

# **Adverse Weather Contingency Plan**

## **Waste & Recycling**

## **Aim**

To provide a management framework for service delivery in the event of a suspension or disruption of the waste collection and related services or activities.

For example, in the case of severe winter weather.

## **Objectives**

- Provide a clear and concise procedure for determining whether to deliver the waste service in circumstances including, but not limited to, adverse weather conditions
- Identify the key response issues to be considered and addressed
- Identify key roles and responsibilities for Stakeholders involved in delivering the waste service and communications strategy during episodes of service disruption as a result of adverse weather conditions
- Identify activities to be introduced to reduce disruption to residents and to produce a defined resource plan to ensure that all employees and where possible vehicles, plant and equipment are actively engaged when unable to undertake their normal duties.
- To provide an agreed communications framework and messages for use for example during periods of bad weather.

This Contingency Plan will help to proactively manage expectations and enable planned and established collection arrangements along with consistent messaging to the Stakeholders and the public during times of unavoidable disruption for example during severe winter weather.

## **The Decision Making Group and Principles**

The Stakeholders will constitute the Strategic Decision-Making Group (SDMG) for service delivery during periods of disruption. Membership and roles of the group is set out in Appendix 1.

The SDMG will make the decision whether to enact the Adverse Weather Contingency Plan. This decision will follow notification of an event or issue expected to affect service delivery; this would include but is not limited to adverse weather conditions likely to last longer than a single day or an unexpected deterioration in weather conditions during the course of the day.

Amey will keep the council updated at appropriate intervals to ensure they are fully aware of the service delivery being achieved, as well as problems and difficulties being encountered to ensure appropriate service decisions are being made, and appropriate and timely communications messages are being issued.

The following principles underpin this Contingency Plan. These principles will be used to guide the operational decisions made by the SDMG during periods of suspension or disruption.

- To deliver a joint, clear, simple, accurate, timely and consistent message to the public with minimal changes
- To minimise disruption to the public as far as reasonably practicable by keeping to the normal scheduled collection days where possible
- To ensure it is safe for our vehicles and crews to undertake collections and ensure the most efficient use of resources during periods of disruption
- To minimise obstructions for the general public as a result of recycling or waste containers being left out for extended periods of time.
- To prioritise the collection of domestic residual waste over Peripheral Services such as Trade, Green Waste, Recycling or Bulky collections, Bin deliveries or any other special collections.
- To have a clear plan for catch up collections that can be communicated to the Public in a timely fashion

During extended periods of disruption likely to continue for five days or more, the following collection priorities will be put in place:

- Domestic residual waste
- Multi occupancy flat routes (particularly High Rise with refuse chutes)
- Recycling

During periods of disruption, residents will be advised they can bring their own recycling and refuse to the City Recycling Centre site if they wish, where it is safe to do so.

In instances where garden waste collections are planned, these will be suspended until residual and recycling collections have returned to normal, utilising this resource to support the catch up action plan

The information that will be used by the SDMG to guide their decision making is:

- Up to date weather forecast
- Work schedules
- Detail of residual and recycling rounds by day
- Summary report by day and by round of average tonnage expected, amount collected and tonnage/collection backlog.
- Health and Safety advice
- Police and Fire advice
- Emergency Planning Team advice
- Anticipated customer behaviour based on historic incidents.

## **Collection arrangements – Minimum level of service**

Where disruption occurs for a day but no longer than a week, residents will be asked to:

- If collections are suspended for the day residents should take their bins / recycling back in and put them back out for their next scheduled collection day
- If collections are not suspended but a resident's street is not accessible those residents should be advised to take their bins / recycling back in and put them back out for their next scheduled collection day
- Residents will be asked not to report a missed collection if a whole street is missed
- If open, residents will be reminded that household waste and recycling centres will continue to be open for anyone who wishes to bring their refuse, recycling and green waste and is able to do so safely.

Where disruption is expected to continue for more than a week, additional services will be put in place to provide further options for residents to dispose of their waste. Details of these will be considered given the weather conditions and disseminated through the council's contact centre, website and social media.

The minimum level of service expected during periods of severe weather will be available on the website. (Appendix 2 gives an example in relation to severe winter weather, but other pages can be devised as and if required ).

## **Resourcing and recovery timescales**

When suspension or disruption to the waste service is in excess of one week Amey will devise a detailed recovery plan for SDMG approval covering the collection of residual and recycling. This will detail the length of time and resource required to catch up and return the service to normal operation as soon as possible. It will also identify the contingencies such as weekend or overtime working that will be used.

Priority will always be given to residential residual collections over recycling and trade rounds.

During periods of disruption additional quantities of recycling and waste will be produced. The council will request that residents contain this excess in suitable receptacles (such as sacks for refuse and appropriate containers for recycling) and in a secure manner but will suspend the policy covering the non-collection of side waste during the period required to bring the service back to routine delivery.

## Communications

It is essential that this Contingency Plan ensures effective, accurate and timely joint communications with internal and external audiences during any suspension or disruption to recycling and waste services. This will consist of clear and simple messages being conveyed by GCC which will enable residents to know exactly what to do with their waste and recycling and ensure that expectations are met.

The aims of this communications protocol is:

- To ensure effective, accurate and timely communications agreed by all Stakeholders to internal and external audiences if disruption occurs to waste and recycling services during periods of adverse weather conditions.
- To ensure clear, consistent and simple messages are conveyed during periods of disruption
- To ensure that residents know exactly what to do with their waste and recycling and that expectations are met.

### **The communications process (what will happen if disruption occurs)**

The flow chart to show how communications will be triggered and how GCC customer services and contact centre teams will be updated.

It shows a systematic approach to communications – a clear process and chain of command.

Email message templates for updates to ensure consistent information is given each time.

### **How will the public be informed?**

Proactive communications from GCC through:

- GCC Website – homepage feature, newsflashes/other mechanism as appropriate
- GCC Social media (Facebook, Twitter updates)
- GCC Customer Contact Centre through recorded messages and effective knowledge base article updates
- Media – radio/TV/media websites – as appropriate

## **How will internal audiences be informed?**

Regular timely email information updates to internal audiences will include:

- Waste team
- Customer Services – for public information and website updates
- Senior Management
- Councillors as appropriate

A morning email identifying the days plan will be emailed between 07:30 and 08:00 to advise of the position for the day, to allow public messages to be made by 08:00.

Any deviations or relevant updates will be provided during the day as required. An end of day update will be sent summarising the day's issues and giving an indication of the anticipated service for the following day.

## **Crew information**

In circumstances where the service is suspended no information shall be provided by Amey to the crews until GCC have been advised and have updated their communications to residents via their web site and social media.

Key messages for crews to give out when on their rounds during disruption periods will be provided and all residents shall be directed to GCC Customer Services, GCC website and GCC social media accounts.

Crews will also be reminded of Amey's social media policy and advised against inappropriate social media posts.

When adverse weather conditions have passed and service is back to schedule, a de-brief will be held to analyse service performance.

## **Risk Assessment process following Heavy Accumulations of Snow**

### **Potential Issues:**

- Increased likelihood of an RTA occurring
- Unsafe vehicle movements.
- Vehicles stranded
- Failure of vehicle safety devices
- High-risk areas (e.g. steep slopes, hills, narrow roads, low traffic routes, ungritted areas etc.)
- Lack of visibility
- Unsafe conditions for operatives to undertake required roles.
- Delayed household collections.
- Inaccurate up to date information and communication.
- Inconsistent information **in** and **out** of the Contact Centre.
- Inaccurate operational information.
- Work force unable to get to work.

### **Priorities:**

- Health & Safety
- Customer Satisfaction

In the event of significant snow fall leading to difficulties in waste and recycling collection, the following Risk assessment process will be followed:

1. Where heavy snow is forecast in advance, a communication process will be triggered between the SMDG. The purpose being to communicate potential risks to the service delivery and how this is managed.
2. This process will be managed through holding conference calls between the stakeholders – The Strategic Decision Making Group enacting the Adverse Weather Contingency Plan.



3. If heavy overnight accumulations of snow materialise, Amey manager/supervisors will undertake Risk Assessment visits to high risk collection areas using four wheeled drive vehicles. A Risk Assessment form will be completed (Appendix 3). The purpose will be to determine the weather conditions and safety of sending the RCV fleet out. Further visits may be required if conditions worsen which could lead to vehicles becoming stranded.
4. Following the ES-HS-WINTER CONTINGENCY CHK-FO-01 (Appendix 2) - should conditions dictate it is unsafe for either the vehicles or operatives to work, an initial decision will be made as to whether:
  - a) This might only be the case for a couple of hours, in which case it might then give sufficient time for conditions to improve and subject to the required improvement, we can then commence with collections for the day at a later start point.
  - b) Conditions are such that there is no chance of any collections during the day. In this case the Contact Centre and Communications team should be informed immediately.
  - c) Conditions are such that some areas of the City are collectable but others are not. In this case the Call Centre and Communications team will need to be notified immediately, with information as to what will and will not be collected throughout the day.
  - d) If it has been approved for vehicles to go out and collect, the ultimate responsibility for the safety of a vehicle to collect a street lies with the driver, if the driver feels he can not operate safely in a street it will be his final decision as to whether the street is collected or not.
  - e) Any street, it is felt we would not be able to complete will not be attempted until it is sure we can complete the whole street. The reasons for this being staff safety, one of accurate communication to the Call Centre and customer.

## Appendix 1

### **Membership roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Decision Making Group**

#### **Amey**

Roles and responsibilities –

- To deliver an effective and safe service where possible.
- To continually assess the situation to ensure minimal downtime
- To keep all stakeholders updated in relation to services
- To support joined up and timely communications for residents and businesses
- To liaise daily with the designated member of the council's waste team to make appropriate decisions to suspend the service where appropriate
- To ensure staff adhere to social media policies and communications messages during adverse winter weather
- To devise and deliver an appropriate catch up action plan when required

#### **Amey Members**

Paul Colbourne – Principal Operations Manager

Anthony Hunter – Operations Manager

Colin Maisey – Operations and Transport Manager

Mark Lewis – Waste Senior Supervisor

Shane Burke – Waste Supervisor

#### **Gloucester City Council (GCC)**

Roles and responsibilities –

- To liaise with Amey and agree to service suspension when appropriate
- To undertake effective communications to residents based on service delivery and/or suspension
- To ensure an appropriate service delivery action plan is devised to bring service back to normal

### **GCC Members**

Jonathan Lund – Corporate Director

Meyrick Brentnall - City Improvement & Environment Manager

Dawn Fearn – Street Scene Strategy Officer

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## Appendix 2

ES-HS-WINTER CONTINGENCY CHK-FO-01

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## Appendix 3

### Risk Assessment Form

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