

Warwickshire Waste Partnership

Wednesday 7 December 2022

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Warwickshire County Council

Councillor Heather Timms (Chair)

Councillor Sarah Millar

Councillor Bhagwant Singh Pandher

Councillor Andrew Wright

Ruth Dixon, Lead Commissioner: Waste Strategy and Contracts

Tamalyn Goodwin, Project Manager (Waste Strategy and Commissioning)

Isabelle Moorhouse, Democratic Services Officer

Andrew Pau, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Waste & Environment)

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Richard Dobbs (Corporate Director – Streetscape & Managing Director – Sherbourne Recycling)

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

Councillor Sue Markham

Glen McGrandle, Head of Waste and Transport

Rugby Borough Council

Councillor Kathryn Lawrence

Anton Cuscito, Transport & Waste Manager

Stratford District Council

Councillor Bill Flemming

Craig Bourne, Contracts Manager - Streetscene

1. General

(1) Apologies

Councillor Margaret Bell (NWBC)

Councillor Tim Sinclair (WCC)

Julie Lewis (Head of Environmental and Operational Services for SDC)

Steve Pardner (WDC)

Claire Preston was substituted by Anton Cuscito (Interim Transport & Waste Manager for RBC)

Zoe Court (Contract Services Manager for WDC)

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

(3) Chair's Announcement

None.

(4) Minutes of the previous meeting, including matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. Waste Management Performance Data Report (Q2, 2022-2023)

Andrew Pau (Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Waste & Environment, WCC) summarised that:

- Ruth Dixon produced the data report because the data officer was on leave
- The numbers in the report were provisional and covered Quarters 1 and 2 (April to September) 2022/23
- Total household waste reduced by 18,000 tonnes
- The reduction was due to a combination of lower rainfall in the growing season reducing composting by nearly 6,000 tonnes
- Stratford and Warwick switching their residual waste to being collected every three weeks
- The cost-of-living issue could also be having an impact, as people are consuming less
- Landfill waste was reduced, and energy recovery was increased
- The re-use, recycling and composting rate increased because residual waste was down
- Reuse, recycling and composting performance was projected at 49.6% for 2022/23 for the whole of Warwickshire, this is likely to change when new tonnages are added from next quarter
- Kilograms of all waste had fallen per household in Warwickshire, it was projected at 915kg for 2022/23. This may change when the number of households is updated by Waste Data Flow.

3. Verbal Update on MRF

Richard Dobbs (Corporate Director – Streetscape, NWBC & Managing Director – Sherbourne Recycling) presented a PowerPoint and summarised that:

- Construction had progressed well and the building itself had taken shape
- The fire suppression water tanks were installed, they store 2 million litres of water
- Most of the outside work had finished so they were finalising the work on the inside
- *A drone shot was used showing the surrounding HWRC and waste to energy plant. The footage followed the route at the MRF that the recycling will follow*
- There were solar panels on the roof
- The dust and air suppression pipes had been installed
- The machinery was being installed and they had a good relationship with the supplier. Everything was shipped from Canada and installed on site
- An electricity wire from the Energy from Waste facility to the MRF was in place
- *A drone shot was used showing the sorting cabin (the only area where there was manual labour – 5 x people), trommel 1 and 2 that organised waste into sizes, sampling bays, the sorting processing equipment for card and metal fractions and the plastic film removal system*

- Richard Dobbs had been appointed as the Managing Director of Sherbourne Recycling; the other roles would be appointed in early 2023
- The plan is to start accepting waste - summer 2023
- The company is preparing to finalise insurance, this links with fire suppression systems
- Operational permits and procedures were being finalised to make sure that the company was ready to go from day one. These include financial and operating systems.

In response to Councillor Bill Flemming, Richard Dobbs agreed to send the slides out but notes that the drone shots themselves were 1GB each so they would be difficult to send out via email. The drone footage would be uploaded onto the Sherbourne Recycling's website at <https://www.sherbournerecycling.co.uk/>.

In response to Councillor Katheryn Lawrence relating to management of fire and explosive risks, Richard Dobbs said that they were carrying out fire risk assessments as part of the comprehensive fire risk strategy. Additional work was taking place on explosive risks, fire risks, dust suppression and air handling. Sparks and ignition risk would not be allowed in key areas to manage risk. Dust suppression and extraction would be very important. The robotics in the MRF would be trained to watch out for ignition risks e.g., lithium batteries, pressurised items. This would be linked to the MRF's health and safety systems, and if it saw any danger, it would shut the plant down until the danger was removed. There was fire suppression throughout the building as well as sprinklers and water cannons. There were shutters so different parts of the building could be compartmentalised quickly and the conveyers were set up so they could be isolated and stopped if things were on there that should not be. A specialist advisor visited monthly to advise on improvements. They were now speaking to their main operating insurers, and they will fully audit what activities take place on site, in addition there will be training plans and certification for licensed workers. A permit would also be sought from the Environment Agency (EA) so they could operate; they were in the final process of this application.

Following a supplementary query from Councillor Lawrence, Richard Dobbs agreed to confirm who was being used for the work.

Andrew Pau congratulated Richard Dobbs on his new role and for the number of solar panels on the building.

In response to a question from Andrew Pau regarding the plastic film extraction equipment, Richard Dobbs stated that the kit will work and there would be rigorous testing regime to ensure that the MRF can recycle film effectively. The recycling collected by the collection authorities would not initially have a lot of film in it so the MRF would need a way to test it with the collection authorities possibly through a pilot so they could see what needed amending.

In response to Anton Cuscito (Transport & Waste Manager, RBC) on the type of water used in the fire suppression system, Richard Dobbs said that the EA permit is very strict on what they would be allowed to do on site regarding water collection and in addition the tanks need to be permanently full in case there is a fire.

Following a question from Glen McGrandle (Head of Waste and Transport, NBBC) regarding the end markets for plastic film, Richard Dobbs stated, the MRF had contracts ready to be signed by offtakers. There were some emerging markets as well. There is not a lot of value currently in film and it is more likely this would be cost neutral.

4. Verbal Update on the development of the Resources and Waste Strategy for England

Andrew Pau summarised that:

- DEFRA recently had some workshops focusing on extended producer responsibility (EPR)
- Feedback from the workshops was that a lot of detail was discussed on EPR as the issue is very important for producers, the waste industry and local authorities
- Central government is taking a detailed and careful approach
- Progress on the Warwickshire waste strategy had paused until central government moves forward
- The changes made by Stratford and Warwick District was in line with the strategy, the waste hierarchy and the circular economy

5. Verbal from RBC work with WRAP

This item was postponed to the next meeting

Andrew Pau informed the group that the work had not been circulated internally at Rugby Borough Council, but this would be done by the time the next meeting takes place in March.

6. Verbal update on Flytipping

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

7. Verbal update on WCC Communications

Ruth Dixon (Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy & Contracts, WCC) presented a PowerPoint and summarised that:

- Various behavioural change campaigns take place, these focus on all aspects of the waste hierarchy from waste prevention to recycling.
- Waste prevention campaigns include - not creating waste in the first place by not buying new and repairing/reusing instead, a 'Second-hand September' campaign that focused on what to do with reused and preloved items, especially clothing. People were expected to buy less with the current cost of living issue.
- Home composting was a current focus - making leaf mulch in the autumn, as well as preparing the garden for winter. A live online home composting workshop was carried out and there is a pre-recorded one on YouTube too. More live online home composting workshops will be carried out in Spring 2023.
- There was a focus on recycling electricals and batteries properly to avoid bin fires. Hypno-cat is the national campaign for this.
- Vapes were being incorrectly put in general waste bins so there is a campaigning to get users to take their used ones back to where they bought them
- For Recycle Week in the autumn, all authorities focussed on increasing recycling and reducing contamination.
- A big part of the communications in October is how deal with Halloween pumpkins including actually eating them, e.g. pumpkin soup.
- For International Repair Day, repair cafes across the county were promoted
- For Black Friday householders were asked to not buy things if they do not need and food planning to reduce food waste

- A lot of campaigns work is carried out on social media but there is also press releases in local papers and magazine advertisements in all boroughs and districts. Adverts in these publications are purposely placed opposite recipes so they were more likely to be seen by our target audience of the household decision maker and also think about reducing food waste and recycling waste from food
- Recent examples of Christmas messages are to buy second hand gifts for Christmas and how to store the mince pies to prevent waste
- Campaigns in January 2023 will focus on what can and should be recycled post-Christmas. This will also include food waste
- The Christmas campaigns take a number of different themes, including 'elf on the shelf' style or 'meme' style to spread information with funny pictures or messages as these have been proven to work
- Different community events were attended by the team in 2022, these were across the county, except North Warwickshire as the one in Polesworth was cancelled due to the mourning period on the death of the queen. More events were planned for Spring 2023
- Three e-newsletters will go out in December, the first one will focus on how to make less waste at Christmas. The second e-newsletter will focus on reducing food waste at Christmas and recycling food waste. The third will be about how to recycle/dispose of the Christmas tree after Christmas. There are 8000 subscribers to the newsletters with around 4000 actually opening the newsletter.
- There will be a campaign showing step by step how to reduce waste and recycle more while earning points and winning prizes. This was in line with the 'Slim your Bin' challenge.
- The school education programme for primary schools will continue, this focuses on composting and recycling assemblies, and plastic or waste free lunches. Pupils get a sticker after the assembly, which asks their parent to talk to them about their learning. 24 of these sessions were held last academic year. 18 schools were visited in the first term of this year with 12 booked in for Spring 2023. Spaces are still available if members have any schools interested. The sessions linked in will with eco-schools.

8. Waste Partners Update

Rugby

Anton Cuscito stated that they are going ahead with their route optimisation on their refuse and recycling rounds. Six new refuse vehicles were ordered, five standard and one narrow access. RBC plan to order some smaller and medium vans and were looking at whether they could be electric, this will depend on range and payload. A review on the trade waste service will take place and will go to RBC full council.

Nuneaton & Bedworth

Glen McGrandle noted that they were focusing on keeping operations running. GM shared some artwork that was being used in Nuneaton and Bedworth to reduce fly tipping. The new artwork was used in laybys where fly tipping frequently occurred. This new enforcement worked well, and fly tipping incidents decreased. The new artwork will go onto refuse vehicles soon. GM queried whether the partnership could have a conversation around whether it would be beneficial to agree a joint approach to enforcement with fly tipping and suggested that this could have cost saving benefits.

The Chair concurred that this could be a good idea.

North Warwickshire

Richard Dobbs stated that they were renewing three new vehicles and had 3 new vehicles on the way. NBBC were looking at alternative fuels for their smaller vehicles. Christmas communications with waste had started, due to the way Christmas falls there was little disruption. Garden waste collections would be suspended in February 2023.

Stratford

Craig Bourne (Contracts Manager – Streetscene, SDC) informed the group that the 1-2-3 system had been in place for four months and it significantly reduced residual waste. There was an increase in dry recycling and food waste. The service had a 99.82% successful collection rate. He thanked Andrew Pau and his team for their help with the food waste disposal point and the transfer points. Fly tipping had reduced since the new system was implemented, but there was an increase in fridges and white goods being fly tipped. Garden waste collection will be halted for two weeks between 26th December 2022 to 6th January 2023.

Andrew Pau suggested publicising the statistics for the reduction in residual waste (30%) and increase of recycling (10%).

Warwickshire

There were no new WCC contracts that affected district and borough councils this time, but there is a lot of procurement ongoing, and a lot of new contracts being developed for April 2023

9. Action on Climate change

The Chair stated that the County Council's Sustainable Futures strategy is out for community engagement, all Warwickshire residents can now provide their thoughts on the proposed strategy. As well as the full strategy there is a nine-page summary and action plan. The documents show the key themes, the planned direction and priority and the actions to be taken. To reach the 2050 target, town/parish councils and community associations would all be involved. The online survey has been launched and will run until the 15 January 2023. Focus groups were put together, using the Voice of Warwickshire so feedback from residents could be obtained first hand. The strategy has six themes which are: transport, energy, built environment, resources, waste & circular economy, sustainable communities & the green economy, natural capital & biodiversity.

The link for the public engagement can be found here:

<https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/insights-service/sustainable-futures-strategy/>

10. Agenda item suggestions for next meeting

Verbal from RBC work with WRAP

Verbal update on Flytipping

Possible joint fly tipping enforcement policy through the partnership (led by NBBC)

11. Dates of future meetings

- 15th March 2023 at 2pm
- 14th June 2023 at 2pm (this meeting will be in person)

There were options to visit Sherbourne Recycling (MRF) and the Anaerobic Digestion facility for WDC and SDC in the new year.

The Chair wished Richard Dobbs luck in his new role with the MRF.

POPS (Persistent Organic Pollutants)

In response to Anton Cuscito, Andrew Pau confirmed that when POPs are collected it would be WCC responsibility to dispose of. They were waiting for the EA to release their RPS (regulatory position statement) that will give more detail on how to manage POPS going forward. EA were implying they wanted to work with authorities on dealing with POPS instead of penalising them.

The meeting rose at 15:17

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Chair