

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 AUGUST 2014

ATTENDANCE OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FRONT LINE SERVICES

Report from: Councillor Filmer
Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services

Summary

This report sets out activities and progress on work areas within Councillor Filmer's Portfolio which fall within the remit of this Committee. This information is provided in relation to the Portfolio Holder being held to account.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The areas within the terms of reference of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee and covered by the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services are:

- 2.1 - Major Transport
- 2.2 - Passenger Transport
- 2.3 - Road Safety
- 2.4 - Traffic Management
- 2.5 - Roads
- 2.6 - Parking
- 2.7 - Street Cleaning & Waste Collection / Recycling / Waste Disposal

2. ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2013-14

2.1 MAJOR TRANSPORT

2.1.1 Local Enterprise Partnership Funding

During the period, transport officers put together a package of schemes as part of the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) bid for the governments Local Growth Fund (LGF). A total of £68.1million was granted to the Kent and Medway federated area for projects that will commence in 2015/16, with £28.6million allocated for five successful Medway schemes. This is an excellent outcome for future transport schemes in Medway. The five successful schemes and the allocated LGF is as follows:

1. Chatham Town Centre and Public Realm Package (£4m LGF)
2. A289 Four Elms Roundabout to Medway Tunnel Journey Time and Network Improvements (£11.1m LGF)
3. Medway City Estate Connectivity Improvement Measures (£2.0m LGF)
4. Strood Town Centre Journey Time and Accessibility Enhancements (£9.0m LGF) (provisional allocation)
5. Medway Cycling Action Plan (£2.5m LGF)

Officers will be undertaking a significant amount of work in the coming months to finalise the approval process. Additionally, a £4m loan is being offered for the Flood Defences in Canal Road, Strood.

2.2 PASSENGER TRANSPORT

2.2.1 Supported Bus Services

During the period all supported bus contracts underwent a renewal via tender process (this included renewal of the School Yellow Bus Contracts). The result was an increase in the quality of service delivery, doubling the frequency of all Sunday services on the main corridors from hourly to half hourly, an increase in the frequency of the evening service between Medway and Maidstone (Service 101) to half hourly from hourly, and introducing a new Night Bus service on Fridays and Saturdays. These improvements were delivered at no additional cost to the Council.

2.2.2 School Yellow Buses

Contracts for all nine of the School Yellow Bus routes were renewed in April 2014 as part of a tender process. Local bus operator ASD Coaches were the successful bidder and will take over the nine routes from September 2014. ASD Coaches scored highly in both their quality assessment and their cost assessment, achieving both an improvement in service quality and a cost saving to the Council. ASD intend to utilise fully accessible double-decker buses on all Yellow Bus routes, which will allow an increased number of children to access what is a very popular service.

2.2.3 Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership

In March 2014 the Council entered into a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership with all local bus operators, designed to address issues affecting the efficiency of bus services in Medway. A number of issues affecting bus routes in Medway are already being addressed. Operators have also put forward a breakdown of hotspots where parking at bus stops is causing problems with bus access and punctuality; officers are working to address these issues.

2.2.4 Concessionary Bus Passes for Older People and People With Disabilities

In March 2013 the renewal of the existing 42,000 bus passes was completed successfully. Since then the overall number of Concessionary Bus Passes in circulation has become more stable after the initial adjustment required due to

the pass entitlement age tying in with an individual's pensionable age. The financial year 2014/2015 will commence the first round of the staggered pass renewal programme. New passes will again be issued for up to a five year period in order to maintain the staggered approach to pass renewal.

2.2.5 Medway Youth Pass

Take up of the Medway Youth Pass for half fare on buses during the morning peak remains consistent at around 3,000 students. However, increased promotion of the scheme has generated more interest in Medway secondary schools. To improve efficiency in processing the passes the scheme has been incorporated onto the same software tool used to process Concessionary Bus Pass.

2.2.6 Villager Community Transport Scheme

The two community buses continue to provide a transport service to residents in the rural areas of Medway; the scheme has 345 individual members and 60 social groups who regularly utilise the service for trips or for hire of the buses. However, the current buses operated have reached the end of their working life and replacement options are currently being considered.

2.2.7 Bus Station Information Screens

Officers have worked closely with contractor Infotech on the maintenance and new format of bus timetable screens for Chatham Waterfront Bus Station. The new screen software and screen format is expected to go live shortly and will improve real-time timetable information available to the public.

2.2.8 SEN Transport

During 2013/2014 Transport Officers worked with colleagues in the Category Management Team and SEN Team to ensure the successful mobilisation of SEN transport at three schools by Medway Norse. This new approach to SEN transport achieved a 20% cost saving on the previous cost of routes to these schools, and also provided the schools with improved service delivery via one dedicated operator (previously the schools received transport from a number of different operators, leading to a disjointed service). To extend this new strategy, the management of remaining SEN transport contracts to other school sites was also transferred to Medway Norse in April 2014. Though this has brought an end to Integrated Transport and RCC's involvement with SEN transport (the Service Level Agreement between Transport and SEN ending in April 2014) officers in the Integrated Transport Team continue to advise colleagues in the Category Management and SEN Team in order to ensure the smooth transition of service.

TRANSPORT INITIATIVES

2.2.9 Cycling Action Plan and Cycle Network

Following stakeholder consultation, Medway's Cycling Action Plan is currently in the process of being finalised, and will now have the benefit of additional

LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) funding as detailed in point 2.1.1. The number of cyclists utilising the primary cycle route network for 2013/2014 showed an increase of 7.8% on the previous year's number. During the period additional cycling infrastructure was delivered on Wood Street, linking 2 new Toucan crossings, and new cycle storage racks at Chatham Library, Chatham Waterfront Bus Station, and Medway Park. Further significant investments secured through the LGF are predicted to increase cycling in Medway.

2.2.10 School Transport Initiatives

Walking Bus – There were 47 routes and 1,489 children participating in Walking Bus routes in Medway by the end of December 2013, an increase of 755 participants since the previous quarter. This significant increase in number was largely due to the Walking Bus themed challenges, which took place during International Walk to School Month in October 2013. Additional Walking Bus stop-sites have been assessed for a third installation of Walking Bus Stop signs in Medway.

2.2.11 Walk2 Count - In May 2014 schools took part in the "Walk2Count Challenge as part of the National Walk to School Week campaign. Figures provided by the KM Charity Team confirmed that 14,466 green journeys were made during 'Walk to Work Week' 16th May to 23rd May, and as a result there were 5,357 less car trips on Medway roads that week. Combined with the "Walk on Wednesday" initiative, the overall number of cars off the road in Medway for the 13/14 academic year is 30,829 journeys. This places Medway top of the league across Kent, 9,000 ahead of second place Authority Thanet.

2.2.12 Medway Hedgehog Hiker & Social "Netwalk" Challenges -Seventeen schools participated in these challenges as part of the international 'Walk to School Month', October 2013. Winners were recognised in the 'Primary', 'Secondary' and 'Highly Commended' categories, with trophy presentations made in January. The overall winning school, St James' CE Academy in Grain tallied a 94.3% walk to school percentage over the month.

2.3 ROAD SAFETY

2.3.1 KSI's

In 2013, 56 Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) casualties were recorded in Medway. This represents an increase of 5 compared with 2012. The additional 5 KSI's were all fatalities, the number of casualties seriously injured remained the same as 2012.

2.3.2 Road Safety Schemes

A number of road safety schemes have been introduced in Medway during the period:

- Ingram Road, Gillingham – New Zebra crossing serving pedestrian desire line and school route.
- Church Street, Gillingham – Upgrade of existing Zebra crossing point serving school route.

- Christmas Street, Gillingham – 20mph zone including raised table at junction.
- Wren Way junction with Princes Avenue, Walderslade, Chatham – Footway widening/uncontrolled crossing distance reduction on school route.
- Wainscott Primary School, Wainscott – Raised table uncontrolled crossing point at relocated school access.
- Sundridge Hill, Cuxton – Vehicle restraint system.

2.3.3 Think Bike Campaign

Medway led (and designed) a countywide campaign called Think Bike! to raise the awareness of vulnerability of two wheeled road users. Highly visible boards were displayed between April - June 2014 across key locations in Medway to urge road users to “Think Bike”. For the first time, the signage included two variants, including 'Think Biker' and 'Biker Think' to encourage those on two wheels to also think about car users. A radio advertising campaign was also utilised to help enforce the message.

2.3.4 School Crossing Patrols

The School Crossing Patrol service continues in Medway, with over 30 full time patrols and 22 reliefs in place. 6 new patrols were successfully recruited to post in 2014 to serve vacant sites, with further recruitment to take place from September 2014.

2.3.5 Zigzag Banner Campaign

Over 20 schools in Medway displayed the Council's “Zigzag” message banners in 2013/14, designed discourage irresponsible parking in the school vicinity. Parking enforcement visits were often coincided with the initiative to help reinforce the keep clear message. Penalty Charge Notice figures continue to be fed back to the relevant schools each month.

2.3.6 ‘Be Bright, Be Seen’ Reflective Taggos

As part of ‘Road Safety Week’ in November 2013, over 40,000 school children in Medway received a reflective clip-on zipper tag as part of an initiative designed to increase their roadside visibility. Medway Council's Community Safety Wardens and Safer Journey Officers delivered lesson plans and bright zipper tags to all Primary and Secondary schools in Medway.

2.3.7 Seatbelt Sled Initiative

The Safer Journeys Team have committed to 30 Medway school bookings for the Seatbelt Sled demonstration class, with approximately 1,700 pupils booked in Year 5/6 to receive the initiative in 2014, compared to 1,400 in 2013 across 19 schools. Positive PR coverage for the initiative has included a video on the Medway Matters website, KMFM radio interviews, and news articles featured in Medway Messenger publication and Road Safety Great Britain website.

2.3.8 Speed Indicator Device (SID)

Medway currently has 2 Speed Indicator Device units for which a schedule of usage has been agreed, comprising of school bookings and other identified sites. The resource also has the capability of generating site-specific speed reports where potential areas of safety concern have been identified. The system received positive television coverage in 2014 in a Meridian News report.

2.3.9 Safer Journeys Update

The Safer Journeys Team continued to expand its social media presence, and supported a number of additional initiatives and partnership events during the period:

- Mid-Kent College Driver Simulator event.
- "Safety In Action" partnership event
- 'Life or Death' clear school access initiative
- Driving simulator education resource

2.3.10 Junior Road Safety Officers

Nine schools in Medway have signed up to the Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO) initiative with 21 JRSO's already in post.

2.3.11 Sustrans 'Big Pedal' Campaign

The Sustrans 'The Big Pedal' inter-school cycling campaign took place in March 2014. Schools in Medway took part with St James' CE Primary Academy in Grain achieving a top 50 place nationally, with 1,300 to 1,400 schools participating nationally.

2.3.12 'A Licence to Kill' (L2K) Campaign

The A License to Kill (L2K) campaign, a safe driving theatre-in-education intervention aimed at 16-18 olds, was implemented in Autumn 2013. This was first year that the Medway leg of the production was delivered in house to schools, and achieved a reach of over 90% of the target audience (over 5,000 students compared to 1,700 historically).

2.3.13 Bikeability

During the period a total of 159 Level 1 and 2 Bikeability courses were delivered in Medway primary schools, reaching 1,900 pupils approximately. Free two-day summer courses are to take place at Greenacre Academy, Walderslade in August 2014.

2.3.14 Strood Town Centre De-cluttering

A design for Strood High Street has progressed with expectation that sign rationalisation will be undertaken this financial year. The scheme has also been expanded to include a number of additional measures to aid pedestrian movements.

2.4 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

2.4.1 Journey Times

Monitoring of the six strategic corridor routes into the boundary of Chatham Town Centre during the morning peak between 8am - 9am has shown the measure of congestion has decreased slightly from the last in 2013/2014 compared to the previous year. The trend is still considerably below the 4-minute target and indicates improved overall journey speeds and journey times for both private and public transport. Officers are working with members to agree a revised methodology for measuring this indicator.

2.4.2 Home to School Journeys

'Mode of travel' School Census data continues to be reported by schools annually in Medway, including Academies. According to data for 2013/14, there were 40,441 pupils walking to school in Medway. This is the highest number to date and represents a reduction in the number of children being driven to school.

2.4.3 Network Management

Medway has been subject to major utility works during this period due to water main replacement, water metering, gas main replacement and high-speed broadband installation.

During the period the Council received 17,162 roadwork notices, equating to approximately 66 each working day. Each notice is assessed for its impact on the network and accepted, conditions imposed or rejected. If no comments are made then approval is automatic. Appropriate notices have been produced to prevent future work following resurfacing work.

13,687 roadworks have taken place in this period, and 7,174 inspections have been carried out, with 342 defect notices issued. In addition, utility companies have been fined for over running roadworks and fixed penalty notices have been issued for streetwork infringements.

The Council also commenced a streetworks coring programme, to ensure better reinstatement compliance. This showed approximately a 43% failure rate on the utility company reinstatements in Medway. Once a failed reinstatement is identified the utility company has to pay defect charges and replace the reinstatement to one that is to the required standards. The Council will continue with a coring programme, and is also investigating the use of ground penetrating radar to assess reinstatements in a non destructive manner.

The Streetworks Team moved to ETON 6 software, an externally hosted system, which has helped to improve operational efficiencies.

2.4.4 General Traffic Management

During the period officers successfully dealt with a high volume of traffic management requests for service and complaints including approximately 2,750 enquiries via Customer First, equating to approximately 11 per working day.

Officers also produced numerous Traffic Regulation Orders including emergency closure orders, and orders for events on the highway, approved a range of temporary signs for new developments, produced consolidation orders for parking controls, and developed a database for Traffic orders.

2.4.5 Traffic Management Support for Events

Officers provided key traffic management support for a wide range of events during the period, both planned (Dickens Festival, Castle Concerts, Fuse Festival, Christmas Markets, etc) and unplanned (tidal surges, winter storms). The support provided was essential to ensure that the events in Medway were a success, and unexpected emergency situations were managed efficiently and effectively.

2.4.6 Traffic signals

Officers achieved the following service improvements:

- Introduction of a streamlined 'bag-over' process, this is where roadworks need to take signals out of commission, the new process introduces fixed costs with a fixed cost solution, saving time and increasing efficient liaison with utility companies and internal teams. This assisted with 40 different 'bag-over' works, 60% of which were on traffic sensitive roads.
- Puffin upgrades along the Brook.
- Connection of two remaining CCTV cameras to the network bringing available CCTV coverage from 38 cameras to 40
- Reconnected parking guidance sign on New Road.

2.5 ROADS

2.5.1 Capital Projects

The design team have a full programme delivering both the design & build and design only projects within the Local Transport Plan. Currently there are 34 schemes proposed to be built this financial year and a further 13 are design only.

The Road Adoptions Team continues to work with developers to ensure their works are within the Medway standard requirements. Their larger schemes include:

- Chatham Waters – currently on site
- St Marys Island – design complete awaiting developer funding

2.5.2 Highways Responsive Maintenance

During 20013/14:

- 34 intermediate carriageway maintenance schemes completed.
- 26 intermediate footway pavement schemes completed.
- 38 minor miscellaneous schemes completed.

Customer satisfaction surveys for Street Lighting continue to remain positive. The target is 80% satisfaction and for 2013/14 the quarterly scores were 90%, 86%, 87% and 89% respectively.

The Salix funded Street Lighting project was successfully completed with upgrades and improvements made across the network to improve lighting using energy efficient means. This will bring reduced energy costs and provide a better carbon footprint.

The percentage of street lamps working at any one time exceeded 99% for the entire year.

The National Street Gazetteer Officer gained and maintained Gold standard, which is the industry expectation, throughout the year and won a Gold exemplar award in 2014 in the category of "street data".

The Public Rights of Way team continue to work with our Volunteer group, on maintaining the Public Right of Way Network. Our Volunteer group, Medway Towns Footpath Group, undertake work that equates to 12 hours per week in the winter months and 14 hours per week in the summer months. Their weekly work is only abandoned in times of inclement weather.

We continue to work with the Community Payback Team and this year we have made additional links with the Prison Service, who are using their resources to improve the PROW network.

Using LTP funding we made surface improvements to various Rights of Way and part of the Saxon Shore Way.

The Highway Inspectorate completed 100% of all targeted safety inspections on time, giving an effective regime of inspection, assessment and recording of defects/condition. It ensures the safety of all network users and forms Medway Council's defence, against third party claims.

The Highway Inspectorate trailed a new condition survey, which assesses the overall condition, of local roads and reports this in Confirm, our asset management system, using a Red Amber Green rating. This is used by our Maintenance team, along with other data, to compile potential future schemes. This is now rolled out on a permanent basis.

Our Highway Inspectors raised 5789 task orders for safety repairs across the network.

Our Highways Inspectors received and dealt with 5658 service requests from customers.

Our Highway Inspectors repaired 1047 defects, on the network, themselves, Viafix (a permanent flexible material) and saving the cost of calling the Contractor out for an emergency repair.

2.5.3 Planned Maintenance

38 roads were resurfaced, 9 of these were Micro surfacing and 29 using conventional surfacing materials. The total length of resurfacing was 9,570 linear metres.

26 pavement schemes completed, totalling 7,760 linear metres resurfaced

2.5.4 Winter Maintenance

The winter service period saw a very mild winter with a record low number of salting runs completed, 35 salting runs in total and 1,000 tonnes of salt used.

Cleansing and Greenspaces teams were available to cover pavement and car park snow clearance however their services were not required as we did not have a no snow event. Additional snow clearing shovels and spreaders were provided to Cleansing and Greenspaces teams

A trial was due to be undertaken to see the effective use of mounting slush blades to the larger gritters, however due to the lack of snow this has been delayed to trial next winter.

The next Winter service period runs from 13 October 2014 - 17 April 2015. A volunteer Snow Warden scheme will be trialled in three wards, Luton & Wayfield, River & Strood Rural during the forthcoming winter period.

2.5.5 Drainage

During 2013/14:

- 33,866 gullies cleaned during the cyclic gully cleansing programme.
- Medway Council car park gullies cleaned where accessible.
- 130 no. soakaways cleaned.
- 25 flooding and drainage issue sites, which have been completed and resolved.
- 327 miscellaneous requests, which were completed

2.5.6 Minor Works

82 Minor Works Briefs from other departments and 10 Ward Improvement schemes, which were all completed.

2.5.7 Signs and Lines

- 348 Road Signs orders completed.
- 336 Road Markings requests completed.
- 70 Road Marking requests for Disabled Bays
- 35 requests for the installation of disabled signs

2.5.8 Medway Tunnel

Innovative surveying techniques have been carried out by the university of Greenwich to scan the Medway tunnel producing a 3d imagery to analyse possible movement within the tunnel over the 18 year operational life. The university carried out ground penetrating radar on the joints on the submerged section of the tunnel concluding that there was significant cover on the Gina joints to prevent possible fire damage.

Proposal for LED lighting developed and officers will be exploring a loan, built around energy savings to implement this scheme subject to approval by Members.

Additionally fire detection and suppressant systems, drainage equipment and emergency cross passage escape doors are items that will need replacing in the near future.

2.5.9 Rochester Esplanade Retaining Wall.

Funding for Phases IV & V are being investigated but at the moment has not been identified.

2.5.10 Highway Retaining Walls

Pier Road has been identified requiring remedial work. Initial work to make safe and to protect the public, has been carried out. A special Inspection to identify remedial options has been carried out by Highways structures engineering consultant Amey. Building Control and Legal Services are currently reviewing special inspection report and options to repair and finance the remedial works are currently being explored.

2.5.11 The Brook Car Park

Anti Jump fence has been installed at the Brook car park as requested by the Coroner.

Additional concrete repairs to the value of £100,000 have been identified and it is anticipated that these works will commence September 2014.

2.5.12 John Hawkins retaining wall

Works to demolish and stabilize part of the far perimeter wall (Masonic Hall site) will commence this summer. The area remains fenced off for safety reasons, however whilst 80% of the car park area is available Parking Services revenue continues to be reduced. The completion of the final phase will ensure future safety of car park users and return the car park to full capacity.

2.5.13 Green Street and Otterham Quay Lane Footbridges

These two footbridges span over Network Rail property and are programmed to commence from August 2014.

2.5.14 Pembroke Interchange Retaining Walls.

The walls that flank Pier Road as it exits the Medway Tunnel have been damaged by a build up of water behind the brick cladding. Works are continuing, to clean the bricks and replace damaged and loose pointing. Maintenance and monitoring continue during the tunnel maintenance closures.

Hockadays footbridge by the Rainham Level Crossing is to have lights reinstalled by Network Rail and funded by Medway Council.

2.6 PARKING

2.6.1 Parking Schemes

Three parking zones were put in, fully funded by developer contributions.

2.6.2 Parking Services

A Paypoint (Pay by Phone) trial is currently being undertaken, in Blue Boar Lane and Corporation Street car parks in Rochester. This enables our customers to pay for their parking, using their mobile phone. The results of the trial will be reviewed and a decision made, on those results, will determine how we take this forward.

Every member of the Parking Processing Team, who deal with all permits and PCN appeals, successfully undertook the City and Guilds, level 3, in Public Notice Processing. This is the industry standard for those working in Parking Services.

Bus Lanes in both Chatham & Strood are still working effectively with compliance building rapidly ensuring the health and safety of the bus station patrons.

Replacement of external agency Civil Enforcement Officers with permanent members of staff now almost complete, resulting in a dedicated team working together for Medway residents and businesses.

Liberty Quays permit scheme is now up and running and is being regularly patrolled and enforced.

Pay & Display operation is now up and running in the Market Hall Multi Storey Car Park (Tesco) Chatham, with a refund scheme for shoppers due to be implemented shortly. The car park now has a traffic order in place and is patrolled by the Enforcement Team.

British Parking Association Safer Parking Park Mark award number of car parks awarded increased from 36 to 41 this year.

2.7 STREET CLEANSING & WASTE COLLECTION / RECYCLING / WASTE DISPOSAL

2.7.1 Waste Collection and Disposal

The recycling rate achieved for 2013/14 was 41.2%.

Satisfaction levels remain extremely high for all waste services

- Refuse: 93.5% (same as last year)
- Recycling: 87.25% (up on last year)
- Household waste recycling centres: 80.25% (up on last year)
- Street cleansing: 72.5% (same as last year)

2.7.2 Weekly Collections Project

Waste Services' primary objective for 2013 was to implement the £14million DCLG-funded 'weekly collections' project in partnership with Veolia Environmental Services. The planned 28 October launch was achieved and Medway's residents now enjoy an enviable kerbside service, one of the most comprehensive in the country.

The entire collection fleet of 46 British built trucks, all fitted with remote-access safety cameras, are now fully paid for and the property of Medway Council. This arrangement, along with other efficiencies negotiated through partnership, has attracted significant cost savings for the Council up to when our contract with Veolia ends in 2019.

The service expansion also created 40 new jobs within Veolia.

Within the funding award a borough-wide communications campaign was delivered to project support:

- A temporary team of 6 doorstep canvassers knocked on 12,000 doors providing householders with information about recycling and food waste. Every ward was visited and the initiative was well received by residents.
- 90,000 kitchen food caddies and rolls of liners were distributed to households on the wheeled bin service brown to encourage their participation.
- Reached approximately 4,400 residents at 40 events, including PACT meetings and partnership work with Safer Communities and a mix of billboard, newspaper and radio coverage..
- The October/November edition of Medway Matters featured an 8-page information leaflet, designed in consultation with two resident focus groups

For every tonne of material that avoids a black sack, Medway saves between £35 and £110. By providing a convenient and comprehensive weekly kerbside collection of all materials, Medway has broken down many of the barriers residents had highlighted that had previously stopped them recycling more of their waste. The amount of black sack waste for 2013/14 reduced by 1% after just five months of weekly recycling collections.

2.7.3 Food waste collections

Around £40 is saved for every tonne of food waste collected by the organics service as opposed to refuse. Around 20% of what households throw out is food waste.

Building on the weekly collections promotion, a second stage of encouraging food waste diversion involves more complex planning, tackling roads with mixed housing stock where wheeled bin suitability is not so easy to define (e.g. properties with steps, no side access or front storage). This work is continuing this year by providing smaller brown bins and kitchen caddies where possible so that these households can also access the service.

From April this year, to encourage ongoing uptake of food waste collections and after a trial exercise, affordable compostable caddy liners were made available at all libraries for residents to buy (£1.50 for 26). This initiative has proved extremely popular and we anticipate selling 12,000 rolls this year, equating to a potential food waste diversion of 468 tonnes.

2.7.4 Electronic and bulky waste collections

This successful partnership with SWEEEP of Sittingbourne and Veolia to collect WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment) from Medway residents' homes free-of-charge, recycled 273 tonnes of material during 2013/14 and avoided 1500 bulky collections, saving Medway over £20,000 in collection costs.

SWEEEP are now able to recover 1kg of lead from every cathode ray tube. The recycling of WEEE is free to local authorities and paid for under a producer responsibility scheme but does count towards our overall recycling rate.

Reusable bulky items such as sofas, continue to be collected free-of-charge by the charity, 'Neighbourhood Furniture Store'. During 2013/14, this socially aware service diverted over 25 tonnes of reusable items from landfill and back to those who can make use of it, saving the Council over £2500 in disposal costs.

2.7.5 Bring site collections

Medway continues to receive a steady income from textiles collected at bring sites, generating £22,400 income last year and diverting 74 tonnes of waste from disposal.

Apart from the usual glass, cans, and paper banks, our small WEEE, 'TetraPak' (carton recycling), textiles, books and CD banks have helped us divert 147 tonnes from disposal in 2013/14.

2.7.6 Household Waste and Recycling Centre's

Landfill diversion and recycling performance has continued to improve under the current contract held by FCC. Since they took over running the three sites

in 2010, they have reduced the amount sent to landfill by 43% and increased recycling by 45%. Along with closer customer engagement, these successes have been helped by FCC separating mattresses, hard plastics, paper and items suitable for recycling from residual bins. During 2013/14, these sites achieved an average 64% recycling rate - an all-time high!

In addition to their existing reuse partnership with Abacus, a local charity outlet selling affordable second-hand furniture to disadvantaged residents, FCC ran a trial auction of other reusable items separated at Medway's HWRCs in November alongside the health care charity, Sue Ryder. Whilst sale receipts were low, the potential of this type of waste diversion initiative has prompted the two organisations to investigate the viability of more auctions this year. Bicycles recovered at the sites have recently started to go to Rochester Prison where inmates have been trained to repair and refurbish them. Not only does this provide up-skilling opportunities for offenders but also the bicycles are resold through Abacus's Strood showroom.

Customer satisfaction amongst those that visit the sites remains extremely high with 97% overall satisfaction being recorded for 2013/14. This has increased from 2012/13 (94%)

2.7.7 Contract monitoring

Waste Services' monitoring officers have carried out over 1400 street cleansing inspections and over 650 refuse and recycling collection inspections to ensure that the contractor has met our standards and provided a good level of service.

170 community clean-ups were supported during 2013/14 by providing equipment and disposal of the waste.

2.7.8 Operational services (pest control, street washing, graffiti removal and sign shop)

The street washing vehicle continues its cleansing schedule along the high streets of Chatham, Rochester, Rainham and Gillingham and now includes washing of every litter and dog bin twice a year.

Our in-house sign shop production and installation service continues to support the needs of other internal departments providing a cost efficient and timely services.

Pest Control and Graffiti removal services continued to hit all service targets, providing a valuable, highly regarded service to residents and the wider community.

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Background documents

None