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## Service Improvement Notice response March 2022

### 1.0 Background

Veolia was disappointed to receive the Service Improvement Notice (SIN) on 04 March 2022 with regard to mobilising collection rounds, the rescheduling of collection rounds and container requests. With regards to street cleansing, the SIN also references road closure management, sweeping standards, sweeping standards in town centre areas and the mobilisation of the street cleaner's app. Finally, the SIN raises the introduction of a dedicated complaints handling resource.

The municipal services have been operating within the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) since March 2020. Firstly, to react to the worldwide Covid19 pandemic and then, from June 2021, to cope with the impact of the national labour shortage.

Within the rest of this response the *text in blue italics* is the performance issue raised in the SIN by Sutton.


### 2.0 Waste Collections

#### 2.1 Driver availability and round dispatch

*Please set out the date, based on current recruitment and staff retention work, when flats recycling collections will be consistently fully operational, and set out proposals for the configuration of rounds where contamination is observed and recorded.*

From Monday 28 February 2022 all rounds - including the two flats recycling rounds - have made improvements in being dispatched.

The image below is drawn from the daily dispatch sheets from Monday 28 Feb 2022 until Sunday 27 Mar 2022. Apologies for the scale, however this does illustrate that for this four week period every round was dispatched on the correct day and only one round (Kerbside Recycling 5) did not complete all their work on the correct day (85% on Friday 18 March 2022). The outstanding 15% was completed on Saturday 22 March 2022. The works were delayed on Friday 18 March because the usual driver was unable to attend work at short notice. The replacement driver was unfamiliar with the round and left late having been recalled from other duties.



Without the influence of external factors (e.g. global pandemic, national labour shortage or escalation in the Russia/Ukraine war) Veolia's current retention, recruitment and internal training processes is projected to allow the managers to mobilise all the services daily.

Any escalation in the Russia/Ukraine war could impact service provision. The SLWP has 23 staff - including 13 drivers - from Poland and Hungary that may be required to return home should their governments recall them for National Service.

#### 2.1.2 Contamination

In c. 500K collections (dwellings, not lifts) there have been just 14 reports of contamination from the flats recycling crews since collections restarted on 28 Feb 2022. Veolia spoke with Matt Webster at Viridor who confirmed that there has been no visible degradation in quality of the loads delivered into Beddington since 28 Feb 2022 compared to when the service was suspended in the Summer of 2021.

The South London regional team has also spoken to their colleagues at the Southwark IWMF who

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have confirmed that since the restart of the service the levels of contamination have not changed from Summer 2021.

The messaging on the containers never changed during the period of service suspension and although residents would have noticed that only one vehicle was visiting for all of the products their 'container discipline' for those products remained high. Veolia does not view contamination at communal sites as more of a risk now that the service has restarted. However, it is true that there is more opportunity for contamination in communal blocks, especially if it is hidden in the middle or the bottom of containers. In the past, in extreme circumstances the communications team has visited communal blocks with contaminated containers, however it is difficult to identify the culprits when multiple addresses have access to communal containers.

In the first instance the communications team will deliver the attached [service leaflet](#) to remind all the residents of their responsibilities when bringing their waste and recycling to the communal bin sheds.

Where contamination has been identified by the collection crew, the bin is 'tagged' and reported on ECHO. The management team will then send a task to a refuse crew to empty the bin as contaminated recycling and tip the contents at Beddington as residual waste in the EFW.

## 2.2 Flats Above Shops

*Please set out proposals for the scheduling of rounds that you have discussed with Sutton, and a timeline for this rollout and implementation. Veolia has highlighted the challenges around round sizes particularly at the beginning of the week for a number of kerbside services, the discrepancies between rounds for flats recycling and residual collections, and the varying flats above shops provision. We are open to solutions for this, but a plan needs to be presented.*

The Regional Manager spoke with Sutton officers on 14 March 2022 to clarify this query. The Sutton officers are concerned that the Flats Above Shops (FAS) service is fragmented, collected by a number of different rounds. Refuse collections are primarily carried out by the 'Bag Round' (BR), however because of collection frequency, collection stream and time constraints the BR is supplemented by a number of resources to collect the recycling.

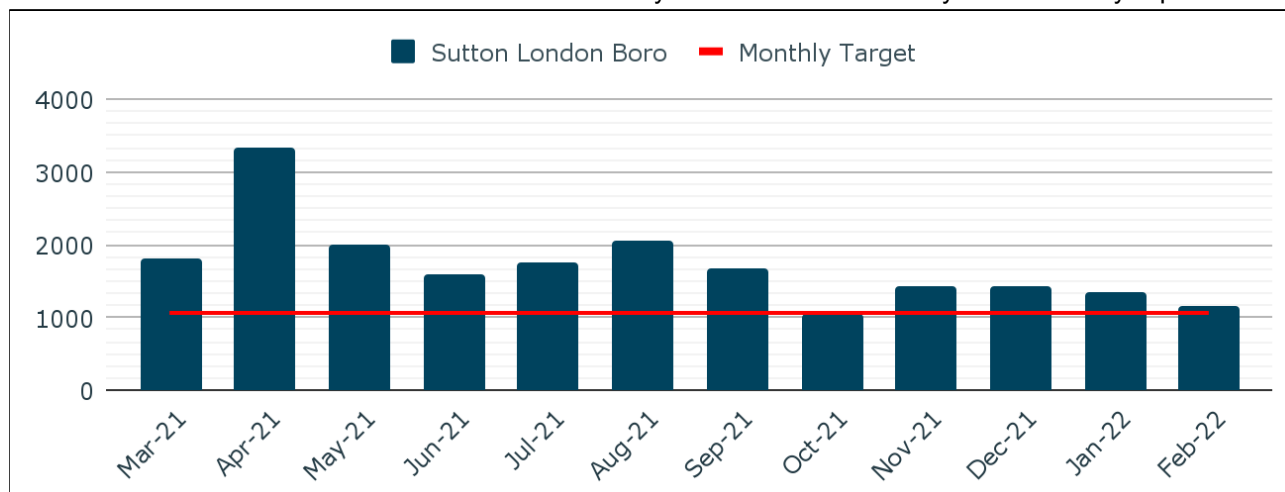
The attached Action Plan will include proposals and timelines for options to consolidate these collections and focus the accountability for the FAS service onto one or two collection rounds.

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### 2.3 Container deliveries

*Please set out a timetabled solution to rectify outstanding container requests, reduce the time period for fulfilment back to the contract specification and minimise the impact on residents.*

The extract below is drawn from the container delivery section of the February 2022 monthly report.



Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22
Sutton London Boro	1805	3348	1988	1585	1751	2062	1666	1056	1428	1418	1353	1148
Monthly Target	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062

As stated in the February monthly report submitted on 14 March 2022, Veolia disputed the validity of this part of the SIN.

Paragraph 3.6 (Container Deliveries) of MS 1.1 (Collections) Veolia stated that the delivery team in Sutton would complete 12,744 container deliveries pa or 51 per day or 1,062 pcm. In the 12 months to 28 February 2022 the delivery team completed 20,583 tasks against a target of 12,744. 64% over target.

### 3.6 Container Deliveries

Where new containers are being introduced in line with the new collections service, these will be delivered by a delivery company, and this price has been accounted for in the model. We have estimated the following annual container delivery requirements across the Boroughs based on our knowledge of requirements of contracts both in Croydon and Kingston and more widely in London. Using a productivity of 50 containers delivered per day we have determined the need for five container delivery crews.

Material	Container Type	Croydon	Kingston	Merton	Sutton
Residual	140l Bin				2,481
	180l Bin	5,006	2,048		
	240l Bin			1,911	
	1100l Bin	57	37	43	35
Recyclates	140l Bin				620
	240l Bin	3,129	1,280	1,592	930
	56l Box	6,883	2,816	3,503	3,411
	360l Bin	113	74	86	39
	1100l Bin	57	37	43	17
Food Waste	7l Caddy	4,603	2,095	2,555	2,470
	23l Caddy	3,754	1,536	1,911	1,861
	240l Bin	113	74	86	81
Garden Waste	240l Bin	951	410	510	794
<b>Total Replacement Containers per Year</b>		<b>24,666</b>	<b>10,408</b>	<b>12,239</b>	<b>12,739</b>
<b>Containers per day (252 days)</b>		<b>98</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Crews Required</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Containers will be delivered within five Business Days of request. The Drivers will also collect any reported damaged containers. Where possible these will be repaired, if not they will be sent for recycling.

Proposals within the Y4 Annual Review (2020/21) to change the way that containers are charged for and delivered were rejected by the SLWP. A revised set of proposals will be brought to the Partnership in the Y5 (2021/22) Annual Review for their consideration. The proposals will again include a charging mechanism. Whether a flat fee (Amazon model e.g. £4.99) per visit, or a pricing model based on the size of the container, these revenues could be used to fund additional delivery rounds and suppress unnecessary demand.

## 3.0 Street Cleansing

### 3.1 Traffic Management

*We have reached an unsatisfactory conclusion on the management of road closures for street cleansing and Veolia has set out that this is a cost you will not meet. Veolia has however committed to completing the Chapter 8 training with staff yet we still await dates on this. Please set out when this training will take place, and when the work for roads where road closures and temporary management orders are required, and the dates when the cleansing in the 8 locations agreed will be able to commence.*

The training for the 28 SLWP staff (6x from Sutton) began in the w/c 07 February 2022. The training is due to finish on 06 April 2022. However, each candidate is required to pass an assessment at the end of each module on each day's training (3). Should a candidate fail a daily assessment they may not progress to the next day. Any failures mean that the candidate's progress will be delayed.

The progress of Sutton's six candidates thus far (as at 30.03.2022);

- 2x have passed all three modules (10 have passed throughout SLWP)
- 1x must retest on two of the three modules
- 1x must retest all three modules (w/c 04.04.2022)
- 2x will start the training in the w/c 04.04.2022

In addition to the three classroom modules each candidate must also complete three practical assessments before they can carry out traffic management (TM) without supervision from a qualified instructor. Two of these three practical assessments will be carried out at a training centre, the third can be held within Sutton in areas that require TM in order for street cleansing to be carried out.

Therefore the timetable for Sutton staff to undertake TM activities without an instructor present is unknown. The practical assessments will not be booked until all of the classroom based activities are complete (post 06 April 2022). Veolia's People Development (PD) team is working on a timetable programme for the practical training at this time. However, we envisage these training dates as imminent. Veolia's local managers will inform the Sutton officers as soon as the dates are known. Again, passing the courses is not just attendance based and each candidate will have to pass all three assessments.

As previously discussed with Sutton, Veolia agreed to work with any third parties appointed by Sutton who have trained Traffic management teams. Veolia's understanding is that Paul Brockwell was working with Sutton's highways team to facilitate these 8x urgent road closures.

### 3.2 Cleansing standards and independent verification

*Regular monitoring by client officers of standards on street cleansing standards not being delivered has been highlighted to the local team through performance meetings. Standards observed and recorded have not improved, and this is now being reported by the Council quarterly. We are seeking an independent cleansing validation on the standards of litter picking and sweeping being maintained in the borough, and to establish an agreed benchmark that is recognised and reported on through the established performance reports on a seasonal basis.*

Veolia welcomes any independent verification of Sutton's internal grading of the service. However, Veolia would like to be provided with the data on how Sutton's officers are randomly selecting the 300 transects from the 10 land use types as defined within the [COPLAR](#).

Sutton's officers are returning scores of 83% of streets passing for litter and 33% of streets passing for detritus. Annually across Sutton the teams carry out approximately 385K sweeping tasks. In the 12 months

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to Feb 28th 2022 Sutton officers recorded c. 290 'street below grade' requests, around 0.08% of all the works carried out. There is a disconnect between these statistics and Veolia will work with Sutton's officers to identify an independent body to carry out a full NI195 survey. White, Young and Green carried out the independent surveys for RB Kingston before they joined the Partnership in 2019.

Until an independent surveyor can be sourced, Veolia's managers welcome the opportunity to carry out joint inspections at the randomly selected transect sites.

### 3.3 High Street areas

*Cleansing standards in Sutton High Street have visibly deteriorated and sweeping regimes have not been maintained with reduced mechanical sweeping in primary and secondary retail areas throughout the borough. This has been highlighted with the local team and we are now seeking details of how improvements will be made in these locations including the more frequent mechanical sweeping, checks and balances that will be put in place and how this will be reported back on to the borough.*

In the contract meetings over the last 6 months Sutton's officers have raised issues within the town centre areas. Veolia offered some mitigation during the leafing season - even in an area maintained 16 hours a day there will be short periods where the weather conditions exceed the resources' ability to cope - and addressed the other 'attention to detail' issues with the town centre sweepers. While Veolia is committed to continually improving and evolving the service throughout the life of the contract, having reviewed the data, Sutton's officers have raised just 16 street below grade events in the 12 months to Feb 28 2022.

A total 156 'Town Centre' Street Below Grade events were created (13 per calendar month or 0.43 per day) from all sources in the same 12 month period.

Of those 156;

- Only 9.62% (16 in total [0.04 per day]) were created by Sutton officers
- 76% of public events concerned sweeping or litter
  - 87% of officer events
- 23% of public events concerned leafing
  - 13% of officer events
- 60% of all events were raised during the morning shift 06:00 - 14:00
- 40% of all events were raised during the evening shift 14:00 - 22:00
- 90% of all events were raised Monday to Friday
- 10% of all events were raised on Saturdays or Sundays
  - 56% of all weekend events were raised before 14:00
- The most events in one street was 13 (8.33%) in St. Nicholas Way, Sutton SM1
  - 1 by an Officer
  - 12 by the public

This high level review of the PowerBI data does not lend itself to any conclusions as yet. However the local managers and the Digital Transformation Manager will review the data in more detail to ascertain if the resources can be put to more efficient use or if they need to be supplemented to account for seasonal variations in footfall etc.

30 transects in the full 300 transect NI195 survey will be from 'Primary Retail' areas (defined as Town Centres in the SLWP) and 30 transects will be from 'Secondary Retail' areas (there is no definition for these areas in the SLWP contract, only Town Centre and Non Town Centre) will form part of the survey. A joint review of the survey data between Veolia managers and Sutton officers would also be of benefit if the survey highlighted particular areas of concern.

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Further to review and discussions with local managers and taking into the consideration the data described above, Veolia will trial an additional sweeper in Sutton Town centre to consolidate the sweeping beats into smaller areas, therefore improving productivity by reducing travelling time (high street is approximately 1 km long), which in turn will improve frequency of sweeping and standards of cleansing.

### 3.4 The 'Sweeper app'

*We have been working with you on the introduction of a digital street cleansing solution for street sweepers in Sutton tracking real-time cleansing updates. Please set out when you expect this to be operational by, and how it will be reported back on.*

The development of the 'sweeper app' is a service enhancement suggested by Veolia **\*date\*** as a tool to improve standards and perception of barrow sweeping activities. As such this sits outside the contract and cannot form part of a Service Improvement Notice.

Since the service improvement notice has been submitted, Veolia Digital Transformation team has feedback to Sutton officers, the sweeper app development has been delayed until Q4 due to unforeseen circumstances and Selected Intervention capacity.

## 4.0 Complaints Handling

*Please set out your proposals for the management of casework and dedicated resources including responding to enquiries and complaints and when this resource will be in place by.*

In the w/c 14 march 2022 Veolia managers met with Sutton officers to discuss their requirements from this resource. Following on from this meeting Veolia's Senior Contract Manager engaged with officers from the LBM and LBC to ascertain if they would benefit from sharing this service (RBK currently do not need this resource).

Once LBC and LBM confirm their participation, the scope for the resource must be agreed and then from that the number of resources can be calculated. Even given the current unknown variables, the local team project that this resource will be available by Q2 2022/23. See action plan for further details, Veolia Sutton complaints team will be prioritised despite ongoing discussions with other parts of SLWP..

## 5.0 Action Plan Summary

The table below summarises all the actions that Veolia will undertake to address the issues identified within the SIN, including the responsibility holders, timetables and methods to measure the success of those actions. Some of these actions require support from Sutton.

Para graph Ref.	Action	Description	Time - line	Measure	Resp onsi ble Person(s)
2.1	Recruitment and training activities	Veolia has provided Sutton's officers with a <a href="#">plan</a> mapping how recruitment and training activities will reduce the reliance on agency staff.	All of 2022	Net positive recruitment and identifying internal training candidates	AL & MB
2.2	Changes to FAS	Audit review of current collection arrangements started in March 2022.	End of Q2	Production of data	SV & AL



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		Following that review Veolia will present options and costs for service enhancement changes.  Proposal would be a dedicated FAS recycling round that mirrors 'the bag round'.	End of Q2	Production of proposal	
		Implement proposals if taken up by LBS	End of Q2	New collection methodology	
2.3	Container deliveries	Veolia will resubmit proposals to the Partnership in the Y5, 2021/22 Annual Review to resolve the issue of container financing and thus deliveries	Q2	Submission of Y5 Annual Review	WG, SV & ES
3.1	Traffic Management (TM)	Classroom based activities	06.04.22	Number of candidates passed	MB & LP
		Training centre practical assessments	TBC		
		On street (Sutton) practical assessments	TBC		
		Cleansing works using TM (without external supervision)	TBC	Applications for temporary management orders	
3.2	Independant NI195 Survey	Identify and engage with an independent surveyor like WYG	From Q1 2022/23	Survey results	MB and AC
	Joint, random NI195 transect inspections	At the next contract meeting Sutton officers and Veolia managers will book in time to jointly inspect the randomly generated transects	From April 2022	Records of joint inspections	MB and AC
3.3	Identify methods to improve Town Centre area sweeping	Use the ECHO data to identify what types of events are being raised and when to target current resources or change the way that they are deployed to meet the needs of the Town Centre areas.  Introduce 4th Sutton town centre sweeper and consolidate beats subject to client approval.	April 2022	Production of data and plan to identify issues with service provision in Town Centre areas. Rebeat TC sweeper maps.	LP and BH
4.0	Complaints handling	Identify Partners that wish to share service and service scope and thus identify volume of work	Q1 2022/23	Production of scoping paper	AL and SV
		Recruit, train and mobilise resource	From Q2 2022/23	Mobilisation of resource	AL and SV

