

GLOUCESTERSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of the meeting of the Gloucestershire Waste Partnership held at Shire Hall, Gloucester on Tuesday 11th February, 2014.

Present:

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cllr Roger Whyborn
Jane Griffiths
Pat Pratley

Cotswold District Council

Cllr David Fowles
Claire Locke
Monica Stephens

Forest Of Dean District Council

Cllr Martin Quaile
Peter Hibberd

Gloucester City Council

Cllr Sajid Patel
Ross Cook

GCC

Cllr Stan Waddington
Cllr Ray Theodoulou
Jo Walker

Stroud District Council

Carlos Novoth
Joanne Jordan

Tewkesbury Borough

Cllr Jim Mason
Julie Davies

Joint Waste Team

Steve Read
Tony Childs
Andy Pritchard
Rachel Capon

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed Pat Pratley, (Deputy Chief Executive at Cheltenham Borough Council), and Monica Stephens, (Head of Customer Services at Cotswold District Council), to the meeting. (Pat will take over from Jane Griffiths in October, whilst Monica will cover for Claire Locke whilst on maternity leave).

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Simon Pickering, (Stroud District Council), and from Rachel North (Tewkesbury Borough Council).

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 19 December 2013 were agreed as an accurate record of that meeting.

4. ACTIONS

The Chairman updated members on the following actions: -

- a) The position of non-participating authorities to be reported at the Annual General Meeting on 10 June 2014 - **Action by Gloucester City Council, Stroud District Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council**

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- b) Gloucester City, Stroud District and Tewkesbury Borough Councils to present their business plans at agenda item 5 of this meeting;
- c) Following a request for more detailed information on the challenges to partner authorities when meeting performance targets, it was agreed that the details would be considered as part of the performance report at agenda item 8 of the meeting. Subject to member's agreement, the information to be adapted and circulated to district, town and parish councils - **Action by Joint Waste Team**
- d) The Joint Waste Team agreed to circulate a briefing note on the achievements and activities in neighbouring authorities, (in particular, Oxfordshire District Council), for consideration at the GWP meeting on 1 April 2014. **Action by Joint Waste Team**

5. PARTNERS BUSINESS PLANS

The Chairman invited the following authorities to give an update on the waste management business plans for their areas: -

a) Gloucester City

Ross Cook circulated copies of the Gloucester City Council Waste Management Action Plan, setting out the key actions from which the council intends to implement the Gloucestershire's Joint Management Waste Management Strategy.

The actions were considered under the following headings: i) changing behaviour, ii) waste prevention; iii) collection systems and iv) other activities.

The key points raised during the discussion included: -

- i. That the council would continue to provide leaflets and information to support its waste collection and prevention schemes;
- ii. The initiative to support and promote the benefits of home composting had been supplemented by the launch of a free trial of using compostable bags in two wards;
- iii. The council was continuing to work with local supermarkets to encourage waste minimisation and re-use;
- iv. The council was continuing to encourage residents who live in flats to take advantage of the recycling services provided by the council by tailoring the service to meet specific needs;
- v. The council to carry out a review of its bring bank provision, including the number, location and types of recyclates.

Jane Griffiths, from Cheltenham Borough Council, expressed a particular interest in the council's recycling service for people living in flats, and enquired whether the information could be shared with other authorities. She was informed that one of the changes the council had introduced had been the use of smaller vehicles to combine and collect more than one element of recycling.

Several members expressed concern about the relationship between the county's recycling teams and leading supermarkets. Cllr David Fowles, from Cotswold District Council, believed the problem may be due to a breakdown in communications between local councils and supermarket personnel; particularly on who has responsibility for the recycling banks located at major supermarkets. During the discussion, other concerns were raised, including; misconceptions by local media and the potential damage to council reputations. Later in the discussion, it was agreed that, rather than undertake a full review of the sites involved, the Joint Waste Team establish a working group from which to assess the situation at each authority before writing to the regional managers of the supermarkets involved. Steve Read from the Joint Waste Team agreed to undertake the action but highlighted the need for officer support from each of the partner authorities. It was later suggested that the Joint Waste Team liaise with the Chairman of Gloucestershire County Council, Cllr Tony Hicks, inviting him to write to the Chief Executives of leading supermarkets.

Action: *Joint Waste Team to liaise with the Chairman of Gloucestershire County Council about writing to the Chief Executive of Leading Supermarkets.*

b) Stroud District Council

Carlos Novoth from Stroud District Council informed everyone that there had been no changes to the previous business plan, pending a spending review on the council's waste budget. Forming part of the review would be a re-think on the use of advertising, whereby the council intended to consider adopting a more direct approach to promoting its waste activities in an attempt to create more value for money. An up-to-date business plan for 2013/14 to be produced and circulated to the GWP.

Action - *Carlos Novoth to circulate the updated business plan for Stroud District Council.*

c) Tewkesbury Borough Council

Julie Davies from Tewkesbury Borough Council announced that the council was currently in the process of finalising its business plan prior to confirming its decision on whether or not to join the Joint Waste Committee. If this was the case, the council would merge its business plan with the Joint Waste Committee.

6. GLOUCESTERSHIRE GREEN POINTS SCHEME

Andy Pritchard from the JWT, (Joint Waste Team), gave an update on the Gloucestershire Green Points (Cheltenham) Scheme, an incentive scheme designed to reward households who committed to recycling more food waste. Launched as a 12 month pilot scheme in May 2013, the scheme involves over 5,000 households in the Cheltenham area.

Detailing some of the savings that had been made since first commencing the trial, the Joint Waste Team confirmed that the £13,000 per year savings did not include the cost of processing the food waste, nor did it include any of the set up costs. In reporting a recent downward trend in the amount of food being recycled, the JWT pointed out that this still constituted less food waste going to landfill than if operating without the scheme.

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One member said he was not surprised by the results, and questioned whether the less than anticipated savings might be due to a lack of public awareness about the benefits that could be offered from signing up to the scheme. The Joint Waste Team said that the scheme had been promoted using direct mail, and from follow up visits to households where no response had been received. Visits had also been made to shops, schools and local businesses. The presenting officer informed members that the 29 per cent sign up to the scheme had been the highest in the UK.

Responding to questions on whether the JWT intended to continue with the scheme, the Head of Service announced that there could be no guarantees on whether improved take up would increase the cost effectiveness of the scheme. He confirmed that no decision had been made but that a full qualitative analysis would be made on completion of the scheme. It was later suggested that a full evaluation, including financial analysis and possible options, should be considered at the next meeting.

Other suggestions made during the discussion included; considering trialling free caddy liners; conducting a marketing exercise to look at the benefits of third party organisations providing incentives; and the implications of using plastic bags as part of the AD food waste treatment process.

Action – *Joint Waste Team to consider options for the scheme and present at a future meeting.*

7. FOOD PROCUREMENT UPDATE

Head of Service, Steve Read, gave a short update on the procurement options for the treatment of food and garden waste collections in Gloucestershire. He reminded members that the current contract arrangement was due to end in September 2014 and that the new contract would be awarded in July. Of the 13 companies expressing an interest in tendering for the contract, 12 had been short-listed, followed by invitations to tender being sent out on 7 February 2014. With a return date of 2 April, the tenders to be evaluated in May 2014.

The Head of Service said he was pleased with the progress to date and would continue to update members at future meetings.

8. PERFORMANCE REPORT

Tony Childs, from the Joint Waste Team, gave an update on the recycling performance of each of the Gloucestershire authorities to the end of 2013/14. Conscious that not all councils were working towards the same target, (with some considerably more ambitious than others), it was noted that only the Forest of Dean and Stroud District Councils were on forecast to meet their recycling performance targets.

Detailing some of the factors that might affect performance, including climate change; changing consumer habits and more responsibility undertaken by retailers and manufacturers, the Joint Waste Team suggested that it might be appropriate to consider introducing a more realistic performance monitoring system during the forthcoming review of the Joint Waste Strategy. It also suggested that members send any comments, including alternative target proposals, to Jo Moore in Democratic Services at Gloucestershire County Council for consideration at the next meeting.

The performance report is attached for information.

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Action – Joint Waste Team to prepare a briefing note to update (i) GWP Members; (ii) District Councils; (iii) Town and Parish Councils

9. SERVICE UPDATES

Rachel Capon from the Joint Waste Team updated members on recent activities at each authority. The following points were made during the discussion:-

Joint Waste Committee – activities in Cheltenham Borough

- a) The council is looking at ways of improving the recycling of different materials and the viability of site locations as part of its 'Bring Site Review'.
- b) A new scheme was launched on Monday 27 January 2014, encouraging Cheltenham residents to take unwanted bikes to the Swindon Road Recycling Centre. The scheme was launched in partnership with Ubico, the council's environmental services provider and the Gloucestershire Bike Project, in an attempt to reduce the number of salvageable bikes being used as scrap metal, and to ensure those bikes that can be reused are refurbished and made available to the community.

Gloucester City

- a) New contractor, (AMEY), has taken over the council's waste collection service. All vehicles have been re-branded and the new uniforms distributed to staff.
- b) A budget proposal to increase the annual cost of the garden waste service from £36.00 to £40.00 was rejected. The service will continue at the current charge.

Joint Waste Committee – activities in Cotswold District

- a) The council is currently working towards the introduction of a trade waste service for the district.
- b) The council is undertaking a review of 'Bring Sites' to understand how the sites are being utilised, and to consider if any changes, or the introduction of additional materials, might generate performance and financial benefits.

Tewkesbury Borough

- a) The council is in the final stages of awarding the MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) Contract with the evaluation of tenders for the new contract being considered during February. A full update to be presented at the next GWP meeting in April.
- b) Collection calendars to be distributed to the public – the design to include notification of seasonal campaigns and information on home composting.

Joint Waste Committee – activities in the Forest of Dean District

- a) The council has started the process of looking at its waste collection contract, due to expire in 2018.

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- b) The cost of the fortnightly garden waste service has increased from £26.00 to £28.00 per bin per year. This is a fixed price covering the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. Leaflets have been sent out to remind households to renew their licenses from 10 February 2014.
- c) It is hoped the majority of households will choose to renew their licences online, which will significantly help in reducing renewal costs.

Cllr Martin Quaile requested that the partnership consider initiatives to promote the 're-use' of waste items, and later enquired whether the JWT was aware of possible funding from which to promote the benefits of re-use. Head of Service, Steve Read, said he was not aware of any funding and suggested that the proposal be considered as part of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Review.

Action: Joint Waste Team to consider 're-use' options as part of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Review

Stroud District

- a) A member led task and finish group has been established to explore different options relating to i) delivery and service; ii) resource considerations iii) procurement options. Members of the Joint Waste Team have been invited to attend a task group meeting on Thursday 12 February 2014.
- b) APSE Solutions to review the latest trends in the delivery of the services included in the council's Multi-Service Contract and feed into the 'task and finish group'
- c) The bulky waste scheme to include local businesses.

Joint Waste Committee – activities in County Council Household Recycling Centres

- a) The 'black bag splitting trial' at the Hempsted Household Recycling Centre is ongoing, (recovering around 50 per cent of items found in black bag waste), with no complaints from the public. The trial has been extended to include Pyke Quarry. One member suggested involving the public in the black bag splitting trial by explaining what is involved and asking them to wait to see how the contents can be recycled/re-used.
- b) A customer survey of the household recycling centres will be undertaken in March/April 2014.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Concerns were raised about a recent press article published in a local newspaper detailing proposals for a councillor led campaign to introduce waste collections for primary schools in the Cotswold District "free of charge". Highlighting some of the key concerns, local councillors requested that the Joint Waste Team (i) respond to the article and (ii) advise the Joint Waste Committee and local schools of the implications of the proposals.

Following a full and in-depth discussion, it was agreed that the Joint Waste Team would undertake a short review of the proposals with a report to the Joint Waste Committee at its

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meeting on 1 April 2014. In the meantime, the Joint Waste Team to issue an interim press release to avoid raising local expectations.

Action: *Joint Waste Team to prepare a report for the Joint Waste Committee*

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of meetings for 2014/15 were circulated at the meeting.

Subject to an amendment at the meeting, the dates of meetings are confirmed as: -

2014

Tues 1 April 2014

Tues 10 June 2014 (AGM)

Tues 14 October 2014

Tues 16 December 2014

2015

Tues 31 March 2015

Tues 9 June 2015 (AGM)

Tues 13 Oct 2015

Tues 15 December 2015