

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Chris Goodwin
Cabinet Member for Don't Trash Oldham

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Winter Maintenance:

Preparations for Winter Maintenance operations were complete by the start of November. Vehicles, materials, grit and the staffing resource were all in place to ensure that main roads are kept open during the winter months. Highways colleagues have been constantly monitoring forecasts, road conditions and undertaking gritting and other activities such as snow clearing as necessary.

So far, through November, the total amount of salt / grit spread is nearly 700 tonnes from our stockpile of approximately 6,000 tonnes. We have fully gritted the main gritting routes 17 times so far and carried out snow clearing activities once. As far as reasonably possible, we will look to keep the primary highway network free of ice and snow at all times, to help ensure safe journeys. Our teams are continuing to fill and refill the borough's grit bins and we have contingency plans in place, including for heavy snowfall.

The council's social media accounts will also share up to date winter information, including traffic and road closure updates and more details about our winter work are on the council's website - <http://www.oldham.gov.uk/winter>. It features the news on gritting routes, locations of grit bins, and tips on how residents can stay safe and get help and support.

We will also update the winter webpage with any school closures that we are notified about. Schools also have a text messaging system to inform parents if they are closing for the day.

Greenspace:

The Council's tree planting programme is now well underway for the 2024/25 season with approximately 300 of the 650 new trees having already been planted. It is expected that 500 trees will have been planted before Christmas with the remainder going in early in the new year. This work is being delivered in partnership with, and supported by, the 'City of Trees' as part of the 'Trees for Climate Change' project. The other main source of trees is the Northern Forest Initiative and use of S106 Funding that the Council secures for environmental improvements.

In addition to the tree planting, the Service will also aim to deliver a further 2.5 hectares of new woodland across the borough during the 2024/25 planting season. This programme is consistent with the aim of increasing woodland and tree planting year on year.

The programmes aim to continuously increase green coverage across the borough, using Council resources and by working closely with partners and environmental groups across Oldham and the Greater Manchester region. All tree and woodland planting support the environmental challenges of climate change / adaptation and deliver the recognised benefits that are brought about by sustainable tree planting and increasing woodland and green coverage.

Fleet Management:

The service continues to assist Council departments with the specification and purchase of vehicles as part of the fleet replacement programme – this ensures that the vehicles meet Service needs and provide value for money.

The service area also maintains, repairs and provides ongoing support for all council owned vehicles – this ensures that the council continues to meet legal obligations and is able to continue to operate goods vehicles and complies with the Operator's License meaning that the Council can deliver waste collection and other highways maintenance operations using large plant, machinery and vehicles.

The Service also provides MOT and compliance testing for all Council Licensed vehicles (Taxis & Private Hire). The new MOT testing bay and facilities will all be completed by early December 2024 to assist with current and future demand.

Waste:

The waste service continues to support the boroughs recycling efforts. From October this year, residents have been able to recycle plastic pots, tubs and trays, as well as plastic bottles in their brown bin/box at home. Partners are upgrading their materials recovery facility where the mixed recycling is sorted and separated. This will allow them to sort a wider range of plastic packaging and therefore, increasing recycling.

Waste Management are committed to ensuring minimal disruption to collections over the Christmas Period. There will be changes to collections due on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day as below:

- Bins due on Wednesday 25 December will be collected on Saturday 28 December, including green bins and food caddies.
- Bins due on Thursday 26 December will be collected earlier on Saturday 21 December
- Please note - green bins and food caddies will not be emptied, so do not put them out.
- Bins due on Wednesday 1 January will be collected on Saturday 4 January.
- Please note - green bins and food caddies will not be emptied, so do not put them out. They will be collected as normal on Wednesday 8 January.

Disposing of your real Christmas trees:

Once you have taken your Christmas tree down, you can recycle it by putting it in your green bin. Just chop it into small pieces, remove the wooden block from the base of the tree as this is too big to be composted, and take off any lights and decorations.

Alternatively, you can take it to Arkwright Street Household Waste and Recycling Centre – along with any extra Christmas waste you may have – or leave the tree at one of our collection points in the following parks (from December 28 to January 15):

- Higher Memorial Park (car park), Joseph Street, Failsworth (open 7.30am until dusk)
- Royton Park (car park) off Bleasdale Street, Royton (Open 7.30am until dusk)
- Werneth Park (car park) off Frederick Street, Werneth (open 7.30am until dusk)
- Churchill Playing Fields (car park), Wellington Road, Greenfield. Anytime access.
- George Street Playing Fields (car park), off Milnrow Road, Shaw. Anytime access.

For all your waste and recycling information – including what goes in which bin, what date your normal collection is and opening times for Arkwright Street tip visit www.oldham.gov.uk/waste

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.