

Warwickshire Waste Partnership

Wednesday 5 June 2024

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Heather Timms (Chair)

Councillor Lorraine Grocott

Councillor Tim Sinclair

Officers

Andrew Pau, Head of Waste and Country Parks

Ruth Dixon, Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy and Contracts

Nicole Conway, Democratic Services Officer

Others Present

North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC)

Rob Bellamy, Interim Head of Streetscape

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC)

Jonathan Snell, Waste Management Supervisor

Alastair Blunkett, Assistant Director for Environment and Enforcement

Andy Kelly, Joint Project Manager for NBBC and RBC.

Rugby Borough Council (RBC)

Claire Preston, Chief Officer for Operations and Traded Services

Stratford District Council (SDC)

Craig Bourne, Operational Services Manager

Warwick District Council (WDC)

Jamie Wicks, Contract Development and Enforcement Officer

Katy Wild, Contract Operations and Performance Officer

1. General

The Warwickshire Waste Partnership expresses its gratitude to Sherbourne Recycling Centre for conducting a tour and hosting the meeting.

(1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Bhagwant Singh Pandher, Councillor Richard Baxter-Payne, Councillor Sarah Millar, Councillor Will Roberts, Councillor Margaret Bell, Councillor Jill Sheppard, Steve Partner (WDC).

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None disclosed.

(3) Chair's Announcement

None.

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

Minutes from previous meeting 14 March 2024 were approved as being an accurate record.

2. Welcome and introduction to new members.

With no new members in attendance this item was deferred to a future meeting.

3. Waste Management Performance Data draft year end 2023/24 and climate impact numbers for 2023/24

Andrew Pau (Head of Waste Management) highlighted the following points of the presentation.

1. Provisional performance 2023/24 on household waste.

- The date referred to in the paper was looking at figures for 2023/2024, last financial year however no provisional data had been provided.
- Reuse and recycling rate was slightly up displaying good, steady performance.
- Composting rate was significantly up, with an explanation on how the weather affected the composting rate year on year.
- Combined Recycling, Composting and reuse rate had increased significantly, mostly due to the composting rates.

Landfill and energy recovery:

- Residual waste was being separated out to try and maximise energy recovery by burning waste rather than sending it to landfill.
- Landfill rates had reduced significantly while energy recovery rates were steady.
- Total household waste had increased but this was expected due to green waste being included in this total.

2. Estimated Performance for year 2023/24 for household waste.

Andrew Pau gave a brief overview of the table and the three years of data it includes which gives a more detailed overview of performance.

- The recycling rate per Borough and District had remained steady. It was mentioned that Nuneaton and Bedworth totals had slightly reduced.

Alastair Blunkett (Assistant Director for Environment and Enforcement, NBBC) advised that the figures on the table did not accurately reflect the data from the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, and there is a disparity there. Alastair will check the details and report back to the meeting.

It was explained that the figures come from the borough and district partners as well as information from the Local Authority Collected Waste Annual Results from DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs).

In reply to a question about the 2023/24 estimated data for quarter four, Andrew Pau advised that the estimated performance spreadsheet contained significant amounts of provisional data. When asked when the data will be confirmed, it was advised that figures are usually confirmed on a six-month cycle, and it was expected that these figures would be released around December 2024/January 2025.

In response to Councillor Sinclair, Andrew Pau replied that the composting rate now included food waste from kerbside collections which it hadn't done in previous years.

There was a general discussion about the percentage of food waste disposed of in residual waste and how this data was reflected. Also, how to encourage members of the public to use the food waste collection caddy.

Andrew Pau continued, stating.

- Recycling, Composting, and Reuse rate showed that a total of 53.2% of household waste was recycled, despite the increase in numbers of households and the increase in overall tonnage. There was a comparison to cost of living and the decrease in household waste.

3. HWRC Performance 2023/24

- Each of the Recycling Centres showed either a steady level or an improvement in the total figures. The lowest performing was Stockton; however, it is the smallest centre and open two days per week. Judkins had a marked increase this could be due to a trial they were running splitting open black bags.

In response to Alastair Blunkett, it was advised that Judkins was the only centre run by a private contractor and they decided to run the trial as they can offer incentives to do so.

In response to the Chair, Andrew Pau advised that the total landfill was about 7% of total household waste and compared to other county authorities, WCC is performing well. However, when compared with some authorities performing at 3%, there was still some improvements to be done.

There was a general discussion about the total kilograms of household waste and why it was different in each borough or district. A comparison rate of total waste per person may be more beneficial.

Resolved: The Partnership noted the provisional data for the year 2023/24.

4. Updates on the Resources and Waste Strategy for England

Ruth Dixon (Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy and Contracts) shared a presentation, discussing the following points.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) sent a National Waste Reforms Update in May 2024 covering three main pillars.

1. Extended Producer Responsibility:

- Includes all household packaging, except for plastic and metal drink containers (this would be the deposit returns scheme).
- Brand owners would pay for the cost of collecting, transporting, processing and disposal. Consumers would pay a small amount towards the recycling of the product.
- This should drive producers to reduce packaging and increase recyclability.
- Payments would be made for the packaging in residual waste, bin litter and recycling (not ground litter).
- Income for recycled packaging is offset.
- Each local authority (LA) should be told by DEFRA how much they would receive for 2025/26 by the end of 2024 (paid October 2025).
- LAs would need to provide data for future years.
- Payment in future years would depend on efficient and effective service. Efficient will be determined by the LA 'family' considering rurality, deprivation, and housing stock. Effective was yet to be defined, however was likely to be related to quantity of packaging. Ruth explained to the group that the family was one of a possible nine local authority groups, put together by DEFRA.

In answer to a question about the collection of recycled waste, Ruth advised that this part of the legislation was about how to do it however DEFRA had not decided on how to quantify the effectiveness of the scheme and more information was to follow and this could have implications on local authorities on how waste was collected.

2. Simpler Recycling:

- Timeline
 - By April 2025 – All businesses and schools to have weekly food waste collections and regular dry recycling collections (including councils).
 - By April 2026 – All households, including flats and apartments to have weekly food waste collections and regular dry recycling collections. Transitional and ongoing revenue funding to follow.
 - By April 2027 – Micro-firms (10+ employees) not included in the first cohort would be included for both weekly food collection and regular recycling collections.
 - By April 2027 – All households and businesses to have plastic film included in recycling collections. Ruth added that Warwickshire would be ahead of the trend and would need to make sure that the comms going out makes sense as it would not be the same message that was sent out nationally.
- Kerbside Rules:
 - Dry recycling can be co-mingled.
 - Biowaste can be co-mingled (food waste must remain weekly and there cannot be a charge for it).

- Statutory Guidelines would state that residual waste should be collected at least fortnightly. LAs must give 'due regard' to this and seek legal advice. It was noted that this was guidance not a legality.

Claire Preston (Chief Officer for Operations and Traded Services, RBC) raised concerns of the potential of a loss of customers for those who do trade waste collections as councils may not be ready to collect separate food waste from business/trade.

There was a round table discussion on commercial/trade waste collections and what that would look like with further discussions on authorities who have gone to four weekly collections instead of three weekly and how that would work and did it have any affect on the waste figures.

3. Deposit Return Scheme (due to start October 2027):

- For plastic and metal drink containers ranging in size from 150ml to 3litres. This scheme would not include glass containers.
- Consumers would pay a deposit at the point of purchase. This would be built into the total purchase price of the item(s) including multipacks. The amount would vary depending on the size of the item.
- The deposit could be redeemed at a deposit point such as a reverse vending machine or an instore return.
- All nations to start at the same time.
- On-pack labelling. This may be a barcode or a QR code.
- The set up of a Deposit Management Organisation to commence in 2025.

There was a group discussion on the implications this could have on consumers, especially those in the lower economic demographic.

In response to a question, Ruth Dixon advised that recycling centres should be able to isolate drink containers that would be part of the scheme however it would be up to local authorities to demonstrate that it was a deposit scheme item collected to claim the refund. Ruth went on to give an example of how this scheme was working in Ireland.

There was a general discussion around bin-diving for deposit scheme items causing additional mess as well as deposit schemes of the past and glass recycling.

4. Other waste reforms.

It was noted that the potential Waste Reforms were released prior to the general election being called therefore these items could change.

- No biological waste to landfill – response to call for evidence.
- WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) regulations – response to consultation
- Disposable vape ban.
- Material facilities regulations – October 2024
- Digital Waste Tracking – April 2025
- New waste hierarchy guidance
- New batteries consultation
- Landfill tax increases to £126.15 in April 2025 (up by 22%)
- Emissions trading scheme for energy from waste due 2028.

There were general discussions about digital waste tracking which was to come into effect in April 2025 with speculation that this may not be ready in time.

No information had been released from the opposition party about waste reforms. The information would be available when the complete manifesto had been published.

A round table discussion about the increase in landfill tax and the emissions trading scheme for energy waste. It was requested that updates were provided to the group at each meeting if any news arises.

5. Food waste collection plans

Alastair Blunkett (Assistant Director for Environment and Enforcement, NBBC) advised that the three northern boroughs were not yet collecting food waste and were working on modelling on how this would work. He acknowledged that NBBC had work to do in this area. He advised that all three Borough Councils were in independent, ongoing discussions with DEFRA over funding.

Claire Preston advised that RBC had been offered an additional £100,000 on top of the original amount, however this still did not cover the costs and further negotiations were ensuing.

Andrew Pau added that WCC fully supported the three Boroughs and was pleased with the drive of performance and work that was going on.

6. Waste Partners Update

Warwick District Council (WDC)

Katy Wild (Contract Operations and Performance Officer) advised that there was nothing additional to add to the written report.

North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC)

Rob Bellamy (Interim Head of Streetscape) gave an update on the following points:

- A response from DEFRA had been received regarding the funding for the food waste collection and planned to challenge this when further information was received.
- Several fires had been reported in waste collection vehicles due to lithium batteries. The Communications team were running a successful campaign on the fire risk of putting batteries in bins.

Claire Preston (RBC) added that joint comms around batteries would be beneficial to the whole of Warwickshire. There was a general discussion around what information the Communications would contain, and it was agreed that a county wide message, especially around hazardous waste was important, with print as well as online campaigns. The conversation also included a discussion around the recycling of vapes with Ruth Dixon advising that all recycling centres can take vapes for recycling however, only Princes Drive HWRC could take NOx (nitrogen Oxides) canisters.

Rugby Borough Council (RBC)

Claire Preston advised that there was nothing extra to add to the written report. She informed the partnership that the Rugby team were going through a challenging time with staff absences.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC)

Alastair Blunkett had nothing additional to add from the report but reported that a sticker system was being used on oversized cardboard advising of why it could not be collected. A discussion followed around the education of recycling cardboard.

Stratford District Council (SDC)

Craig Bourne (Operational Services Manager) elaborated on the Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel planned to be used in place of diesel fuel for frontline vehicles in Stratford, this was to commence in July 2024. Warwickshire County Council discussed the trial run by Fire and Rescue and the cost this incurred.

Warwickshire County Council (WCC)

Presented by Ruth Dixon, the following points were discussed.

- Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC)
 - Some operational issues caused a slight increase in costs.
 - The booking system was working well as the HWRC's were getting increasingly busy over summer and during weekends. Andrew Pau added that it was advisable to book a slot as some centres were looking at turning people away who had not booked and where there was no capacity to accommodate extra visitors. It was emphasised that this was only when there was no capacity. Wednesday evening slots were to continue at those sites open on a Wednesday with the closing times confirmed to be 6.15pm (this did not include Shipston). There was a general discussion about visitors wanting access to the shop on site. At this time, no additional communications around booking slots had been decided.
- Composting workshops were held over spring and were very well received. These along with food waste reduction ideas would continue to be promoted.
- A staff upcycling clothing event was held recently at Warwickshire County Council. Once the case study was completed it would be shared with local authorities.
- A tender for the Reuse shops was scheduled to go out ready for November 2024. It would be separated into two sections, north and south.

Resolved: The Waste Partnership acknowledged the updates on the various waste activities taking place in each area since the last partnership meeting in March 2024.

7. Action on Climate change

Andrew Pau discussed the slideshow presented on Carbon Impact of Waste Disposal and Recycling in Warwickshire since 2014. This slideshow had been discussed at the meeting in December 2023. It contained historic data of Carbon Impact, with a comparison to the previous financial year, 2022/23. The total Carbon Impact varied over the previous years; however, the totals showed a carbon benefit. The Carbon Impact data for 2022/23 slide broke down each individual authority and each waste area that made up the total carbon benefit for 2022/23. Using the current model, the projected carbon impact for 2023/24 was a positive impact of 12,500 tonnes. This was a large increase from the previous year. It was discussed that the increase in recycling and bio-waste and reduction of residual waste by some local authorities had a big impact. Andrew advised that more detailed information per local authority would be provided. A general discussion followed around the deposit scheme and the recycling numbers going forward.

8. Agenda item suggestions for next meeting

No additional items were proposed for the next meeting. There would be an opportunity to review the agenda should any new items be raised.

9. Dates of future meetings

The next Warwickshire Waste Partnership meeting will be held on 4 September 2024 via Teams.

The meeting rose at 15:38

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Chair