

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the East Devon Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board, held at Knowle, Sidmouth, on 27 November 2014

Present

Councillors:

Ian Chubb – Portfolio Holder, Environment (Chairman)
Tom Wright – Deputy Portfolio Holder, Environment (Vice Chairman)
David Cox - Portfolio Holder, Finance
Geoff Pook
Steve Gazzard

SITA:

Nick Browning – General Manager
Dave Swire – SITA Regional Manager
Andy Williams – SITA Senior Contract Manager

Officers:

Jamie Buckley – Engagement and Funding Officer
Simon Davey – Strategic Lead, Finance
Cherise Foster – Customer Service Manager
Andrew Hancock – Service Lead, StreetScene
John Golding – Strategic Lead, Housing, Health and Environment
Karen Jenkins - Strategic Lead, Organisational Development and Transformation
Steve Joyce – Waste Management Officer
Paul McHenry – Recycling and Waste Contract Manager
Rachel Pocock – Corporate, Legal and Democratic Services Manager
Amanda Coombes – Democratic Services Officer

The meeting started at 2.35pm and ended at 4.45pm.

***25 Minutes**

The minutes of the Recycling and Refuse meeting held on 18 September 2014 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

***26 Declarations of interest**

None

***27 Matters arising**

None

28 Statistical information

Paul McHenry – Recycling and Waste Contract Manager informed the Board that at the last meeting concerns were expressed on the backlog and high numbers of waste containers awaiting delivery. He was happy to report that since the appointment of Andy Williams, SITA Senior Contract Manager, these numbers were reduced and containers were being delivered on time. There had been a higher number of reports of lost boxes but this was put down to the windy weather experienced recently. The assisted collections performance had improved and it was suggested that the Cloud 9 technology would help to improve this even

further once up and running in all vehicles. SITA and STRATA had been working together using Cloud 9 to look at the route options. Use of this technology would start in January 2015 for a limited number of collections as an initial trial to help with, amongst other things missed assisted collections. It was reported that any issue raised with SITA was dealt with professionally and politely. It was asked if the performance figures were benchmarked with other areas; Paul McHenry said they were not yet but knew that the results were better than other areas.

Cherise Foster – Customer Service Manager said her team was still getting calls from residents that the recycling operative transfer boxes were not being replaced. Andy Williams reported the new operative transfer boxes had not passed the quality test and had been sent back. These will be replaced by January with 100% virgin plastic making them much stronger. In response to a question about the more settled workforce, Dave Swire SITA Regional Manager advised that Andy Williams had been a positive influence on workforce moral and performance.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

29 **SITA performance improvement report**

The contractors were using Cloud 9 technology to route the collections of dog litter bins. The Refuse Collection Vehicle refurbishment was under way and would arrive in early December. Also a new fitter and welder were to be employed to cover for scheduled vehicle services and work towards minimising breakdowns. A hot-desk provision has been set up for the Waste Management Officer at the Greendale depot to encourage closer working. With changes to clinical waste processes, the service requirement had dropped to three additional staff (previously 4 new staff members had been agreed). Further mitigation was planned through investigation of apprenticeship schemes and alternative recruitment models.

SITA's colleagues at the depot had allowed for the locked storage of boxes to avoid glass being broken in the boxes when left outside. There was opportunity to procure the use of their skips. Nordic as part of the recruitment process would induct new prospective employees. They were also looking into use of apprentices routes in the company which they felt would be a win win situation. SITA was looking into the issue of maintaining recruitment levels during the summer months when staff were lost to other summer jobs. The Cloud 9 update included data cleansing had been worked on by the IT department from EDDC, with the Cloud 9 trial date confirmed for January 2015. Hardware had been purchased for the introduction of on-board computing and real time reporting; this would result in improved customer care.

There would be changes to the Cranbrook collections after Christmas with 2 men crews across 2 days per week. Any changes to collection days etc would need to be well communicated to residents. The Customer Service Manager suggested putting on some road shows in the area to inform residents could be useful. It was remarked that there was a market on Thursday nights where a potential road show could be appropriate. SITA reported that the parking on roads at Cranbrook could be difficult for their vehicles to get around effectively.

RECOMMENDED: that the performance report be noted and that any changes to Cranbrook collection days be communicated to the Customer Service Manager, in order for resident notification procedures to be put in place.

30 Container deliveries and bring site issues

Paul McHenry – Recycling and Waste Contract Manager reiterated the container delivery waste boxes issues had righted themselves. The subject of ‘bring sites’ was raised with concerns over the condition of some of the recycling banks; many were in poor condition which did not give a good impression of the district and also needed specialised vehicles to empty them. There had been requests from some town and parish councils to remove these banks in rural areas as they appeared to be mostly used by businesses. It was suggested that smaller wheelie type bins (1100 litres) be used in their place with the advantage that they could be collected by existing collection vehicles.

RECOMMENDED: that the ‘1100’ wheelie bins be considered as an alternative to larger recycling banks in poor condition.

***31 Exclusion of contractual partners due to the nature of the items which will include business plans and future contract arrangements**

The Council’s contractual partners were asked to leave the meeting at this point as the Board wanted to discuss various commercially sensitive issues including business plans and future contract arrangements.

32 Communications Team – update

Karen Jenkins, Strategic Lead - Organisational Development and Transformation emphasised the importance of strategic and tactical thinking in terms of communication and consultation in relation to the critical dates for the procurement project. The Communications and Consultation team would want to do as much as is possible to keep residents informed but would need to understand the time constraints the Board was working to. Karen Jenkins outlined the quality of communication and engagement would bring more support and buy-in from residents to any proposed service changes, but this needed to be planned and timed in advance. The Portfolio Holder, Finance supported road shows, stating they were really useful and appreciated by residents and a good way to get the messages out.

RECOMMENDED: that the Board works with the Communication and Consultation team to ensure support and buy-in from East Devon residents to changes in service delivery.

33 VEAT Notices, extension of current SITA Contract. Explanation of recent external legal advice

Rachel Pocock – Corporate, Legal and Democratic Services Manager updated the Board on current European Procurement legislation; this had to be followed because of the value of the contract in question.

RECOMMENDED: that the Board considers all legal implications throughout the procurement process.

34 Budget position

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead – Finance updated the Board on the budget position with affordability of any new contract arrangement being paramount. He reminded the Board that the Recycling and Refuse spend was a quarter of the Council’s overall revenue budget. Costs should be considered on a like for like basis. Andrew Hancock – Street Scene

Manager confirmed the new Commissioning group would look at the breakdown of costs of the service. Discussions included the following:

- The possibility of giving bidders a target budget, although it was argued this would let bidders know what the council was prepared spend.
- The need to look at improved recycling material prices rather than relying on Devon County prices.

RECOMMENDED: that the Board considers all budget implications throughout the procurement process.

35 Notes of the Environment Think Tank

The notes of the Environment Think Tank held on 12 November 2014 were discussed. Cllr Chubb gave some further background as to the contract procurement regarding any further extension of the current contract with SITA.

He also provided an update on progress of the Integrated Devon Waste option, of co-joining the collection contracts of East Devon, Teignbridge and Exeter Councils into one contract, with Devon CC providing disposal within the new local authority company. Other issues were discussed with an overview listed below:

- **Outline the service purpose and 'what matters'**
The Think tank were reminded of the current service purpose (Systems Thinking) of the recycling and waste management service and suggested that the current service purpose required updating to reflect current practice. A new service purpose was suggested and presented to members. This was agreed.
- New Recycling and Waste Management Contract Questionnaire
- Length of the new contract.
- Which materials should be collected for recycling at the kerbside?
- Collection of recyclable items and changes to the recycling collection system
- Frequency of collections
- Should the collection service remain a five day a week service?
- Bidding Process and Evaluation of Bids

It was agreed that further meetings would be called as and when required.

RECOMMENDED: that the notes from the Think Tank of 12 November 2014 be noted.

36 Draft Cabinet Report

John Golding – Strategic Lead, Housing, Health and Environment would produce a report to the January 2015 Cabinet meeting outlining the way the Board wished progress with the procurement process. He would also give a verbal update of the Integrated Devon Waste/ Eunomia meeting which was due to take place just before Cabinet. He confirmed the Board was in a good position to start the procurement process and an early start had been made on the production of necessary documents.

RECOMMENDED: that a report on progress on the position of the Integrated Devon Waste business case would be made to Cabinet in January.

***37 Progression of collection contract procurement, update on Integrated Devon option and EDDC procurement**

Board members were asked to refer to the report to Cabinet (included in the agenda) on the work to produce a new contract. This had been divided into three distinct phases.

1. **Commissioning Phase** – where members, stakeholders and service users discussed contract requirements with officers to design an outline specification for the new contract.
2. **Procurement Phase** – during this phase officers commenced work on the process of procuring a new contract and selecting a suitably qualified contractor to carry out services for the Council.
3. **Mobilisation Phase** – following the conclusion of procurement phase, officers would work with the contractor [be that SITA or a new contractor] to mobilise the new contract for 1 April 2016 start.

The Chairman, Cllr Ian Chubb would update Board members by email with feedback from the Integrated Devon Waste/Eunomia meeting to be held on 18 December 2014.

RECOMMENDED: a report on progress of the commissioning phase would be made to Cabinet in January, together with an update on the position of the Integrated Devon Waste business case.

38 Draft Prior Information Notice [PIN]

Paul McHenry – Recycling and Waste Contract Manager apologized to the Board that this was not ready and would get it to the Board within a week. He explained the purpose of the PIN and how it signaled to the market the Councils intended procurement.

RECOMMENDED: that once in receipt of the draft PIN , it be agreed by the Board.

39 Updated Procurement Timetable

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager tabled a draft timetable. The Prior Information Notice (PIN) if used, will start the process. This gave prospective bidders across Europe notification that the Council wanted this service and contract to be renewed.

The Bidders Open Day Event gave potential market players a general understanding of the aims of the procurement exercise without specific detail. It was a useful way to test the market and gain market intelligence.

The Issue of a Contract Notice allowed the Council to be specific about its requirements to inform prospective contractors. This important stage allowed those concerned to see if the contract would be profitable. The Pre-Qualification Questionnaires will be used to scrutinise bidders suitability and act as a safety measure to ensure the quality of companies. The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager expected a lot of initial expressions of interest but that only a dozen or so would complete the pre-qualification stage. The final choice would likely be of around 5 candidates. By requesting prices on specific lots it would be possible to compare the bids. Paul McHenry would write a timetable narrative for the Board.

If the process was delayed for any reason the Council could attempt to agree with SITA to pay for an extra few months to cover for this period. While the Council waited for Integrated Devon (ID) plan to produce its report and findings the procurement process would still go ahead; if ID was a considered option then the Council could pull out of the procurement process at any time. The question was asked what would happen if non UK companies submitted a bid. Paul McHenry doubted there would be any non UK bidders but had officers to cover all events and that safety check procedures were in place to ensure all companies

were able to meet the Council's quality standards. The Portfolio Holder, Finance questioned the viability of ID, the Council had to go for the contract procurement route that was right for East Devon residents. It was thought that ID would need to make a compelling case for timely integration and there would need to be a considered counter argument if the decision was to say no to ID.

RECOMMENDED: that the Procurement timetable be noted.

40 Evaluation criteria

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager gave an update to the suggested evaluation criteria. Throughout the competitive dialogue process the Council would apply an evaluation criteria similar to the following:

QUALITY – 30% of total evaluation score.

- 1 – Service Requirements
- 2 – Mobilisation, Contingency and Expiry plans
- 3 – Health Safety and Welfare
- 4 – Service Management
- 5 – Added Value

PRICE – 70% of total evaluation score.

Proposals from bidders would be assessed against the criteria listed. Each of the criteria contain a number of considerations, with a maximum number of marks available depending on how each were judged to meet the overall aims of the Council.

RECOMMENDED: that the evaluation criteria be noted.

***41 Outline Bidders Information**

This process would provide details of the draft outline Specification for the East Devon District Council Recycling, Refuse Collection and Associated Services Contract. Its purpose was to guide bidders towards the essential elements of any future contract.

42 Questionnaires results to-date

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager informed the group that due to late returns of the questionnaire sent to district members, Town and Parish Councils he did not have a full update of the results. His summary so far was that people generally wanted to leave the service as it was. Respondents appeared to want a quality service without paying more. Over 70 questionnaires were sent to elected members and town and parish councils with 23 returned; there was some general disappointment from the Group as to this low return rate. The question of garden waste collection was raised as this service provision seemed popular with elderly residents who did not have a car. Cllr David Cox - Portfolio Holder, Finance was opposed to the Council collecting garden waste as smaller households and those with no gardens would effectively be subsidising those with larger gardens. The group were reminded that Otter Rotters deliver such a service; although deemed to be relatively expensive but very convenient. They were expanding their service area with the intention to eventually covering all of East Devon; they were looking into the issue of suitable composting sites. This company appeared popular not only for its service but also because they employed young people.

There was surprise that cardboard recycling was not a priority from the questionnaire results. Cardboard counted as 14% of all waste collections nationwide. However the problem was its volume and the impact of that on collection vehicles and recycling plants. Andrew Hancock, Service Lead - StreetScene reminded the group that it was within the

Council Plan to consider cardboard and mixed plastics collections. It was discussed that the survey was too small to properly reflect the opinions of the East Devon electorate. The Chairman suggested a second questionnaire with more multiple choice questions – a comment was made that low response rate maybe because people were happy with the service so did not feel the need to complete a questionnaire. Members were asked to feedback any points they received from their Town and Parish councils on waste collection and recycling.

RECOMMENDED: that the summary update report be noted, with a full update being reported to members at the next Board meeting.

43 Any other business

Andrew Hancock updated the board with changes to staffing in his area. A new Waste Management Officer had been recruited and there was a vacant post of Senior Waste Management Officer still to fill.

RECOMMENDED: that the update be noted.

***44 Date of next meeting**

RESOLVED: that a meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Commissioning Group be held on Thursday 15 January at 1.00pm followed by a meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board.

Chairman Date.....