

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the East Devon Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board, held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 24 January 2013

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Chubb – Portfolio Holder, Environment (Chairman)
Phil Twiss – Deputy Portfolio Holder, Environment (Vice Chairman)
David Cox – Portfolio Holder, Finance
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Roger Giles – Recycling Member Champion

SITA:

Rick Aldridge – Senior Contract Manager

Officers

Paul Deakin – Waste and Recycling Manager
Andrew Hancock - StreetScene Manager
Timothy Borrett - Communications and Public Affairs Manager
Nick Stephen – Communications Officer
Alethea Thompson – Democratic Service Officer

Apologies:

Councillor Geoff Pook
Cherise Foster – Customer Service Manager
Darren Lockett - SITA
Mandy Jennings – Otter Rotters

The meeting started 10.10 am and finished at 12.05 pm.

41 Minutes

The minutes of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board meeting held on 22 November 2012 were agreed and signed as a true record.

The Waste and Recycling Manager gave a brief update on WEEE (waste electrical and electronic) equipment. He had contacted all of the Town Councils to request that small low energy bulb recycling boxes be placed in their offices. He had so far received four responses. He would also investigate using the libraries, through discussions with Devon County Council (DCC).

The six month trial with WEEE recycling banks in Exeter had yet to start and members expressed their frustration.

SITA's Contract Manager offered to look into the possibility of SITA helping with the provision of WEEE banks. He would provide an update at the next meeting.

RECOMMENDED

that SITA's Contract Manager discuss with SITA options for the provision of WEEE recycling banks in East Devon.

42 Developers paying for waste containers

The Waste and Recycling Manager updated the Board on discussions he had had with the Planning department regarding a requirement that all developers of four or more properties contribute to the cost of the provision of waste containers.

The Waste and Recycling Manager had spoken to the Development Manager who did not feel that the suggestion was financially viable as developers already made contributions through section 106 agreements and CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). The Street Scene Manager reported that he had also discussed this at an SMT meeting with the Development Manager and Planning Policy Manager and that they did not feel that CIL was a suitable means for claiming such costs from developers as a large financial burden was already placed upon developers. A CIL report would be considered by Cabinet in the near future. It was suggested that an increase in council tax be used to contribute to the cost of the provision of waste containers for new homes.

The Board were disappointed with the planning department's response and felt that the issue should be raised again during the CIL discussions.

RECOMMENDED

that the Board's concerns that the provision of waste containers for new homes was another burden on the District Council that it could ill afford, despite the Government's objective to increase the rate of recycling be considered by Cabinet during its discussions on the CIL policy.

***43 Update on Otter Rotters**

Mandy Jennings, from Otter Rotters had given her apologies. She had been due to attend the meeting to update the Board on the Otter Rotters' activities; however she had been unable to attend due to adverse weather conditions. She had provided the Waste and Recycling Manager with some Otter Rotter review notes which he read out at the meeting.

These included the following points:

- Management arrangements and the current Directors.
- Reasons for a larger centralised composting site to allow increased tonnages and a more cost effective operation.
- The temporary closure of the Fenny Bridge site and the extra time needed for tipping each load had reduced available capacity, delayed expansion and decreased the number of larger 'special' collections undertaken.
- Tonnages and income in 2012 were down from 2011.
- Using the Fenny Bridge site capacity and additional tonnages being taken to Hill Barton in order to reinstate their ability to expand the rounds.
- The aim of composing local green waste locally would require suitable new sites to be identified close to each residential area.
- Provision of supported employment opportunities.
- Aspirations to roll out the scheme in the Exmouth and Budleigh area and search for an additional site nearer to Exmouth.

***43 Update on Otter Rotters (cont'd)**

The Recycling Champion reported that he had been in discussions with both Otter Rotters and Devon County Council about the possible use of the Woods Farm Recycling Centre as an option for Otter Rotters to use the site for composting. However he felt that the offer had not been taken further by Otter Rotters. The Board discussed site availability and locations and requested that the Waste and Recycling Manager raise the site issue with Mandy Jennings again. It was acknowledged that Exmouth needed a garden waste recycling service.

The Board requested that Mandy Jennings attend the next meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board.

RECOMMENDED

that Mandy Jennings be invited to attend the next meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board to provide an update on the Otter Rotter's activities.

***44 Statistical information**

The Board considered a report presented by the Waste and Recycling Manager, setting out statistical and operational data on missed collections, finance and SITA key performance indicators.

There had been a continued reduction in the number of missed refuse and recycling collections. There had also been a continued reduction in the amount of calls received by the Customer Service Centre. This indicated that the recycling and refuse service was continuing in the right direction.

The Board also noted the final statistics for 2011/12 from DEFRA. These indicated that EDDC ranked 87th out of 352 English authorities and met the Council's objective of being within the top 25% of authorities. EDDC had the 10th lowest household waste generation per head in the country.

Members discussed the number of replacement recycling boxes and food caddies and the main reasons for damage. Many of these were unrelated to the contractors. It was noted that the Council bore the cost of replacing lost/stolen/damaged refuse and recycling receptacles. Replacement was on an ongoing basis and 5% per year had been included in the budget for this.

***45 Devon Waste Strategy Review**

The Waste and Recycling Manager gave the Board an update on the latest position. The review had been completed and was due to be published shortly. The Waste and Recycling Manager would circulate the Devon Waste Strategy to Board members once he had received it.

The Street Scene Manager reported that East Devon's Waste Strategy was due to be reviewed and that a draft would be brought to a future Board meeting.

***46 Integrated Devon wide waste service**

The Waste and Recycling Manager gave the Board an update on the proposals to consider an integrated Devon wide waste service. There were two groups; a Member group and an officer group. The officer group would be reporting back to the Member group on 29 January 2013 with options for the outline business case, and consider moving to a detailed business case hopefully to be completed by June 2013.

The outline business case showed reasonable future savings of 5-10% across Devon, although these may not be achieved for some time, especially as some of the waste contracts did not end until 2018.

***47 Joint contract for the sale of newspapers and magazines and glass cullet, and the associated transport**

A joint contract for the sale of newspapers and magazines and glass cullet was being re-tendered across Devon and was due to be let around mid May. It would be beneficial as it would provide guaranteed tonnage. Discussions were underway with the re-processors whether the contractors should undertake the haulage or not.

It was noted that recycling income for paper and glass was reviewed on a quarterly basis and was guided by market prices. Income was reducing due to the economic climate and pressures. The price for paper had been budgeted as £90/tonne. At one time £120/tonne was being achieved. This had a big impact on the Council's budget, in the region of £300,000.

The Board acknowledged that overall recycling figures had been reduced as people were not generally buying as many products such as magazines, newspapers and products in bottles. The amount of waste going to landfill showed a similar trend, as people tended to buy less produce.

***48 Update from SITA – Contract Manager's annual report 2012**

The Communications and Public Affairs Manager, Tim Borrett and the Communications Officer, Nick Stephen joined the meeting at this point.

SITA's Contract Manager presented his annual report to the Board which included:

- Recycling performance.
- Residual waste performance.
- Vehicle statistics
- Direct labour statistics
- Looking ahead to 2013.

Tonnage for all recycled materials, apart from plastic bottles, had declined. The prices for materials sold by SITA had also declined. Members felt that although recycling rates were high, 25% of household were still not recycling, and that a message could be sent out reminding people to recycle. The SITA Contract Manager reported there was signage on one vehicle thanking residents for recycling.

***48 Update from SITA – Contract Manager’s annual report 2012 (cont’)**

The tonnage of refuse collected had significantly reduced, despite an increase in the number of properties. It was noted that a processing plant would soon be opening at Avonmouth and it was hoped that all clean plastics would go through this plant (enabling easier mixed plastics recycling). The problem with mixed plastics recycling remained the capacity of the current vehicles to take the extra materials.

Clinical collection costs in 2012 had reduced. However clinical collections could no longer be disposed of locally and were instead taken to Liskeard daily. Various options had been considered but there was very little capacity to increase clinical collections in East Devon. A request was made that Devon Authorities Waste and Recycling Committee (DAWRC) be asked to consider this at their July meeting.

There had been a high turnover of staff between January and September 2012. This had now stabilised. Following a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visit, SITA operatives had to be provided with expensive specialised gloves. Trials were being undertaken on different types and costs of gloves to find the most cost effective ones.

The number of road traffic accidents had reduced by 30% from 2011, and property damage had reduced by 50%.

Fuel had increased by an average of 4p per litre, with an impact of £1,400 per month on current usage of fuel. The overall costs of fleet (excluding fuel) reduced by £75,000, which was mainly a reduction in maintenance repairs to vehicles.

The total direct costs of the contract during 2012 increased by £7,500. This represented an increase of 0.2% on the overall cost of services to EDDC. The Contract Manager would continue to produce quarterly reports for the Board.

The Contract Manager was thanked for his report and congratulated and thanked the SITA staff for their service over the Christmas period.

***49 Letter from the waste policy minister**

The Deputy Portfolio Holder Environment reported that he had received a reply from the Waste Policy Minister. The letter had been circulated with the agenda and its contents were noted.

***50 Communications update and call details**

The Communications Officer introduced the newly appointed Communications and Public Affairs Manager, Tim Borrett.

The waste and recycling service had not required a great deal of communication over the past few months. However, it was felt that it would be good to publicise the positives and what had been achieved over the past year. It was important that the public understood that it was simply unaffordable at the present time to offer kerbside mixed plastics and cardboard recycling, if the Council was also to keep council tax low. If recycling income improved it was something that could be further investigated in the future. In order for the recycling service to be improved income price and the rate of participation needed to increase.

It was acknowledged that there was an ongoing need to engage with the public, constantly drip feeding information about the underlying campaign.

51 Any other business

Christmas leaflet

The Waste and Recycling Manager brought to the attention of the Board the cost involved in the production and distributed of the Christmas leaflet which had cost £15,474 in postage for 2012 alone .The Board discussed various ways of informing all residents of the changes to collection services and giving them information about the waste and recycling services in East Devon. It was noted that information delivered direct to the customer through the door was the most effective form of communication.

A report would be brought back to a future meeting on the different options for notifying residents. These included SITA operatives placing stickers on bins before Christmas or using a hanger style leaflet. It was hoped that part of the In Cab programme a householder app would give details to householders of collection changes in the future.

Otter Rotters

Members agreed that the Otter Rotters' contract should be renewed on a one year basis, and on the same terms and conditions as previous years. This had been included in the budget.

Side waste in Exmouth Town ward

Councillor Steve Gazzard, ward member for Exmouth Town wished to record his thanks for the collection of side waste in the area over the Christmas period. He reported that the residents had been very grateful for this service.

Exmouth Tidy Group

Councillor Steve Gazzard, on behalf of Exmouth Tidy Group, requested to know whether 'split bins' could be placed along Exmouth seafront in an effort to increase recycling. The Street Scene Manager reported that the provision of these bins was in the service plan, for consideration in 2013/14. The existing bins were coming to the end of their life span and Street Scene was looking at replacements that could offer on street recycling in the future. SITA's Contract Manager felt that this was a very positive step forward and advised that the new facility at Avonmouth had the capability to deal with the co-collection of materials.

Councillor Gazzard also reported that Exmouth Town Council had employed a supplementary street cleaner to work across the whole of Exmouth. This arrangement was working well and cost the Town Council £15,000 per year.

RECOMMENDED

- 1 that a future report be brought back to the Board on the different options (including costings) of communicating the information contained in the Christmas leaflet, to householders.
- 2 that the Otter Rotters' contract be renewed on a one year basis and on the same terms and conditions as previous years.

***52 Next meeting**

RESOLVED

that the next meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board be held on Thursday 25 April 2013, at 10am in the Council Chamber.

Chairman

Date