

Warwickshire Waste Partnership

Wednesday 6 December 2023

Minutes

Attendance

Warwickshire County Council

Councillor Heather Timms (Chair)

Councillor Richard Baxter-Payne

Councillor Tim Sinclair

Councillor Sarah Millar

Andrew Pau, Head of Waste and Environment

Ruth Dixon, Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy and Contracts

Tamalyn Goodwin, Project Manager (Waste Strategy and Commissioning)

Nicole Conway, Democratic Services Officer

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Councillor Margaret Bell

Cath James, Interim Corporate Director – Streetscape

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Councillor Sue Markham

Jonathan Snell, Waste Management Supervisor

Rugby Borough Council

Councillor Carolyn Watson-Merret

Stratford District Council

Julie Lewis, Head of Environmental and Operational Services

Warwick District Council

Councillor Will Roberts

Zoe Court, Contract Services Manager

Steve Partner, Head of Neighbourhood and Assets.

Others Present

Councillor Ian Shenton

Mark Barnfield, Commercial Lead, Seven Trent Green Power

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bhagwant Singh Pandher, Councillor

Sarah Millar, and Councillor Lorraine Grocott

(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 meeting held on 27 September 2023 were approved as a correct record.

There were no matters arising.

2. Waste Management Performance Data for Q2 2023-2024

Andrew Pau (Head of Waste and Country Parks) provided an update on the provisional performance report for Q1 and Q2 2023/24 household waste. The report compared previous year data with the current year which showed improvements in all areas, except the total household waste figure which was up by a very small amount (0.1%).

Andrew Pau continued, discussing estimated performance for the year 2023/24 in household waste, highlighting an increase in the overall recycling and composting rates for the whole of Warwickshire and a predicted recycling, composting and reuse rate of 53.1%. He emphasised the positive reduction in the residual waste and the KGs of all waste per household across Warwickshire. He highlighted that this positive shift was mainly due to the service changes in Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon districts.

Finally, Andrew Pau highlighted the HWRC Q1 and Q2 2023-24 data which showed that all sites had achieved over 50% recycling.

3. Carbon Data for Warwickshire

Andrew Pau (Head of Waste and Country Parks, WCC) introduced the Carbon Impact presentation, based on the previous years' data, and confirmed that this data would be presented annually. He confirmed that the calculations used the Zero Waste Scotland model which was freely available and advised that the model was based on several assumptions, so these numbers were more of an indication rather than definite. The model looked at the carbon impact of processing recycling or disposal of waste.

Andrew Pau discussed the historic data of Carbon Impact, with a comparison of the most current year, 22/23, with previous years. 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. There was some discussion around the difference in landfill and burning of waste for energy and the carbon impact of each.

Jonathan Snell (Waste Management Supervisor, NBBC) requested that the slides be shared after the meeting, this was agreed.

Ruth Dixon (Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy and Contracts, WCC) added that information was available on the carbon impact of transportation of waste. Part of the contract with Warwick District Council (WDC), Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) and Biffa, meant that Biffa was required to report on the carbon impact of running the contract. This figure did not cover the full financial year as the contract started in August 2022. The total amount of CO2 was 2349 tonnes and including that into the overall figure for WDC and SDC would mean that the total would still show an overall carbon benefit due to the high recycling rate and low residual waste.

In response to the Chair, who commented on the success of textile recycling at Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Ruth Dixon confirmed that the report would be shared with the group when it became available to identify trends. Andrew Pau stated that some materials had more carbon impact than others. Officers would use the data to target specific areas.

4. Food Waste Reprocessing Presentation

Mark Barnfield, Severn Trent Green Power (STGP), provided a presentation on food waste recycling and explained the renewables and waste recycling section of the overall Severn Trent business. He provided details of anaerobic digestion facilities, with 10 in the UK and another two facilities acquired, which meant STGP was the largest food waste reprocessing provider for local authorities in the UK. He explained the anaerobic digestion process and the collection of biomethane to be converted to renewable energy as well as the production of pasteurised organic fertiliser, PAS110 digestate which was used on local farms.

Mark Barnfield outlined the environmental benefits of production of renewable energy. Biomethane gas could be added to the grid or be used to contribute to renewable electricity. He also outlined other benefits such as increased recycling rates, carbon benefits, other potential innovations and potential CO2 capture for the food and drink market.

Mark Barnfield outlined the associated financial benefits, such as lower disposal costs, whole system cost impact and reduction in total food waste. He provided details of the new contract which commenced 1st February 2024 for Stratford and Warwick districts, and which included the securing of future capacity for North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, and Rugby boroughs if required.

Further value-added benefits for Warwickshire County Council were outlined, including employability skills development sessions to schools and colleges, apprenticeships, support of local charities and local community projects, support of local environmental projects, and volunteering days for community and environmental conservation in Warwickshire.

In response to Councillor Will Roberts, Mark Barnfield advised that efforts were made to capture plastics at the beginning of the process before entering the tank, but a backup screen was in place

to capture anything that may have slipped through. The packaging that had been collected was sent for energy recovery.

Zoe Court (Contract Services Manager, WDC) asked if resources were available to be used for comms on the Severn Trent Green Power website, Mark Barnfield advised that content was available on the website that could be used as well as marketing support. Discussions continued around stickers on bins as the simplest and most effective way to promote and encourage recycling.

Councillor Sue Markham commented that a visit to the plant would be worthwhile.

5. Update on the Development of the Resources and Waste Strategy for England

Ruth Dixon (Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy and Contracts, WCC) provided a presentation, stating that simpler recycling was one of the three pillars in the Government's waste reforms. She summarised the following points:

- Dry recycling – a core set of items to be recycled by April 2026.
- Food Waste – to be collected weekly by April 2026. However, it would be up to each authority to determine if this was to be collected with green waste which would mean a weekly collection and no charge for green bins.
- Plastic Film – this was to be collected by April 2027 in the dry mixed recycling.

Ruth Dixon highlighted that trade waste services, collections from schools, and other municipal buildings (for example churches, meeting spaces, prisons) would need to include separate collections for food waste and dry mixed recycling by April 2025. There was demand for good kerbside services for businesses and schools which local authorities may be able to offer.

Ruth Dixon added that the Government had decided to allow local authorities to make the decision on how much to charge for green waste collection, rather than stipulate how much to charge or put a cap on the cost of the service. However, one uncertainty was a government proposal that general waste should be collected every fortnight or sooner. A consultation had been carried out and Warwick District Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwickshire County Council had put in individual comments to say that residual waste collection frequency should be a local decision as financial benefits and environmental benefits would depend on local factors such as rurality and housing stock. No timeframe had been advised on when the matter would be resolved; however, details would be shared with the Partnership once available.

Ruth Dixon advised that Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) work was ongoing. Details regarding the EPR payments for October 2025 were likely to be made available towards the end of 2024. It was anticipated that the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) would also commence in October 2025 across the UK; however, specific details had not yet been announced.

6. Waste Partners Update

Stratford-on-Avon District Council:

Julie Lewis (Head of Environmental and Operational Services, SDC) said that only a small number of missed collections had been reported which was a positive performance. Sherbourne Recycling

was going well, with no negative feedback. Preparations had started for communications around Christmas and Christmas trees. Garden Waste permits have exceeded sales from last year and food waste tonnage had remained high, with good participation rates.

In response to Councillor Sinclair, Julie Lewis advised that there were no additional collections for sanitary requests. These fell under the extra bin policy with 51% of requests made for medical reasons for which there had been no issues or complaints. She was aware of a request to look at medical waste and had been investigating this. Work would continue with a review, to see how to refine what was already being done.

Councillor Sinclair stated that the Coffee Pod Recycling Scheme looked very good, and he would be interested to learn how that had gone and the uptake of the recycling scheme.

Julie Lewis added that there were no additional plans to include a separate collection for textiles as this was part of the normal collection. She also expanded on and discussed sharing good practices with other authorities in both the food waste collection and 3 weekly refuse collection.

Warwick District Council:

Zoe Court (Contract Services Manager, WDC) advised that waste collection had gone well with some issues unique to the Warwick District area. A new position, Waste Education Enforcement Officer, had been filled, and they would be leading on comms for food waste. She continued with identifying some issues with fly tipping, and the new Waste Education Enforcement Officer had been out addressing some of these and some improvements were already being noted.

Councillor Roberts added that he was really pleased with the progress the new officer had made and genuine results had been noted.

In response to the Chair, Zoe Court advised that there was a continued focus on educating about waste and recycling in Leamington Spa. There had been a recent increase in fly tipping of rubbish at public litter bins, and it was hoped that the focus education would lead to an improvement.

Councillor Sinclair questioned if the fly-tipping was linked to new collection arrangements.

Zoe Court advised that it was most common to see household waste items fly tipped in Leamington Spa centre. This problem had first been observed in August 2022. However, similar problems had not occurred in Warwick or Kenilworth.

Julie Lewis added that in Stratford District the increase in fly tipping had only been in recent months and had been more larger items and commercial waste which people could not fit into bins or take to a recycling centre.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council:

Jonathan Snell (Waste Management Supervisor, NBBC) advised that the refuse and recycling round reconfiguration started in September 2023. This had gone well, and rounds were currently finishing a lot earlier than planned however this would change as new developments came online and the system reached full capacity. A 'Keep in Touch' trailer event had been held at local markets which provided an effective means of engagement. Following the fatal accident earlier this year in Coventry, additional training had been completed for all crews and drivers and further training would be completed in January 2024. Recycling waste into Sherbourne had an issue at

the start with contamination, but reporting is now normal with no further reported issues. A new Assistant Director for Environment and Enforcement would be appointed in January 2024 and would attend the next meeting.

North Warwickshire Borough Council:

Cath James (Interim Corporate Director – Streetscape, NWBC) discussed the pilot scheme of direct delivery and double handling with Sherbourne and analysing the carbon footprint. Communications about Christmas collections had been sent to residents as well as the postponement of green waste collection till the new year. She described an incident of a compactor fire in the back of a refuse truck due to a battery. As a result, extra communications would be sent out to residents about safe disposal of batteries. There was a focus on health and safety for refuse collection. She provided details of the contract with Biffa, including independent external monitoring arrangements where a report would be sent right away with education opportunities for all crews. She mentioned that the Council was interested in food waste and enhancing recycling options in the future.

Rugby Borough Council:

Councillor Watson-Merret commented on Sherbourne and the interest in recycling after a visit to the plant but was waiting on Comms to be released by Sherbourne. She was encouraged to see good annual statistics; however, there were areas to improve on. Developments and new builds were adding more pressure to refuse and recycling. Rural fly tipping had caused problems but not as much as had been anticipated. She advised that refuse collection crews and drivers had expressed some reluctance to use the onboard system as they had been advised by Unions that it was not safe to use. More assistance and training would be needed around utilising the system safely. She provided details of food waste collections and funding, and how these would be managed going forward.

Warwickshire County Council:

Ruth Dixon (Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy and Contracts, WCC) shared a presentation on Behaviour Change campaigns and discussed the different campaigns running over the autumn and winter, including a composting workshop, and understanding electronic recycling. A Christmas promotion was ongoing. This was aimed at reducing waste at Christmas, and included newsletters about food reduction, Christmas tree recycling, and general packaging and wrapping recycling. She provided details of community events. The offer was made from the Waste Team at Warwickshire County Council to support colleagues from all district and borough councils who would like to run face to face events in town centres. She provided details of school visits and assemblies and the different categories of education offered, including discussions with staff and kitchen helpers about food waste and reduction. Interested schools could sign up at Warwickshire Waste Education.

Andrew Pau (Head of Waste and Country Parks, WCC) discussed customer satisfaction surveys around household waste and recycling centres which commenced in December 2023 ([Warwickshire County Council Recycling Centre Survey - Warwickshire County Council - Citizen Space](#)). The survey was online and would close in January 2024. Face to face interactions were planned to follow the online surveys in 2024.

Andrew Pau provided details of the Government's guidance for charges around household DIY waste at recycling centres. This would be investigated with the possibility to revise figures and details. The Government had requested that this be implemented by 1 January 2024 and efforts had been made to have communications out by that date.

Andrew Pau mentioned waste composition analysis which was proposed to be carried out in the spring. He offered further support to councils with kerbside collection of food waste and the implementation of this with government help.

In response to Councillor Sinclair, Andrew Pau replied to say that both users and non-users of the facilities had been invited to take part in the online survey with face-to-face interactions happening at recycling facilities with those that use it.

In response to Councillor Baxter-Payne, Andrew Pau stated that there may be an increase in DIY tonnage including plasterboard and more recycling. This could lead to increased costs. However, plasterboard recycling arrangements were working well. Better incentives could reduce fly tipping of plasterboard and other commercial waste.

Councillor Baxter-Payne highlighted that recycled plasterboard could be used as soil fertiliser. Andrew Pau stated that different ways of recycling were always being investigated. The current plasterboard contract included recycling of the plasterboard. He also gave an example of mattress recycling and stated it was a balance between ensuring everything was recycled but at a beneficial cost.

7. Update on Climate Change

The Chair commented on the Sustainable Futures Strategy which had been approved by WCC Cabinet on 9 November 2023. A lot of hard work had gone into this. The key was the delivery plan and the action plan, and these were the areas to focus on. The Chair reported that a Funding Officer had been employed to identify external funding opportunities.

In response to Councillor Watson-Meritt, the Chair commented to say that the Sustainable Futures Strategy had been launched to the public through social media campaigns. It was available to view on the Warwickshire County Council website under climate change.

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

Members noted the future meeting dates.

The meeting rose at 3:46pm.

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Chair