

Warwickshire Waste Partnership

Wednesday 9 December 2020

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Warwickshire County Council

Councillor Heather Timms (Chair)

Councillor Neil Dirveiks

Councillor Jenny Fradgley

Councillor John Horner

Ruth Dixon, Waste Strategy and Commissioning Manager

Tamalyn Goodwin, Project Manager (Waste Strategy and Commissioning)

Isabelle Moorhouse, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

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

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Councillor Margaret Bell

Richard Dobbs, Corporate Director – Streetscape

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

Councillor Jill Sheppard

Glen McGrandle, Head of Waste and Transport

Rugby Borough Council

Dan Green, Head of Environmental and Public Realm Senior Management Team

Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Councillor Ian Shenton

Angela Lloyd, Streetscene Lead Contracts Officer

Julie Lewis, Head of Community and Operational Services

Warwick District Council

Councillor Moira-Ann Grainger

Zoe Court, Contract Services Manager & Parking & Ranger Service Manager

1. General

(1) Apologies

Craig Bourne – Contracts Manager (Streetscene-Stratford District Council) were received in the meeting.

(2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

(3) Chair's Announcement

None.

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

Councillor Jill Sheppard requested that she was added to the list of attendees for the last meeting.

The minutes were approved as a true and correct record.

2. Waste Management Performance Data

Andrew Pau (Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Waste & Environment) informed the partnership that the performance data covered Q1 and Q2 of the financial year. Most elements were travelling in the desired direction except household waste which had increased. Andrew Pau noted that the household recycling centres remained open in the second lockdown but there was a switch of tonnage from household waste recycling centres to curb side. The projected figures showed an increase in recycling, composting, recycling rate, total waste arising and a decrease in residual waste.

Resolved

That the Waste Partnership:

1. Note the provisional data for the 1st and 2nd Quarter 2020/21.

3. Update on the MRF Project

Richard Dobbs (Corporate Director – Streetscape at North Warwickshire Borough Council) presented an update for the MRF (materials recycling facility) project which was formed by several local authorities to build and run for dry recyclables; planning should start in the near future. The MRF was designed to carry its desired waste capacity and be flexible in periods of holiday waste increases; it was also designed to be flexible to updated waste strategies e.g. deposit return schemes. Some backlash was received from Coventry residents due to the MRF and other developments in the area affecting their highways. The MRF project would be largely self-sustainable in terms of power with several photovoltaics on the roof providing between 1/3-1/4 of power and the rest would be from a private wire from the waste plant's energy next door. When the MRF has started production, it should not be taking any energy from the grid and will be solely powered from sustainable resources making the MRF as green and sustainable as possible.

The process contractors who would provide the machinery have been consulted with and numbers have been analysed for each of the perspective contractor which was promising. On the 18th December 2020 the preferred bidder was awarded the contract. The process engineering contract was awarded around the same time. There was a single bidder for the 'civil' contract, this was different as it did not focus on economic advantages but a quantity surveyor and consultant approach, but also through open book tendering for major works packages. The MRF will need to be owned by a company wholly owned by the local authorities who are partners, this will be set up with the procurement exercise by March-April 2021; the company will be called 'Sherbourne Recycling'. Insurance and loans had been taken out to start the project and there are now 8 local authorities who sit on the company board and shareholder panel. Other local authorities and the private sector were contacted regarding the MRF dealing with their waste. The final figures were

finalised in January 2021 and Richard Dobbs concluded that they want to have a presence in the waste industry as well as work with existing waste companies; the process and civil engineering contractors will be worked with to ensure this.

In response to the Chair, Richard Dobbs confirmed that the planning permission and affordability were looking positive, but the prospective affordability contractors varied from more traditional manual labour focused to automatic machinery focused. All were affordable but the viability on the continuation of these methods were being analysed.

In response to Councillor Jenny Fradgley's concerns with AI taking up possible job opportunities, Richard Dobbs stated that the jobs taken up by AI systems would be the worst and more technologically advanced jobs. Non-AI jobs would focus on cleaning the AI systems but there would be fewer jobs than expected in traditional MRF's. However, a lot of local employment would be generated around construction, maintenance, supply and haulage.

Following several queries raised by Councillor Ian Shenton, Richard Dobbs confirmed that other authorities were contacted regarding feedstock rather than to be partners of the MRF, some local authorities contacted him because they were interested in the MRF and had similar difficulties with waste management. This had allowed opportunities for future partnerships.

The MRF project was set up for today's problems for local authorities who were on the board, but extra feedstock would be sought in the future to improve the MRF's economic viability and return money to the investors. Richard Dobbs concluded that need to work through the financial implications and contractors needed to be confirmed. Work could be done to reduce costs but essentially investors needed to feel confident to invest in the MRF. The initial plans were reserved and would build up when possible, the facility will be set up to run for at least 30 years. The lowest amount of income return was set up for the initial plans too.

4. Biowaste/Green and Food collections

Julie Lewis (Head of Community and Operational Services (Stratford and Warwick District Councils)) presented the update on Stratford and Warwick Districts merging their waste collection, she noted this was a lengthy task. All aspects had to be reviewed including bin sizes and charges for the service. The two districts becoming a unitary was brought up, but the focus remained on benefiting the environment, reducing waste and the carbon footprint as well as cost. Both districts were looking at a joint contract because their outsourced contracts were ending; the new joint contract is aimed for 1st August 2022 after Stratford's contract ends. This contract will be affected by current and future legislation; both councils being signed up for the MRF will push their waste collection initiatives forward and both councils needed to be at same place. There had been cross-party support and the joint-contract idea had already been approved by Warwick District Council. A joint-council project board was set up between the two councils. To achieve the August 2022 deadline, a contract needs to be supplied to perspective procurers in January; this contract will be affected by changes in waste collection and the effects from Covid-19. A communication plan started early to resolve queries from the media and public. A joint communication plan with the county council to reinforce the recycling benefits will start in 2021.

The new contract will follow the 1-2-3+ process: 3-weekly residual collections with a 180L bin (this will be more environmentally friendly and cheaper than the current system), 2-weekly collection for recycling, 1 new food waste bin which will be collected weekly (food waste will likely be compulsory in the future, so cheaper and more environmentally friendly to do it now), the '+' step will be an optional green bin purchase for garden waste collection. Legislation states what legally can be done so this had to be taken into consideration, for example local authorities cannot charge

for collecting food waste. Communications remain ongoing informing the public of the 1-2-3 programme, this included FAQ webpages. It was important to focus on that the programme will be better for the environment than the old system.

Julie Lewis concluded that while the 1-2-3 project at Daventry was economically driven, at Stratford and Warwick Districts it was environmentally driven.

Andrew Pau added that the 1-2-3 agenda is in line with central government's future plans. The second round of consultation should start in March 2021 and the environment bill which dictates waste collection was being progressed through the House of Lords.

Dan Green (Head of Environmental and Public Realm Senior Management Team at Rugby Borough Council) praised the 1-2-3 programme and noted that it created behavioural change. In response to Dan Green's queries regarding net carbon, fortnightly residual waste collections and free green collection, Julie Lewis stated that they did not believe a frequency of residual waste collection would be dictated and that collected garden waste created a sizable income and they would expect central government to reimburse them and the 75% of councils which charge for garden waste. There would be no separate fleets of vehicles collecting food waste as this waste would be 'podded' in recycling vehicles. Green waste collection vehicles must go to every house who subscribes to their service.

Councillor Shenton praised the cross-party approach to the 1-2-3 programme because of the environmental and economic benefits to this.

Following a query from Councillor Margaret Bell, Julie Lewis said that food waste collection will go into a 240L wheelie bin and then onto the refuse lorry. To prevent confusion, the food waste collection bin will be a distinctive colour. Feedback from refuse collectors and the public was positive as it made members of the public think about the amount of food they were wasting. Operators liked the wheelie bin. Councillor Moira-Anne Grainger added that recycling operators struggled with the high turnover with staff and praised that the new system will make it easier to retain staff.

In response to Councillor John Horner and Councillor Neil Dirveiks, Julie Lewis clarified that the councils will provide the food waste bins (a small one for inside and one for outside) which would be covered by one-off capital costs. The small bin size would prevent them from being too heavy for residents, the large bin (either 180L or 240L) will be outside and have wheels.

5. Seasonal Communication Campaigns

Ruth Dixon (Waste Strategy and Commissioning Manager) stated the work focused on the Christmas period waste and reducing, reusing and/or recycling it. This was advertised through different medias including magazines, online newsletters and social media. On Instagram there were daily posts providing information and there was increased positive responses on the 'Warwickshire Recycles' Facebook page and Twitter. The newsletter currently has 9000 subscribers and the 'Slim your Bin' training course is on twitter, provided monthly prizes and provides money to charity nominations.

Councillor Grainger praised the Twitter posts.

6. Waste Partners Update

North Warwickshire

Richard Dobbs did not have any further updates then already provided in the paper circulation.

Rugby

Dan Green stated that they had ongoing challenges because of Covid-19 due to the amount of positive cases within the refuse collector teams. There were concerns about cold weather causing refuse collection suspensions.

Julie Lewis praised Rugby's refuse collection service. A discussion followed regarding the 1-2-3 programme.

Nuneaton & Bedworth

Glen McGrandle (Head of Waste and Transport-Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) stated they had been dealing with the ongoing problems caused by Covid-19 which had affected performance and a colleague was lost to Covid-19. Covid-19 messaging had been implemented on their refuse vehicles to encourage residents to comply with central government's safety guidance. Due to the increase in fly-tipping on the Nuneaton & Bedworth/Rugby border, a meeting with Rugby and the police was set up to try to resolve this issue; this included increasing the amount of fixed penalty notices for fly-tippers and processing a case to potentially go to the magistrates court for prosecution. A HRA vehicle procurement was underway, including looking at different fuel provisions and electric and hybrid collection vehicles.

Stratford

Angela Lloyd (Streetscene Lead Contracts Officer-Stratford District Council) informed the partnership that there were two active case of Covid-19 in the BIFFA fleet, therefore, ten refuse workers were on leave or self-isolating. As well as the waste contract the street cleansing contract will be renewed at the same time. Green waste charges went live 11th January 2021 and there was a large public response regarding the 'early-bird offer' and fly-tipping remained high.

Warwick

Zoe Court (Contract Services Manager & Parking & Ranger Service Manager-Warwick District Council) stated that they were preparing for the '1-2-3' communication with a new apprentice, Stratford District and Warwickshire County Councils. The reinstating of enforcement with fly-tipping will be brought back in 2021. The ground and streets contract was awarded to ID Verde and the waste contract with Suez was extended until the '1-2-3' is installed.

Resolved

That the Waste Partnership acknowledge the updates on the various waste activities taking place in each area since the last partnership meeting in September 2020.

7. Update on environmental crime, littering and fly tipping

Andrew Pau reminded the partnership that a lot of meetings happened in 2019-2020 with police, planning officers and the Environmental Agency regarding environment crime and fly-tipping. Officers held another meeting to get more organised, so the county council pulled data together despite it being sporadic.

Ruth Dixon added that Warwick District's information was the same as the circulated 'Flycatcher' information. She suggested gathering information on fixed penalty notices for fly-tipping to create

an enforcement so they could be more preventative with this then just gathering information. The Chair supported this idea and suggested looking into the viability of this.

8. Action on Climate change

Andrew Pau noted that waste management affects the carbon rates of local authorities, therefore a new tool model was being established by the LGA (local government association). The county council have completed it and helped develop it. Andrew Pau and the Chair noted the importance of climate change and waste management being linked.

9. Agenda item suggestions for next meeting

Richard Dobbs stated he will present another MRF update for March's meeting.

Andrew Pau added that he will present the second round of central government's consultation if it is released before the meeting.

10. Dates of future meetings

17th March 2021

The meeting rose at 15:54

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Chair