.</b> ICT figures. Do we have any availability or uptime stats that could be included? I don't have a lot of faith in "consumer satisfaction" data. How is it measured?</p>	<p>In the last 6 months ICT has begun to collect data on the uptime of the council's ICT systems.</p> <p>The result for the 6 months between October 2010 and March 2011 are:</p> <p><b><u>WBC P1</u></b>  COA  Academy (Windows)  Uniform  Email  Internet  WBC Website  Lagan  File and Print Server</p> <p><b>Target: 99.5%    Outturn: 98.57%    Below target</b></p> <p><b><u>WBC P2</u></b>  Touchpaper  EROS  Gauge  Resource Link  Intranet</p> <p><b>Target: 99.5%    Outturn: 98.76%    Below target</b></p>
<p><b>Q.</b> Do we have any stats on the use of the Borough's facilities such as the Central Baths/Woodside etc.?</p>	<p>The service is still analysing the 2010/11 but from 2011/12 monthly figures should be available for scrutinising if Committee requests for future reports.</p>
<p><b>RB1 - Average time to process benefits claims – new claims</b></p> <p><b>Q.</b> We are within target, and I know this might be centralised, but I think in this day and age there should be a more ambitious target... 36 days to do this is still a long time if you are waiting for it and in this age when digital communications should be speeding everything up. I don't want us to waste time on it if the Government do centralise everything but I would like us to have a look at the whole issue as...</p>	<p><b>Head of service attending meeting.</b></p>
<p><b>RB2 - Average time to process change of circumstances</b></p> <p><b>Q.</b> The changes of circumstances processing is significantly worse and I would like an explanation for committee and the current state of play if known</p>	<p><b>Head of service attending meeting.</b></p>