

Staffordshire Local Government Association

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAFFORDSHIRE AND STOKE-ON-TRENT JOINT WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD HELD ON 2 DECEMBER 2020, VIRTUAL/ONLINE

Present:

Cannock Chase District Council

Mr. M. Edmonds
Cllr. J. Newbury
Mr. J. Presland

Stafford Borough Council

Mr. P. Gammon
Cllr. J. Price (Chairman)

East Staffordshire Borough Council

Mr. P. Farrer
Cllr. R. Faulkner
Mr. S. Kahn
Cllr. Mrs. S. McGarry

Staffordshire County Council

Mr. T. Cooper
Cllr. Mrs. J. Jessel
Mrs. S. Lamour
Mr. C. Thomson

Lichfield District Council

Cllr. R. Cox
Mr. B. Percival

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

Cllr. S. Scalise

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Mr. A. Bird
Mrs. J. Copestake
Cllr. T. Johnson

Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Cllr. C. Edwards
Mr. R. Vernon

South Staffordshire District Council

Cllr. L. Bates
Mr. M. Jenkinson

Tamworth Borough Council

Mr. A. Barratt
Cllr. J. Chesworth

Also in attendance: Mrs. K. Buck (Waste Partnership Manager) and Mr. J. Lindop (Staffordshire County Council).

Apologies: Mr. N Harris (Lichfield District Council)

PART ONE

Quorum

16. The Chairman verified that the meeting was quorate.

Minutes

17. **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 August 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

18. Following a request by the Board at their previous meeting, the Waste Partnership Manager presented a briefing note comparing the results of the recent Waste Composition Analysis undertaken by Keele University with those of the previous analysis by Entec in 2007 (schedule 1 to the signed minutes).

Members were encouraged to learn that there had been an approximate 34% decrease (Kgs) in Dry Recyclable Materials present in the residual waste stream. In addition, only a slight fluctuation in weights by waste type had been detected over the period of the analysis.

The Board discussed Partners' arrangements for collection of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and the impact of kerbside collections of WEEE on the composition of the residual waste stream.

Strategic Waste Management Plan – Performance Report Quarter 1 2019/20

19. The Board considered a report of the Waste Partnership Manager regarding progress made towards delivery of the Strategic Waste Management Action Plan during Quarter 1 2019/20 (schedule 2 to the signed minutes).

20. **RESOLVED** – That the report be received and noted.

Staffordshire Waste Officers' Group – Revised Terms of Reference

21. The Board considered an oral report of the Waste Partnership Manager informing them of changes which had been made to the Staffordshire Waste Officers' Group Terms of Reference.

During the discussion which ensued, Members expressed support for the changes and questioned whether a review of their Terms of Reference should now be undertaken with a view to expanding the Board's remit and facilitating further progress in the wider environmental arena in Staffordshire.

22. **RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That an item be included on the Agenda for their next meeting to consider their Terms of Reference to ensure they remained aligned to Partners' aims and aspirations in respect of the waste and wider environmental arena.

Waste During the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic

23. The Board considered an oral report of the Waste Partnership Manager informing them of the Partnership's on-going response to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic.

The Staffordshire Waste Officers' Group (SWOG) had continued to meet on a weekly basis during the on-going pandemic in order to discuss operational issues and offer support to Partners. Waste tonnages collected had returned to normal levels following the lifting of lockdown restrictions in June. However, there had been a further significant increase in waste following the imposition of the second lockdown in November 2020. Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) in the County had remained open during this time which had reduced disruption when compared to the situation earlier in the year.

Whilst there had been two cases of Covid-19 reported amongst waste operational staff since the latest restrictions were announced, these had not had a serious impact on service delivery. The Waste Partnership Manager then thanked and paid tribute to the work of her colleagues at Partner Authorities for their efforts in ensuring continuity of service during the pandemic particularly having regard to the additional health and safety measures which had been implemented at short notice. She went on to say that any increase in the number of cases of Covid-19 amongst staff over the Christmas period maybe offset by the seasonal reduction in the quantity of green waste collected over the winter period. However, the matter would be kept under close review and Partners supported with any remedial measures which became necessary.

The officer representative of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council referred to guidance published by the Health and Safety Executive's Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum on Covid-19 and Waste Management Activities which had provided invaluable assistance to Waste Authorities in dealing with the consequences of the outbreak. The representatives of other Partner Authorities went on to speak of the impact of the virus on their waste operations and raised concerns regarding the welfare of their staff. The representatives of Tamworth Borough Council proposed that a letter be sent on behalf of the Partnership to all Staffordshire Members of Parliament and Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to highlight these concerns and ensure Local Authority waste staff were included in the Government's Critical Worker category so that essential services could be maintained.

24. **RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That the Waste Partnership Manager co-ordinate a letter from the Partnership to all Staffordshire Members of Parliament and Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs highlighting the need for Local Authority's waste staff to be included in the Government's Critical Worker category enabling them to access services during the pandemic and so ensure essential waste services could be maintained.

National Resources and Waste Strategy - Update

25. The Board considered an oral report from the Head of Recycling and Fleet Services, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council updating them on progress with regard to the National Resources and Waste Strategy.

Members were informed that formal second stage consultations on three areas of proposed waste and recycling legislation looked set to take place in early 2021. As part of the National Resources and Waste Strategy, the Government were currently planning for the introduction of:- (i) a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks packaging in England; (ii) Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging and; (iii) measures for consistency in recycling collections in 2023. However, whilst confirmation was still awaited, the consultation period could be for a twelve-week period in line with the initial phase undertaken in 2019. Therefore, it was critical the Board were in a position to respond at the appropriate time.

During the discussion which ensued, Members gave consideration to the likely impact of the proposals on Partners' waste collection and disposal operations in Staffordshire including collections of:- (i) food waste; (ii) packaging films and cartons not currently included in recycling waste streams; (iii) additional publicity campaigns required and; (iv) reductions in waste tonnages and implications for existing waste contracts.

26. **RESOLVED** - That the report be received and noted.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

27. **RESOLVED** – That, having regard to the timing of expected Government waste consultations, a further meeting of the Board be held in early 2021 on a date and at a time and venue to be arranged.

Exclusion of the Public

28. **RESOLVED** – That the public be excluded for the following items of business which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972, indicated below.

PART TWO

Exempt Minutes

(exemption paragraph 3)

29. That exempt minutes of the meeting held on 6 August 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

Key Projects Update - Dry Recyclable Material Processing
(exemption paragraph 3)

30. and 31. The Board received an exempt report/presentation by the Waste Partnership Manager updating them on progress with regard to their key project – Future Dry Recyclable Material Processing in the County together with an exempt briefing note issued by Staffordshire Waste Collection Authorities and took decisions thereon.

CHAIRMAN