

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

**Friday, 9 December 2016**

**This meeting was inquorate and those members in attendance  
discussed the following issues**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Linda Green in the Chair (Gateshead Council)  
Gateshead Council Councillor John McElroy and  
Sunderland Council Councillor Graeme Miller

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Gateshead Council Anthony Alder, Fiona Swinburne, Chris Wilson, Gary Smith,  
Rosalyn Patterson  
South Tyneside Council Andrew Whittaker  
Sunderland Council Mark Speed and Colin Curtis

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mordey, Councillor West, Councillor Foreman and Martin Harrison.

**2 MINUTES**

Due to not being quorate it was recommended that the next meeting of the Joint Executive Committee confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2016 are a correct record.

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted.

**4 FROM JUNK TO JUVENILIA - WASTE AWARENESS EDUCATION THROUGH RECYCLED ART AND BEYOND**

The Committee received a presentation from Stephen Armstrong, Programme

Manager at Groundwork around the partnership work that has been undertaken over the last year.

It was noted that the team are based at the Visitor and Education Centre and run community engagement to build capacity of communities and raise awareness around reduce, reuse and recycle. It was reported that a lot of work has been held with universities, colleges, schools and community groups. A wide range of activities are delivered which is tailored dependent on the audience to ensure the key messages get across successfully.

Groundwork carries out a lot of engagement activities through work within the Visitor and Education Centre and also outreach work, such as in schools, trips to the EfW site to educate and inform residents about correct practice and support behavioural change.

Over the last year the team has created an outdoor classroom at the Visitor and Education Centre, with a pond and compost facility. In addition there are raised beds for growing of food plants and wildflowers.

It was noted that partnership working is important in order to improve recycling and waste management whilst sharing resources and skills. Partnership working also allows more to be achieved with less and better enables communities.

Partnership working is achieved through open communication, a shared commitment and equality of contribution. Monthly Steering Group and reporting is carried out as well as regular knowledge sharing.

It was reported that, by Christmas, Groundwork has engaged 10,000 people over two years, held 260 school sessions, two thirds of the schools in the partnership area have been worked with and 260 different community groups.

RESOLVED - That the Joint Executive Committee note the information presented.

## **5 WEEE RECYCLE CAMPAIGN**

A presentation was given on the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Recycle Campaign. It was noted that this is a year long campaign working in partnership with all three Council's.

The project is working to deliver a 3% increase in WEEE recycling and raising awareness on WEEE and battery recycling. This is through roadshows, school workshops, amnesty events and door knocking. Work is ongoing to create advertising to ensure the message is carried on beyond the year.

Through schools amnesty events are held for WEEE and battery recycling with competitions and incentives offered. In addition roadshows have been held in areas of high footfall to raise awareness. During the year 55 roadshows have been held which have reached 3831 people, 36 school visits have been carried out, 4 amnesty

events and 2500 door knocks.

It was questioned how schools have been contacted to get involved. It was confirmed that initially there was various pushes in order to get into schools and since then it has been through word of mouth, there is also a champion school in each of the partnership areas.

It was queried how people are informed about battery recycling and how they can do it on a regular basis. It was confirmed that there are battery recycling boxes in local shops and factsheets online. It was agreed that further conversations would be held at the next Steering Group meeting around marketing battery recycling better.

RESOLVED - That the Joint Executive Committee noted the information presented.

## **6 CONTRACTS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report on the current position regarding the Residual Waste Treatment Contract and other contracts and activities managed by the Partnership.

Gateshead and South Tyneside Councils' are in a 48 month Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) contract with Palm Recycling Ltd which commenced in April 2014. Sunderland Council has a separate MRF contract with J&B Recycling for 36 months which commenced 1 April 2015.

Three separate Green Waste Composting contracts have been awarded; Gateshead with A Willey and South Tyneside with Suez, both for 36 months from 1 April 2016 and Sunderland with JBT for 31 months with effect from 1 September 2016.

In terms of the Residual Waste Treatment Contract the 2014/15 and 2015/16 reconciliation exercises are nearing completion and latest performance figures were provided.

The turbine at the EfW facility has not been operational since September 2016 and has been sent to Austria for repair. It is expected that this will be returned by March 2017, this has impacted on turbine availability which has dropped to 74%, although all residual waste is still being treated. The Residual Waste Treatment Contract is currently over achieving in terms of recycling and recovery performance from April to October 2016, there has also been 100% landfill diversion rate.

It was reported that actions to discharge two minor planning conditions at Campground Waste Transfer Station (WTS) have been progressed around noise monitoring assessments and recording of vehicles using the emergency road. Also, there have been minor outages due to blockages in the bottom ash chute, however no time was lost to the contract and there were no major issues during shutdown.

It was noted that employee levels remain stable, 40% of the posts at the EfW facility and 70% of the posts in the WTS are from the Partnership area.

Community Liaison Groups continue to be held with the Jack Crawford House group meeting on 22 September 2016 who expressed an interest in visiting SUEZ's new EfW plant at Wilton to see the rail links.

In terms of MRF contracts, feedback has been received from health and safety advisors around operational procedures at Riverdale, which have now been amended to enhance safety. This is used by Gateshead and South Tyneside vehicles.

Performance around HWRC and blue bin tonnage were provided.

The position with regards to the turbine was questioned. It was confirmed that the electrical winding unit will be replaced and there is confidence this will repair the problem. It was felt easier to remove and reinstall the turbine instead of attempting a repair on site.

The Committee requested more context in relation to personal injuries and near misses, to be included in the next report. It was acknowledged that Suez pride themselves on health and safety and therefore report everything, which can be very minor. It was also noted that a lot of the incidents occur during the shutdown period when there are high numbers of sub contractors onsite.

RESOLVED - That the Joint Executive Committee noted the progress of the project.

## **7 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

A presentation was given to the Committee on local, national and local authority waste-related stories that have been in the media.

The Airports Commission identified its preferred option of a third runway at Heathrow. This would impact on the Lakeside EfW facility in Berkshire as it would need to be demolished to make way for the runway. The Commission's report recommends that it should be relocated as part of the proposals to a site nearby with minimal disruption.

It was reported that, in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, there was no assurances over the future of landfill tax rates after April 2018. It was also noted in the statement that work is ongoing to clarify issues around landfill tax obligations. There was no specific environmental policy touched on in the speech, although the waste sector was highlighted as one of the six priority areas governed by the National Infrastructure Committee.

It was reported that the Dorset Waste Partnership, which manages waste services for seven local authorities, has called for further Government guidance over what constitutes household waste for disposal. Dorset currently charges for the disposal of construction waste, however a Conservative MP has written to the Local Government Minister to clarify what steps Government are taking to ensure that

Dorset Waste Partnership does not charge for waste from household DIY projects. In a written response to Parliament the Minister referred to legislation preventing local authorities from charging residents to dispose of household waste, classifying DIY waste as household if it results from work a householder could carry out. The Director of Dorset Waste Partnership responded and requested further clarification on what is now a national issue.

Committee was advised that Somerset Waste Partnership will decide next month whether to switch from fortnightly to three weekly collection for their five local authorities. It is anticipated that the service change will lead to a 27% reduction in residual waste and deliver £1.7m savings per year. It was noted that the transition costs are forecast at £2.2m with an estimated pay back within 18 months so full year savings will be seen from 2019.

It was noted that a survey conducted on behalf of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) has found that the Council services that people are most satisfied with are refuse and recycling. However, APSE warned that the public are now starting to see the impact of austerity with many respondents reporting a decline in their local services. 44% of those respondents thought that this was the combined fault of both Government and local Councils whilst only 27% thought this was caused by Government alone.

It was reported that there was a recent article in the Daily Mail around a group of bin men who have been sacked for helping an elderly man by clearing bags of rubbish from his garden. The men worked for Veolia in Kent and were dismissed for gross misconduct without first receiving a warning. Residents were so upset that they started a collection to help their families out over the Christmas period.

RESOLVED - That the Joint Executive Committee noted the information presented.

## **8 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Friday 17 March 2017 at 1.30pm.