



## **JOINT WASTE AND RECYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Friday 26 April 2019 – 2:35pm**

### **Court Room, Town Hall, Eastbourne**

Minutes of the Joint Waste and Recycling Committee meeting held in the Court Room at Town Hall, Eastbourne on Friday 26 April 2019 at 2:35pm.

Joint Waste and Recycling Committee Members present: Councillors A. Ganly (RDC) (Chairman), N. Bennett (ESCC), P. Chowney (HBC), C. Fitzgerald (HBC), R. Galley, (WDC), M. Kenward (RDC) and R. Standley (WDC).

Advisory Officers present:

**East Sussex County Council:** Head of Transport and Operational Services and Waste Team Manager.

**Hastings Borough Council:** Director of Operational Services, Assistant Director Environment and Place and Waste and Cleansing Manager.

**Rother District Council:** Executive Director (Lead Director), Head of Service Housing and Community, Neighbourhood Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer.

**Wealden District Council:** Director of Environment and Community Services, Lead Head of Service and Waste Manager.

**Central Client Team:** Joint Waste Partnership Manager.

**Biffa:** Senior Operations Project Manager, Senior Business Manager and Regional General Manager.

Others present: 1 member of the press.

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Publication Date: 7 May 2019

The decisions made under PART II will come into force on 15 May 2019 unless they have been subject to the call-in procedure.

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#### **JWRC18/18. MINUTES**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2019 as a correct record of the proceedings.

## JWRC18/19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Kevin Boorman – Marketing and Major Projects Manager (HBC), Malcolm Johnston – Executive Director (Secretary) (RDC), Karl Taylor – Assistant Director Operations and Contract Management (ESCC) and Robin Vennard – Assistant Director Resources (RDC).

## JWRC18/20. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

(7)

In accordance with the Joint Waste and Recycling Committee Executive Decision Procedure Rules, the following questions were submitted by Councillor Mrs Prochak, Rother District Council and answered by the Joint Waste Partnership Manager.

**Question:** Under the new contract, why was the collection of food waste rejected?

**Answer:** In 2017, Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) supported the Joint Waste Partnership by conducting an analysis of 10 waste and recycling systems. The 10 systems analysed were:

Options	Residual	Recycling	Garden	Food
1	Fortnightly	Fortnightly two-stream (separate glass)	Fortnightly charged	None
2	Fortnightly	Fortnightly two-stream (separate glass)	Fortnightly charged	Separate weekly collection in dedicated vehicle
3	Fortnightly	Fortnightly two-stream (separate paper and card)	Fortnightly charged	Separate weekly collection in dedicated vehicle
4	Fortnightly	Fortnightly two-stream (separate paper and card)	Fortnightly charged	None
5	Fortnightly	Fortnightly co-mingled	Fortnightly charged	Separate weekly collection in dedicated vehicle
6	Fortnightly	Fortnightly co-mingled	Fortnightly charged	Weekly collected in pod
7	Fortnightly	Fortnightly co-mingled	Fortnightly charged	None
8	Fortnightly	Weekly multi-stream	Fortnightly charged	Weekly collected with recycling (same vehicle but multi-compartment vehicle)
9	Three-Weekly	Fortnightly co-mingled	Fortnightly	Separate weekly collection in dedicated vehicle
10	Fortnightly	Fortnightly co-mingled	Fortnightly free (WDC and EBC)	None

Each system was assessed using the following criteria:

Criterion	Red	Amber	Green
Ease of use	Services which require considerably more effort for residents to participate in relative to	Services which require more effort for residents to participate in relative to the baseline i.e. the	Services which are easier to participate in relative to the baseline e.g. co-mingled collections

	the baseline i.e. the introduction of new material streams such as separate food waste, as well as changes to the recycling service e.g. switch from glass separate to paper separate or a switch to kerbside-sort.	introduction of new material streams such as separate food waste.	without the introduction of additional separate material streams at the kerbside e.g. food waste.
Impact on recycling rate	Options which the modelling indicates will result in no recycling rate improvement relative to the baseline position.	Options which have the potential to result in a moderate improvement to recycling performance relative to the baseline position.	Options which have the potential to result in a significant improvement to recycling performance relative to the baseline position.
Affordability	Options which the modelling indicates will result in an increase in service costs, relative to the baseline.	Options which the modelling indicates will result in a moderate decrease in costs, relative to the baseline.	Options which the modelling indicates will result in a significant decrease in costs, relative to the baseline.
Communication	Options which introduce additional material streams, as well as altering the way in which residents are required to segregate their recyclables.	Options which introduce new service elements (e.g. food waste) whilst keep the recycling service the same as the baseline, or options which require no segregation of recyclables from each other and which do not introduce additional materials streams.	Options which do not involve any change to recycling collections nor involve the introduction of new material streams.
Waste Hierarchy	Options which involve no change or possibly a negative impact in relation to how materials are collected relative to the baseline.	Options which introduce new material streams which would otherwise be destined for disposal e.g. food waste, as well as having a positive impact on recycling rates, but which have a limited or possibly negative impact on closed loop recycling and contamination rates.	Options which introduce new materials streams which would otherwise be destined for disposal e.g. food waste, as well as having a positive impact on recycling rates, proportions of closed loop recycling and contamination rates.

WRAP concluded that Fortnightly Residual, Fortnightly co-mingled Recycling, Fortnightly charged Garden and no separate food waste collection (Option 7) offers best overall outcome in terms of service and total cost. This system together with specific consideration of food waste collections was referred to the Joint Waste and Recycling Committee (JWRC) on 10 November 2017 and helped Members of the JWRC to determine the service specification for procurement.

The JWRC considered that while food waste collections were not currently required as part of the contract, provision should be made within the contract to enable the introduction of food waste collections, if required at a future date. This provision had been made so that the same operational infrastructure (depots etc.) could be used by one contractor to support all domestic collection services. The provision would also mitigate procurement costs if food collections become necessary during the period of the contract.

**Question:** Where in the country does Biffa provide a food waste collection?

**Answer:** Biffa provided the following list of councils whose specified service requirements include the collection of food waste. It was noted that food waste services were not provided to all households in these areas (e.g. food was not usually collected from communal storage areas):

Ashford; Central Bedfordshire; East Lothian; Epping; Forest of Dean; Isle of Anglesey; Maidstone; Melton; Mid Kent; North Somerset; Norwich; South Bucks; South Oxfordshire; Swale; Tandridge; and Vale of White Horse.

**Question:** Also is there any scope for working towards a local parish based food waste collection service. What steps could be taken to achieve this?

**Answer:** Food collection systems obviously need safe handling and secure collection vehicles to prevent liquid, food material which was already breaking down and insect larvae from escaping. The bioaerosols naturally produced by food and garden waste require health and safety management (please refer to Health and Safety Executive [HSE] website for guidance on personal protective equipment and safe handling of these materials).

Any organisation (including Parish and Town Councils) that might wish to implement food waste collections should therefore take professional advice and be prepared to meet the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act in terms of licensing and awareness of the legal provisions arising from handling waste. Good practice guidance such as that produced by the HSE Waste Industry Safety and Health group should also be implemented with regard to slow moving vehicles and pedestrian (crew) movements while making collections along the highway; use of personal protective equipment; record keeping etc.

As the Waste Disposal Authority, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) had invested in an in-vessel composting facility which had capacity to handle food waste as a small proportion of the total garden waste going through the facility. Some of the total capacity for food waste was being used by Lewes District Council but the volume being presented for collection had reduced and some additional capacity might be available. Obviously it was absolutely essential that sufficient disposal capacity was secured before any final decision to collect food was taken. The forecast volume(s) of food to be collected must therefore be carefully calculated and forecast.

Officers would therefore recommend that Parish and Town Councils which were interested in the potential to implement food waste collections seek specialist advice and support to develop such schemes and engage with ESCC at the earliest opportunity to establish whether disposal capacity was available.

Alternate disposal options could also be assessed as locally based community compost facilities were previously popular within some local

groups such as allotment holders. Unfortunately, the practicalities of ownership and managing unsupervised compost facilities to avoid pests and maintain input standards (i.e. avoid contamination) was very often the reason for such facilities to ultimately be removed. However, the principle of community compost to handle food and garden waste remains sound provided an appropriate level of supervision and management was available.

**PART II – EXECUTIVE DECISIONS** – subject to call-in procedure under Item 10 of the Joint Waste and Recycling Committee Constitution by no later than 4:00pm on 14 May 2019.

#### JWRC18/21. **BIFFA UPDATE**

(7)

The Senior Operations Project Manager led Members through Biffa's presentation which provided an update on the progress of the mobilisation plan for the Waste Collection, Recycling, Street and Beach Cleaning and Associated Services Contract. During the presentation the following points were noted:

- Fortnightly meetings were being held to review previous minutes and mobilisation plan; ensure actions were progressed / completed; assess and update the risk register; and demobilisation support required by Kier.
- Establishment of a comprehensive communications plan which included key meetings with regional/union representatives, Comfort meetings (14, 15, 16 May) and 1:1s organised, weekly onsite staff interaction (open door policy); FAQs prepared and placed on Biffa's board at each depot and anonymous "engagement surveys" completed.
- Fleet: front-line vehicles had been ordered and regular reviews held with vehicle suppliers. Ongoing support from suppliers was being received and induction familiarisation training would be undertaken with new vehicles. The FTA (monitors driving hours) system was already in use and would be retained.
- Work had been undertaken to ensure all HR requirements were established and embedded which included the supply of Employee Liability Information data; ongoing recruitment policy; continuous reviews; transformation programme post contract (job titles etc.); and training programme identified.
- Work was progressing on the IT systems and infrastructure which included weekly conference calls. Successful Workshops had been completed and system development was ready for testing. It would be important that the system was automated to improve customer service via live data. A cabling survey had been undertaken and all IT equipment ordered.
- Properties: conditional and structural surveys had been completed at each location and the transfer of assets e.g. furniture agreed. On occupation Biffa would require all sites / properties to meet statutory compliance. The following statutory compliance documentation had been received from Kier: asbestos survey; fixed wiring (electrical); annual portable appliance test (electrical); and legionella.

- All Health and Safety activities had been or were scheduled to be completed.
- A robust training programme would be established across all areas to ensure a professional management and skilled workforce. Six driver training courses had been established and were well attended.
- Thirteen risks had been identified; five were considered significant: clean and accurate data; Whitespace failing to deliver software; Health and Safety of staff compromised whilst mobilising the project; industrial action; and culture change. All risks would be closely monitored.
- Key to successful mobilisation was consistency across the Partnership authorities; co-mingled mixed recycling including glass from start of the contract; clear and concise communications plan; continuity of message and any response, accuracy of data; non-contradiction of policies and matched website information; and ongoing communication would be vital to deliver the contract.
- DRoPS (Driving Recklessly on Pavements/Streets) Campaign: All vehicles would be fitted with outside cameras; evidence from the footage would be used for staff protection, to assist with prosecutions and identify dangerous driving.
- 64 days to go: Biffa was on track to ensure successful mobilisation.

Biffa assured the Committee of their commitment to providing a successful Contract across the Partnership.

**RESOLVED:** That the presentation be noted.

## JWRC18/22. **CLIENT SIDE MOBILISATION UPDATE**

(8.1)

Waste, recycling, street and beach cleaning and other associated services would be provided by Biffa Municipal Limited from 29 June 2019. It was noted that Hastings Street Cleansing and Bulky Waste Services would be provided directly by Hastings Borough Council and therefore sat outside the remit of the Joint Waste and Recycling Committee. The local authorities were currently working with Biffa to mobilise the new Contract. Effective transfer and mobilisation was seen as critical for both parties to avoid disruption to residents and reputational damage.

The mobilisation period was five months and had already commenced. Regular project meetings were being held with Biffa to progress the project plan and review mobilisation risks, as well as ICT workshops and conference calls.

The project risk register had been updated to capture specific transfer and mobilisation risks. The following risks were considered significant as follows:

- 1) Service Data: Failure to collate accurate service requirements for each individual household to populate the new waste management ICT system. Doubts had been expressed as to the accuracy of the data in Kier's Whitespace System. Biffa confirmed that they now had access to Kier staff and therefore, it

was anticipated this risk would be de-escalated. However the introduction of round changes 12 weeks after contract commencement could be delayed until early 2020.

- 2) Depots: Failure to ensure that depot leases were in place prior to the start of the contract to alleviate service disruption. Property/Estate officers at Hastings and Wealden were actively working to mitigate this risk.
- 3) Customer Contact (arising from public communications): Failure to inform customers of the new arrangements for co-mingled recycling / glass collections. This risk would be mitigated by the Communications Plan.
- 4) Customer Contact (arising from operational issues): The level of customer contact required for matters such as ICT development, in-cab technology, crew training, local crew knowledge and the reliability of data. These risks were being mitigated by regular communication with each authority's Waste officers to assess and enable preparation. It was anticipated that the greatest impact would be round changes from the autumn onwards.

All risks would be monitored and the risk register updated accordingly.

In terms of client mobilisation, job roles and responsibilities would largely remain the same. Updated processes and procedures would need to be aligned between Biffa and the authorities. This work was currently being developed in parallel with East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) waste data management proposals. Invoicing, payment and cost recovery processes were being reviewed and refreshed to minimise the issues at the start of the contract. Both the Supervising officers (local client teams) and the Authorised officer (central client role) had contract responsibilities; the work processes and points of integration between the central and local client functions would remain on a similar basis and could be refined and further clarified in due course.

The use of technology to support the new contract required implementation within the Biffa depots, offices and vehicles as well as within the three partner councils. The Joint Waste Partnership Manager was working closely with officers and Biffa to ensure that the new Waste Management ICT system met the Partnership's contractual and financial audit requirements as well as customer service expectations.

Arrangements to handle the disposal of dry mixed recycling were being procured by ESCC. Members were advised that bids had been received, evaluated and a recommendation to award would be signed off by 6 May 2019; standstill period would be 17-20 May 2019 prior to contract award. All bidders had confirmed acceptance of six week mobilisation period. A query was raised regarding the amount of building materials e.g. plasterboard that could be disposed of at bring sites and whether Household Waste and Recycling site charges introduced in late 2018 had led towards the increased number of fly-tipping incidents reported in the last few months across the Partnership area. ESCC clarified that commercial waste should only be taken to transfer stations. It was confirmed that after a full year of operation,

information would be gathered from each authority and an annual review would be undertaken of the charging system.

Reassurance was sought that litter / detritus picking on major 'A' roads / routes would be regularly monitored and cleansed. It was confirmed that Biffa operated a comprehensive street cleansing service and provided a guarantee that a regular service plan would be established. High speed road cleansing was a significant challenge which would require robust pro-active planning as road closures would be necessary to ensure all safety measures.

**RESOLVED:** That progress with regard to mobilisation activities through to Service Commencement Date be maintained and noted.

## JWRC18/23. **JOINT WASTE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS** (8.2)

Consideration was given to the report of the Lead Director which identified a number of key service requirements and contract provision changes.

Following dialogue with Biffa and analysis of their Specification and Service Delivery Plan, the report highlighted a number of key service requirements for Members' consideration. The following was noted:

- Batteries and Small Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment (WEEE): Biffa were committed to expanding the range of dry mixed recycling; implementation was pending subject to agreement with Veolia South Downs Limited (disposal site operator).
- Payments for Containers: Containers would be purchased and stock levels maintained by Biffa. Delivery would be charged separately at the tendered unit rate. To manage costs / control it was suggested that containers be ordered through Council websites.
- Storage Capacity and Additional Containers: The impact of additional containers would be assessed by Biffa. Preference was for residual waste to be collected in 180 litre rather than 240 litre containers. It was suggested that a review of the current policy to request / approve additional containers be sanctioned. The following question was raised: How many containers / receptacles were replaced annually per year? This information was not available at the meeting, but would be provided at a later date.
- Fly tipping and Enforcement: During the mobilisation period, officers and Biffa aimed to clarify fly-tipping / enforcement expectations. Biffa was keen to tackle all incidents and, in particular, smaller regular fly-tips. Consideration would need to be given to the availability of Council enforcement resources.
- Changes to Service Requirements (Variations): Protection clauses provided security to ensure that service requirement changes did not adversely impact individual parties.

Performance Management enabled a clear understanding of expected work standards and provided mutually understood mechanisms for addressing performance which was not meeting expectations. The Performance Management Framework had been carefully and



specifically developed through the procurement process. The Competitive Procurement with Negotiation procedure enabled the councils to discuss service standards and consider the financial impact on the contract price by instigating financial deductions should targets not be met. Financial enhancements were also considered should targets be met. It was important that all parties and stakeholders understood what service details were included and excluded. Joint goodwill and leadership were essential during the early stages to prevent issues.

The Partnership's vision was to deliver a predominantly self-monitoring contract that operated as a single integrated service across the Partnership. The onus was on the Contractor to evidence performance levels and respond to performance failures appropriately to minimise impact and ensure a high-quality service was delivered.

A 12 week "honeymoon", then a further eight week period after implementation of the Routine Services Programme (RSP) had been incorporated to allow Biffa to meet staff and become accustomed to the local depots and operations. Biffa's long-term RSP was expected to be implemented and settled by the end of 2019.

After the "honeymoon" period(s) Rectification and Default Notices would be issued in response to unsatisfactory performance. Should Biffa comply with the terms of Rectification Notices, within the rectification period, no further action would be taken. Default Notices would be issued in response to service failure which could not be rectified and it was noted that different performance standards warranted different default point and deduction values.

Performance would be reviewed at monthly meetings and all key performance indicators through the Annual Services Performance Plan. This enabled service revisions, if required.

**RESOLVED:** That the Key Service Requirements be noted.

#### **JWRC18/24. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (8.3)**

The Committee considered the report of the Lead Director which detailed the Communications and Engagement Strategy (CES) for the new contract commencing on 29 June 2019.

Clear communication would play a crucial role in public understanding and acceptance of the change to the recycling system. Strong communications work would also be essential in order to minimise confusion, ensure high levels of awareness, build public confidence, enable correct public behaviours and retain and improve recycling levels.

A joint CES had been developed, a copy of which was appended to the report at Appendix A. The CES set out the protocol for the management, communications and planned activities in the lead-up to the commencement of the new contract. It would be reviewed and refreshed monthly, subject to communication developments.

The CES proposed two clear phases:

**Phase 1 (period leading up to and shortly after 29 June 2019):**

Changes to the contractor, all glass products to be co-mingled with recycling, what to do with obsolete recycling boxes, and information to improve the volume and quality of recycling. Recycling boxes would not be delivered after 1 May 2019 and messages regarding co-mingled recycling would be published from 14 June 2019. Messages using all communication channels were currently being developed and agreed by all partners, as well as East Sussex County Council (ESCC). ESCC had agreed to contribute towards communications. With regard to obsolete recycling boxes, residents would be encouraged to keep their box and reuse if for their own use. Concern was expressed that unwanted boxes would appear within waste or recycling streams. Options for the disposal of boxes were currently being explored. Residents who persistently presented recycling incorrectly would be advised by Biffa (tag on bin) and by the individual council. Clearer advice might be required for households with recycling collection sacks. It was considered important that a clear concise message be relayed to all residents advising that advanced recovery facility technology processes allowed for the collection of mixed co-mingled recycling materials.

**Phase 2 (period leading up to and shortly after implementation of new collection rounds):**

Introduction of round changes (12 weeks after contract commencement / September 2019). The key issues to communicate were: How many rounds/residents are affected? What are the changes to the residents' services i.e. change of collection day for waste or recycling or garden waste or all three? Biffa would be assisting each authority to produce a series of press releases and producing a calendar for every resident, which would commence at the point of service change.

Under the new contract, the responsibility of managing all collected recycled material would fall to the ESCC (disposal authority) via their contractor Veolia. Any changes to collected recyclables would be communicated during Phase 1.

Individual councils would be responsible for bespoke messages to their residents. A comprehensive understanding to all intended communication activity helped ensure that residents were not exposed to conflicting messages.

The Joint Waste Partnership Manager advised that the communications plan for Kier employees transferring to Biffa was on track and was the responsibility of both companies. Biffa had in place a comprehensive engagement plan which included key meeting dates, 1:1s, union meetings and written communications. Newsletters were being produced and Biffa had commissioned a staff survey.

Bespoke branding would incorporate the council logos on all main vehicles. Biffa was designing a vehicle wrap with the support of their dedicated marketing team and design consultants.

All council websites would be updated to concur with the communications strategy. Weekly IT meetings were being held with each authority's IT teams, Biffa, their IT provider Whitespace and the Joint Waste Office. Focus was on the commencement of the contract and IT work required to ensure systems were on target for 29 June 2019.

It was anticipated that the number of media enquiries would increase throughout the mobilisation period. Therefore it would be important that common messages agreed by the Partnership were issued to avoid confusion and ensure consistency for residents. The Council's Customer Contact Centres were already making plans to ensure availability of sufficient resources. All relevant staff would be trained on Biffa's IT System (Whitespace).

Consultation on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published policy paper "Our Waste, Our Resources: a Strategy for England" was currently being undertaken. Developments would be monitored to ensure that any changes that could affect the new service were incorporated into all communication activities and reported to the Committee.

Members were supportive of and confirmed authorisation that Waste and Communications Officers plan and deliver communications materials to residents as outlined in the Communications and Engagement Strategy.

**RESOLVED:** That the Communications and Engagement Strategy 2019 be approved and Waste and Communications Officers be authorised to plan and deliver communication materials to residents in accordance with the Strategy.

#### **JWRC18/25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

(9)

It was confirmed that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on Friday 7 June 2019 at 2:00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bexhill.

#### **CHAIRMAN**

The meeting closed at 3:40pm

JWRC190426jh