

JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD
21 JANUARY 2021
(9.30 - 10.37 am)

Present: Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes MBE
Councillor John Harrison

Reading Borough Council
Councillor Adele Barnett-Ward
Councillor Tony Page

Wokingham District Council
Councillor Parry Batth
Councillor Gregor Murray

Officers: Grace Bradbrook, re3
Monika Bulmer, re3
Oliver Burt, re3
Andy Edwards, Reading Borough Council
Kevin Gibbs, Bracknell Forest Council
Damian James, Bracknell Forest Council
Gareth Jones, Bracknell Forest Council
Clare Lawrence, Wokingham Borough Council
Claire Pike, Bracknell Forest Council

19. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

20. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Waste Disposal Board**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Waste Disposal Board held on the 8 October 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. **Urgent Items of Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

22. **re3 Progress Report**

The Board considered a report on progress in the delivery of the re3 Joint Waste PFI **Contract. Andy Edwards, Assistant Director Environmental & Commercial Services** introduced the report.

The report covered:

- Waste Flows (since commencement of virus Lockdown/beginning of 20/21)
- re3 Waste Statistics
- Ongoing Operation of re3 HWRCs as Covid-19 Measures Evolve
- User Satisfaction

- Lakeside Energy from Waste and Heathrow
- Chargeable Wastes at HWRC
- Trade Waste Service
- re3Grow
- re3Paint
- WRAP Contamination Project
- Clinical Waste
- Climate Change
- re3 Strategy and Partnership
- Review of Performance Monitoring
- Communications

The report covered the changes that had been made to the re3 booking system, which now allowed users to cancel their bookings if they no longer required them, in time for potential reallocation.

The annual user satisfaction survey couldn't be conducted in the usual way due to the pandemic, so was conducted using an online form during December. More than 3000 responses were received across both sites, with satisfaction levels scoring high.

The main phase of a project aimed at understanding and targeting contamination, in Bracknell and Reading, had been completed, and the provisional results in the trial areas were positive.

A review of the chargeable waste rates at the HWRC had also been concluded. The charges, for non-Household Waste types, are for costs only, with no profit being made. Officers reported the proposals to reduce the cost for some items such as soil and rubble.

The re3 reusable paint scheme was now available for residents at the HWRC sites.

To help improve information to residents about recycling and to help reduce untidiness and/or fly-tipping at bottle bank sites, new stickers were being applied to bottle banks. The stickers feature a QR code, which can be scanned by smartphones for access to a web-page containing information about the appropriate use of the bottle banks. The information is available in English as well as being translated into 6 other languages, in use across the re3 area.

A range of educational webinars covering topics of recycling and waste management had been delivered to re3 residents via Zoom in November and December 2020, these covered topics including the benefits of food waste recycling and festive recycling tips and statistics.

The situation regarding the transmission of the Covid-19 virus had been worse than last March/April amongst staff. At one point up to 24 re3 staff were having to self-isolate due to family members displaying symptoms or having been contacted by track and trace. There were no service reductions at present, but all contingencies put in place in Spring 2020 remained open.

Members reported that feedback received about the online booking system had been very positive, and it was felt that a booking system should remain going forward. Officers agreed that a review would take place in June 2021, where options for the system could be looked at in detail. It was requested that a paper be brought to the Board at its July meeting.

Since introducing the facility to cancel bookings, on the Recycling Centre booking system, overall numbers of bookings had been lower than earlier in the year, due to Christmas and the post-Christmas 'lull' being included within in this period. While it was apparent that bookings were being cancelled now, the number of 'no shows', where a booking is made but not redeemed via an actual visit, had not yet reduced by the amount hoped-for by officers. Officers undertook to continue pushing positive messaging about the cancellation facility because service efficiency is important, not least for residents who may miss-out on a booking as a result. This would also be revisited as part of the June review.

The booking system had been shown to manage a steady flow of visitors, reducing off-site impacts such as queuing which had often caused unwanted outcomes for neighbouring businesses and other council services, who also use the sites. However, by so managing the flow of visitors, officers explained that it was not possible to identify when highest demand for bookings. This was expected to remain at weekends.

An automated reminder email is sent to all residents prior to their bookings. Officers undertook to investigate whether the system was able to send out automatic emails to those residents that had missed their slots. This would be discussed with the provider.

Covid tonnages had been tracked throughout the period from the first lockdown, residual waste was up 10%, kerbside recycling had increased by 13%, garden waste had increased by 21%, food waste by 28% and the bring banks were up 33%.

RESOLVED that

- i. Members note the contents of this report.
- ii. Members agree, subject to continued review at each re3 Board meeting, to provisionally retain a booking system, for access to the two re3 Household Waste Recycling Centres, until the end of June 2021, as described at 5.22 and that a report be brought to the July 2021 Board Meeting.
- iii. Members approve the changes to Non-Household Waste and Trade Waste Prices, as presented at 5.40
- iv. Members note the review of the performance monitoring regime described from paragraph 5.86 to 5.91.

23. Date of the Next Board Meeting

The Group was reminded that its next meeting would be held at 9.30am on Thursday 29 April 2021.

24. Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 8 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

(3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular

person.

25. **Financial Report**

The Board received a report which briefed them on the Partnership's current financial position and to confirm the second draft budget.

RESOLVED that

- i. Members noted the Partnership's financial position for the year to date.
- ii. Members noted the contents of the financial report.

26. **re3 Workshop**

The Board received a presentation from Oliver Burt, re3 Strategic Waste Manager and Project Director, as part of their re3 Workshop. Following the presentation, it was planned that the separate Councils would then hold their own individual workshops. The presentation was intended to inform these individual workshops and each council would set aspirations and objectives, which would be brought back to the board.

Arising from the presentation, the following points were made:

- In January 2020 a new strategic pathway had been discussed, which had been delayed while the councils focused on issues related to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The last 12 months had been difficult, but great recognition, of the work done throughout waste management during the pandemic, had been received.
- Both facilities were up for a Recycling Facility of the year award.
- A strategic pathway had been introduced in 2016, since then plastic and wood recycling had been introduced, improvements made to HWRCs and food waste recycling had been introduced in Wokingham and would shortly be introduced in both Reading and Bracknell.
- Collectively across the partnership £14m was spend on collection, £23m was spent on disposal, there were £5m on overheads, £8m of income from services such as garden waste collection, charges levied on non-household waste and from government grants. The net cost was circa £35m.
- There was great scope to make changes to the processes.
- There were a number of current factors that needed to be thought about at present, these included market demand, public engagement, legislation, Covid and Climate Change.
- The partnership managed to successfully accommodate the different approaches of each Council.
- It was important for Bracknell Forest Council that their imminent service roll outs be successful. Similarly, for Reading, where services in flats were also of importance Dry paper and card collection changes for Wokingham were important for 2021/22.
- The focus for the re3 partnership during 2021 were to ensure recycling waste from disposal would help reduce cost and improve environmental outcomes.
- Reducing contamination would help increase recyclability and help reduce costs.
- The HWRCs would be focusing on reviewing the booking system, and also help visitors to maximise the efficiency of their trips.
- The HWRCs would also be seeking ways of reusing more locally.
- The change in demographics and population growth of residents need to be looked at more closely from a waste perspective. ONS modelling showed an

aging population between 2020 – 2040. This may change the way waste is collected and how the service is changed going forward.

- As a result of the pandemic, it is possible that more people may be move out of cities, to areas such as the ones covered in the partnership.
- If 40% of the recyclable material in residual waste was captured and recycled, then significant savings and efficiencies could be made in 2021.
- The re3 partnership used only 3 material processors used that were not in the UK.
- Vehicles and haulage needed to be looked at as part of the environmental impacts.
- A synthesis of energy usage and generation and local treatment could be explored.
- Each Council had made their Climate Change commitments, and these would be considered within a subsequent re3s strategy.
- It had been reported that waste sector emissions had fallen by 46% since 2008.
- There were big legislation changes to waste collection, within the forthcoming Resources and Waste Strategy, with further consultation in March 2021.
- Compulsory collections consisted of core set of six materials including a glass collection.
- There was strong public support for a free garden waste collection.
- There were three prescribed collection systems, one of which would have to be adopted, recognising the procurement cycle in such contracts.
- Municipal waste would replace household waste, bringing England into line with the system already adopted in Wales.
- A deposit return scheme (DRS) was an important aspect of the new legislation, it is likely to cause some change and potential disruption to existing methods of waste collection. Government assumptions indicate that 85% of relevant packaging types could be returned via a DRS.
- It would be possible to consider the development of a food waste facility,if this was one of the things that the Council's aspired too.
- It was requested that the thoughts from each council be delivered back within a fortnight so Officers could look to report back at the next meeting.

CHAIRMAN