

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP JOINT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Friday, 7 December 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Linda Green (Gateshead Council) (Chair)

Gateshead Council Councillor Angela Douglas and councillor amy wilson

South Tyneside Council

Sunderland Council

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gateshead Council

South Tyneside Council

Sunderland Council

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Mark Walsh and Councillor Jim Foreman

36 APOLOGIES

37 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 15 June and 21 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record, with the following amendments:-

15 June 2018 should read Tom Turner in the attendance list

21 September 2018 should read Councillor Angela Douglas in the attendance list

38 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received

39 CHALLENGES AFFECTING RECYCLING IN THE UK - A J&B RECYCLING PERSPECTIVE

Mark Penny from J&B Recycling gave the partnership a presentation on the Challenges affecting recycling in the UK from a J&B Recycling perspective.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted.

40 **CONTRACTS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report on the current position regarding the Residual Waste Treatment Contract and other ancillary waste joint contracts and activities managed by South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership (STWWMP).

The joint partnership team continues to undertake several waste management functions on behalf of the partner authorities, including reviewing and verifying monthly contract reports, which detail materials processed and, where appropriate, apportioned between partner authorities within contractual timescales.

This is enabling, amongst other things, a proactive and timely approach to management of the TWTC which is operated under strict timescales. Similar benefits are also afforded to the procurement and management of other ancillary contracts, such as MRF, HWRC, and green waste composting.

Appendix A provides the latest performance on the residual waste treatment contract for April – October 2018.

The Committee were advised that during recent months, the operation of the EfW has encountered no significant issues so unavailability has been limited. For example, Line 5 has experienced 100% availability over the last three months. However, some services issues were experienced on Line 4.

Three and a half hours of turbine availability were lost on 29 September as a result of a trip initiated by a pump fault on the closed water cooling system. The trip was investigated, and the system reset.

An Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) exceedance of high copper levels was reported during October, resulting in the second exceedance within the rolling 24-week reporting period. Investigations are ongoing to identify a possible root cause.

During October, it was also observed that the Line 4 outboard and inboard grates were sticking during operations. However, the issue did not affect plant combustion or performance. A full investigation noted that operations have since improved, and whilst no repairs are considered to be necessary at this stage, the situation will continue to be monitored.

Committee were advised that the dates for the annual EfW maintenance shutdown have now been confirmed:

- Line 4: 20 February – 14 March 2019
- Line 5: 5 – 27 March 2019

Discussions with representatives from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), STWER, and Willis Towers Watson insurers involving the joint insurance cost report associated with the RWTC are ongoing.

Committee were advised that all three of the WTS have remained available throughout the current contract year; with all sites continuing to accept STWWMP contract waste without significant issues. Recycling activities are ongoing at each site, which includes the segregation of materials, such as street sweepings, wood and scarp metals.

Routine maintenance of buildings, plant and control systems continues to be delivered as planned and no significant issues have been identified.

The former 'civic amenity' site area at Middlefields WTS was inspected by the Environment Agency (EA) on 24 August. No issues were raised.

The Committee were advised that the RWTC affords provision for SUEZ to help to improve local prosperity across the partnership area by promoting vacant posts within their facilities. The Economic Development Service at Gateshead Council continues to receive information on local vacancies, which are then cascaded to partner authorities for circulation to their client base. Local vacancies are also highlighted at the Jack Crawford House and Campground Community Liaison Groups to enable opportunities to be circulated across community contacts.

Following an internal restructure with SUEZ, and the conclusion of the subsequent secondment period, the position of site manager at Jack Crawford House WTS was advertised, interviews held and a Sunderland resident was externally appointed into the role. The official start date is anticipated to be during January 2019.

The Committee were advised that STWWMP remains committed to an ongoing programme of community education and engagement, managed by Groundwork North East & Cumbria (GNEC) at the visitor and education centre, the energy-from-waste facility, and through outreach activities held in local schools and community settings.

Between April and October 2018, over 7,280 local residents, children and young people, and community group members have taken part in waste awareness events, activities, and site visits. Recently, this has included:

- Waste awareness assemblies with 134 pupils at Harlow Green Primary School, Gateshead, and 157 pupils at St. Gregory's Primary School, South Tyneside
- A waste awareness roadshow with almost 1,350 STWWMP residents at the into Metrocentre as part of the national Recycle Week, which also enabled 14 children from Blaydon St. Joseph's Primary School Eco Club to undertake a behind-the-scenes tour of intu's recycling activities and facilities at the centre
- Waste awareness community roadshows, including: 69 residents at Doxford Park (Sunderland); 165 attending the Big Local Event, Jarrow (South Tyneside); and 64 at the Raich Carter Centre Family Fun Day in Sunderland

A separate events programme for the dedicated Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) continues to be delivered for local schools and community groups. A battery amnesty campaign was launched in schools across STWWMP in September. Battery tubes are also being rolled-out to schools and community

venues to further encourage battery recycling.

Committee were also advised that The Jack Crawford House Community Liaison met on Thursday 15 November 2018. The group were updated on site operations, noting that it was operating well with no significant accidents or incidents occurred during the period since the last meeting. It was highlighted that across STWWMP, waste continues to be 100% diverted from landfill.

Although the EA were unable to attend the meeting, they provided a statement confirming that whilst no inspections had been undertaken since the last community liaison group meeting, they were happy with site operations.

The group also received a presentation on the dedicated WEEE project. The Campground Community Liaison Group was scheduled to meet on Tuesday 27 November.

The Committee were advised that the MRF contracts continue to be monitored closely by the joint partnership team. This includes processing payments, holding regular contract meetings and performance reviews, and Health and Safety site inspections at the various contractor facilities to ensure that recycling performance is maximised.

Table A of Appendix B (attached to the report) highlights the total amount of materials collected by each authority between April and October 2018, broken down to demonstrate the paper collected separately in the inner box and the comingled materials collected in the main section of the blue bin. The overall recycling tonnages in each partner authority continue to fluctuate, but paper tonnages collected separately in the inner caddy have fallen again compared to the same period last year.

Appendix B also contains Table B, which highlights MRF recycling and recovery rates (for comingled materials only) since Quarter 1 2017/18. Recycling performance has generally remained at similar levels in each partner authority. Sunderland City Council continue to identify actions to help increase their recycling rates.

The Committee were also advised that a recycling trial will be introduced in Gateshead and South Tyneside in January/February 2019 which will involve the collection of paper and card together in an additional wheeled bin, which will replace the inner caddy at the households in the trial area. Councillors are being fully briefed regarding the development and delivery of the trial. Meetings with the contractor, Palm Recycling, remain ongoing to ensure the new arrangements are fully communicated effectively to residents within the trial area. Although the trial is taking place in Gateshead and South Tyneside, the results will benefit all three partner authorities and will be used when evaluating future service delivery models.

The joint partnership team has begun investigating to support the partner authorities in considering the future delivery of the MRF contracts post 2021. As part of this process, a market engagement day will be held in February 2019, enabling a range of recycling contractors to engage in direct dialogue with STWWMP. This will impact on the next MRF contract procurement exercise by enabling the partnership to clarify

and consider contractors' delivery model preferences.

Furthermore, STWWMP has secured free of charge consultancy from the National Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAPWRAP), which will enable specialist support to be provided in the development of the future MRF contract such as:

- Analysis of the outcomes arising from the market engagement day;
- Support in the evaluation and impact of the Palm paper and card recycling trial;
- Appraisal of different collection service configurations and service delivery models; and
- Support in the development on contract specifications and relevant documentation

The Palm MRF on Teesside, which processes recycling material collected by Gateshead and South Tyneside, was recently offline for 4 days. However, the fault has now been rectified and there was no impact on contract operations as materials were able to safely stored on site before full service resumed.

The Committee were advised that in October, councillors from Sunderland City Council visited the J&B Recycling MRF at Hartlepool. The visit was aimed at demonstrating what happens to waste that is collected for recycling, how it is processed, and the problems caused by material contamination etc. In addition to the operations at the MRF, councillors also witnessed two different council collection crews undertaking recycling rounds and material drop-off activities at the waste transfer station at Washington.

The Committee were also advised that Appendix C highlighted the latest Household Waste and Recycling Centre Contracts (HWRC) performance April-September 2018.

Recycling performance at the sites remains at a similar level to the previous year and is either exceeding or in line with annual recycling targets.

At Beach Street, residual waste received has increased significantly in comparison to the same period to last year, with a slight increase in recycling tonnages also experienced.

All HWRC contractors continue to explore whether additional materials disposed at sites can be recycled and further improve recycling performance. For example, SUEZ are currently trialling mattress recycling at the Gateshead and Sunderland sites. Mattresses are traditionally difficult to recycle, due to the different materials involved in their manufacture, but SUEZ has provided additional resources and equipment to separate the different material types (i.e. metals and flock) so that they can be both be processed as recycling.

In addition, Committee were advised that all three partner authorities recommended garden waste kerbside collection services in March/April 2018. Contract management meetings have been held with service providers at the various facilities, which also include Health & Safety site inspections.

The current contract periods are scheduled to end in March 2019. However, it is proposed that the current contracts are extended for a period of 12 months. Written feedback from all contractors to confirm the extensions is awaited.

RESOLVED - that the Joint Executive Committee noted the contents of the report

41 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

A presentation was given to the Committee on International, National and Local Authority waste news.

International Waste News

The Committee were advised that a global commitment to eliminate plastic waste and pollution at its source has now been signed by over 290 organisations; and this represents around 20% of all plastic packaging produced across the world.

The Ellen MacArthur foundation, which is leading the 'New Plastics Economy Global Commitment' in collaboration with UN Environment, says that many of the world's largest packaging producers, brands, retailers and recyclers, as well as governments and NGOs have signed up.

The commitment aims to create a 'new normal' for plastic packaging, with companies agreeing to publish their progress against key targets annually by aiming to:

- Eliminate problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging, and move from single-use to reusable packaging models;
- Innovate, to ensure 100% of plastic packaging can be easily and safely reused, recycled, or composted by 2025;
- And ensure plastics stay in circulation for longer by increasing its reuse, or the amount recycled as new packaging or products

The Committee were also advised that a new Quality Control scheme has been jointly developed by the Recycling Association and certification and inspection organisation CCIC London to help meet the requirements for exporting paper to China.

The new scheme introduces an additional paper inspection regime to the existing quality control systems already in place at many depots and will ensure materials meet the Chinese specifications.

Companies not wishing to take part in the scheme will face the alternative of CCIA London physically inspecting all shipments to China, which could cause delays and additional costs.

National Waste News

The Committee will recall the Chancellor's recent budget announcement, which was followed by a mixed response from different parts of the waste sector in terms of its environment and sustainability measures, which included:

- £10million to tackle abandoned waste sites;
- A new tax on the manufacture and import of plastic packaging that contains less than 30% recycled plastic content;
- And a commitment to reforming Packaging Producer Responsibility;
- But, notably, did not include rumoured taxes on disposable plastic cup and, crucially for us, incineration

Responses from the sector has been mixed and subject to consultation, it is expected that the new plastic packaging tax will take effect from 1 April 2022.

The Committee were also advised that a report issued by the UK Without Incineration Network that looks at the climate change impacts of waste incineration in the UK has been described as 'deeply flawed' by Cory Riverside Energy.

The report claims that in 2017, the UK's 42 incinerators released a combined total of nearly 11 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. However, Cory Riverside said that the report is both frustrating and highly concerning and agree that wherever possible waste must be minimised or recycled.

The Committee were also advised that more than four out of ten UK adults say that there are insufficient incentives for them to recycle materials in their local area, according to new research commissioned by technology company Yotta. And just under a third of the sample said smart schemes designed to incentivise recycling,

- Such as systems that identify different types of waste and then reward customers for correctly disposing it,
- Or specialised bottle deposit machines which allow consumers to claim a small sum on returns;
- Would improve the amount they recycle

However, it should be noted that whilst this sort of technology brings a different dimension to waste services, the research doesn't acknowledge a number of key issues. Further updates will be given in due course to Committee.

The Committee were advised that Walkers has launched the UK's first nationwide recycling scheme for crisp packets. The scheme, which is due to start this month,

accepts all crisp packets, not just Walkers' products.

Walkers long-term ambition is to make all of its packaging 100% recyclable, compostable, or biodegradable by 2025. The Committee were advised that crisp packets are technically recyclable, but are difficult to separate from other recycling at the MRF.

Conwy County Borough Council has become the first UK council to rollout a four weekly residual waste collection, following a year-long trial. This means that residents now receive:

- A weekly collection for food waste;
- A weekly collection for paper, card, TetraPaks, cans, aerosols, glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles, tubs, and trays and household batteries;
- A fortnightly collection for green waste, textiles and small electrical waste;
- A refuse collection every four weeks; and
- A weekly nappy collection for those who need it.

The council say that half of the waste that was disposed as residual waste before the trial could have been recycled easily.

Conwy currently recycles 64% of its waste but needs to recycle 70% by 2024/25 to meet Welsh Government targets... or face fines for non-achievement.

Local Authority Waste News

The Committee were informed that Minister for Resources, Therese Coffey has written to Swindon Borough Council to ask if to 'reflect carefully' on its recently announced plan to temporarily stop recycling plastic.

Last month, the council said that because plastic was 'not being recycled properly', it intends to temporarily send it for energy recovery and also that unrecyclable plastics are finding their way into recycling collections.

The council say that unrecyclable plastics are finding their way into recycling collections and the Recycling Association said this was 'absolutely the wrong way to go'.

South Staffordshire District Council has extended a waste contract with Biffa because the council believed that if they were to re-tender the work, they might not receive any bids.

The original seven-year contract with Biffa was signed in 2013, with an optional extension period of up to another seven years. However, the council decided that it didn't want to take up the full extension option because further delays to the publication of the waste and resources strategy might radically change what the service needs to deliver.

A cabinet report noted that that Biffa contract had saved taxpayers £2.8million over its lifetime and there had been no performance issues or problems. The report also advised that this should be agreed because if the council sought a new contractor

now, it may receive unsatisfactory bids, or even no interest at all.

RESOLVED - that the Joint Executive Committee noted the contents of the report.

42 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Joint Executive Committee will take place on Friday 15 March 2019 at 1.30 pm