

# TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 July 2018
<b>Subject:</b>	Annual Ubico Report
<b>Report of:</b>	Peter J Tonge, Head of Community Services
<b>Corporate Lead:</b>	Robert Weaver, Deputy Chief Executive
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Councillor J R Mason, Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment
<b>Number of Appendices:</b>	5

## **Executive Summary:**

This report provides an annual update on the Ubico contract for waste and recycling, street cleaning and grounds maintenance services.

The report details the performance outturn figures for 2017/18; despite some difficulties with the service early in the year, predominantly due to service changes, recycling in the Borough remains positive and waste to landfill continues to fall.

This report not only outlines service performance but also considers the financial outturn figures for the year, which shows an underspend. It also informs Members on the other elements of the Ubico contract including street cleansing, grounds maintenance and the excellent garden waste service which is delivering better income than targeted.

Finally, the report introduces a new suite of performance indicators which will be monitored consistently across the Ubico partnership and will form the basis of future reports on this subject.

## **Recommendation:**

**To CONSIDER the annual Ubico report.**

## **Reasons for Recommendation:**

The report allows Members to monitor service performance and financial performance of our waste and recycling contractor Ubico Ltd. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives regular updates on the performance of Ubico Ltd. In previous years the timing of the annual reports was such that not all of the performance data for the year was available; this year the annual review has been timed in a manner to be able to provide a full years data.

## **Resource Implications:**

None arising directly from this report.

**Legal Implications:**

None arising directly from this report.

**Risk Management Implications:**

There are no significant new risks or opportunities arising within the period under review.

**Performance Management Follow-up:**

Performance is monitored and managed in conjunction with the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Team through the monthly client meetings; the Environmental Service Partnership Board; and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Environmental Implications:**

None arising directly from this report.

**1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** Ubico has been delivering the Council's waste and street scene services since 1 April 2015. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the performance of the contract on an annual basis.
- 1.2** The 2016/17 annual review report provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in May 2017 did not include Q4 figures due to the timing of the report. It was subsequently resolved that the annual review of the performance of the Ubico contract be brought back to the Committee in July 2018, including the full year's performance information. It was agreed that, going forward, reports would be prepared for the July Committee meeting to enable a full year's performance figures to be included and allow for comparison year on year. The Committee received an interim report in September 2017.
- 1.3** Members will recall that, in April 2017, in partnership with Ubico, the Council rolled out a significant service change that saw over 60% of households having a change in their collection day or week. This change in service led to a high number of missed collections and complaints to the Council and resulted in an improvement plan being put in place.
- 1.4** Despite these changes and the disruption to service, recycling rates remain positive and the quantity of residual household waste going to landfill continues to decline.

**3.0 UBICO PERFORMANCE**

- 3.1** A range of performance information is collected and reported to the Environmental Services Partnership Board (ESPB) quarterly and is monitored by the Joint Waste Team on a monthly basis.
- 3.2** Appendix 1 attaches the Commissioner Report which is prepared for the ESPB and details service requests, performance and health and safety statistics for the year. The highlights from that report are outlined below.

### **3.3 Residual Household Waste Per Household (Kg/Per Year) And Household Waste Reused, Recycled And Composted**

**3.3.1** The table below shows the 2016/17 and 2017/18 outturn figures and also shows the percentage of household collections that were completed on schedule:

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
Residual Household Waste per household (kg/hh)	410	385
Percentage of household waste reused, recycled and composted.	53.29%	54.07%
Percentage of household collections completed on schedule.	99.95%	99.88%

**3.3.2** The final outturn for 2017/18 shows a decrease in the amount of residual waste sent to landfill and an increase in the percentage of waste reused, recycled and composted. This is positive given the backdrop of declining recycling rates nationally.

### **3.4 Percentage of Household Collections Completed on Schedule**

**3.4.1** On a monthly basis there are approximately 350,600 collections taking place which equates to 4.2 million collections per year.

**3.4.2** During 2016/17 there were 2,240 missed collections. In 2017/18, as a result of the service changes, we experienced a significant increase - certainly in the early part of the year - with an outturn of 5,317.

**3.4.3** The target in previous years for the percentage of missed collections was 1%, meaning that Ubico would have been well within the target of 42,000 total misses for the year; however the Managing Director of Ubico agreed a new target of 0.1%, or a target of 4,200 a year, and this remains the current target.

**3.4.4** Quarter 1, and part of Quarter 2's, missed bin figures remained stubbornly high and an urgent improvement plan was put into place. This improvement plan included the following elements:

- to reduce the number missed to collections to less than 100 per week by the end of August, and a further 50% reduction by the end of October from the end of Q1 figure. This will equate to 0.09% missed collection rate, well below the (at that time) 1% performance target;
- improve communications between the Council and Ubico;
- develop better reporting systems; and
- ensure that the stock of bins is monitored and maintained in order for Ubico to deliver bins to residents when needed.

**3.4.5** The improvement plan has had some success and the number of missed collections has reduced but remains above target.

### **3.5 Bin Deliveries and Bulky Waste Collection**

- 3.5.1** The new system for bin deliveries and bulky waste collection has reduced lead times to an acceptable level. Further improvements were implemented in September which added 2 days per month to the schedule in areas where demand is highest. The lead times are monitored at the monthly Joint Waste Team / Customer Services / Ubico meeting and corrective action is put in place if lead times start to rise. Currently the wait time is approximately 2 weeks.
- 3.5.2** In June, Ubico ran out of garden waste bins which resulted in bins not being delivered to residents at the agreed time and under-utilisation of resources for a short period. As mentioned above, as part of the improvement plan Ubico has assigned a person responsible for monitoring stock levels, gaining quotes and ordering bins and has committed to maintaining adequate levels of stock. In addition, following a review of the Swindon Road Depot, more space has been identified to store larger numbers of bins on site; this will have helped to resolve bin stock issues.

### **3.6 Grounds Maintenance**

- 3.6.1** Tewkesbury Borough Council is responsible for grass cutting on its own land and has a contract arrangement with Gloucestershire County Highways and Parish Councils to cut various areas of grass across the borough. Gloucestershire County Highways currently contracts Amey for highway verges across the county and, in Tewkesbury Borough, these are mainly verges and roundabouts along lanes and major trunk roads. The majority of the grass that Tewkesbury Borough Council / Ubico cut on behalf Gloucestershire County Highways is within developments such as the Wheatpieces, Newtown, Bishop's Cleeve, Winchcombe, Longford, Ashleworth and Gotherington. Tewkesbury Borough Council only cuts the roundabouts and trunk road verges when they neighbour a development. For example, Tewkesbury Borough Council / Ubico is not responsible for the verges along the A38 on the dual carriageway south of Tewkesbury; the Tewkesbury Road into Cheltenham; and around Junction 9 of the M5
- 3.6.2** Tewkesbury Borough Council officers have provided comprehensive maps to Ubico detailing all land subject to maintenance, however at the start of the year an unacceptable level of complaints was being received about grass cutting. This led to an unacceptable number of complaints from members of the public and the Council's Executive Committee expressed deep concern about the level and quality of grass cutting.
- 3.6.3** As a result, an urgent improvement plan was put in place and this plan is appended to this report at Appendix 2 for information.
- 3.6.4** At the time of writing this report, Ubico has caught up with its grass cutting schedules.

### **3.7 Street Cleaning / Garden Waste / Fly-tipping**

- 3.7.1** The Joint Waste Team is in the process of undertaking a street cleansing review. The purpose of this review is to appraise the current practices carried out by Ubico, in line with the relevant governing legislation and the Council's vision under the Clean and Green Environment Portfolio.
- 3.7.2** Since the services were transferred to Ubico Ltd in 2015, a new fleet of cleansing vehicles has been procured and much housing development has taken place. A review is required to evaluate the service performance and also to decide whether the current levels of resourcing, frequencies of cleansing activities and schedules are sufficient to meet the service standards and legislation.

- 3.7.3** The fly-tipping figures reported in Appendix 1 are the number of reports that are sent to Ubico to clear rather than to the total number of fly-tips reported. This is because some fly-tips occur on private land and are not the Council's responsibility to clear.
- 3.7.4** There has been a slight increase in the number of fly-tips cleared by Ubico from 902 in 2016/17 to 925 in 2017/18. It is hoped that further enforcement action and subsequent publicity by the Council will see this decrease in the coming years.
- 3.7.5** The garden waste service has been in operation since March 2006 and has served the 15,000 customers well. Historically, customers who had a brown bin and signed up to the service were invoiced on the annual renewal date of their joining the service. This meant that invoices were being raised and payments being taken all year round, in addition to this, manual lists were being used by the Ubico crews to identify who had signed up to the service.
- 3.7.6** In April 2018 the Council changed the way it delivers the garden waste service and how it charges for it. We moved to a single renewal date (1 April) and used a sticker for the bin to identify those customers that had paid for the service for the current year. This had led to an increase in the customer base and income.

#### **4.0 FORMAL COMPLAINTS**

**4.1** The table below shows the number of complaints by year by complaint type.

Complaint Type	No. of complaints	
	2016/17	2017/18
Waste and Recycling	51	82
Grass Cutting	3	2

- 4.2** It is highly likely that the elevated number of waste and recycling complaints in 2017/18 is due to the service changes at the start of the year.
- 4.3** The above numbers differ slightly to the numbers in the Ubico performance report and this is due to some complaints being dealt with by the Council and not necessarily being reported through to Ubico as a formal complaint.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

- 5.1** At Q3, Ubico was forecasting an approximate £40,000 overspend. The reality at year end was a £58,000 underspend. This indicates that, whilst building the budget for the year has improved, budget management and forecasting still needs improvement. Ubico has recognised this and added to their finance team to ensure better budget monitoring going forward.
- 5.2** Full details of the financial performance for 2017/18 can be found at Appendix 3.

## **6.0 FUTURE PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

- 6.1** Over the course of the last 12 months, the Joint Waste Team, Ubico and all Ubico partners have been working on developing a new suite of performance indicators and these are attached at Appendix 4.
- 6.2** These indicators have been agreed across the Ubico partnership and will lead to better performance management and we will now be able to compare how Ubico is performing across the partners.
- 6.3** These indicators will form the basis of reports to this Committee moving forward.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1** Improvements are being made and officers of the Council, Joint Waste Team and Ubico are working closely together to monitor progress regularly.
- 7.2** Particular improvements have been made in reducing the number of missed bins and better communications between partners has assisted greatly in this and has enhanced the level of communication with our communities.
- 7.3** Management is determined that the issues are resolved effectively and more quickly. Standards are being closely monitoring and corrective action will be taken as necessary to resolve any further issues.
- 7.4** Appendix 5 to this report is a summary, produced by Ubico, of performance for the year.

## **8.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1** None

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

- 9.1** None

## **10.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES /STRATEGIES**

- 10.1** Joint Waste Committee Business Plan  
Ubico Business Plan

## **11.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

- 11.1** None

## **12.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**

- 12.1** None

## **13.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)**

- 13.1** None

## **14.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health & Safety)**

- 14.1** None

**15.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**

**15.1** None

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<b>Background Papers:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes – May 2017
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<b>Appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Ubico Commissioner Report Appendix 2 – Ubico Grass Cutting Improvement Plan Appendix 3 – Ubico Financial Reporting Appendix 4 – Joint Waste Team / Partnership Key Performance Indicators. Appendix 5 – Ubico report – June 2018.