

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
25th January 2018**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for
Property & Waste
County Councillor James Evans, Portfolio Holder for
HR, ICT and Communications

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Sandra Davies

Much has been mentioned of late of the increasing elderly population and the associated pressures on front line services. There is an increase in dementia, people who have mobility issues and more demand on carers / care providers.

Powys no longer provides a list of dates for refuse collection which can cause confusion for people and their carers. Not everyone has access to a computer to access information.

It was unfortunate that just before Christmas the weather resulted in disruption to the collection service. It was unclear when refuse was to be collected.

Added to this confusion was a change to normal collection day over Christmas and yet a different collection day for the New Year?

What plan does the portfolio holder for refuse/recycling have to ensure that members of the public know when to put out their rubbish for collection: both black bins (purple sacks) and coloured boxes?

Are the two portfolio holders working together to communicate this effectively?

Answer

We have been going through a process of optimising all the waste and recycling collection routes in order to maximise the efficiency of our crews and vehicles. This will result in a change in collection day for most households. This will be clearly communicated by letter prior to the change taking place. With the letter will be a new guide to recycling along with the upcoming dates for the three weekly residual collections.

When the three weekly residual collections were introduced a list of dates was issued for the following year. A postcode checking facility was then introduced on our website where residents can type in their postcode to receive the next five collection dates. This is not only very convenient for the majority of residents who

use such technology but is also invaluable for our customer services staff as when residents call in, they can enter the postcode and then tell the caller the dates. This system has worked very well and also saves the significant cost of sending out a calendar to all residents.

Unfortunately inclement weather, such as experienced before Christmas, does impact on the service we provide. It is of course essential that we only take the vehicles on roads on which it is safe to do so and we must also consider the safety of our staff when handling waste and recycling at the kerbside. We did try to get the message regarding disruptions to collections out as widely as possible using the website, social media and via customer services. However, by the very nature of the changing weather conditions, it is difficult to instantly communicate such changes.

Collections over Christmas are an issue for all local authorities as they try to balance providing a service with allowing staff to enjoy the festive season and spend time with their families. This was again communicated wherever possible including in all the local papers and media websites. Again, a mail drop to all households is very expensive when we are trying to minimise our costs across all council services.

The portfolio holders are of course aware of the problems of communicating these messages and work closely with both the Waste and Recycling Service and the Communications Team to effectively publicise any changes, planned or otherwise.