

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the East Devon Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board, held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 15 February 2012

Present:	Councillors: Iain Chubb – Portfolio Holder, Environment (Chairman) David Cox – Portfolio Holder, Finance Geoff Pook Honorary Alderman Ron Mudge
Also present:	Councillors: Roger Giles – Recycling Member Champion
SITA:	Rick Aldridge – Senior Contract Manager
Officers	Kaz Arnett – Waste Management Officer Paul Deakin – Waste and Recycling Manager Andrew Hancock - StreetsScene Manager Hannah Whitfield – Assistant Democratic Service Officer
Apologies:	Councillor Chris Wale Denise Lyon – Deputy Chief Executive Simon Smale – Head of Environment Dave Swire – Regional Manager

The meeting started 10.00 am and finished at 12.18 am.

***43 Minutes**

The minutes of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board meeting held on 15 December 2011 were agreed and signed as a true record, subject to Minute 34 being amended to read that crews had been asked to ring the Depot if they could not access bins at a property on the assisted collection list. The Depot would then pass this information onto the Customer Service Centre so that it could be logged accordingly.

44 £250m Weekly Collection Support Scheme

The Waste Manager advised the Board of a £250m weekly collection support scheme announced by Government to encourage local authorities to introduce and retain weekly refuse collections, which must be supplemented by fortnightly recycling collections. This money was being made available through a bidding process – local authorities needed to submit their expressions of interest by March 2012. Successful bidders would need to retain weekly refuse collections for at least 5 years.

The Board had a lengthy discussion about the weekly collection scheme and the importance of a decision being based on evidence. The general feeling of the Council was that it should continue with the current fortnightly refuse collection and weekly recycling and food wastes collection scheme – which not only was cost saving but was also increasing the District's recycling rates. There was concern that re-introducing weekly refuse collections would have a huge cost impact and could see recycling rates decrease. WRAP considered the Council's current

44 £250m Weekly Collection Support Scheme cont...

collection scheme to be best practice and the most effective method for dealing with household waste.

The Waste Management Team was very proactive with Waste Management Reviews which helped to educate residents on how to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. Very few complaints were received from residents regarding smell due to the weekly food collections – between 5000 and 6000 tonnes of food waste was collected per year. Families with young children using nappies were provided with larger bins if requested and encouraged to double wrap the nappies to reduce smell. The Board noted that there had been virtually no requests from residents asking to the Council to return to the weekly collection scheme.

EDDC was thirteenth in the country for combined figures for recycling and refuse waste collected. The Board felt it was important that this information was fed back to the residents through a press release.

RECOMMENDED: that the Council does not put in a bid to the Government's £250m Weekly Collection Support Scheme and continues to operate a fortnightly refuse collection and weekly recycling and food waste collection.

RESOLVED: that the Council issues a press release to highlight that the Council is thirteenth in the Country for its combined refuse and recycling figures.

***45 Cardboard and mixed plastics collections update**

At the last meeting the Board had considered a report setting out future options for introducing cardboard and mixed plastics collections. The Senior Contract Manager had advised the Board of a possible further option that might be available and would advise if confirmed.

The Senior Contract Manager advised the Board that as a result of SITA winning a contract to manage the Devon Household Waste and Recycling Centres a facility was being installed at the Greendale depot which would enable materials to be combined on collection and then separated through 'combing' - this would address some of the capacity issues that had been raised previously. The Board was advised that this facility would not be available until at least the end of April 2012. Work would now begin using the information gathered from the Beer trial to look at costings for the whole of the District and the types of materials that could be combined in order to establish the viability of introducing cardboard and mixed plastic collections to kerbside collections; if proved to be viable an implementation plan would be drawn up.

The Board discussed the market prices for the materials currently collected and budget considerations for the year.

As a possible interim solution the Waste and Recycling Manager reported that he was awaiting an answer from DS Smith, having carried out site visits, about the siting of mixed paper (cardboard) banks into the main East Devon towns car parks – they would not be removed if mixed plastics and cardboard kerbside collections

***45 Cardboard and mixed plastics collections update cont...**

were introduced. DS Smith had previously indicated – when the exercise had been previously considered in 2011 – that there would be no charge to the Council for the banks as they would retain the value of the recycled material – but EDDC would however gain some recycling credits. Villages, unless they specifically requested in which case the possibility would be investigated, would not receive banks due to the space they would take up in village car parks and difficulties in the vehicles used accessing them. There was also concern regarding flytipping and commercial companies using the banks. The Board considered siting a bank in the large car park at Beer, as having taken part in the mixed plastic and cardboard collection trial were keen to continue to recycling those materials. In response to a concern raised that not all the towns required banks, the Board was advised that Town Councils had previously been consulted.

RESOLVED:

1. that the Waste and Recycling Manager continue negotiations with DS Smith Recycling regarding the siting of mixed paper banks in each of the East Devon towns (if required) and at Beer and present a report to the Board next meeting;
2. that the Waste and Recycling Manager and Senior Contract Manager present a report at the next Board meeting on the viability, including costings and indicative timetable for introducing mixed plastics and cardboard to kerbside collections.

***46 Results of the Beer survey**

At the previous meeting the Board had been advised that a survey would be sent, in the New Year, to all residents within Beer to gather feedback on the trial of mixed plastics and cardboard collections. The closing date for surveys to be returned had now passed and 341 surveys had been submitted (almost half the number of properties within the trial area). An initial look at the results, which were circulated to the Board, showed a very positive and encouraging overall response to the trial.

RESOLVED:

1. that a detailed report on the results of the mixed plastics and cardboard kerbside collection trial in Beer be presented at the next Board meeting;
2. that the Communications Officer write a press article on the mixed plastics and cardboard trial in Beer using the information gathered from the survey results.

***47 Side waste update**

The Waste and Recycling Manager reported that as of 6 February side waste was no longer being collected from properties - residents had been informed through press releases, adverts in newspapers and on the radio. SITA were sending daily reports through to the Waste Management Team with details of properties where side waste had been left and as a result bins had been stickered. In 6 days 375 letters had been sent out to residents advising why their side waste had not been collected, along with a useful leaflet, 'Can you make a difference?', containing information on recycling and making the most of the landfill container. The Board noted that landfill waste contained within a non EDDC landfill bin was also classed as side waste – this could be due to a previous resident taking their EDDC bins

***47 Side waste update cont...**

when they moved, in which case new bins would be supplied, or residents using their own bin because it was larger.

The Waste Management Team had also been out and about on collection days offering assistance where necessary. The Team had 17 waste management cases where they would be working with residents to address capacity issues. One off capacity issues, such as if a resident had visitors, could be dealt with through the resident contacting the Customer Service Centre.

There had been an increase in the number of calls received by the Customer Service Centre since side waste collections had stopped, however the number of complaints received were relatively low.

RESOLVED: that the 'Can you make a difference?' leaflets be sent to Recycling Champions.

***48 Government consultation on the powers of Local Government regarding the presentation of household waste for collection**

The Board considered a report setting out details of a Government consultation outlining proposed changes to the level of fines which could be levied on households for not dealing with their waste correctly. Under the current system there was an option that households could be fined up to £1000 for an offence and was also deemed to be a criminal offence. The Government wanted to change this current policy by removing the criminality from the offence and also reduce the amount of any fixed penalty notice - in order to impose a fixed penalty notice the Council would have to prove a household was causing 'harm to the local amenity'. The Government was proposing to change the amount for a fixed penalty notice from £75 - £110 to between £60 - £80, with reductions available for early payment.

Two options were being consulted on with the key difference being that there was no underpinning criminal offence in the second option.

The Council was asked to respond to the consultation, by 9 March, by answering a number of set questions on the options presented and the appeals procedure.

The Board discussed the options presented, favouring the second option with no underpinning criminal offence. The StreetScene Manager explained that the Council's enforcement procedures for dealing with residents who did not deal with their waste correctly was already moving towards fixed penalty notices and enforcement letters had already been future proofed by taking out references to a criminal offence.

RESOLVED: that the Waste and Recycling Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, respond to the Government's consultation on the powers of Local Government regarding the presentation of household waste for collection behalf of the Board supporting the second option.

49 Review of Joint Waste Management Strategy for Devon

The Board considered a report setting out a programme to review the Joint Waste Management Strategy for Devon; there was an obligation for the Strategy, published by Devon County Council in partnership with the District Councils of Devon, Environment Agency and Unitary Councils of Plymouth and Torbay, to be updated at least every 5 years. The review would refresh the current strategy for dealing with municipal waste management in Devon to include changes in waste treatment and integrated working.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Board note and comply with the programme for reviewing the Joint Waste Management Strategy for Devon to enable the Council to consider approving the draft Strategy prior to public consultation.

***50 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 National and SITA key performance indicators.

The Board noted that the recycling rate for the first 3 quarter of 2011/12 in East Devon was 48.7%. The recycling rate had expected to drop a small amount in the third quarter due to less garden waste at that time of year. The amount of waste collected per head continued to decrease – the current financial climate was thought be contributing to this reduction due to people generally buying less. In East Devon there had been an 11% drop in the amount of waste collected in the first 3 quarter, compared to 9% nationally.

***51 Systems Thinking in Waste Management**

The Waste Management Officer explained the purpose for undertaking Systems Thinking in Waste Management, which was primarily to improve the service for its internal and external customers. Systems Thinking had been carried out in a number of departments throughout the Council and had achieved very positive results. The Team was currently in the 'check' phase of the process assessing value and preventable demand in order to identify problem areas. Areas for focus would include waste management reviews, larger bin requests, assisted collections and missed bins. The Board would be kept updated as the process progressed.

***52 Update on actions in respect of StreetScene – Waste Collection and Recycling Audit**

The Board noted the action progress report on recommendations resulting from the Audit Waste Management Service. The Waste and Recycling Manager explained that some of the recommendations had been easily resolved through discussions with SITA and others were still in progress.

In response to a question, the StreetScene Manager advised that installing recycling bins in town centres was detailed in the StreetScene Service Plan for the upcoming year.

***52 Update on actions in respect of StreetScene – Waste Collection and Recycling Audit cont...**

RESOLVED: that a progress report on the actions plan from the internal audit of the Waste Management Service be included on future Board agendas.

***53 Update from SITA**

The Board considered the Senior Contract Manager's report covering the period January – December 2011. The report outlined key performance indicators and issues for consideration; these were service performance and fleet, personnel, and new and on-going issues. The Board was asked to advise if there was any information that had not been included that they would wish to see in future reports.

The Board noted the following:

- Total tonnages of recyclable and refuse collections for the year – 17,655 tonnes of recycling and 18,885 tonnes of refuse;
- Revenues for materials had generally been steady throughout the year – mixed cans increased from March 2011 due to selling material through SITA trading to achieve better prices;
- Accident related costs – SITA would like to see these decrease further;
- Fuel costs were slightly higher than 2010 representing an increase of 3.1% over the year, however fuel prices had increased by 6%. Costs presented did not include the cost of the additive (Ab blue) added to fuel.
- The use of agency staff had been eliminated since January 2011, however there had been a high turnover staff during the year – staff levels maintained at 114;
- Sickness levels continue to be address and have reduced significantly since the previous year;
- The CMS management system tracked vehicles, monitored driving habits and measured fuel consumption. After a period of monitoring, training was given to all drivers on efficient driving techniques. SITA was working on producing a meaningful report to show the impact of fuel usage using the system.

In response to a question the Waste and Recycling Manager explained SITA and EDDC's cost plus Contract.

RESOLVED: that the Senior Contract Manager's report for January – December 2011 be noted.

***54 Communications update and call details**

This item had already been covered earlier in the meeting.

***55 Any other business**

Waste and Recycling Champions

The Recycling Member Champion enquired about arrangements for the next Recycling Champion meeting.

The Waste and Recycling Manager confirmed that Waste Management Officers would be attending the 'Waste not, want not' event being held in Honiton on 25 Feb.

RESOLVED: that the Waste and Recycling Manager arrange a date for the next Recycling Champions meeting,

'Back to the Floor' days

The Waste Management Officer encouraged Waste and Recycling Champions and Councillors to take part in 'back to the floor' days with the Waste Management Teams to better understand the work of the Service and SITA crews.

RESOLVED: that 'back to the floor' days with the Waste Management Team be raised at the next Recycling Champions meeting.

***56 Next meeting**

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board be held on 28 March 2012, 10am, in the Committee Room.

Chairman

Date