

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	13 July 2021
Subject:	Ubico Report 2020/21
Report of:	Interim Waste Contracts Manager
Corporate Lead:	Head of Community Services
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment
Number of Appendices:	1

Executive Summary:

This report provides the annual update on the Ubico contract for waste and recycling, street cleaning and grounds maintenance services. It covers the service overview, financial performance, fleet management, health and safety performance and a summary of projects. Appendix 1 contains the full performance report which is referred to within this report.

Despite being in the midst of a global pandemic, Ubico has maintained good performance during the year with improvement to the numbers of missed bin collections and repeat missed bin collections along with delivering an underspend on the contract costs.

Key pieces of data are highlighted within the body of this report and the full detail is contained within the full report at Appendix 1.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the 2020/21 outturn performance update on the services provided by Ubico.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The report allows Members to monitor the service 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.

Resource Implications:

Nothing specific arising because of this report.

Legal Implications:

Nothing specific arising because of 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 (until December 2019) through the monthly client meetings, Environmental Service Partnership Board (ESPB), Depot Services Working Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Tewkesbury Borough Council has two new contract officers, one for Waste Management and one for street cleansing and grounds maintenance, and recruitment of a Principal Trade Waste Officer and Waste Contracts Manager has been successfully completed.

Environmental Implications:

Nothing specific arising because of this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Ubico has been delivering the Council's waste, recycling, and street cleansing services since 1 April 2015. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews the performance of the contract on an annual basis.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives the annual report and regular updates on service and financial performance.

2.0 PERFORMANCE REPORTING

- 2.1 Performance information is collated by Ubico and presented to the Council on a regular basis at meetings - including monthly contract meetings and quarterly ESPB meetings - and the opportunity is made available for colleagues from the client-side monitoring, Head of Service and Finance Officers to discuss the monthly financial position statements and data.
- 2.2 Monthly reports consist of service detail including missed bin information, formal complaint resolutions, health and safety information, risks, and progress on projects. Quarterly reports to ESPB inform the Council of all the service-related performance information found in Appendix 1.

3.0 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

3.1 At the end of the financial year, the full year spend on the Tewkesbury contract stood at £3,897,863. The final spend represents a contract saving of £160,455,

3.2 Notable savings were recorded in the financial year as being:

- I. Diesel cost – full year saving of £52,000. Diesel cost on all contracts were impacted by price deflation. It is not expected that this will translate into a saving in the year ending March 2022 as fuel prices start to increase.
- II. The Tewkesbury contract, having been sorely hit by tyre costs in the year ended March 2019, had a high budget for tyres for the year ended March 2021, being £108,000. Total spend came in at £67,000. The tyre policy changed during the year; they are now changed at 2mm tread, increasing their longevity compared to the previous policy of changing them at 3mm tread.
- III. Vehicle repairs - for the year ending March 2022 the budget sat at £165,000, compared to an actual spend of £147,000 and £170,000 for the year ending March 2020. This cost code represents an area of risk in the Tewkesbury Borough Council budget due to the age of the vehicles.

3.3 The level of financial information provided by Ubico to the Council has continued to improve allowing Officers access to more detail of spends and forecasts. This has been coupled with greater partnership working between the organisations allowing for discussion and meetings to be held on a regular basis should the monthly report information require further discussion.

3.4 The budget setting process for the following financial year takes place with the Council Officers and Ubico representatives in quarter three to ensure the budget is agreed in time and in line with the timescales for the Council's budget setting process.

4.0 FRONTLINE SERVICES PERFORMANCE

4.1 During the year, the collection accuracy and performance improved resulting in the number of missed bins reducing. The performance is outlined month by month in Appendix 1 including overall performance accuracy and performance by service area. The food waste service has suffered the highest number of missed collections, garden waste services have seen the largest reduction in missed collections reducing from 1,531 to 638.

4.2 The overall collection accuracy is just short of the target of 99.95% with an outturn of 99.93%. This is 0.02% up on the outturn for the previous year. The target equates to maximum 50 missed collections per week. The target does not account for bins reported as missed but which were either not presented on time or not emptied due to issues such as contamination.

4.3 Repeat missed collections have fallen and are well below target which is a positive step. This indicates a good level of collection service satisfaction as residents experience fewer regular repeat missed bin collections which then require reporting to the Council repeatedly – this is now below the target of 10 per month for the year. Repeat missed assisted collections have fallen from a high of 54 last year to just nine in 2020/21. An assisted collection is where the crew access the properties of elderly or infirm residents to collect their bins. Work has been carried out to ensure the crews are checking the lists of assisted collections to make sure they are collected.

4.4 Street cleansing reports have been previously received through Firmstep and sent directly to Ubico. These are then directed to the relevant crew for actioning. The response rate is good with most of the reports being completed and closed within the timeframes. This reporting system has now been replaced with a better system which was built by the in-house IT department. The Business Transformation Team supported this work.

4.5 During this year the grounds maintenance service has not had the best of times with the end of last year being very wet and causing major issues for the final cuts of the season; this year's season started with much of the same where the mowing teams were unable to access many areas due to rain and flooding. Nonetheless, grass cutting has been complete with an average B grade standard. There has been an increase in reports from members of the public regarding the standard of grass cutting. This includes increased Report It / dashboard requests and increased emails and phone call which are time consuming and an inefficient use of resources.

4.6 Formal complaints regarding service delivery can be for a variety of reasons such as crew behaviour, damage to property, missed collections and issues with the collections, how bins and caddies are returned to the property or handled by the crews. Where formal complaints relate to crew behaviour or collection day related issues, the CCTV from the vehicle is reviewed where possible and action is taken. If crews are regularly missing the same bins or caddies, these are put on the supervisors' checklists to make sure they are not missed again. The use of these lists has decreased in this reporting period. There has been a significant decrease in the number of formal complaints across all services, including grounds maintenance, when compared to the previous year.

SERVICE	2019-20	2020-21
Waste and street cleansing services	86	26
Ground's maintenance	9	6

5.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

5.1 A positive trend is the increase of near miss reports/safety concerns. These are reports from crews or staff members where an unsafe occurrence has been witnessed or experienced (not an accident or an incident). These have increased from 381 in 2019/20, to 1,123 in 2020/21. Safety concerns are a useful tool in identifying potential incidents before they occur. In the first six months Ubico saw a huge rise in safety concerns reported. The main cause of this was due to more cars parked in roads, this caused a large number of access issues resulting from COVID-19 and people working from home.

5.2 There are areas for improvement in the numbers of vehicle accidents which totalled 22 for the year. Although lower than the previous year, the number of overweight vehicles (89) requires improvement as this increased on the previous year. There is a target of zero for overweight vehicles.

5.3 A lower number of Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) reportable incidents were recorded in 2020/21 (2). Each report is investigated and, where necessary, remedial actions taken. Monitoring officers require a completed investigation report and details of the findings for the Keep Safe, Stay Healthy Board.

6.0 FLEET MANAGEMENT

6.1 The fleet compliance audit score has been consistently increasing throughout the reporting period. This is a positive report to show that the operational team are regularly checking the management of the fleet with a score of 98.3% - the highest achieved by any UBICO contract.

7.0 PROJECTS

- 7.1**
- Implement and review changes to grounds maintenance – in progress.
 - Implement changes to street services – ready to be rolled out, we are awaiting confirmation.
 - Implement a sweeper schedule – Groundwork has been completed; we are awaiting a sweeper specialist from Cotswold to assist. COVID-19 has delayed this.
 - Adding an extra food waste round – in progress, this has now been approved and planned. Ubico are just awaiting the vehicle to be delivered.
 - Explore potential for greater service integration with Tewkesbury to deliver operational efficiencies and improvements on collection rounds, trade waste and streets and grounds services – in progress, trade waste identified as a potential source of extra revenue.

8.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 None

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 None

10.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

10.1 Council Plan
Managing Contractors Safely Policy

11.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

11.1 COVID-19

12.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

12.1 National driver shortage

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

13.1 None

13.0 IMPACT UPON (Value for Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health and Safety)

13.1 None

14.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

14.1 None

Background Papers: None

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Review of Ubico July 2020

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Ubico Performance Report