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Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group

Date: Tuesday, 2nd April, 2024

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden,
Essex CB11 4ER

Co-Chair: Councillors C Criscione and B Donald

Members: Councillors G Driscoll and G Sell

Public Speaking

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions and make statements, subject to having given notice prior to the meeting in writing to committee@uttlesford.gov.uk. A time limit of 3 minutes is allowed for each speaker.

**AGENDA
PART 1**

Open to Public and Press

1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4 - 7

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting.

3 Operational Resilience Draft Final Report

8 - 111

To consider the Operational Resilience Draft Final Report.

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

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General Enquiries

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Agenda Item 2 Public Document Pack

OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE TASK AND FINISH GROUP held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on MONDAY, 18 MARCH 2024 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors C Criscione and B Donald (Co-Chair)
Councillors G Driscoll and G Sell

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Director of Corporate Services), B Brown (Director of Environmental Services), P Holt (Chief Executive) and C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services Officer)

Also Present: Councillors P Lees (Leader of the Council) and N Reeve (Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Climate Change)

8 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

9 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.

Councillor Criscione said that it had been a difficult meeting, but he hoped that the group would move forward and look positively at the lessons learnt.

10 **BROADER OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE**

The Chief Executive provided an overview of the work being undertaken to identify any system weaknesses within the Council.

He explained that he had initiated an organisation-wide review of all business functions to assess system weaknesses and the existing resilience in place. He had begun by requesting that all Heads of Departments have discussions with their teams and report back in order to obtain as much information as possible. These risks would then be tested for their likelihood and impact, and the existing documentation and back-up arrangements would be reviewed. Once the assessment had been completed internally, it would be appraised by officers at Epping Council who would be acting as a "critical friend".

Members provided their feedback on the ongoing review, highlighting in particular the need not to spend too much time managing and monitoring risk when there was other work to be carried out. It was acknowledged that not all risks could be captured and assessed within the review, for a range of reasons such as unpredictability, the time allocated for the review and the capacity of officers to go into very fine levels of detail. Therefore, priority needed to be given to those weaknesses on the higher scale of risk as well as those that needed

greater management; for example where there were lower qualified managers, a lack of ability to delegate at the current time or a lack of existing documentation.

Members also asked questions regarding the openness within the culture of organisation, as this would be crucial within the review and future resilience. The Chief Executive clarified that he led by example and frequently advocated the value of openness. He gave the example of the recent Council Housing rent miscalculation and how it was important to commend the individual for reporting the mistake. Furthermore, he was introducing more changes to create an open culture within the organisation. This included refreshing the appraisal system and requiring in-person attendance at quarterly staff briefings.

Concerns were raised regarding the current reporting of risks, given that the revocation of the Operator's Licence was not featured on any risk registers despite being a single point of failure. Officers confirmed that the Corporate Risk Register would now be collectively reviewed quarterly by CMT, rather than annually. During these meetings, there would also be consideration given to the Service Risk Registers in order to promote or demote anything of relevance. In between these reviews, the Chief Executive had power to add immediate risks which had emerged from unexpected events, such as a humanitarian crisis. In addition, the Chief Executive had incorporated risk management into Directors' annual appraisals in order to ensure that they were having direct conversations with their services that may not be complying with their statutory requirements. Those that continued to not comply, would be escalated back to the Chief Executive.

In the cases of risks within specific posts which may not appear on the Risk Registers, such as the loss of required qualifications, further work was being carried out to review Job Descriptions and have risks flagged up through the HR systems when there is a vacancy or absence in order to put step-in arrangements in place.

Members requested that a current draft of the Council-wide resilience review be circulated to them outside of the meeting.

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OUTLINE OF COSTS INCURRED

Members considered an outline of the costs incurred from the disruption to the waste and recycling services.

In response to questions, officers clarified the following:

- The invoice from Braintree District Council (BDC) had not yet been received. Officers said that they had double counted, so expected the invoice to be £10k-20k higher, although it was still lower overall than anticipated.
- The tipping fees charged by BDC would be reclaimed from Essex County Council. Officers had yet to invoice for this, although they were confident to receive it soon as they exchanged money with the County Council on a routinely basis.

- The net cost for Widdington Skips' services was approximately £300 per day which included tipping fees, a vehicle and staff. Some organisations had also offered to help, however at a higher cost.
- Should the costs result in an overall overspend of the Waste Service's budget for the financial year, then funds would be drawn out of the Waste Management Reserves. This budget had previously been used due to the regular variation in recycling costs, as well as to cover temporary staffing.
- The costs for the disruption accounted for approximately 2% of the services' budget.
- The pay of the Interim Licence Holder was factored within the overall costings at approximately £4,400 during the period of disruption.
- The Interim Transport Manager was employed on a rolling contract which required a month's notice from either side. Officers were currently updating the Job Description for a permanent staff member and this would go out to market in due course. A decision had yet to be made on whether to rely on the advert itself or receive assistance from recruiters.
- Officers were unable to comment at the current time on whether they were looking to recruit a candidate with more experience or more potential. The most important aspect was that the candidate was fit for the culture that they wanted to promote.
- There was no relocation budget available for any potential postholder. It was noted that the press coverage had brought forward a number of local people with the relevant qualifications who were interested in assisting the Council.
- The crew for the additional 11th round were currently assisting on the existing 10 rounds. The new route would be rolled out as soon as a vehicle was secured; whether this be when the new vehicle is ordered and built or sooner if a hire vehicle is secured.

Members commented that the costs outlined within the report were non-avoidable and there was no way that these could be reduced. However, officers had selected options which were financially palatable and had made the total lower than expected.

They agreed that these findings should be included within the group's final report.

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EMERGING CONCLUSIONS

Members discussed arrangements for reporting their emerging conclusions, including the lessons learnt.

They agreed to meet privately to discuss their conclusions and draft their initial report which would then be considered at the next meeting. The Chief Executive would provide a skeleton template with agreed headings.

They highlighted the need to produce a report which would be endorsed by all four members and was clear, readable and digestible for the Scrutiny Committee. They said that the emphasis needed to be on the operational resilience and applying the lessons learnt, as opposed to reporting on the Waste

Service Disruption; although it was important to address certain points on this such as their rejection of a possible Council Tax rebate.

Meeting ended at 20:52

Agenda Item 3

Draft 1.1

Report of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Operational Resilience following Waste Service disruption in January/February 2024

1. Introduction

Uttlesford District Council's cross-party Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 February 2024 held a lengthy discussion on the recent disruption suffered by residents and businesses to their waste and recycling collections. The Committee resolved to establish a task and finish group to consider these matters in more detail, and to produce a report on their findings for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee and then for discussion at full Council.

This task and finish group's brief was to look into what went wrong, how it came about, how the recovery from that situation was managed, and most importantly, what positive lessons can be learned and applied. The group's brief was extended beyond looking merely at the waste service disruption to consider resilience across the council generally, particularly in relation to 'never events' (ie to spot and mitigate single points of failure which if triggered would lead to other such consequential negative service impacts).

In establishing the group, it was recognised that the Council's policies require, in line with both employment law and good practice, that any formal management action in relation to any individual staff members' accountabilities are matters for the Head of Paid Service [the Chief Executive] and not matters falling within the proper remit of Councillors. As such, the task and finish group was established with this clear boundary in place.

It was accepted that the maximum possible amount of its work should be in open session, with the maximum amount of evidence also published – but also accepting that there may be some specific elements of evidence or discussion that necessarily needs to be in confidential, private session – e.g. around sensitive commercial matters.

The Scrutiny Committee appointed us to the task and finish group: Councillors Chris Criscione [Conservative], Bianca Donald [Residents for Uttlesford], Geof Driscoll [Residents for Uttlesford] and Geoffrey Sell [Liberal Democrat], with Cllrs Criscione and Donald as co-chairs.

Our task and finish group was empowered to finalise our own terms of reference, meeting schedule etc. [see Appendix A].

We met as the task and finish group on three occasions in public and on one occasion informally in private, and we considered a substantial volume of detailed evidence [all herewith republished, as Appendices B and C]. These accompanying papers set out issues such as the chronology which led up to the operational interruption, specifics of the operational response, the costs of the stand-in solution

quickly assembled, so we refer readers interested in that level of detail to the appendices rather than aiming to cover that same ground here in our report.

We as a group received full cooperation from the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, as well as from the Chief Executive and the Director of Environmental Services, for which we are very grateful, as we are to the Director of Corporate Services who assisted us in collating our findings and recommendations for the future, into this unanimous report.

In section 8 all those conclusions are pulled together and supplemented by a series of recommendations for action, so as to draw and apply learning from this service failure.

Conclusion A: Uttlesford District Council is right to have unreservedly apologised to all residents and businesses whose waste was not collected during this disruption to service.

2. Severity of the Waste Service disruption

Having bins emptied is just about the most universal service received by households, and is central to many residents' perception of what they get in return for their Council Tax.

Waste crew members are amongst the hardest working and are the council staff most appreciated by residents, doing a difficult job at comparatively low pay, and this disruption was no fault of theirs.

The Council's fleet of 10 main waste collection trucks, two commercial waste vehicles and one smaller truck used for narrower lanes, was, because of the licensing issue, off the road for two weeks, from Wednesday 24 January to Tuesday 6 February. For the first three days, the residual waste bins and food caddies for three quarters of the district were not emptied, and thus began a substantial backlog.

By the following week, a 'patchwork quilt' of alternative providers began to come online, increasing in volume day by day until a peak of nine big trucks and crews were on the road on some days. Some of these crews worked full (and long) days, while others came over to Uttlesford in the early afternoon at the end of their shifts in Braintree. Various of these crews and trucks also worked on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays (which are not normal Uttlesford collection days).

Many of these vehicles were smaller than our trucks, and most were only single compartments, meaning that their capacity was lower and also that separate food caddy collections were needed, using smaller vehicles. On many occasions, Uttlesford crews preceded the waste vehicles operated by others to pull out the bins onto the street, particularly when the waste was being collected on non-normal days, and not everyone had got the message to leave their bins out.

In total, the patchwork quilt was able to operate on nine days over this fortnight (compared to the eight normal Uttlesford collection days that would have been worked had there been no loss of licence) – which was virtually every day possible as soon as it was stood up after the first few days of no collections at all.

Once the Uttlesford crews and vehicles were back on the road on Thursday, 8 February, additional capacity from the patchwork quilt of alternative provision was maintained until ** February, so as to assist with the backlog generated over the previous two weeks. This was important, as although waste collections of the usual bins on the usual days was reinstated immediately on restart of Uttlesford's service, some households had not had a normal collection at that time for several weeks, and every effort was made to collect those without them having to wait for their next usual collection day. In addition, the normal bin rounds quite naturally contained more waste which meant that the vehicles filled up more quickly and had to be taken to the transfer station more often, meaning that in the first couple of weeks of return to normal service, many rounds were not completed on their usual day, with an estimated average of 15-20% of most rounds needing to be finished the following morning.

In practice, although normal collection days recommenced after the initial two week gap, it took a further two weeks until service returned fully to normal because of the need to clear this accumulated backlog.

The majority of households missed out on two weekly collections, with a substantial further number missing out on one weekly collection. A smaller number of households missed out on three collections, with a much smaller number in isolated cases missing out on four or more collections.

Conclusion B: The task and finish group concluded that this serious and impactful disruption of service, of the council's own making and experienced by nearly all residents and many businesses in the district, is amongst the least proud moments of the authority's 50 year history.

Conclusion C: Many people worked long and hard both to fix the problem and to put in place the patchwork quilt solution as quickly and thoroughly as possible, and they deserve our recognition and genuine thanks. Uttlesford District Council is particularly grateful to Widdington Waste Ltd and Braintree District Council for their help.

3. How this happened

We explored this matter extensively, considering a substantial volume of background information and noting that many pages of correspondence and documentation has been released in response to Freedom of Information Act requests.

Although the vast bulk of our considerations took place in open, public session, we did hold a smaller proportion of their discussions in private session, so that we could be briefed on confidential staffing issues. We were careful to follow our terms of

reference, and in line with Council policies and procedures (and good employment practice and law), we stayed out of any individual management procedures relating to individual staff, but we were aided by the opportunity behind closed doors to be briefed in confidence on certain staffing matters which provide important context to understanding both what happened and what might happen more effectively in future.

Rather than re-telling the story in detail of how the Council came to be without a staff member holding the necessary qualification on which the authority's Operators' Licence relied after the previous postholder abruptly left, we resolved explicitly to focus on drawing and applying the important lessons for the future which flow from this episode.

Conclusion D: There was a significant failing in the proper management of the process to cope with the unplanned and immediate departure from the council of the previous staff member who held the necessary professional qualification on which continued permission to hold an Operator's Licence from the Office of the Traffic Commissioner is dependent. This failure to ensure a timely replacement was due to human error, and happened in the complex context of mitigating factors. However, this situation underlines the absence of a systemic solution to managing such major risks and critical service dependencies.

We noted that there were several discussions between senior staff and councillors in the second half of 2023, after the qualified staff member had left, underlining the importance of ensuring he was promptly replaced. We also noted that there were a range of serious attempts during that period to regularise the licensing situation, each of which did not succeed for reasons outside of local control, and each of which was followed by a fresh approach to resolve the matter, until ultimately the clock ran down without a resolution, and the licence was revoked on 13th January.

We noted that while the Council has a wide range of policies and procedures in place across the whole organisation, these have not been focused into a document with an Environmental Services-specific focus.

4. Operational Response

The specifics of the operational response to the revocation of the Council's Operators' Licence are covered in the already-published papers we considered, and are again appended to this report.

We would like to acknowledge afresh though our whole-hearted thanks to external colleagues from other waste providers who stepped in so speedily to provide a 'patchwork quilt' of waste collection over the two weeks we were without a licence, and then for a short while whilst we caught up with the backlog once our trucks and crews were on the road again, under our new Operator's Licence.

Conclusion E: We noted that – quite understandably – some of the colleagues from other waste collectors stepping in to help us out were not familiar with our area, its

villages and its roads, and that this led at times to some being missed out, or approached in a sub-optimal/counter-intuitive order.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work of colleagues in Environmental Services who worked long days to pull together this operational response so quickly.

We noted that the department urgently explored a wide range of potential additional providers, but that some of these were not pursued for a range of reasons, which we explored and accepted without any negative inference – e.g. the costs of those partners we did work with represented good value for money (essentially we were recharged at, or close to, cost).

Other than that, our conclusions in relation to the operational response phase in particular are covered in separate sections of this report above and below.

5. Communication and Engagement

The papers we considered during our review provide a huge amount of detail on the number of customer complaints received during these few weeks of service disruption, and we commend those to you in the appendices for the details.

We note in particular the efforts made to provide at the end of every day of the period of peak disruption an update on the council's website repeated in an email sent to all councillors and all parish councils and published on social media setting out which types of bins were going to be collected in which villages and towns the following day.

We did though also explore the role of councillors generally, and leading councillors in particular, in times of operational disruption.

Conclusion F: Councillors bring a wide span of professional knowledge and skills to their roles which needs to be better respected and harnessed, and councillors can be useful conduits in communicating with residents, and can be more actively used in future as a positive resource rather than treated as a stakeholder to be periodically updated.

6. Cost – and Refund/Rebate Considerations

We noted the estimated cost to the Council Tax payer of this situation net out at approximately £60,000-£70,000, which is close to (but less than) the estimate given by the Chief Executive during the period of disruption itself. We feel that it is important to note that the exact final cost will only be able to be calculated once our partners have submitted their final invoices to us over coming weeks for the support they provided, at which point the final cost table will be republished.

We noted that some residents have talked online about demanding refunds or rebates, but that as the average weekly cost of emptying bins works out at about 50 pence per week, the work involved in refunding one or two pounds on average per household would be disproportionate in its cost of administration.

Conclusion G: the cost to the taxpayer of this waste disruption is serious, and must absolutely not be repeated, but we do not recommend any further consideration of a refund or rebate.

7. Broader questions of resilience for the Council

We welcome the fact that the Chief Executive, after discussions with the Leader and Cabinet, had already urgently begun a wider review of resilience across the Council before the Scrutiny Committee tasked us with exploring this in our work.

We strongly believe that for positive good to come from this unfortunate episode, lessons learned around operational resilience across the whole council will provide that greatest benefit.

We were keen to extend and apply the learning from the narrow specifics of the waste disruption to the wider council – both in identifying ‘essential workers’ and beyond across the full range of all key council functions on which so many people rely for a smooth and continuous service.

Our discussions focused extensively on the systematic identification of critical service single points of failure; the risk-based prioritisation of those issues to be addressed urgently; the documentation of resilience and mitigation measures to address those priorities; the introduction of council-wide systems to monitor triggers that would give rise to the need to implement an intervention to avoid any future critical service failure; and the greater embedding of business continuity and risk management culture at all levels of the council, including at Member level.

We are particularly concerned about the lack of apparent consistency across the Council’s departments in terms of how embedded processes and cultures are around risk management and business continuity, and believe this must change with some urgency.

Conclusion H: we strongly support the current exercise to identify, and then prioritise and mitigate, key service resilience risks across the whole organisation, and welcome that a senior colleague from a neighbouring council has kindly agreed to quality-assure that exercise. We believe that this is a key action, and must be reported up for consideration at Member level, not only in regards to this focused exercise, but also on an ongoing basis in relation to assurance of business continuity measures. We equally strongly welcome the clear indication given by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Crisis that the whole Cabinet is taking a clear set of actions to liaise directly with their respective chief officers about major service provision risks.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations, as a basis for an Action Plan

Conclusion A: Uttlesford District Council is right to have unreservedly apologised to all residents and businesses whose waste was not collected during this disruption to service.

Conclusion B: The task and finish group concluded that this serious and impactful disruption of service, of the council's own making and experienced by nearly all residents and many businesses in the district, is amongst the least proud moments of the authority's 50 year history.

Conclusion C: Many people worked long and hard both to fix the problem and to put in place the patchwork quilt solution as quickly and thoroughly as possible, and they deserve our recognition and genuine thanks. Uttlesford District Council is particularly grateful to Widdington Waste Ltd and Braintree District Council for their help.

Conclusion D: There was a significant failing in the proper management of the process to cope with the unplanned and immediate departure from the council of the previous staff member who held the necessary professional qualification on which continued permission to hold an Operator's Licence from the Office of the Traffic Commissioner is dependent. This failure to ensure a timely replacement was due to human error, and happened in the complex context of mitigating factors. However, this situation underlines the absence of a systemic solution to managing such major risks and critical service dependencies.

Further actions recommended: that the management and operation of the Environmental Services team is regularised as soon as reasonably possible, so that temporary appointments made to meet Operators' Licence requirements are made permanent.

We further recommend that the necessary qualification requirement to support the Operators' Licence is integrated into the relevant job description as an essential occupational requirement, and that an appropriate requirement is also included in the director's job description. These job descriptions should be annually reviewed (and in between as necessary in response to events) to check that they remain up to date with regulatory requirements and other changing circumstances.

We further advise that alternative/secondary provision of an appropriately qualified person is maintained, rather than relying solely on one permanent staff member.

We also recommend that the Environmental Services function carries out a broader organisational review of team structure and training & development needs, also addressing succession planning.

Conclusion E: We noted that – quite understandably – some of the colleagues from other waste collectors stepping in to help us out were not familiar with our area, its villages and its roads, and that this led at times to some being missed out, or approached in a sub-optimal/counter-intuitive order.

Further actions recommended: we strongly endorse the action being undertaken within Environmental Services to better document and map routes and for the purposes of resilience, ensuring that these are mapped onto commonly available cloud platforms such as Google Maps, and in hard copy, and using tools such as What Three Words.

Conclusion F: Councillors bring a wide span of professional knowledge and skills to their roles which needs to be better respected and harnessed, and councillors can be useful conduits in communicating with residents, and can be more actively used in future as a positive resource rather than treated as a stakeholder to be periodically updated.

Further actions recommended: we recommend some structured work is organised to build further on existing officer/member relations to better reflect that even in relation to operational issues councillors play an important ongoing role as representatives of the wider community.

This ongoing work should focus on drawing value from what councillors bring to the authority from their life experience, as well as helping building communication channels into local communities, both through existing hyper-local social media sites as well as potentially compiling new text/WhatsApp/email lists (such as residents can sign up to with the Environment Agency to get flood alerts).

Conclusion G: the cost to the taxpayer of this waste disruption is serious, and must absolutely not be repeated, but we do not recommend any further consideration of a refund or rebate.

Conclusion H: we strongly support the current exercise to identify, and then prioritise and mitigate, key service resilience risks across the whole organisation, and welcome that a senior colleague from a neighbouring council has kindly agreed to quality-assure that exercise. We believe that this is a key action, and must be reported up for consideration at Member level, not only in regards to this focused exercise, but also on an ongoing basis in relation to assurance of business continuity measures. We equally strongly welcome the clear indication given by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Crisis that the whole Cabinet is taking a clear set of actions to liaise directly with their respective chief officers about major service.

Further actions recommended: we recommend that as well as this service resilience exercise being reported up to Cabinet (and Scrutiny) as is already planned, that we are reconvened later in the year as a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to explore and test the resultant new system in detail and in practice.

We acknowledge that such a detailed member-level testing will necessarily have to be in private, as the nature of such risk and resilience plans must necessarily remain confidential so as not to inadvertently enhance the risk by publicising unavoidable system weaknesses or mitigation measures to bad actors or saboteurs.

We further recommend that the balance is urgently reviewed by the Chief Executive as to the routine and ongoing administrative support provided to senior staff so that greater capacity to deal with routine but absolutely vital tasks is better resourced.

We also believe that notwithstanding the importance of improving and testing systems and processes which dominate this report, it is vital that the importance of organisational culture and behaviours are also equally valued – to hammer home the message that if you see something, bring it to light. This needs to become an ongoing process and a regular check on emerging issues/risks should be an agenda item at team meetings with the opportunity for people to pass on anything they come across in day-to-day work.

Appendix A – Terms of Reference etc. for the task and finish group

<p>Purpose/ Objective of the Review (the reason for the review and what it hopes to achieve)</p>	<p>To draw and apply learning from the recent waste collection situation to prevent recurrence.</p> <p>To take those lessons learned and apply them more broadly across the organisation in order to identify any points of structural weakness or risk and recommend proportionate mitigating measures.</p>
<p>Terms of Reference (including what is in/out of scope)</p>	<p>To work with the portfolio holder and leader, and with officers, to establish the chronology of key events that led to the interruption of waste collection services in late January/early February</p> <p>To identify the key issues behind this</p> <p>To look at the operational response</p> <p>To consider and draw lessons to be learned from this incident that can be applied both to environmental services, but also more broadly to all council services and operations, ensuring that the authority is more resilient</p> <p>To recommend when a report updating progress on the implementation of the action plan be presented to the Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Out of scope are discussions/recommendations around any matters relating directly to any individual employee of the council. These are matters reserved for the Chief Executive and senior managers in consultation with HR</p> <p>Any previous issues around missed bin collections prior to the service interruption</p>
<p>Methodology/ Approach (methods to be used to gather evidence)</p>	<p>The Task and Finish Group shall both meet in public, so as to take evidence or representations, as well as in private so as to enable discussions in confidence with the Chief Executive on management action he is taking as a result, in line with Uttlesford District Council’s employment policies and procedures, and good employment practice generally.</p>

	The final report shall be presented by the Task and Finish Group to the Scrutiny Committee in April 2024, and supplemented by a confidential private report on any restricted items should it be necessary.
Potential witnesses	Relevant cabinet members Relevant senior officers Service users
Other issues	It is important that this Task and Finish Group carries out its legitimate job through the Scrutiny function to explore operational matters, but not cross into matters out with the responsibility of members, primarily any matters relating to staff.

Review Topic	Operational Resilience
Final report to go to Scrutiny meeting on:	April 2024
Portfolio Holder	Petrina Lees, Leader Neil Reeve, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change
Lead Officer	Peter Holt, Chief Executive
Stakeholders	All households Businesses that use the council's trade waste service



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group

Date: Tuesday, 12th March, 2024

Time: 7.30 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden,
CB11 4ER

Chair: Councillors C Criscione and B Donald

Members: Councillors G Driscoll and G Sell

Public Speaking

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions and make statements, subject to having given notice prior to the meeting in writing to committee@uttlesford.gov.uk. A time limit of 3 minutes is allowed for each speaker.

AGENDA

PART 1

Open to Public and Press

- 1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 2 Public Apology and Thanks**

To receive a public apology and thanks.
- 3 Waste Disruption Chronology** 6 - 31

To consider the chronology of events in the lead up to revocation of Operator's Licence.
- 4 Waste Disruption Recovery Actions** 32 - 34

To consider the Waste Disruptions Recovery response.
- 5 Public Engagement** 35 - 46

To consider the impact on the council of the disruption to the waste and recycling service through the increased number of calls to the Customer Service Centre, complaints and comments on social media.
- 6 Waste Refunds** 47 - 49

To consider the position with regard to requests for refunds following the period of service disruption.
- 7 Broader Operational Resilience** 50 - 53

To consider work being undertaken to identify any system weakness across the council.

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

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Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Scoping Report for Scrutiny Committee Review

Review Topic	Operational Resilience
Scoping Report to go to meeting on:	N/A
Final report to go to meeting on:	April 2024
Portfolio Holder	Petrina Lees, Leader Neil Reeve, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change
Lead Officer	Peter Holt, Chief Executive
Stakeholders	All households Businesses that use the council's trade waste service

Purpose/ Objective of the Review (the reason for the review and what it hopes to achieve)	<p>To draw and apply learning from the recent waste collection situation to prevent recurrence.</p> <p>To take those lessons learned and apply them more broadly across the organisation in order to identify any points of structural weakness or risk and recommend proportionate mitigating measures.</p>
Terms of Reference (including what is in/out of scope)	<p>To work with the portfolio holder and leader, and with officers, to establish the chronology of key events that led to the interruption of waste collection services in late January/early February</p> <p>To identify the key issues behind this</p> <p>To look at the operational response</p> <p>To consider and draw lessons to be learned from this incident that can be applied both to environmental services, but also more broadly to all council services and operations, ensuring that the authority is more resilient</p> <p>To recommend when a report updating progress on the implementation of the action plan be presented to the Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Out of scope are discussions/recommendations around any</p>

	<p>matters relating directly to any individual employee of the council. These are matters reserved for the Chief Executive and senior managers in consultation with HR</p> <p>Any previous issues around missed bin collections prior to the service interruption</p>
<p>Methodology/ Approach (methods to be used to gather evidence)</p>	<p>The Task and Finish Group shall both meet in public, so as to take evidence or representations, as well as in private so as to enable discussions in confidence with the Chief Executive on management action he is taking as a result, in line with Uttlesford District Council's employment policies and procedures, and good employment practice generally.</p> <p>The final report shall be presented by the Task and Finish Group to the Scrutiny Committee in April 2024, and supplemented by a confidential private report on any restricted items should it be necessary.</p>
<p>Potential witnesses</p>	<p>Relevant cabinet members</p> <p>Relevant senior officers</p> <p>Service users</p>
<p>Other issues</p>	<p>It is important that this Task and Finish Group carries out its legitimate job through the Scrutiny function to explore operational matters, but not cross into matters out with the responsibility of members, primarily any matters relating to staff.</p>

Agenda Item 3

Waste Disruptions Chronology

Table detailing the chronology of events in the lead up to revocation of Operator's Licence.

Date	Event	Note	Additional information or documents
13 Jul 2023	Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence course booked by HR for Ben Brown		Background documents section Doc 1
31 Jul 2023	Fleet and Operations Manager resigned from post with immediate effect	This individual held the Transport Manager (TM) Certificate of Technical Competence	N/A
9 Aug 2023	Informed Office of the Traffic Commissioner (OTC) via the online VOLS (Vehicle Operator Licensing Service) that Transport Manager CPC holder had left.	BB Removed the TM from the licence.	Online system no option to record changes.
18 Aug 2023	Letter from OTC requesting information on TM CPC departure.		Background documents section Doc 2
07 Sep 2023	Letter to OTC responding to his letter and requesting a formal Period of Grace.	Period of Grace requested until 31 Jan 24.	Background documents section Doc 3
13 Sep 2023	Period of grace granted by OTC	Period of grace granted until 13 Jan 24	Background documents section Doc 4
Sep/Oct 2023	Meetings with potential interim TM / Operations manager	Meetings held with potential agency cover but candidates not suitable. Explored options for support with BDC and Colchester.	
7 Nov – 17 Nov 24	Attended Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence course in Tunbridge Wells, between 7 Nov and 17 Nov 23, Part 1 exam 17 Nov 23		
7 Dec 2023	Part 2, case study exam 7 December 2023		
17 Jan 2024	Email from Office of Traffic commissioner received stating that our period of grace had expired.		Background documents section Doc 5
17 Jan 2024	emailed OTC acknowledging email and saying that would reply.		Background documents section Doc 6
23 Jan 2024	Email from OTC revoking Licence 23 January		Background documents section Doc 7
23 Jan 2024	Discussion with chief executive updating on the situation		

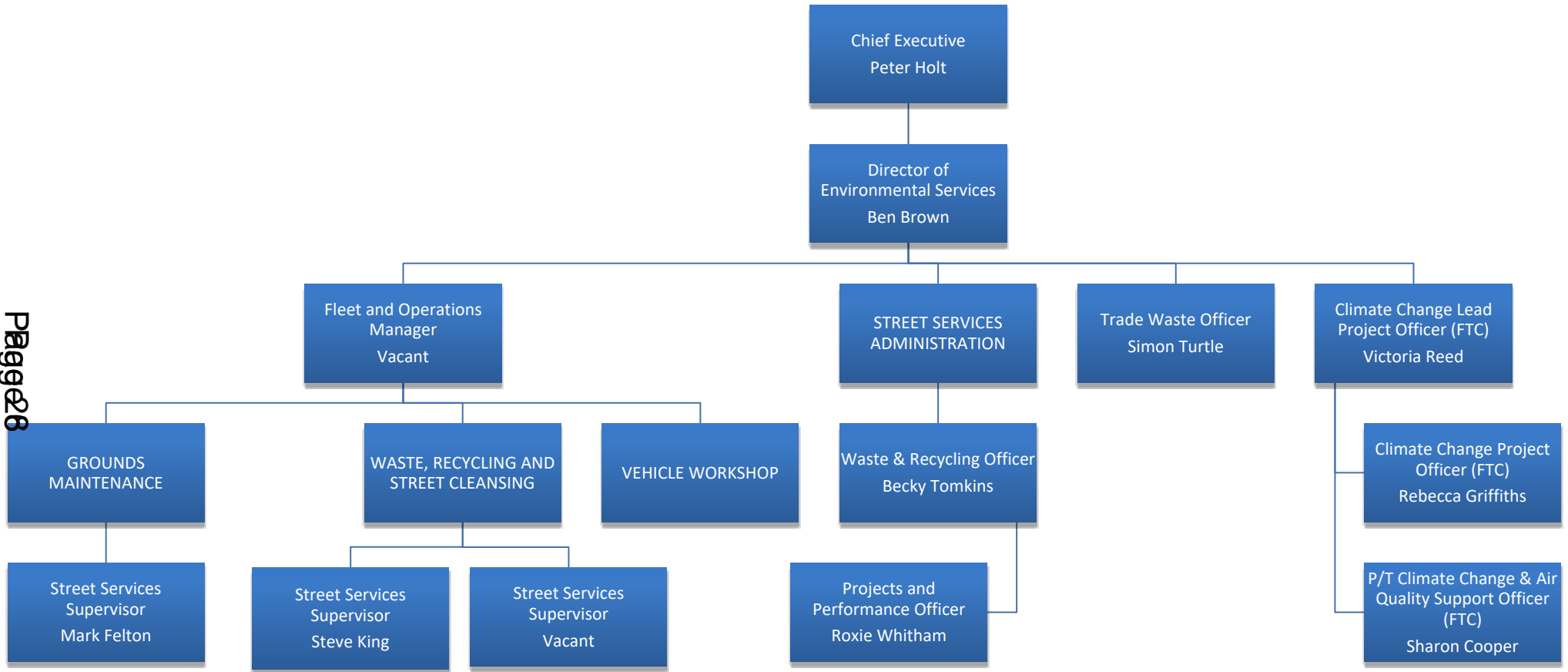
23 Jan 2024	Discussions with key elected Members on updating on the situation		
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In addition to the table above the following information has been supplied further to an email request by Cllr Driscoll.

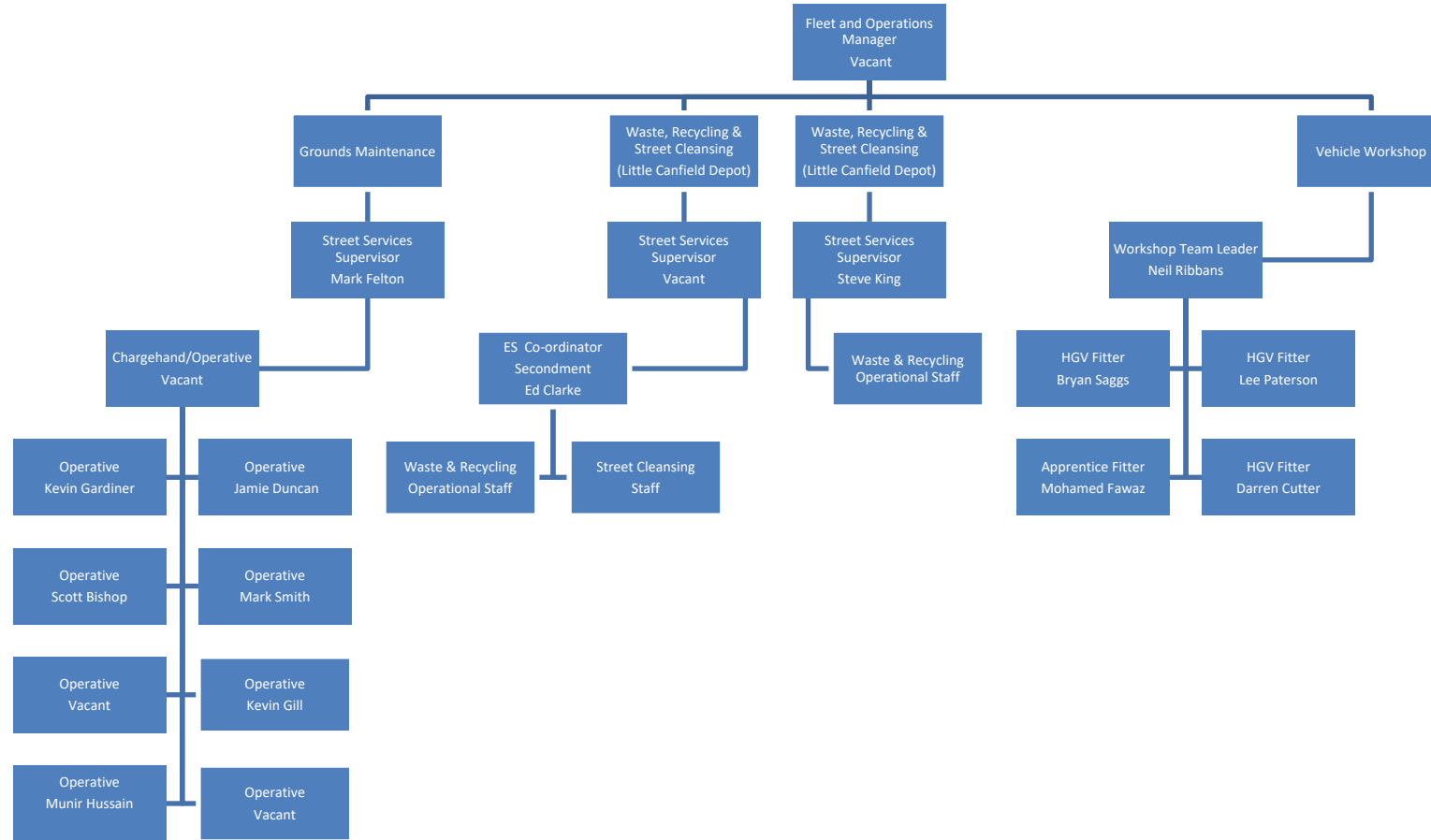
Copy of budgeted Structure for Environmental Services

Copy of historic job descriptions for :-

- Assistant Director – Environmental Services – Agreed job title Director of Environmental Services
- Assistant Operations Manager – agreed job title, Fleet and Operations Manager
- Workshop Team Leader



Chief Executive – Director of Environmental Services – Environmental Services – Chart 18 – March 2024



Waste & Recycling Operational Staff (51 in total) = 28 Loaders, 21 Drivers, 1 ES Co-ordinator and 1 Van Driver

LGV Driver: A Johnson, N Mead, M Roche, M Want, T Coleman-Raine, E Fairhurst, A Peacock, N Mackenzie, L Townsend, D Adamson, J Joslin, J Sontag, M Redgwell, S Shaw, A Ward, S Watson, B Edwards, W Thomas, D Rae, T O’Dell

Loaders: M Cornell, A Duncan, P Orchard, S Coleman-Raine, R Nicholson, B Nicholson, A Tayler, P Graves, C Thorpe, C Chapman, R Gurung, S Tivnan, C Ward, A Fell, P Dooley, T Kemp, C Mason, M Agius, K Lawson + G Van Rooijen + C Bonnett + C Labram + 6 Vacancies

Van Driver/Loader C Band

Street Cleansing Operational Staff:

Mechanical Sweeper Driver(s) Large and Small: D Turner (L), W Huckle (S), S Reynolds (S)

Street Cleansing Operative: P Johnson, L Heath, N Pearce, M Lewell, D Purdy, S Willing, J Lyons (P/T), + 1 Vacancy (P/T) and 1 Vacancy (F/T)

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Designation: Assistant Director

Directorate: Environmental Services

Reporting to: Chief Executive

OVERALL PURPOSE OF JOB

1. To act as a corporate leader in association with Directors, other Assistant Directors and elected members.
2. Lead on all aspects of the Council's Environmental Services Directorate, including Waste & Recycling, Grounds Maintenance, Street Cleansing, Highway Rangers & Vehicle Maintenance and temporarily Climate Change.
3. To develop policies, plans and drive culture change for the Directorate to deliver the Council's corporate objectives and medium-term financial strategy, and to contribute to such plans, policies and initiatives that could similarly improve other service areas.
4. To encourage innovative ways of working and constructively challenge existing practice to transform services that secure cost reductions and efficiency improvements across the whole Directorate, and to contribute to similar transformation initiatives across the council.
5. To provide challenge and assurance of the quality of services, decisions, judgements and drive a high performance culture within the organisation.
6. To ensure a good reputation for the Council and ensure excellent customer relationships which are open, productive, and trusting, both within the council and its customers.
7. To help develop commercial skills in the organisation to support the delivery of successful chargeable services.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 Specific accountability for the safe, effective operation and development of Environmental Services.
- 2 To commission external goods, services and support as needed, ensuring quality and value for money in such arrangements.

- 3 To lead and manage timely delivery of a range of high quality and cost-effective environmental services.
- 4 Responsible for ensuring the planning and delivery of effective business and performance strategies by ensuring that innovative and new ways of working are encouraged to develop a strong business culture committed to achieving the corporate objectives.
- 5 Work with the Corporate Management Team to develop the service by scoping the business needs, identifying solutions for sustained service delivery improvements including value for money and customer outcomes.
- 6 To assess the current business environment and implement the most efficient and effective processes to deliver an improved quality of service.
- 7 Preparation of service plans with associate risk management and business continuity plans.
- 8 To ensure strong financial management and budgetary control within services and provide robust evidence of efficiency and value for money being achieved.
- 9 To work with relevant partners, local agencies and organisations as appropriate.
- 10 Responsibility for the management and career development of staff.
- 11 To prepare and present reports to Members, Committees, partners and other organisations.
- 12 To ensure monitoring systems, performance targets and relevant local indicators are in place to ensure that the Directorate meets all corporate and statutory national indicators.
- 13 To implement Health and Safety policies within the corporate guidelines.
- 14 Responsible for Human Resource issues within the Directorate.
- 15 To support and assist the development of the council's strategies for the promotion of equalities and diversity with the workforce and community.
- 16 To undertake such other duties as required by the Chief Executive as may reasonably be within the competence of the postholder or the scope of the post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION/SELECTION CRITERIA

The following person specification lists the criteria that have been agreed for the person we are seeking to recruit. These criteria will be used for both the shortlisting of applications and at the interview stage. **It will help your application, therefore, if you can provide information on the application form of your experience**

ability to meet the criteria either through your previous employment, social activities or in the home.

1. Knowledge

- a) In depth knowledge of environmental services relevant to the post.
- b) Detailed and expert knowledge, understanding and experience of providing such services in a public sector setting.
- c) Knowledge of and ability to use information technology to enhance service delivery.
- d) Understanding of the democratic processes and sensitivity to working in a political environment and experience of working with elected members
- e) Understanding of the changing role of local government, including the use of partnerships and multi agency working

2. Skills

- a) Ability to analyse and synthesise complicated information and find creative solutions to problems.
- b) A corporate, flexible and innovative approach that is proactive in working with others to identify early risks and opportunities.
- c) Sensitivity to working in a political environment; understanding of the changing role of local government.
- d) Ability to lead, direct and develop staff.
- e) Ability to work across the organisation and gain the confidence of members and colleagues.
- f) Highly developed interpersonal skills.
- g) Ability to communicate complex information both orally and in writing in a clear, concise and balanced way.
- h) Ability to manage a diverse and demanding workload and prioritise accordingly.
- i) Able to manage projects and initiatives.
- j) Ability to understand complex issues and provide sound, professional and reliable advice across the Council.
- k) Ability to prepare and deliver clear concise service plans and budgets with identified targets and costs.

3. Experience

- a) Substantial experience of providing environmental services to local government at a senior level.
- b) Significant experience of working with elected members
- c) Experience of formulating, leading and implementing change in service provision.

- d) Experience of corporate working and working beyond own professional boundaries.
- e) Experience of managing or supervising staff and of being responsible for service delivery.
- f) Experience of working in a local authority or similar organisation, and preferably also in a commercial environment.

4. Qualifications/Training

- a) Educated to degree level or equivalent (desirable)
- b) Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Managing People Safely qualification
- c) Recognised management qualification or prepared to work towards this
- d) Membership of the Chartered Institute of Waste Management or work towards this

5. Circumstances

- a) Willing to work flexibly to meet service requirements and demands
- b) Hold valid driving licence and be able to use own vehicle for work purposes
- c) Be available to support 'Out of Hours' call outs
- d) The role is mainly office based but will involve depot visits and meetings on site to resolve operational problems
- e) Ability to attend meetings, including those held in the evening throughout the district/region, as necessary.
- f) Current full driving licence

Line Manager Core Accountabilities

- Manage employees in working flexibly and collaboratively across structural boundaries as part of a project or process teams in support of key outcomes
- Manage the development of organisational capability through good people management, including the training, development, mentoring and coaching of team members
- Think creatively and constructively challenging to ensure continuous improvement
- Ensure the proper assessment, management and mitigation of risk, including Health and Safety and Business Continuity

Safeguarding

Uttlesford District Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

Role Requirement: This role does not require a DBS (CRB) check.

Pre-employment Checks appropriate to this Job Profile

Uttlesford District Council (UDC) is committed to ensuring all recruitment is undertaken fairly, effectively, safely and in accordance with legislation.

Essential User: Does not qualify as an Essential User

Effective date: April 2022

UDC – VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

VALUE: ACHIEVING HIGH PERFORMANCE	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
ENTHUSIASTIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates and maintains a positive work ethic while striving to get the job done
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows pride in what they do
SUPPORTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies where changes are needed and helps make them happen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learns from experience/mistakes
PROBLEM SOLVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts a proactive and positive approach to solving problems
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces innovative ideas, thinks 'outside of the box'
FLEXIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes and embraces change, is open to new ways of working
VALUE: RESPONDING TO CUSTOMER NEEDS	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
CUSTOMER FOCUSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and honest in communication with internal and external customers; shows courtesy and respect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates required behaviours to meet all Customer Charter promises above and beyond specified requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts themselves in a professional manner, promoting the council's reputation
RESPONSIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands and responds to customer needs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seeks feedback to improve customer service
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively works to progress new ways of working to improve customer service
VALUE: WORKING TOGETHER	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
VALUING OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treats everyone fairly, with respect and dignity, responding sensitively to individuals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows respect for the values, experience, contribution or work of others
TEAM WORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops team working in service area and across the council and strives to maintain a high level of motivation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works across service areas to attain common goals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages others to input ideas and opinions and responds to good suggestions
OPEN/HONEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and honest in communication, seeking and giving regular feedback
DEVELOPING OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares job knowledge and skill willingly with other employees to help them or assist in their development
RECOGNISING SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges success/achievements of others in the organisation

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOB PROFILE

Designation: Assistant Operations Manager

Post Number: New post

Directorate: Public Services

Section: Street Services

Reporting to: Operations Manager
Dunmow depots

Located: Shire Hill/

Responsible for: Street Services staff engaged in fleet maintenance, grounds maintenance, street cleansing and waste management

OVERALL PURPOSE OF JOB

(summary in no more than two or three sentences)

1. Co-ordinate the Operational Management of the Street Services teams and associated workloads.
2. Contribute to and support continuous development and improvement of Street Services to enhance the overall performance of the Street Services function.
3. Contribute to the development of comprehensive, high calibre, cost effective technical policies and procedures for critical functional areas to meet all legislative (e.g. Health and Safety) and operational (e.g. energy efficiency) requirements and implement them as approved

JOB PROFILE

Key responsibilities

- 1 To assist in the management of the waste, street cleansing, grounds maintenance operations, vehicle workshop ensuring that they comply with agreed policy.
- 2 Regularly monitor the performance of all staff in the service and take action as appropriate to deal with under-performance or disciplinary matters in accordance with the council's procedures.
- 3 Identify training and development needs for team members to ensure performance levels are maintained
- 4 To ensure staff schedules meet service needs.
- 5 To manage complaints by responding to queries and maintaining appropriate records and maintaining excellent relationships with customers and other stakeholders.
- 6 To assist in budget management to deliver the services within the specified budgets having made optimum use of the available resources, and ensuring Best Value practices.

- 7 Support the Operations Manager to manage both the process and financial performance of their service.
- 8 To maintain the health and safety culture and ensure Health and safety policies and practises are updated as needed and requirements are met at all times.
- 9 To manage recruitment of employees to the agreed structure and ensure they are trained and developed to effectively and efficiently carry out their roles.
- 10 Participate in, and contribute to, service improvements identifying where changes are needed and supporting/managing their implementation.
- 11 Monitor own work and that of team members to identify best practice opportunities to improve both service provision and development
- 12 To undertake any other duties which may reasonably be within the competence of the post holder or the scope of the post including responding to the demands of any state of emergency within the District

The above duties and responsibilities give a broad outline of the functions of the post. However by necessity, these duties must be approached in a flexible manner to accommodate the changing needs and demands of the service provided by Uttlesford District Council. The post holder will be expected to adapt to changing circumstances and therefore the outline of duties may change from time to time.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The post holder will be expected to follow the council policies and procedures and act in a flexible, co-operative and professional manner at all times, assisting colleagues to maintain an effective and efficient service delivered economically. The post holder will also be expected to operate within corporate standards of performance and security. In addition the post holder will be expected to contribute to the general tidiness and housekeeping and ensure a safe working environment is maintained.

PERSON SPECIFICATION/SELECTION CRITERIA

The following person specification lists the criteria that have been agreed for the person we are seeking to recruit. These criteria will be used for the shortlisting of applications. **It will help your application, therefore, if you can provide information on the application form of your experience ability to meet the criteria** either through your previous employment, social activities or in the home.

1 Knowledge

- a) Sound working knowledge of employment, health and safety, road traffic and waste management legislation
- b) Good working knowledge of O licences desirable

2 Skills

- a) Confident communicator, both written and verbal
- b) IT literate with a good working knowledge of Word, Excel and Outlook
- c) Good numeracy skills with the ability to understand budgets, manipulate and report on data
- d) Strong negotiating and judgement making skills
- e) Strong relationship building and influencing skills
- f) Good interpersonal skills

3 Experience

- a) Waste management industry experience in a supervisory/ managerial capacity with ability to demonstrate success and effectiveness
- b) Track record of continuous improvement in the field of customer service
- c) Vehicle management

4 Qualifications/Training

- a) Valid UK driving licence preferably LGV class 2
- b) Recognised Health and Safety qualification: Institute of Occupational Health and Safety Managing People Safely or equivalent
- c) Valid Operator's Licence desirable

5 Circumstances

- a) Willing to work flexibly to meet service requirements and demands
- b) Hold valid driving licence and be able to use own vehicle for work purposes
- c) Be available to support the 'Out of Hours' call outs

- d) The role is mainly office based but will involve depot visits and meetings on site to resolve operational problems

Line Manager Core Accountabilities

- Manage employees in working flexibly and collaboratively across structural boundaries as part of a project or process teams in support of key outcomes
- Manage the development of organisational capability through good people management, including the training, development, mentoring and coaching of team members
- Think creatively and constructively challenging to ensure continuous improvement
- Ensure the proper assessment, management and mitigation of risk, including Health and Safety and Business Continuity

Safeguarding

Uttlesford District Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

Role Requirement: This role does not require a DBS (CRB) check.

Pre-employment Checks appropriate to this Job Profile

Uttlesford District Council (UDC) is committed to ensuring all recruitment is undertaken fairly, effectively, safely and in accordance with legislation.

Essential User: TBC

Effective date TBC

Please sign this job description below when you are satisfied with its contents

Postholder's name (please print)	Postholder's signature	Line manager/ supervisor	Assistant Director	Director
Date	Date	Date	Date	Date

UDC – VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

VALUE: ACHIEVING HIGH PERFORMANCE	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
ENTHUSIASTIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates and maintains a positive work ethic while striving to get the job done • Shows pride in what they do
SUPPORTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies where changes are needed and helps make them happen • Learns from experience/mistakes
PROBLEM SOLVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopts a proactive and positive approach to solving problems • Produces innovative ideas, thinks 'outside of the box'
FLEXIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes and embraces change, is open to new ways of working
VALUE: RESPONDING TO CUSTOMER NEEDS	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
CUSTOMER FOCUSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and honest in communication with internal and external customers; shows courtesy and respect • Demonstrates required behaviours to meet all Customer Charter promises above and beyond specified requirements • Conducts themselves in a professional manner, promoting the council's reputation
RESPONSIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands and responds to customer needs • Actively seeks feedback to improve customer service • Proactively works to progress new ways of working to improve customer service
VALUE: WORKING TOGETHER	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
VALUING OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats everyone fairly, with respect and dignity, responding sensitively to individuals • Shows respect for the values, experience, contribution or work of others
TEAM WORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops team working in service area and across the council and strives to maintain a high level of motivation • Works across service areas to attain common goals • Encourages others to input ideas and opinions and responds to good suggestions
OPEN/HONEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and honest in communication, seeking and giving regular feedback
DEVELOPING OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares job knowledge and skill willingly with other employees to help them or assist in their development
RECOGNISING SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledges success/achievements of others in the organisation

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Please list below the equipment which is required to carry out this job

Job Profile:	
Directorate:	
Division:	

List of Equipment

tick if required

Standard Mobile Phone OR Smart phone:

Laptop:

Lone Working Security Pass/Device:

Procurement Card:

Fuel Card:

CIS Fob (Benefits)

Uniform:

BAA Airside Pass:

Keys:

Please give details: _____

Protective Clothing:

Please give details: High visibility waterproof jacket and steel toe cap boots

Tools:

Please give details: _____

STREET SERVICES EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Please list below the equipment which is required to carry out this job

Job Profile:	Assistant Operations Manager
Directorate:	Public Services
Division:	Street Services

Tick YES / NO

List of personal protective equipment eg	Tick if needed for this job profile
Gloves	
Boots/shoes/safety wellingtons	Y
Goggles/visors	
Glasses	
Safety helmet	
All weather clothing	Y
Respiratory equipment	
High visibility clothing	Y
Ear defenders/plugs	
Helmets	
Stab/cut proof trousers	
Other (specify)	

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOB PROFILE

Designation: Workshop Team Leader

Post Number:

Directorate: Public Services

Section: Workshop

Reporting to: Assistant Operations Manager

Located: Shirehill SW

Responsible for: 3 Fitters

OVERALL PURPOSE OF JOB

(summary in no more than two or three sentences)

- 1 To be responsible for the day to day management and operation of the vehicle maintenance workshop, planning and organising workloads to optimise available service capacity and maximise customer satisfaction. This will be split approximately 50:50 between office management and workshop operational duties including hands on vehicle maintenance.
- 2 The post holder will be responsible for the overall management of the workshop operation including key holder duties, line management of all skilled vehicle and plant fitter and trainee fitter posts, coordination and allocation of service scheduling and workflows between shifts, stock control and health and safety, quality control and customer relations.
- 3 To be responsible for managing and motivating your team to ensure effective delivery of customer focussed services on time and within budget. To ensure vehicles are serviced and maintained as per maintenance schedules and are compliant with the Traffic Commissioner undertakings.

JOB PROFILE

Key responsibilities

- 1 To ensure all vehicles listed on the Council's Operator's Licence have their preventative maintenance inspections carried out on time every time and are inspected in accordance with the Heavy Goods Vehicle Inspection Manual and DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency) Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness. The post holder will be expected to obtain the Transport Manager CPC and be a named TM on the Operator license.
- 2 To repair/maintain/weld and service a wide range of vehicles, plant and machinery.
- 3 Oversee and co-ordinate the day-to-day activities of other fitters engaged in the maintenance, repair and servicing of the Council's vehicles and plant.

- 4 To spend up to 50% of time assisting workshop team with undertaking vehicle servicing and repairs and provide a floating resource to cover all shifts, in terms of staff absences and workflow peaks.
- 5 Distributing work and managing staff workloads to ensure correct workshop loading and eliminate periods of inactive time and maximise use of available workshop assets, including tools and equipment.
- 6 Pre-test and present LGV Vehicles to Ministry standards and prepare for MOT testing.
- 7 To ensure all other vehicles, plant and equipment are maintained in line with Council and manufacturers guidelines.
- 9 To be responsible for service scheduling and planning to ensure the steady flow of routine maintenance through the workshop to avoid peaks and troughs.
- 10 To effectively manage the stores area and ensure sufficient stock to cover vehicles belonging to all major customers.
- 11 To effectively develop, manage and lead a high performing workshop team, carrying out annual performance reviews and, in liaison with the Assistant Operations Manager, agreeing individual and team performance objectives, targets and behaviours and identifying training and development needs.
- 12 Complete a Fleet availability report for all vehicles on a daily basis and ensure communication with Supervisors.
- 13 Ensure all job cards/inspection sheets are checked and signed off.
- 14 To undertake any other duties which may reasonably be within the competence of the post holder

The above duties and responsibilities give a broad outline of the functions of the post. However by necessity, these duties must be approached in a flexible manner to accommodate the changing needs and demands of the service provided by Uttlesford District Council. The post holder will be expected to adapt to changing circumstances and therefore the outline of duties may change from time to time.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The post holder will be expected to follow the council policies and procedures and act in a flexible, co-operative and professional manner at all times, assisting colleagues to maintain an effective and efficient service delivered economically. The post holder will also be expected to operate within corporate standards of performance and security. In addition the post holder will be expected to contribute to the general tidiness and housekeeping and ensure a safe working environment is maintained.

PERSON SPECIFICATION/SELECTION CRITERIA

The following person specification lists the criteria that have been agreed for the person we are seeking to recruit. These criteria will be used for the shortlisting of applications. **It will help your application, therefore, if you can provide information on the application form of your experience ability to meet the criteria** either through your previous employment, social activities or in the home.

1 Knowledge

- a) Detailed knowledge of heavy and light vehicles
- b) Detailed knowledge of bin lifts and hydraulic compaction bodies and systems
- c) Guide to maintaining roadworthiness
- d) Large goods vehicle inspection manual/procedures
- e) Operator Licence requirements
- f) Construction and Use regulations
- g) Knowledge of Fleet Management procedures
- h) The ability to diagnose complex vehicle faults
- i) The ability to prioritise workshop loading

2 Skills

- a) Knowledge of Risk Assessment and Health & Safety policies and procedures
- b) Able to inspire trust, confidence, respect and credibility from a range of people
- c) Ability to manage and develop staff
- d) Ability to deal with change and support new ways of working
- e) Communicates in an effective and respectful manner
- f) Awareness and understanding of diversity issues
- g) Demonstrates personal responsibility for decisions and actions and the consequences of these
- h) Able to influence others to achieve service outcomes

3 Experience

- a) Experience of heavy/light vehicle maintenance
- b) Working to deadlines
- c) Management of staff
- d) Customer liaison
- e) Operational workshop management

4 Qualifications/Training

- a) Transport Manager CPC Desirable, however training will be given.
- b) City & Guilds or equivalent level 2 minimum in motor vehicle repair
- c) Skilled status time served apprenticeship
- d) Driving licence to category B
- e) Driving Licence to category C

5 Circumstances

- a) Committed to keeping up to date with current legislation and regulations and willing to attend training courses when appropriate.
- b)
- c) To undertake any other duties which may reasonably be within the competence of the post holder

Line Manager Core Accountabilities

- Manage employees in working flexibly and collaboratively across structural boundaries as part of a project or process teams in support of key outcomes
- Manage the development of organisational capability through good people management, including the training, development, mentoring and coaching of team members
- Think creatively and constructively challenging to ensure continuous improvement
- Ensure the proper assessment, management and mitigation of risk, including Health and Safety and Business Continuity

Safeguarding

Uttlesford District Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

Role Requirement: This role does / does not require a DBS (CRB) check

All staff will have to undertake a “Basic Disclosure” for access to our systems, together with an on-line course on ICT Security.

Pre-employment Checks appropriate to this Job Profile

Uttlesford District Council (UDC) is committed to ensuring all recruitment is undertaken fairly, effectively, safely and in accordance with legislation.

Essential User: Does this role qualify / not qualify as an Essential User

Effective date *Enter date here / Date last reviewed: * Enter date here

Please sign this job description below when you are satisfied with its contents

Postholder's name (please print)	Postholder's signature	Line manager/ supervisor	Assistant Director	Director
Date	Date	Date	Date	Date

UDC – VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

VALUE: ACHIEVING HIGH PERFORMANCE	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
ENTHUSIASTIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates and maintains a positive work ethic while striving to get the job done • Shows pride in what they do
SUPPORTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies where changes are needed and helps make them happen • Learns from experience/mistakes
PROBLEM SOLVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopts a proactive and positive approach to solving problems • Produces innovative ideas, thinks 'outside of the box'
FLEXIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes and embraces change, is open to new ways of working
VALUE: RESPONDING TO CUSTOMER NEEDS	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
CUSTOMER FOCUSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and honest in communication with internal and external customers; shows courtesy and respect • Demonstrates required behaviours to meet all Customer Charter promises above and beyond specified requirements • Conducts themselves in a professional manner, promoting the council's reputation
RESPONSIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands and responds to customer needs • Actively seeks feedback to improve customer service • Proactively works to progress new ways of working to improve customer service
VALUE: WORKING TOGETHER	
REQUIRED BEHAVIOURS	
VALUING OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats everyone fairly, with respect and dignity, responding sensitively to individuals • Shows respect for the values, experience, contribution or work of others
TEAM WORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops team working in service area and across the council and strives to maintain a high level of motivation • Works across service areas to attain common goals • Encourages others to input ideas and opinions and responds to good suggestions
OPEN/HONEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and honest in communication, seeking and giving regular feedback
DEVELOPING OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares job knowledge and skill willingly with other employees to help them or assist in their development
RECOGNISING SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledges success/achievements of others in the organisation

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Please list below the equipment which is required to carry out this job

Job Profile:	
Directorate:	
Division:	

List of Equipment

tick if required

Standard Mobile Phone OR Smart phone:

Laptop:

Lone Working Security Pass/Device:

Procurement Card:

Fuel Card:

CIS Fob (Benefits)

Uniform:

BAA Airside Pass:

Keys:
Please give details: _____

Protective Clothing:
Please give details: _____

Tools:
Please give details: _____

STREET SERVICES EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Please list below the equipment which is required to carry out this job

Job Profile:	
Directorate:	Public Services
Division:	

Tick YES / NO

List of personal protective equipment eg	Tick if needed for this job profile
Gloves	
Boots/shoes/safety wellingtons	
Goggles/visors	
Glasses	
Safety helmet	
All weather clothing	
Respiratory equipment	
High visibility clothing	
Ear defenders/plugs	
Helmets	
Stab/cut proof trousers	
Other (specify)	

Agenda Item 4

Waste Disruptions Recovery Response

3 x workstreams

1 – work to reverse previous decision of TC

2 – work to obtain a new Operator’s Licence

3 – to put in place contingency arrangements to allow core operations to take place

Date	Event	Note	Additional information or documents
Tue 23 Jan 2024	Calls and emails to Office of Traffic Commissioner (OTC) trying to find a way to reinstate licence	Spoke to compliance officer who suggested that it would be possible for them to ask the TC consider our case.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Tue 23 Jan 2024	Messaged Transport Consultant 1 / trainer for assistance	Seeking advice on predicament, possible Transport Manager (TM) CPC support. Not available for immediate assistance.	N/A
Tue 23 Jan 2024	Contact made with Transport consultant 2 and provider of interim TM CPC support	Agreed to allow Transport Consultant to speak to OTC on UDCs behalf.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Wed 24 Jan 2024	Letter of Authority provided to interim TM to act on our behalf and talk to OTC.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Wed 24 Jan 2024	Halted operation 24 Jan. Stood down crews etc	Held a meeting with all front line staff at 6:45 informing them that we would not be operating, staff redeployed to training and vehicle washing.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Wed 24 Jan 2025	Called Logistic UK – Transport trade association and provide advice to Members. UDC a member.	Sought view of their compliance and licencing expert on best approach.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Thurs 25 Jan	Meeting with chief exec to discuss potential contingency plans and making contact with any companies that had offered to assist.	At this point in time a number of organisations had come forward to offer TM advice or operational support.	N/A
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Email to all Essex CEOs asking for operational support and mutual aid.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Interim Transport Manager appointed and details provided to OTC	Interim TM supplied qualification documents etc collected by UDC staff	N/A
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Saffron Walden Reporter arranged public notice for new operator licence application.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Sent all information required for a new licence to OTC enquiries + recorded delivery	Attempted to submit new licence application but system issue identified. Attempted to call OTC.	N/A
	Email from OTC saying the commissioner has considered		Not included as part of pack but available.

	the request and licence should remain revoked.		
Mon 29 Jan 2024	Interim TM contract outlining support returned		Not included as part of pack but available.
Mon 29 Jan 2024	Calls made to OTC for support and assistance with Vehicle Operator Licensing system (VOLS) , emails also sent.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Mon 29 Jan 2024	Followed up all offers of help and proactively rang / contacted all neighbours to see if mutual aid was possible	Start of Operation Patchwork Quilt	N/A
Tue 30 Jan 2024	Calls made to OTC for support and assistance with VOLS system, emails also sent.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Tue 30 Jan 2024	Lightwood PLC (max 2 vehicles)	Given two UDC vehicles and inspected records and concluded that they could not assist.	N/A
Tue 30 Jan 2024	Widdington mobilised 2 x Trade vehicles (under their own licence)		N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	Insurance issues identified with BDC	Insurance providers view as that UDC staff would not be insured if working for BDC. Individual drivers would need to be added to BDC insurance.	N/A
Wed 31 2024	Submitted application for new licence on VORS after resolving technical issues with assistance from OTC helpline.	Application paid for	N/A
Wed 31 2024	BDC mobilised vehicles 2 BDC owned domestic vehicles – under their licence.	No food waste recycling capability	N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	Widdington mobilised 2x UDC owned Trade vehicles (under their own licence)		N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	UDC sent 1 x domestic vehicle to BDC for inspection Thurs		N/A
Thu 1 Feb 2024	UDC sent 1 x domestic vehicle to BDC for inspection Fri.		N/A
Thu 1 Feb 2024	UDC sent 2 x domestic vehicle to Widdington Operations Fri.		N/A
Thu 1 Feb 2024	UDC vehicle 1x to BDC		N/A
Fri 2 Feb 2024	Vehicles operating across district		N/A
Fri 2 Feb 2024	UDC vehicle 2 x vehicle to BDC for inspection.		N/A

Sat 3 Feb 2024	BDC operating at the weekend supported by UDC staff, some areas with food waste recycling capability.		
Sun 4 Feb 2024	No operations		
Mon 5 Feb 2024	Some BDC vehicles operating.		
Tue 6 Feb 2024	2 trade vehicles operating from Widdington 2 domestic vehicles operating from Widdington 2 UDC domestic vehicles operating from Braintree depot 2 BDC domestic vehicles operating all day + supported in PM by 3 vehicles		
Wed 7 Feb 2024	Interim Licence Granted 7 Feb 2024		
Thu 8 Feb 2024	UDC Vehicles recalled and restarted operations from Canfield depot		
Thu 8 Feb 2024	Catch up operations begin support continued from BDC.		

Committee: Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group

Date: Tuesday 12
March 2024

Title: Public Engagement

Report Author: Richard Auty, Director of Corporate Services

Summary

1. This report describes the impact on the council of the disruption to the waste and recycling service through the increased number of calls to the Customer Service Centre, complaints and comments on social media. It also sets out common types of enquiries and complaints and the council's approach to keeping residents informed.

Recommendations

2. None

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	This report explains the steps the council took to keep the public informed during the period of disruption to waste and recycling services
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None

Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	The impact on some areas of the workforce is touched on in this report.

Situation

6. As the waste and recycling service is the most visible front-facing service the council offers, the disruption inevitably caused a large increase in enquiries and complaints from residents. Primarily these contacts came through the Customer Service Centre, although a small number of complaints were sent directly to the Chief Executive and/or the Leader and the Portfolio Holder. In addition there were thousands of comments via social media which are covered elsewhere in this report.
7. This report provides information on the number of such customer contacts during the peak period of disruption in January and February and also explains the steps the council took to keep residents informed, as much as possible, about what was happening on a day-by-day basis.
8. Inevitably there are lessons to be learned for senior management, Customer Services and the Communications and Website teams, as is always the case when an unexpected widespread issue such as this arises, and this will be incorporated into a subsequent report to the Task and Finish Group.
9. The report breaks the statistics down into three categories – contact directly to Customer Services, complaints sent to the aforementioned senior officer and councillors, and lastly some information about how the council used communication channels to inform and update residents and also online activity during the period.

Customer Services

10. The Customer Service Centre is the primary point of contact for residents wanting to receive services or ask questions of the council. It deals with more than half of all phone calls received across the entire authority; it has responsibility for two of the most high traffic email accounts – uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk and wasteaware@uttlesford.gov.uk – and the team also runs the council's LiveChat instant messaging service which can be accessed via the website.
11. Complaints received via the council's online website form go into the uconnect inbox and are either dealt with in Customer Services or, where this is not possible due to the need for specialist officer intervention, are forwarded on to the relevant department. These forms are included in the email data presented in this report – ultimately it doesn't matter how the complaint is received; from a customer's point of view all that matters is that their complaint is dealt with.
12. Inevitably, the widespread disruption caused a massive rise in the number of enquiries received by Customer Services. The table at Appendix A shows

week by week how many calls, emails and LiveChats were dealt with, compared to the same time period the year before.

13. While reporting on phone calls and LiveChats is done through the council's phone system, monitoring of emails is a manual process whereby supervisors have had to count every email. Although daily stats compiled by Customer Services list the total number of emails received and dealt with, this reporting does not provide a service-by-service breakdown. Should members require a week-by-week breakdown of emails, this can be provided although it will be many hours' work for an already hard-pressed service.

14. The most common enquiries and trends during the period as reported by the Customer Services team are as follows:

- The first calls that came through to Customer Services were requesting clarification on communications sent out via parish councils – initially the team was unable to provide further information as to how the council was resolving the issue beyond what had been explained to parish councils. Customer Service Advisors did reassure residents the council was taking the issue very seriously and would let residents know the plan once it was agreed, and in the meantime to leave their bins out.
- There were enquiries as to whether Council Tax would be reduced due to non-collection. Once a statement on this was released, these calls reduced in number. Additionally it gave Customer Service Advisors the information they required should a resident not have seen that statement.
- Residents wanted to know how the council let this happen.
- As the disruption progressed, the majority of calls became those just asking when their bins would be cleared, even if wasn't that day.
- Where the council said, in good faith, a particular area would be cleared and then this ended up not being the case due to the volume of waste that needed to be collected or mechanical issues with the fleet, this then produced further calls and further frustration.
- The general message to "leave your bins out we will get to you as soon as we can" was not well-received in some quarters.
- Residents felt that being in local government should mean the council should be able to get a licence quicker and phoned the council to say that.
- Some Parish Councils called for further information.
- Towards the end of the period of disruption as services were returning to normal the number of calls relating to the garden waste service started catching up with, and then overtaking, the calls about general domestic collections.

15. Customer Services' Supervisor and Team Leaders liaised with Environmental Services and the Website and Communications Teams to ensure they were able to provide the best possible information to residents. Ultimately, the

Customer Services team wanted residents to feel reassured and even though an error had been made their communication was important to the council and staff were doing their best to rectify the issue.

16. While a level of annoyance and frustration is completely understandable, unfortunately staff were at times subjected to unreasonably aggressive and rude customers. In such circumstances, staff let the caller vent their frustrations, then reiterated what the council could, and was doing, and apologised.
17. The most abusive customers were escalated to the Team Leaders and Supervisors.
18. This has been an extremely difficult period for Customer Services. The sheer volume of customer contacts has been difficult to keep up with and that, combined with the level of aggression from a minority, has had a substantial impact on the team. The only way the team has been able to cope with the workload is by working extra hours. The additional cost of this will be included in the report being prepared by the Section 151 Officer which will be presented to Council.

Complaints

19. A small number of residents complained directly to the Chief Executive and/or the Leader. In addition, some complaints were escalated either by Customer Services or the Environmental Services team where initial responses were not accepted by the complainant.
20. The table at Appendix B sets out these complaints as coordinated by the Executive Support Team. They were relatively small in number, with the majority being general complaints about the disruption to service. A small number of emails requested refunds of Council Tax and an even smaller number were complaints specifically about either trade waste or garden waste collections. One complaint was received about a problem with an assisted collection.
21. Residents also complained to their ward councillors but numbers for these are not held centrally and in any case many of these also complained directly through Customer Services or senior staff and/or members.

Communication approach

22. As it did with enquiries from residents, the disruption to the waste and recycling service generated a high volume of enquiries from local, regional and trade media over a number of weeks.
23. This peaked in the days after it became apparent the council's licence had been revoked. As this was an operational rather than political issue, the Chief Executive conducted TV interviews with BBC and ITV on 26 January. The Leader took part in a follow-up interview with the BBC on 30 January and the Portfolio Holder also spoke to the local press. Multiple statements and updates were provided on request to regional and local outlets as well as to journalists

working for trade or national organisations. The coverage was extensive in the local press with online and paper articles running over several weeks.

24. Alongside traditional media, the council used its social media channels heavily to cascade information and service updates. It was important the information was coordinated across services and channels and therefore the council adopted a consistent process early, which was used throughout the period of disruption:

- An update was provided at the end of most days, detailing the work that had been completed and the plan for the following day.
- These updates were published at around the same time, in the early evening, to ensure consistency for residents.
- Each message was uploaded to a dedicated space on the council's website, linked from the homepage
- It was emailed out, almost always by the Chief Executive to all councillors and all parish councils
- It was posted on Facebook and Instagram
- The recorded message that greets people phoning the Customer Service Centre on 01799 510510 was changed every time with the latest information
- The statement was an important source of information to allow Customer Service staff to help customers phoning, emailing and using LiveChat. Internally a Microsoft Teams group was established for Customer Service Team Leaders, Communications, Website and Environmental Services staff to quickly exchange information and provide updates during each working day
- Every statement included an apology for the disruption

25. The main difficulty encountered by the Communications Team in compiling the daily statement was the reliability of information about the following day's plan. Every daily statement released was accurate at the time of publishing; however because of issues on the ground including the sheer volume of waste being collected, vehicle breakdowns and the unfamiliarity of parts of the district of crews provided by other organisations, it sometimes proved to be the case that despite best efforts the day's work could not be completed. This then led to further complaints to the Customer Services team and on social media.

26. To ensure as much clarity as possible in the messaging (and to avoid people leaving comments about their bins on unrelated posts) the decision was taken to suspend social media posts related to other service areas.

27. A decision was taken early that the council would not reply to comments on bin-related social media posts. The reasons for this were:

- The volume of correspondence – collectively the 20 related social media posts reached hundreds of thousands of users and generated almost 3,000 comments. This was an unprecedented amount and over an extended period, and it was simply not possible to reply to all.
- In many circumstances, the council was simply unable to provide users with the information being requested, such as the exact day and exact time when their bins would be collected.
- The situation developed at pace and the service plans were changing frequently which made messaging extremely challenging. This was exacerbated by the complex nature of the patchwork collection arrangements and operational issues within the service once the interim licence was granted.

28. Many of the comments were not requesting information; they were simply stating opinions about what had happened or venting frustration. Even though there were examples of social media users making claims that were simply not true, in the interest of transparency no posts were hidden by the council, except for two from the same person that contained defamatory statements about current and former members of staff. There were a small number of posts using offensive language that were automatically hidden by Facebook.

29. Although the decision not to respond was taken as per the reasons set out above, all social media comments were read. These comments were a valuable listening tool and in the later stages helped inform the service's approach to clearing the backlog of bins.

30. The table at Appendix C shows the volume of social media contacts during the period of disruption.

The tables below show the number of customer contacts by phone, email and LiveChat to the Customer Service Centre, for the period of disruption to waste and recycling services and the equivalent period the previous year.

There was a sharp drop off in waste related calls in the week commencing Monday 26 February as the service returned to normal – around 250 calls.

As per paragraph 13 of the report, a weekly breakdown of waste and non-waste emails is not readily available and would require a lengthy manual process to calculate. However, the total for the period is provided, which shows 62 per cent of all emails received were about waste and recycling compared to 17 per cent over the equivalent period in 2023.

Phone calls

This year

22/01/24 - 23/02/24				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 22/01/24 - 26/01/24	1668	1332	336	20%
Week 2 - 29/01/24 - 02/02/24	1752	1374	378	22%
Week 3 - 05/02/24 - 09/02/24	1867	1291	576	31%
Week 4 - 12/02/24 - 16/02/24	1760	1195	565	32%
Week 5 - 19/02/24 - 23/02/24	3024	2160	864	29%
Calls	10071	7352	2719	27%

Last year

23/01/23 - 24/02/23				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 23/01/23 - 27/01/23	1530	1242	288	19%
Week 2 - 30/01/23 - 03/02/23	1476	1208	268	18%
Week 3 - 06/02/23 - 10/02/23	1589	1261	328	21%
Week 4 - 13/02/23 - 17/02/23	1508	1291	217	14%
Week 5 - 20/02/23 - 24/02/23	1685	1396	289	17%
Calls	7788	6398	1390	18%

LiveChat

This year

22/01/24 - 23/02/24				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 22/01/24 - 26/01/24	155	59	96	62%
Week 2 - 29/01/24 - 02/02/24	154	64	90	58%
Week 3 - 05/02/24 - 09/02/24	204	89	115	56%
Week 4 - 12/02/24 - 16/02/24	151	53	98	65%
Week 5 - 19/02/24 - 23/02/24	297	148	149	50%
Chat	961	413	548	57%

last year

23/01/23 - 24/02/23				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 23/01/23 - 27/01/23	112	88	24	21%
Week 2 - 30/01/23 - 03/02/23	115	90	25	22%
Week 3 - 06/02/23 - 10/02/23	96	79	17	18%
Week 4 - 13/02/23 - 17/02/23	48	39	9	19%
Week 5 - 20/02/23 - 24/02/23	156	81	75	48%
Chat	527	377	150	28%

Emails

This year

22/01/24 - 23/02/24				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 22/01/24 - 26/01/24	427			
Week 2 - 29/01/24 - 02/02/24	1172			
Week 3 - 05/02/24 - 09/02/24	623			
Week 4 - 12/02/24 - 16/02/24	374			
Week 5 - 19/02/24 - 23/02/24	333			
Email	2929	1116	1813	62%
Totals	13961	8881	5080	57%

Last year

23/01/23 - 24/02/23				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 23/01/23 - 27/01/23	394			
Week 2 - 30/01/23 - 03/02/23	437			
Week 3 - 06/02/23 - 10/02/23	560			
Week 4 - 13/02/23 - 17/02/23	508			
Week 5 - 20/02/23 - 24/02/23	434			
Email	2333	1702	399	17%
Totals	10648	8477	1939	28%

Public Engagement Report - Appendix B

This table shows the complaints coordinated by the Executive Support Team from week commencing 22 January to 1 March 2024. These are complaints either forwarded on by Customer Services or Environmental Services if the complainant requested their complaint be escalated once the initial response was received, or where the complainant directly contacted the Chief Executive and/or the Leader/Portfolio Holder.

With regard to the category "General" – these complaints are those which do not fall into any of the other more specific categories listed and are those which complain about the disruption to the domestic waste and recycling service and/or the loss of the Operator's Licence.

Nature of complaint	Total
General	99
Missed assisted collection	1
Refund of council tax	20
Garden waste	7
Trade waste	2
	129

Received via	Total
CSC	41
Environmental Services	35
Leader/Chief Executive/Portfolio Holder	53
	129

Public Engagement – Appendix C

The tables below provides statistics for each daily update on Facebook and Instagram. In addition to the figures below there were 133 direct messages from residents – 128 on Facebook and five on Instagram.

The definitions of the columns are:

Reach – the number of people who viewed the post at least once

Impressions – the total number of times a post was visible on a user’s timeline

Comments – the number of comments left under each post

Shares – the number of times the post was shared to another Facebook page or the user’s own timeline

Engagement – any action someone takes on a post other than just reading it, including a comment, reaction, share or clicking on a link

FACEBOOK

	Reach	Impressions	Comments	Shares	Engagement
24-Jan	6445	6799	41	7	1121
25-Jan	31792	26240	259	87	14943
25-Jan	32155	39877	209	99	11375
26-Jan	16603	21343	190	47	5911
29-Jan	26928	32517	212	119	7369
31-Jan	17121	19303	177	46	4591
01-Feb	11654	13657	153	35	3731
02-Feb	13222	15341	235	27	4415
05-Feb	17461	19053	227	39	6080
06-Feb	16997	18534	174	46	4931
07-Feb	16981	18448	132	61	3830
07-Feb	13767	15686	139	51	3706
08-Feb	9287	10030	84	13	2140
09-Feb	10546	11631	110	13	1847
12-Feb	8675	9086	82	8	1935
13-Feb	7262	7534	65	13	1364
14-Feb	6114	6432	44	5	1318
15-Feb	5014	5129	61	4	1124
16-Feb	5583	5822	72	8	1512
19-Feb	3852	3825	60	6	1161
23-Feb	7054	7054	31	10	1060
26-Feb	5038	5204	30	10	746

INSTAGRAM

	Reach	Impressions	Comments	Shares	Engagement
24-Jan	n/a				
25-Jan	893	1025	2	1	17
25-Jan	950	1168	8	2	23
26-Jan	1382	1631	12	0	43
29-Jan	1196	1351	6	1	28
31-Jan	762	854	1	0	9
01-Feb	820	953	5	1	11
02-Feb	876	1040	5	0	7
05-Feb	706	822	4	0	9
06-Feb	738	817	9	1	15
07-Feb	664	756	5	1	20
07-Feb	499	553	3	1	9
08-Feb	464	512	2	0	4
09-Feb	504	552	1	2	5
12-Feb	534	577	5	0	9
13-Feb	483	518	2	0	4
14-Feb	391	420	0	0	3
15-Feb	371	399	0	0	4
16-Feb	433	482	1	0	3
19-Feb	617	672	8	0	10
23-Feb	294	308	0	0	3
26-Feb	507	515	1	0	2

Agenda Item 6

Committee: Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group

Date: Tuesday 12
March 2024

Title: Waste Refunds

Report Author Peter Holt, Chief Executive

Summary

1. This report sets out the position with regard to requests for refunds following the period of service disruption.

Recommendations

2. None

Background Papers

3. None

Impact

- 4.

Communication/Consultation	The council communicated the position with regard to council tax refunds during the period of disruption
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

5. Provision of weekly residential waste collections is funded through taxation not by an individual charge. All homes in the district are entitled to these collections, and there is no differential charge for larger/smaller homes, though

homes in different Council Tax bands obviously pay different amounts of Council Tax, and individuals are entitled variously to single-person Council Tax discounts, Council Tax Relief Scheme etc.

6. As all homes pay for this service, there is effectively no incentive for a competitive commercial market for residential waste collection to exist, as any resident paying another supplier to empty their bins would get no Council Tax discount or refund, making the Council's domestic waste collection service a monopoly supplier. This of course has long been the case for every single local authority area in the country.
7. Service standards and frequency are at the Council's discretion, whether that is the alternating fortnightly cycle of recycling and residual waste (ie recycling bins one week and residual bins the next week), or the weekly food caddy collection. Over Christmas week in 2023, the waste collection service was suspended for the week, with staff required to take the three days that week which weren't statutory holidays as annual leave, with waste collections resuming as normal the following week.
8. There is therefore no contractual frequency or standard for waste collection which if not met gives any legal entitlement to residents to a refund or compensation, whether that is an individual bin missed or a wholesale system failure.
9. In contrast, the Council's commercial waste collections operate on a commercial basis, and in the market in direct competition with a number of commercial competitors. Individual businesses that choose to buy their commercial waste services from the Council pay a bespoke rate depending on frequency, volume etc. Failures in commercial waste collection services, whether an individual missed collection or a systemic failure, are therefore contractual do therefore in contrast stimulate conversations about refunds/compensation, though such discussions are normally a lot more fluid in terms of resolution, including a catch-up collection, and potentially influencing the negotiation at contract renewal time, such as rolling over the deal with an extra charge-free week of collection on renewal.
10. As well as the recycling, residual and food collection, the Council does offer residents a paid-for garden waste collection service for £50 a year, and this is taken up by about 25% of residents. This service did face its own operational difficulties prior to the recent bin disruption, though it also could not be operated for those weeks where there was no operator's licence in place. In light of these various disruptions, the 12 months of paid operation of this service has been extended to run for 15 months before renewal/charge for the next year, and Members also abandoned consideration as part of the 2024/25 budget just passed of raising the annual fee from £50 to £60.
11. Of these three separate waste collection models, it is therefore only the one – the main residential waste collection service – that has not already applied its own system in relation to charging following service disruption.
12. Residents in an average property – ie a Band D – pay Uttlesford District Council some £3.50 a week, as the district council only retains about 8% of the

Council Tax it collects, with the rest going to Essex County Council, the Police and Fire Services, and to Parish/Town Councils

13. Of that c£3.50 a week, around 1/7th of that is attributable to the residential waste collection service. In layman's terms, this means that residents pay an average of 50 pence a week to have their bins emptied.
14. During this waste collection disruption the pattern of missed collections was asymmetric, as described elsewhere on the agenda, with most residents not having collections in one or two of the weeks affected (albeit with their collection days often out of the normal rota), with a smaller number of residents missing out for three or in the case of individual difficulties four weeks.
15. Various Councillors and members of the public have raised the issue of a refund or compensation; one resident sent an invoice claiming compensation of over £200 for a single missed waste collection (though this has no legal foundation, and is not being paid).
16. The obvious opportunity for Councillors to bring forward this issue for serious consideration was the February 2024 budget setting Council meeting – not least as any large scale refund or rebate would quickly add up to a substantial sum of money for which individual budget provision and authorisation would be required.
17. No Councillor proposed a budget amendment to this effect at the February full Council meeting, though all party groups were (as usual) offered the opportunity of officer support in advance of the meeting if they wished to bring forward an in-order budget amendment.
18. The opportunity to respond to this disruption by way of not increasing (or even reducing) the base level of Council Tax which funds this service has been missed by Councillors for the year. There would be an opportunity for Councillors to propose some other form of refund or rebate in-year still exists, though this would because of its scale likely require a mid-year budget change resolution, and would incur substantial additional administrative costs disproportionate to the cost of a small number of 50 pence a week service missed.
19. In light of the importance of providing the interim service during the disruption, drawing on the support of a local commercial provider and a neighbouring council, the waste service has spent more money than usual, rather than less. Both these additional costs incurred (which will be subject of a separate report, once the recharge bills from the other suppliers have actually been submitted) and the cost of any refund/rebate would need to either be carried by the waste service – which would put future reliable provision at risk – or from Council funds generally,
20. Members of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group are invited to take a view on this issue.

Agenda Item 7

Committee: Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group

Date: Tuesday 12
March 2024

Title: Broader Operational Resilience

Report Author Peter Holt, Chief Executive

Summary

1. This report describes work being undertaken to identify any system weakness across the council.

Recommendations

2. None

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Management colleagues are being consulted as per paragraph 10
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	The resilience review summarised in this report has implications across the workforce.

Situation

6. Beyond the issues specifically around the waste service disruption, this experience has flagged up the risk of 'single points of failure' elsewhere in the organisation. Although the Council is one of the larger local employers, with some 330 staff, these staff are spread over a vast number of different specialist services. There is a rich and proud tradition of Council staff stepping sideways to help fill gaps in other services under pressure, caused for whatever reason, and this was proved most visibly during the pandemic. The fact remains however that there are so many various specialist, complex or statutory requirements which cannot instantly or smoothly be filled by such best endeavours.
7. The chief executive has therefore initiated a process to consider the whole organisation's business functions to spot for system weaknesses in terms of resilience and business continuity to see how well they are already mapped and covered, proportionate to their risk.
8. For example, there is a requirement that at the end of every working day, every Council banks with the Government any funds over a certain agreed limit, rather than leaving them in banks overnight. As a district council, UDC often holds sizeable sums not only of its own money, but of Council Tax receipts collected on behalf of other preceptor authorities (with 92% of such tax collected paid over periodically to Essex County Council, the Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, and all of our Parish and Town Councils who raise their own precept), so these can be very sizeable sums. The physical process for transferring this money to Government coffers late in the afternoon requires specialist knowledge, security equipment and log-ons, and so there is in place an identified local resilience system within our finance team to carry this out.
9. This council-wide resilience check exercise will both test the appropriateness of that system, as well as capture and record it centrally in the Council in a way that is not currently done, so that any vacancies or absences in those specific posts that carry out this work can be flagged up through an HR system, with step-in arrangements put in place as appropriate.
10. This action includes an immediate addition of a risk to the Corporate Risk Register (as below), and an initial trawl of the organisation by the Director of Business Change and People to identify such issues (see template as below). The chief executive has also secured the agreement of an experienced director of a neighbouring local authority to join in this exercise as a 'critical friend', providing insight and independent, constructive challenge and advice.
11. A report back on this resilience review will be provided in due course, though by the nature of the risks and issues involved, various specific details will not be published for security reasons.

New strategic risk:

NEW RISK

- *Impact of regulatory/enforcement/intervention action by various Government departments/regulators on UDC – both their individual risks and impacts, and also cumulative impacts on both operations, reputation, ability to recruit and retain etc.*

23-CR-21 BUSINESS RESILIENCE			Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Lees	
Risk Owner: Peter Holt				
<p>If the council does not have officers in post with the correct statutory or regulatory qualifications to carry out the key functions/activities of the council or ensure adequate back up is in place to avoid single points of failure this could lead to adverse impacts on service provision and reputational damage.</p>	Original Likelihood	Original Impact	Original Score	Current Controls
	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and proactive management of regulatory requirements both at a corporate and operational level • Succession planning/deputisation of key roles within the authority to mitigate operational/service failure • Support professional qualification or specialised training programmes throughout the organisation to mitigate single points of failure
	Current Likelihood	Current Impact	Current Score	Further Action
	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update Business Continuity plans for each service area to include where specific qualifications and/or licences are required and ensure back up options are specified to avoid single points of failure and ensure continuity of service delivery
	Target Likelihood	Target Impact	Target Score	Planned Completion date
	1	4	4	31.03.2024

Template for organisational trawl (edited to remove specifics):

Operational Resilience

Service Area	Activity/Function	Responsible Officer/s	Back up/Deputy	Service Impact	Other information
Environmental Services	Operator's Licence				
Finance	Statutory Officer - Section 151 Officer				
Finance	Treasury Management				
Legal	Statutory Officer – Monitoring Officer				
Car Parks					
Economic Development	Not applicable				
Private Finance Initiative					
Homelessness					
Housing Strategy					
Building Control	Building Inspections				
Development Management					
Highways Infrastructure Planning					
Planning Management					
Planning Policy					
Planning Specialists					
Contract, Performance and Risk Management					
Committee Administration					

Ben Brown

From: Logistics UK <bookings@fta.co.uk>
Sent: 19 July 2023 13:44
To: Ben Brown
Subject: [External] >> Welcome to Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage
Attachments: We sent you safe versions of your files; FAQ TMCPC - Road Haulage Nov22 v.pdf; 1633453019_TMCPC L3 Candidate Tutor Notes 0921.pdf; T&Cs 2023.pdf

Mimecast Attachment Protection has deemed this file to be safe, but always exercise caution when opening files.

Welcome to @@BookedCourseLabels



Dear Ben Brown,

Thank you for booking a place on the Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage course commencing Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage - Part One (07/11/2023 09:00 - 10/11/2023 17:00), Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage - Part Two (14/11/2023 09:00 - 17/11/2023 17:00) at Logistics UK Tunbridge Wells - Tilbury (20).

You will receive formal joining instructions and more detailed information 21 days before the course start date.

Pre-Course Study

To effectively support you in preparing for this course, you will receive login credentials and instructions to complete your pre-course study modules roughly **two weeks prior** to your course. **Please remember to login and complete this Pre Course Study prior to your course start date.**

Candidate Examination Registration

Logistics UK is required to record all candidate identification details with the Awarding Organisation for examination registration purposes.

Failure to complete this candidate registration form now may result in non-registration of your CPC examinations.

[Click here to register for your examination](#)

Logistics UK offer additional support for candidates through case study revision days. If your candidate is already booked on this they will receive your joining instructions closer to the date. If not then please contact salesupport@logistics.org.uk

Driver CPC

Transport Manager CPC is registered with JAUPT and can offer 28 hours towards your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence. Please click on the star below to let us know if this is something you would like adding. If this course has been arranged on your behalf, please refer to the person who booked the course for you.

If there are any access, learning support or special dietary requirements or general questions regarding this course, please contact Logistics UK on 01926 450020 or email tmcpcc@logistics.org.uk

This is a **NO REPLY** email address please be aware if you require to speak to a member staff to email training.admin@logistics.org.uk

Kind regards

Training Support Services- Logistics UK



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Office of the Traffic Commissioner

MR BEN BROWN
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN
CB11 4ER

Compliance Team
Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
Hillcrest House
386 Harehills Lane
Leeds
LS9 6NF
e-mail: northeastcomplianceteam@otc.gov.uk

Our Ref: OF0216604

18/08/2023

Sent by Recorded delivery and email

Dear Sir or Madam,

EARLY RESPONSE REQUIRED BY 08/09/2023

LOSS OF TRANSPORT MANAGER

Please note: failure to address the concerns raised in this letter by the due date will result in the traffic commissioner revoking the licence. This applies even if you have already submitted an application to nominate a new transport manager which has not yet been granted by the traffic commissioner. Operation of vehicles without a valid operator's licence is unlawful.

It is a requirement of holding an operator's licence that you either have a transport manager or a period of grace. It is also a condition of your operator's licence that you notify the traffic commissioner of any change, which affects your ability to fulfill the requirement within 28 days. It has been brought to the attention of the Traffic Commissioner that there is currently no transport manager specified on your licence to satisfy the requirement to have a suitable number of individuals who meet paragraphs 14A(1) and (2) or 14A(1) and (3) of Schedule 3 of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 (the Act).

Section 27(1) of the Act states that the traffic commissioner shall direct that a standard licence be revoked if at any time it appears that the licence-holder no longer satisfies the requirement to designate a suitable number of transport managers.

In view of the evidence currently available, it appears to the traffic commissioner that you may no longer satisfy the requirement to designate a suitable number of transport managers satisfying the requirements of paragraph 14A(1) and (2) or 14A(1) and (3) of Schedule 3 of the Act. In accordance with Section 27(2) of the Act, this office is serving notice that the traffic commissioner is considering the revocation of your operator's licence on the grounds detailed above. Under Section 27(3) you are entitled to make written representations to the traffic commissioner. Section 29(1) allows you to request a public inquiry, in order to offer further evidence as to why the licence should not be revoked.

Any written representations must be made to this office by **08/09/2023** for the traffic commissioner's consideration.

Your representations may include an application to add a replacement transport manager to your licence. If you have not already submitted an application, you can do this by using the online facility at:

www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence

However, applications to nominate a new transport manager must be complete. You must return any further information requested by this office in connection with the application promptly. Guidance to help you to submit a complete transport manager application can be found at Annex A.

Even if you apply to nominate a transport manager (using the online facility) you must still respond to this letter by the date specified. The licence is at risk if a replacement transport manager has not been approved by the traffic commissioner. Responding with incomplete information could still result in the revocation of the licence.

The requirement is only met once the traffic commissioner has approved the transport manager(s).

Further information about the transport manager requirements is set out in the Senior Traffic Commissioner's Statutory Document No.3 on Transport Managers which can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/senior-traffic-commissioners-statutory-guidance-and-statutory-directions> and which includes a general list of transport manager responsibilities.

A summary of the responsibilities is also available on gov.uk at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-involved-in-being-a-road-transport-manager/being-a-road-transport-manager-your-responsibilities>.

The traffic commissioner may consider granting a period of grace to enable you to find a replacement or whilst your nomination of a new transport manager is being considered, but you need to ask. The traffic commissioner is not obliged to grant a period of grace and is unlikely to do so unless there is evidence that a replacement will be recruited and that the licence requirements will be met in the meantime. An application for a period of grace must be in writing and set out what you are doing to resolve the matter. Guidance to request a period of grace whilst you recruit a new transport manager is attached at Annex B.

If you did not notify the traffic commissioner of the loss of your transport manager, you should also provide an explanation as to why you failed to comply with the condition on the operator's licence.

This letter has been sent by recorded delivery post.

Yours faithfully

Compliance Team

Sign up to [the Vehicle Operator Licensing system](http://www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence) at www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence to make applications, vehicle changes, and manage your licence.

VOL username and passwords must not be shared, you can always add additional new users.

Annex A: Guidance to submitting a complete transport manager application

The following guidance is to assist you to send a complete and accurate application for a new transport manager to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner.

For further information about transport manager requirements, please refer to:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-transport-managers-november-2018

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/goods-vehicle-operator-licensing-guide#transportmanagers>

Sending your application

When you submit your application, as a minimum, you must ensure that the Office of the Traffic Commissioner receives the following:

a completed online transport manager application, which has been signed digitally by both parties. Alternatively, the declaration will need to be printed, signed and returned to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner by post.

the nominated transport manager's original certificate(s) of qualification of professional competence in road haulage, or evidence of any relevant exemption.

Further information may be required, depending upon the answers provided in your application and information held by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner.

You should anticipate having to supply additional information with your application, if any of the following apply. This list is not exhaustive but failure to prepare will delay a decision being made.

Continuous and effective management

When you make your application, the traffic commissioner must be satisfied that the proposed transport manager can exercise continuous and effective management across all licences they are specified on. The contract with your nominated transport manager should specify the detailed activities which will be undertaken. All transport managers are responsible for fulfilling the general responsibilities set out in the Senior Traffic Commissioner's Statutory Document on transport managers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-transport-managers-november-2018/statutory-document-3-transport-managers#generalresponsibilities>

You will be asked to supply details if:

the proposed transport manager will be on four licences.

the proposed transport manager will be responsible for more than 50 authorised vehicles. An external lone transport manager will not be accepted on a licence specifying more than 50 vehicles.

the proposed transport manager has other work as a driver.

the proposed transport manager has other work/duties which may impact on their availability.

the proposed transport manager has been involved with any licences with adverse compliance.

there has been recent adverse compliance on your licence which might suggest that an incoming transport manager may need to do more to ensure compliance.

the proposed transport manager is committing to less hours to support your licence than the starting points set out by the traffic commissioner and/or there is a significant distance between all the relevant operating centres and the transport manager's home address:

Number of vehicles	Hours per week
2 vehicles or less	2 to 4 hours
3 to 5 vehicles	4 to 8 hours
6 to 10 vehicles	8 to 12 hours
11 to 14 vehicles	12 to 20 hours
15 to 29 vehicles	20 to 30 hours
30 to 50 vehicles	30 hours to full time
More than 50 vehicles	Full time and another staff member needed
Additional hours may be required for trailers	

The suggested amounts of time above are a starting point as to what traffic commissioners might expect in terms of hours worked. They are intended as a guide to operators and the nominated CPC holder to discuss what time is actually required to carry out the General Responsibilities linked above.

Keeping knowledge up to date – continuing professional development

Further information about the relevant skills and knowledge to carry out the transport manager role can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-involved-in-being-a-road-transport-manager/being-a-road-transport-manager-skills-and-knowledge-you-need>

A transport manager needs to keep up to date through Continuing Professional Development (CPD). You might be asked to provide evidence to demonstrate this if:
your proposed transport manager has not been listed on a licence within the previous five years.
your proposed transport manager attained their CPC qualification more than 10 years ago.
you are required to provide a more detailed explanation of how you will ensure continuous and effective management, as above.

Evidence which could be submitted to show this includes:

certificates of any training courses, including transport manager refresher courses, attended, including e-learning.
evidence of attendance at events or conferences about managing fleets of vehicles.
evidence of where you have shared your knowledge with others, for example by giving presentations.

Annex B: Guidance for requesting a period of grace to satisfy the transport manager requirements

You have been sent this letter as it would appear that you no longer meet the mandatory requirement to have a suitable number of individuals who meet the requirements for transport managers as specified at Schedule 3 of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing Of Operators) Act 1995. A transport manager is required to be able to manage effectively and continuously the operator's transport service and is an important means by which a transport business maintains compliance. It is a condition of an operator's licence that changes affecting the ability of the licence holder to meet the transport manager requirements, including the availability of a transport manager, are notified to the traffic commissioner.

A traffic commissioner has discretion to consider granting a period of grace in circumstances where it is found that there is no authorised transport manager in place. This could allow a period of up to 6 months for you to find a replacement transport manager that allows you to meet the requirement to continue to hold an operator's licence.

In order to allow a period of grace the traffic commissioner must establish that the requirement for a transport manager is no longer met. An application for a period of grace invites a traffic commissioner to make an adverse finding that the requirement for designating a suitable number of transport manager is no longer met.

There must be tangible evidence that a period of grace will be worthwhile, in other words, there are reasonable prospects that the mandatory requirement will be met before expiry of the specified period of grace.

On application you may wish to invite the traffic commissioner to decide how long to allow within the maximum periods permitted by the legislation.

Although the period will depend on the individual merits of the case before the commissioner, the Senior Traffic Commissioner has set a starting point of three months, which allows for an extension where required.

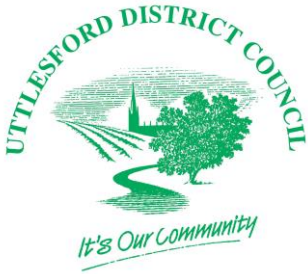
Please make any period of grace requests in writing and specify:

why your last transport manager has left and the circumstances.
what measures were taken to prevent loss of a suitable number of transport managers.
the period of time you seek for your period of grace.
how will you cover the duties of a transport manager during the period of grace.
what action you are taking to meet the transport manager requirement as soon as possible.

Operators who are granted a period of grace should understand that if, upon expiry of a period of grace, the transport manager requirements have still not been met then the operator's licence will be revoked.

Further information about the transport manager requirements can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-transport-managers-november-2018



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Compliance Team
Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
Hillcrest House
386 Harehills Lane
Leeds
LS9 6NF

7 September 2023

Your ref: **OF0216604**

Our ref:

Please ask for: Ben Brown on [REDACTED]
email: b [REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam,

LOSS OF TRANSPORT MANAGER APPLICATION FOR A PERIOD OF GRACE

Thank you for your letter dated 18 August 2023 regarding the fact that we have removed our Transport Manager. I believe this came to your attention because I updated our online records on the www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence website. However, the Commissioner may have also notification via a third party.

In this letter I am formally exercising our right under Section 27(3) of Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 (the Act) to make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner to consider not revoking our licence.

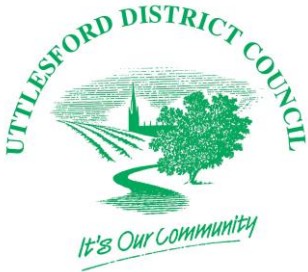
I am also formally applying for a six-month period of grace to enable us to nominate and appoint replacement Transport manager(s).

Annex B of your letter, set out several questions that would assist the Commissioner, in considering our application and I have provided this information below after repeating each question.

Uttlesford District Council is a small local authority with limited resources; however it does take responsibilities around transport operations very seriously and has historically invested in the service to ensure legal compliance and that we are a good operator. We currently have 29 vehicles on our LGV fleet and in May 2022 amalgamated our two operating centres to one central location. Our fleet is used to carry out environmental services to district residents and businesses. It is limited to the operation of waste collection vehicles.

Commissioner's Question - Why your last transport manager has left and the circumstances?

Our Transport Manager, [REDACTED] left the organisation on 31 July 2023 and chose to resign with immediate effect, with the Council's agreement. I notified the Commissioner of this via the gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-license webpage and submitted amendments that removed [REDACTED] and updated some other



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records on the system. I believe this was on 9 August. It is possible that a third party, including [REDACTED], may have notified the Commissioner prior to this date. I was not clear that removal of the transport manager on the website was possibly not sufficient notification. If this was the case then I can only apologise. The amendments to the license were done in good faith that this was the correct process.

It was [REDACTED] personal decision to leave after over 20 years at UDC as he wanted to make a fresh start. He was a qualified Transport Manager and had just undertaken refresher training with Logistics UK. Prior to his departure he was working on a project to update our systems to achieve the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme, bronze standard. His departure from the Council, was not directly related to any Operator License compliance issues.

Commissioner's Question - what measures were taken to prevent loss of a suitable number of transport managers?

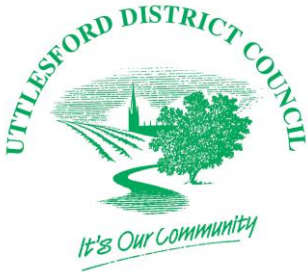
The fact that the Council had only one nominated and formally qualified transport manager has left us in a vulnerable position. I had identified that it was possible [REDACTED] future employment was a risk earlier in the summer and on 17 July 2023 had booked myself onto training to obtain the Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence qualification and help mitigate the risk of being left without a transport manager. I am booked to attend between 7-17 November 2023 (APPENDIX 1). When [REDACTED] chose to resign, I did attempt to attend an earlier course, however the dates clashed with my planned annual leave and that of other colleagues. It would have meant that there was no management supervision of our operations for the best part of two weeks. I did not consider this an acceptable risk.

Commissioner's Question - the period of time you seek for your period of grace?

I am seeking a period of six months grace covering the period since 1 August (the day after [REDACTED] last day with us to 31 January 2024. This will enable me to attend and obtain the Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence and allow further time to apply to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner for consideration. There are further plans to increase resilience which are set out below.

Commissioner's Question - how will you cover the duties of a transport manager during the period of grace?

As the Director responsible for the service, I have a sound background knowledge of the requirements in relation to transport, although perhaps not yet some of the detailed processes. As highlighted above I am due to attend Transport Manager CPC training in November and assuming that I successfully pass, I propose to apply to be our transport manager immediately after obtaining the qualification.



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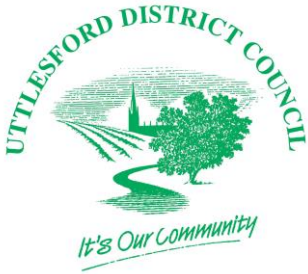
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I am supported by [REDACTED], Workshop Team Leader, who is our nominated safety inspector. [REDACTED] has extensive experience in maintaining and operating vehicles, although he does not hold transport manager CPC.

As a result of [REDACTED] departure and another vacancy with my service, I am reviewing our management team structure, with the aim of giving greater priority to compliance. As part of this I will create a refreshed assistant manager position (title to be confirmed) who will provide support to me in ensuring compliance, both in terms of transport and health and safety. They will also be tasked with completing the FORS accreditation project that I mentioned earlier. They will not manage our workshop team or [REDACTED] to ensure a degree of separation of duties. This post will be expected to hold a transport manager CPC qualification.

In terms of covering the duties of a transport manager, the Council already has robust systems in place to ensure that we have a positive safe culture and comply with license requirements. By way of summary, we have the following measures in place :-

1. Operator Compliance Risk Score of Green (detailed report attached as APPENDIX2)
2. Safety inspection of all LGVs carried out every 6 weeks.
3. Daily driver walk around checks carried out using R2C app enabling defects to be reported directly to our workshop team in real time.
4. Full driver induction programme in place including inhouse driving assessments.
5. All drivers licenses, CPCs are checked every six months after starting work with us.
6. Fleet performance indicators are monitored by corporate management team on a quarterly basis including :-
 - a. Percentage of vehicles service or inspected on target week,
 - b. Percentage of vehicles passing MOT without additional work,
 - c. Percentage of drivers license and CPC checks carried out,
 - d. Percentage of overweight vehicles tipped,
 - e. Percentage of vehicle defects reported which are not rectified or signed off.
8. At a service level we monitor compliance with the number of pre-use checks undertaken and enforcement on drivers hours records, highlighting contraventions.
9. The majority of our fleet is fitted with digital tachographs and we monitor drivers hours electronically.
10. Our front-line vehicles are fitted with regularly calibrated onboard weighing systems with automatic cut outs to prevent overloading.
11. Vehicle maintenance plans are in place for every vehicle in the fleet. Inspections, services and MOTs are planned 12 months in advance.
12. Our current management team have previously received Operators



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License Awareness training however I will organise a refresher to be undertaken.

The measures above will be managed by myself and the assistant manager, when appointed. For the sake of clarity, I am present at the operating centre at least 3 days per week and work full time. I have a team reporting to me that are able to provide management information in relation to all aspects of our operation including the measures highlighted above. I recognise that there are, as in many organisations, improvements to make and I am committed to ensuring that we operate to a high standard.

It will be my intention that the new assistant manager will undertake Transport Manager CPC if they do not already hold the qualification.

We are a member of Logistics UK and able to access professional support and advice as required. If recommended by the Commissioner, I would put in place a transport consultant to assist us during the interim period. As a local authority we also seek advice from our peers and certainly took on board learning from our neighbours, Braintree District Council in relation to their previous inspection.

Commissioner's Question - what action you are taking to meet the transport manager requirement as soon as possible.

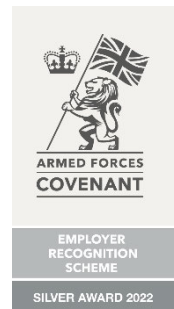
As already highlighted, I am booked on Transport manager CPC training for November, this was booked prior to [REDACTED] decision to leave. I am currently reviewing the overall structure of the service to ensure that we have more resilience in future and will ensure that we have two qualified transport managers in future.

I fully recognise the importance of maintaining excellent standards and would welcome comments from the Commissioner on the proposed interim arrangements.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Director - Environmental Services



From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: OF0216604 Application for period of grace and response to your letter on loss of transport manager.
Date: 07 September 2023 15:20:00
Attachments: [REDACTED]
Importance: High

Dear East of England compliance team
Please find attached my response to your letter date 18 August 2023.
Should you have any questions or queries I can be contacted as set out below and on my mobile
[REDACTED]

Kind regards

Ben Brown
Director – Environmental Services

Uttlesford District Council
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex CB11 4ER

T: [REDACTED]
E: [REDACTED]
www.uttlesford.gov.uk
facebook.com/UttlesfordDC
twitter.com/UttlesfordDC



Office of the
Traffic Commissioner

MR BEN BROWN
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN
CB11 4ER

Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
HILLCREST HOUSE
386 HAREHILLS LANE
LEEDS
LS9 6NF

Our reference:OF0216604

13/09/2023

Dear Mr Brown

Thank you for your letter dated **07.09.2023** regarding the loss of your transport manager [REDACTED] from your goods vehicle operator's licence.

Your licence is at risk

Please read this letter and the deadlines given carefully. If you do not take the appropriate action in time, the traffic commissioner will revoke your licence under section 27(1)(a) of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 (the Act).

Your request for a period of grace

You have requested further time to nominate a suitable replacement. The Traffic Commissioner has granted your application for a period of grace. This means that your licence can remain in force until **13th January 2024** without a specified transport manager.

During the grace period, you must ensure ongoing compliance with all other terms and conditions under which your licence was granted.

This includes:

- vehicle maintenance
- scheduled safety inspections
- drivers' hours rules
- retaining associated records and making them available on request

The traffic commissioner reached their decision in accordance with Section 27(3A) of the Act. The traffic commissioner has recorded that you no longer meet the requirement to designate a suitable number of transport managers satisfying the requirements of paragraph 14A(1) and (2) or 14A(1) and (3) of Schedule 3 of the Act as necessary to meet the ongoing requirement set out in Section 13A(3) of the Act. In doing so the traffic commissioner has complied with the requirements of Section 27(2) of the Act.

Your deadline for compliance

The period of grace will end on **13th January 2024**.

This should be a sufficient period for you to add a suitable transport manager to your licence. Before this deadline you must satisfy the traffic commissioner that you have made suitable transport manager arrangements. If you do not, your licence will be revoked.

Take action well in advance of the deadline

The requirement is not met until the traffic commissioner accepts a proposed transport manager. The traffic commissioner must have accepted them as capable of meeting the requirements of paragraphs 14A(1) and (2), or (1) and (3), of Schedule 3 of the Act before the period of grace expires.

You must:

- submit the application in time
- provide sufficient information to satisfy the traffic commissioner

We recommend you submit your application at least 4 weeks before the deadline.

What you need to do

You must apply for a new transport manager as soon as possible.

Complete a transport manager application

Sign in to your VOL online account at www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence and complete a transport manager application.

Upload your nominated transport manager's CPC

You need to upload the full page of your nominated transport manager's Certificate of Professional Competence in Road Haulage to your VOL account.

Upload relevant documents or explanations

The individual(s) must be capable of meeting the relevant requirements. You may need to send supplementary evidence to demonstrate this to the traffic commissioner. Please refer to our previous letters for details.

What if I need more time?

You should make every effort to appoint a transport manager in time and must consider contingency plans. There is no power to extend a period of grace beyond the maximum six months except in cases where the previous transport manager is

physically incapacitated or deceased and it will take more than six months to recruit a replacement where the maximum increases to nine months.

Any request for an extension must:

- be submitted well in advance
- include what steps have been taken to recruit a new transport manager

You should not assume that a request will be granted.

Once we have received your information

Your application for a transport manager will be considered in accordance with the Act.

We may request further information

We may need further information, depending upon the answers provided in your application and information held by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner. You should allow time for this.

You will be notified of the traffic commissioner's decision

If the traffic commissioner accepts your nominated transport manager, a new licence document will be issued via your VOL user account. The transport manager details will be included within the licence document.

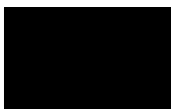
If the traffic commissioner is unable to accept the transport manager, you will be sent a letter giving reasons.

Your licence will be revoked if you do not respond or if your nominated transport manager is not suitable

If you do not add a suitable transport manager to your licence before the grace period ends, the traffic commissioner is obliged to revoke the licence and will do so. They must do so under section 27(1)(a) of the Act.

You must take prompt action if you wish to continue to operate.

Yours sincerely



Sign in to [the Vehicle Operator Licensing system](http://www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence) at www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence to make applications, vehicle changes, and manage your licence.

VOL username and passwords must not be shared, you can always add additional new users.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [External] >> OF0216604 UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Date: 17 January 2024 10:32:41
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)

Good Morning Mr Brown,

Your period of grace expired 13/01/2024 and a response has not been received.

Please provide your comments as to whether a transport manager has been recruited and respond to the period of grace letter by the end of the day.

Thank you

Kind Regards

[REDACTED] | Compliance

Office of the Traffic Commissioner | Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF

[REDACTED]
[@TrafficCommsGB](#) [REDACTED]

The information in this e-mail and any attachments is confidential and may be subject to legal professional privilege. Unless you are the intended recipient or his/her representative you are not authorised to, and must not, read, copy, distribute, use or retain this message or any part of it. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

Please quote your licence or application number in all correspondence with this office.

Please upload any application related documents through your VOL user account. Only send documents by email if you are unable to use the self-service system. Where possible you should correspond with us by email, but you may send correspondence to us by post at the above address.

If you are an existing operator without a VOL user account, and you would like one, please sign up online at <https://www.vehicle-operator-licensing.service.gov.uk/auth/login/> - select 'create an account' and follow the on-screen instructions.

For advice on Coronavirus (Covid-19) please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/traffic-commissioners>.

Sign up to receive news alerts from the Traffic Commissioners:
<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKOTC/subscriber/new>

You can [view the traffic commissioners' privacy notice here](#)



Ben Brown

From: Ben Brown
Sent: 17 January 2024 16:21
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: [External] >> OF0216604 UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Dear [REDACTED]

This is a quick note to say that I have received your email and I will provide a full response as soon as I can. Realistically, this may be tomorrow and I hope that is ok.

Yours sincerely

Ben Brown
Director of Environmental Services

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 10:32 AM
To: Ben Brown <bbrown@uttlesford.gov.uk>
Subject: [External] >> OF0216604 UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Good Morning Mr Brown,

Your period of grace expired 13/01/2024 and a response has not been received.

Please provide your comments as to whether a transport manager has been recruited and respond to the period of grace letter by the end of the day.

Thank you

Kind Regards

[REDACTED] | Compliance
Office of the Traffic Commissioner | Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF

The information in this e-mail and any attachments is confidential and may be subject to legal professional privilege. Unless you are the intended recipient or his/her representative you are not authorised to, and must not, read, copy, distribute, use or retain this message or any part of it. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

Please quote your licence or application number in all correspondence with this office.

Please upload any application related documents through your VOL user account. Only send documents by email if you are unable to use the self-service system. Where possible you should correspond with us by email, but you may send correspondence to us by post at the above address.

If you are an existing operator without a VOL user account, and you would like one, please sign up online at <https://www.vehicle-operator-licensing.service.gov.uk/auth/login/> - select 'create an account' and follow the on-screen instructions.

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Office of the
Traffic Commissioner

MR BEN BROWN
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN
CB11 4ER

Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
HILLCREST HOUSE
386 HAREHILLS LANE
LEEDS
LS9 6NF

Direct Line: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

Our Ref: OF0216604

23/01/2024

Dear Mr Brown

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE OF0216604

GOODS VEHICLES (LICENSING OF OPERATORS) ACT 1995 (the Act)

THIS LETTER REQUIRES URGENT ATTENTION

Sent by Recorded Delivery and email.

I refer to our letters dated 18/08/2023 notifying you that the Traffic Commissioner was considering revoking your goods vehicle operator's licence as the mandatory requirement of professional competence is not met.

I also refer to our letter of 13 September 2023 detailing the Traffic Commissioner's decision to grant a Period of Grace for the purposes of professional competence until 13 January 2024. The Council was informed in this letter that professional competence would need to be restored or an extension to the Period of Grace requested prior to the expiry of this grace period or the licence would be revoked.

In the absence of a response to this letter or a request for a public inquiry to be held the Traffic Commissioner has revoked your operator's licence with immediate effect in accordance with the grounds stated in our letter.

Notification of this decision will be placed in the publication 'Applications and Decisions'. This decision may also be recorded on an electronic national register that can be inspected by the competent authorities of other EU member states.

What you must do now

You must now return the operator's licence and vehicle discs to me at the above address for cancellation. Failure to do this is a criminal offence.

Right of Appeal

There is a right of appeal against the Traffic Commissioner's decision. To appeal you should, **within one month from the date of this letter**, apply to:

Upper Tribunal (Transport)

Administrative Appeal Chamber
5th Floor, Rolls Building
7 Rolls Building
Fetter Lane
London
EC4A 1NL

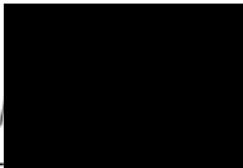
Guidance on the appeal procedure, including an explanatory booklet, is available from the Upper Tribunal website –

www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/upper-tribunal-administrative-appeals-chamber

This letter has been sent by recorded delivery post and email.

If you believe that you have received this letter in error due to responding to previous letters please contact me on the telephone number shown above IMMEDIATELY.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.A black rectangular redaction box covering the name of the sender.

Office of the Traffic Commissioner



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group

Date: Monday, 18th March, 2024

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden,
CB11 4ER

Co-Chairs: Councillors C Criscione and B Donald

Members: Councillors G Driscoll and G Sell

Public Speaking

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions and make statements, subject to having given notice prior to the meeting in writing to committee@uttlesford.gov.uk. A time limit of 3 minutes is allowed for each speaker

**AGENDA
PART 1**

Open to Public and Press

- 1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting** 6 - 12

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 3 Broader Operational Resilience** 13 - 16

To consider work being undertaken to identify any system weakness across the council.
- 4 Outline of Costs Incurred** 17 - 18

To consider an outline of the costs incurred from the disruption to the waste and recycling services.
- 5 Emerging Conclusions**

To consider emerging conclusions, including discussion of lessons learned.

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

Telephone: 01799 510410, 510369, 510460 or 510548

Email: Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk

General Enquiries

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Telephone: 01799 510510

Fax: 01799 510550

Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Scoping Report for Scrutiny Committee Review

Review Topic	Operational Resilience
Scoping Report to go to meeting on:	N/A
Final report to go to meeting on:	April 2024
Portfolio Holder	Petrina Lees, Leader Neil Reeve, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change
Lead Officer	Peter Holt, Chief Executive
Stakeholders	All households Businesses that use the council's trade waste service

Purpose/ Objective of the Review (the reason for the review and what it hopes to achieve)	<p>To draw and apply learning from the recent waste collection situation to prevent recurrence.</p> <p>To take those lessons learned and apply them more broadly across the organisation in order to identify any points of structural weakness or risk and recommend proportionate mitigating measures.</p>
Terms of Reference (including what is in/out of scope)	<p>To work with the portfolio holder and leader, and with officers, to establish the chronology of key events that led to the interruption of waste collection services in late January/early February</p> <p>To identify the key issues behind this</p> <p>To look at the operational response</p> <p>To consider and draw lessons to be learned from this incident that can be applied both to environmental services, but also more broadly to all council services and operations, ensuring that the authority is more resilient</p> <p>To recommend when a report updating progress on the implementation of the action plan be presented to the Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Out of scope are discussions/recommendations around any matters relating directly to any individual employee of the</p>

	<p>council. These are matters reserved for the Chief Executive and senior managers in consultation with HR</p> <p>Any previous issues around missed bin collections prior to the service interruption</p>
<p>Methodology/ Approach (methods to be used to gather evidence)</p>	<p>The Task and Finish Group shall both meet in public, so as to take evidence or representations, as well as in private so as to enable discussions in confidence with the Chief Executive on management action he is taking as a result, in line with Uttlesford District Council's employment policies and procedures, and good employment practice generally.</p> <p>The final report shall be presented by the Task and Finish Group to the Scrutiny Committee in April 2024, and supplemented by a confidential private report on any restricted items should it be necessary.</p>
<p>Potential witnesses</p>	<p>Relevant cabinet members</p> <p>Relevant senior officers</p> <p>Service users</p>
<p>Other issues</p>	<p>It is important that this Task and Finish Group carries out its legitimate job through the Scrutiny function to explore operational matters, but not cross into matters out with the responsibility of members, primarily any matters relating to staff.</p>

Agenda Item 2 Public Document Pack

OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE TASK AND FINISH GROUP held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on TUESDAY, 12 MARCH 2024 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillors C Criscione and B Donald (Co-Chairs)
Councillors G Driscoll and G Sell

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Director of Corporate Services), B Brown (Director of Environmental Services), P Holt (Chief Executive) and C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services Officer)

Also Present: Councillors N Gregory (Chair of Scrutiny Committee), P Lees (Leader of the Council) and N Reeve (Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Climate Change)

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Co-Chairs welcomed those present and made their introductory remarks.

They said that the group were here to explore what went wrong with the Waste Collection; the weaknesses and ultimate failure of a service that affected all households and businesses in the district. When things went wrong, it took a lot of time and effort to fix which was not transparent, causing further frustration to residents.

They hoped that members would approach the matter with level heads and minimum hyperbole, and they requested that all speakers avoided complicated jargon. They reminded the meeting that they were not here for political point scoring, especially as the public sees everyone at the Council as the same and this was disruption that reflected badly on all.

They concluded that the disruption was one in a string of issues spanning many years, administrations and Chief Executives. It was not specific to staff, rather to a failure of governance that needed refreshing. It was therefore important to focus on “never events”, identifying critical issues and building resilience.

There were no apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

2 **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

Councillor Gregory, Chair of Scrutiny Committee, addressed the meeting. He thanked everyone for coming and for the seriousness in which the matter was being taken.

He commended an excellent set of technical papers, and said that, although they were examining the proximate cause to the waste service disruption, which had been both high-profile and embarrassing, it did speak to the greater issues about how the Council had run things for a long time.

He highlighted the recent news coverage about the HMS Queen Elizabeth, noting that things break all the time but would never have made the papers. Aircraft Carriers were complicated with people doing a lot of work that was not necessarily overlapping. The same could be said for the Council, where the complexity of what is done is underestimated and there were not many people with the specific skills and knowledge that could be easily slotted in. However, there were questions about the culture and attitude.

He said that, on the point of the bins, the comms was not snappy enough and needed to be improved. The Council had been besieged by social media, and comments needed to be addressed.

He then moved onto candour and culture. He said that he appreciated the Chief Executive for his approach to telling the truth and doing the right thing, although there was still a wider culture with the assumption for covering things up. In his time as a Councillor, there had been two key failures of governance; Stansted, a failure of governance by all, and Reynolds Court, where controls and checks had not been carried out. This was in a greater series of events where things that shouldn't have happened, happened and the Council needed to embed within its culture the understanding that things that go wrong aren't bad, it's part of the approach of Local Authority.

He concluded to say that members needed to approach the bins and broader issues from a leadership perspective in order to seek how to improve overall. He hoped there would be deliberations on wider issues, rather than the specifics.

Councillor Sell requested to make introductory comments and said that he was under the impression that things went right with the waste service previously, but officers were defensive on this. There was merit to being open with members about the issues and at last November's meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, the nature of some of the problems were revealed for the first time.

He felt that he was being pushed away when asking questions and a healthy Council shouldn't be like that; the open culture was not embedded. He raised questions of the credibility and competency at UDC and the recent waste disruption exacerbated this. The Task and Finish Group were doing an important, thorough piece of work to improve overall quality of service delivery.

3 **PUBLIC APOLOGY AND THANKS**

Councillor Reeve said that, as the relevant Portfolio Holder, he took responsibility for what had gone wrong and apologised for this.

He gave thanks to officers for their diligent work in both finding a solution and getting it in place. He thanked neighbouring authorities and contractors who had responded to the Council's outreach, even if they were not all able to help, giving particular mention to Braintree District Council (BDC) for going above and beyond.

He said that he was glad that the issue was being reviewed. From his perspective, he saw his role during the disruption change from his expectations as it was not to inquire as to what had gone wrong, but rather to help motivate and look for the solution. He hoped that the learning from the review would add to a behaviour change.

Councillor Lees said that she took responsibility for the disruption, as politically it lay with her, and she apologised for this.

She highlighted that there was a history of the Chief Executive finding problems across the Council but was glad that this meant that there was further improvement.

4 **WASTE DISRUPTION CHRONOLOGY**

Members discussed the chronology of events that had led up to revocation of the Operator's Licence and questions arose as to whether enough urgency had been given to the situation. In response, officers highlighted that a number of actions had been taken between the resignation of the Fleet and Operations Manager, who held the Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence qualification, and the revocation of the Operator's Licence. This included applying for the grace period with the Office of the Traffic Commissioner (OTC), interviewing potential interim Transport Managers and the Director of Environmental Services undertaking the relevant qualification. In addition, a number of alternative options were explored such as a shared manager with BDC and Colchester and putting Councillor Driscoll, who holds the qualification, on the licence as a figurehead. However, they acknowledged that not enough had been done, otherwise the licence wouldn't have been revoked.

The Director of Environmental Services apologised for overlooking the 17th January email which stated the period of grace had ended. He thanked the Leader and the Chief Executive but said that this was ultimately his mistake.

In response to a question from Councillor Sell, he said that not all of the relevant correspondence from the OTC had been forwarded to the Chief Executive, Leader or Portfolio Holder until the Operator's Licence was at the point of revocation. However, he had been in regular discussions with all three to update them on progress. Councillor Reeve said that he regretted not seeing the correspondence, as he may have had a different attitude to the matters.

The Leader added that she had requested a spreadsheet on all mandatory documentation be brought to ICB for monitoring whilst there were ongoing operational issues.

In response to further questions from members, the following was clarified:

- It was noted that, whilst meetings were taking place during the grace period, the potential revocation of the Operator's Licence was not on either the Corporate or Service-Level Risk Registers.
- The Director of Environmental Services had decided to undertake the Transport Manager CPC qualification in order to gain further knowledge

and be able to challenge any risks or working practices around the management of the fleet in future. The intention was not for him to become the named Transport Manager on the Operator's Licence.

- Following the immediate resignation of the Fleet and Operations Manager, the Council had 28 days to report that the Transport Manager CPC holder had left, however it was best practice to do this sooner and the Council had done so within nine days. During this period, the Licence was still valid.
- An acknowledgment had been sent to the email received on 17th January from the OTC stating that the period of grace had expired. However, there was not a formal reply.
- Officers had got the deadline for the grace period wrong, believing it to be 31st January rather than 13th January. It was not known why the OTC had chosen 13th, as the Transport Manager had left on 31st.
- The recruitment of a Transport Manager, with waste management experience and a progressive approach to creating an inclusive working culture had proven difficult to find.

5 WASTE DISRUPTION RECOVERY ACTIONS

The Chief Executive highlighted the three work streams undertaken within the Waste Disruptions Recovery response; to reverse the previous decision of Traffic Commissioner, to obtain a new Operator's Licence and to put in place contingency arrangements to allow core operations to resume.

In response to questions raised by members on the recovery, the following was clarified:

- Lightwood PLC were provided with two UDC refuse vehicles and inspected records, concluded that they could not assist due to concerns around the maintenance of records. As they were only able to offer two slots, officers chose to put more effort into Widdington and BDC who had greater available capacity.
- BDC did a thorough examination on all the refuse vehicles which were sent to them in order ensure that they were the best standard for their staff who were working overtime. However, this meant that they pushed back on some of them for minor defects, such as a ripped seat cover or squeaking pipe, which were quickly rectified. No vehicle was sent back on road safety grounds.
- A range of refuse vehicles were offered to BDC, including two which were within a year old. Officers did not believe that the fleet contain any substandard vehicles, and as a result in further investment into the service, the Council were replacing three vehicles two years earlier than anticipated.
- Additional staff had been deployed from within the Council to assist with logistics, most around Grade 7. After the Chief Executives request for mutual aid, they followed up any responses and contacted the relevant senior members of the staff at other authorities who could authorise any assistance.
- Authorities in Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire were all contacted with requests for assistance, as proximity was more important than county boundaries.

- The Operators Licence belonged to the Council, however they were required to employ someone with the relevant qualification.

Members noted that, whilst the disruption was felt for longer, there was only two-and-a-half weeks between the Council's Operator's Licence being revoked and the operations restarting from the Canfield depot and this was commended. They also highlighted the proactive actions taken, which had not been listed in the agenda documentation, including deploying staff and requesting assistance from consultants prior to the revocation.

However, they raised concerns as to the information provided to the BDC crews to conduct their route. The current system had individual records for every household within the district which was incorporated into the in-cab technology used by the UDC refuse collectors. As an alternative option needed to be found for BDC to use, and the design of the technology made it difficult to translate elsewhere, crews were given maps, as well as UDC staff operating as a guide. Lists were often not in chronological order and the information fed back from staff was not completely accurate. Officers were working to improve the format of their instruction, such as translating routes into Google Maps to follow or using What3Words for harder to find locations.

Further concerns were raised regarding the accuracy of the communication to the public, as this was found at times to not be reflective of what was happening. Officers explained that trying to get the communications right was a steep learning curve as they were dealing with the difficulty of getting timely, accurate information as to what routes had been completed, along with the additional pressure to release the daily updates earlier. Nonetheless, they took an approach to only promise one day at a time and achieved between 80-90% of the catch-up collections which they advertised.

The communications from Facebook and the UDC website did not appear to be engaging with the number of residents that they'd anticipated as many instead chose to rely on their local "binfluencer". However, the daily notices made it easier for these individuals to share the right information to community groups.

There was discussion around the mutual aid arrangements and planning ahead. Officers clarified that there were generic mutual aid arrangements in place, but it was not possible to make any formal agreements due to the unpredictability of events and the reliance on good relationships and other Council's available capacity and resources at the time. Currently at UDC there were three triggers for business continuity measures: staffing, access to vehicles/premises and access to technology. It was a general approach with no defined single solutions, nor specific scenarios planned for. Moving forward, the Chief Executive was working on an exercise to prioritise the biggest risks at the council, based on the data captured, and work through both short- and long-term solutions to these. When specifically considering the Waste Service, there were also discussions taking place around Essex at an operational level to build greater resilience.

It was highlighted that before the recent events, there had been at least two other periods of disruption, which signalled a potential pattern of behaviour.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Members noted the heightened level of engagement in which the disruption to the waste and recycling service had caused. This included an increased number of calls to the Customer Service Centre, complaints and comments on social media.

Some members expressed disappointment in the lack of communication from the leaders of the administration, both publicly and with opposition members, especially when both officers and ward councillors were receiving criticism for the disruption. They said that it was not evident what was being done by the Leader and Portfolio Holder.

In response, Councillor Lees said that she had wanted to do the first high-profile media appearance, but the decision had been taken by the Chief Executive that he would do it. Instead, she focussed her efforts on supporting the staff affected by the disruption, rather than finding opportunities to be seen, although she did partake in a number of interviews also. In regard to a recent joint statement on the resuming of services, she wanted this to be from the Chief Executive, but the decision was made that it would go out jointly.

She said that she did not email members of the opposition as they were already receiving regular email briefings from officers, although they were welcome to contact her if they had any questions. She said that she was, however, often only made aware of any new information either slightly before or at the same time as other members.

The Chief Executive added that it was easier for him to have control over the comments made on behalf of the Council.

Councillor Reeve said that the Chief Executive was the most briefed in the matter so could provide the most accurate information to residents. It was more important to get accurate information out on a daily basis and they didn't need to be seen doing stuff as this was self-glorification. He confirmed that he had also contributed to press releases.

It was confirmed that the Leader and Portfolio Holder had in fact done as many media interviews as the Chief Executive.

In response to questions on the public engagement operations, officers confirmed that a greater number of calls had been received, but the amount was low in proportion to the population of the district, and it quickly dropped off once the Council received its interim Operator's Licence and services started returning to normal. The phones lines were always covered, despite the Customer Services team not being at capacity. The majority of callers were frustrated but reasonable; however there was a minority of abusive callers who were dealt with using existing protocols.

In regard to engagement on social media, Facebook content was also replicated onto Instagram, which did not take a lot of time to monitor as there was less engagement.

Councillor Criscione suggested that communication and engagement planning be considered in future.

7 **WASTE REFUNDS**

Members agreed with the Council's current position not to refund Council Tax for the period of service disruption, noting that the costs incurred to administer this would be disproportionate to the monies residents would receive.

Officers confirmed that, due to the disruption, garden waste collection charges had been frozen for the following year and the 12 months of paid operation of this service had been extended to run for 15 months before charge for the next year. Members debated whether to extensively advertise this due to potential criticisms which it could attract from residents who did not use the service.

Members agreed that Agenda Item 7 (Broader Operational Resilience) would be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting ended 22:10

Committee: Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group

Date: Monday 18th
March 2024

Title: Broader Operational Resilience

Report Author Peter Holt, Chief Executive

Summary

1. This report describes work being undertaken to identify any system weakness across the council.

Recommendations

2. None

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Management colleagues are being consulted as per paragraph 10
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	The resilience review summarised in this report has implications across the workforce.

Situation

6. Beyond the issues specifically around the waste service disruption, this experience has flagged up the risk of 'single points of failure' elsewhere in the organisation. Although the Council is one of the larger local employers, with some 330 staff, these staff are spread over a vast number of different specialist services. There is a rich and proud tradition of Council staff stepping sideways to help fill gaps in other services under pressure, caused for whatever reason, and this was proved most visibly during the pandemic. The fact remains however that there are so many various specialist, complex or statutory requirements which cannot instantly or smoothly be filled by such best endeavours.
7. The chief executive has therefore initiated a process to consider the whole organisation's business functions to spot for system weaknesses in terms of resilience and business continuity to see how well they are already mapped and covered, proportionate to their risk.
8. For example, there is a requirement that at the end of every working day, every Council banks with the Government any funds over a certain agreed limit, rather than leaving them in banks overnight. As a district council, UDC often holds sizeable sums not only of its own money, but of Council Tax receipts collected on behalf of other preceptor authorities (with 92% of such tax collected paid over periodically to Essex County Council, the Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, and all of our Parish and Town Councils who raise their own precept), so these can be very sizeable sums. The physical process for transferring this money to Government coffers late in the afternoon requires specialist knowledge, security equipment and log-ons, and so there is in place an identified local resilience system within our finance team to carry this out.
9. This council-wide resilience check exercise will both test the appropriateness of that system, as well as capture and record it centrally in the Council in a way that is not currently done, so that any vacancies or absences in those specific posts that carry out this work can be flagged up through an HR system, with step-in arrangements put in place as appropriate.
10. This action includes an immediate addition of a risk to the Corporate Risk Register (as below), and an initial trawl of the organisation by the Director of Business Change and People to identify such issues (see template as below). The chief executive has also secured the agreement of an experienced director of a neighbouring local authority to join in this exercise as a 'critical friend', providing insight and independent, constructive challenge and advice.
11. A report back on this resilience review will be provided in due course, though by the nature of the risks and issues involved, various specific details will not be published for security reasons.

New strategic risk:

NEW RISK

- *Impact of regulatory/enforcement/intervention action by various Government departments/regulators on UDC – both their individual risks and impacts, and also cumulative impacts on both operations, reputation, ability to recruit and retain etc.*

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23-CR-21 BUSINESS RESILIENCE			Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Lees	
Risk Owner: Peter Holt				
<p>If the council does not have officers in post with the correct statutory or regulatory qualifications to carry out the key functions/activities of the council or ensure adequate back up is in place to avoid single points of failure this could lead to adverse impacts on service provision and reputational damage.</p>	Original Likelihood	Original Impact	Original Score	Current Controls
	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and proactive management of regulatory requirements both at a corporate and operational level • Succession planning/deputisation of key roles within the authority to mitigate operational/service failure • Support professional qualification or specialised training programmes throughout the organisation to mitigate single points of failure
	Current Likelihood	Current Impact	Current Score	Further Action
	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update Business Continuity plans for each service area to include where specific qualifications and/or licences are required and ensure back up options are specified to avoid single points of failure and ensure continuity of service delivery
	Target Likelihood	Target Impact	Target Score	Planned Completion date
	1	4	4	31.03.2024

Template for organisational trawl (edited to remove specifics):

Operational Resilience

Service Area	Activity/Function	Responsible Officer/s	Back up/Deputy	Service Impact	Other information
Environmental Services	Operator's Licence				
Finance	Statutory Officer - Section 151 Officer				
Finance	Treasury Management				
Legal	Statutory Officer – Monitoring Officer				
Car Parks					
Economic Development	Not applicable				
Private Finance Initiative					
Homelessness					
Housing Strategy					
Building Control	Building Inspections				
Development Management					
Highways Infrastructure Planning					
Planning Management					
Planning Policy					
Planning Specialists					
Contract, Performance and Risk Management					
Committee Administration					

Scrutiny Task and Finish Group – Meeting on 18th March 2024

Estimated cost of waste service disruption

Peter Holt, Chief Executive

It is important to transparently account for the costs of this service disruption to Councillors, and ultimately to the general public. Rather than just give a single figure, for sake of transparency, a detailed breakdown is offered as below. Some of these figures are based on estimates, including the largest element – the amount that Braintree District Council will ultimately recharge to Uttlesford District Council for their costs in assisting with our collections during the period of disruption, which were hugely appreciated.

It is important in being fully transparent to also avoid double-counting, and to take account of costs incurred that can subsequently be reclaimed.

For example, had Uttlesford never lost its operating licence and operated as usual during the weeks in question, it would have spent an estimated £28,745 in diesel. As the costs recharged to us by Braintree District Council will include the costs to them of the diesel they used, a line item has been included in the table below to account for this double-counting of 2 sets of diesel when only 1 was actually burned.

Similarly, costs recharged by Widdington Skips includes the amount that they had to pay, when assisting us, to discharge the waste they collected, but which Essex County Council has helpfully agreed (in writing) to subsequently refund to Uttlesford, and this is estimated at £19,000 (ie offsetting more than half of the £36,000 that Widdington Skips have had to charge us for their assistance).

Similarly, officers thought it important to show not only the cost of the appropriately qualified extra staff member brought in to allow us to apply for the new licence, but also the savings on the permanent staff member post that this temporary staff member was replacing.

In total therefore, the total net cost to the Council (and therefore to Council Tax Payers) of this period of disruption is estimated at approximately £53,000. A full and final accounting will be provided in due course, once all elements therein have been finalised and are all actual rather than estimated costs.

This approximate £53,000 cost contrasts to the very rough estimate given to Members previously of £80,000-£100,000 by the chief executive.

It would be possible to look beyond the period of disruption in January and February 2024, and also consider excess costs/further savings – e.g. approximately six months' salary saving at c £5,000 per month in 2023 from the vacant qualified manager post, but officers want to be careful to not be seen to be minimising net costs on reputational grounds, so are providing a full and transparent costs breakdown related to the actual period of disruption only.

Direct cost of revocation of licence	
Widdington Skips	36,000
Full Cycle Waste Management	6,848
Braintree District Council – NB estimated cost (invoices not yet received)	45,000
Replacement Licence Application Fee	800
Overtime for Customer Service Centre staff answering concerned residents	2,508
Overtime cost for Waste Services inc operating catch up for bins not emptied during the main period of disruption	9,321
Temporary licence holder staff costs for period of disruption	4,400
Transport consultant advice	515
Less items that represent double-counting, recoverable costs, or salary for vacant post covered by temporary licence holder	
Diesel	(28,745)
Tipping fees to be reclaimed from ECC, as agreed with them	(19,000)
Saving on Fleet Operations Manager vacant post for period	(5,070)
Net total cost of service disruption (including current estimates pending invoice receipt etc.)	£52,981