

Somerset Waste Board

Minutes of a Meeting of the Somerset Waste Board held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Friday 12th February 2021 at 10.00 am.

Present: Cllr S Dyke (Chair), Cllr C Paul (Vice-Chair), Cllr D Hall, Cllr D Mansell, Cllr T Kerley, Cllr A Gilling, Cllr J Keen, Cllr M Martin, Cllr S Wakefield, Cllr T Ronan

Other Members Present: Cllr Tessa Munt,

Apologies for Absence: None

Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

There were none.

Minutes from the Previous Meeting on 4th December 2020 –Agenda Item 3

Somerset Waste Board members made reference to the minutes of the performance report on page 10 under the section detailing the debate in bullet point 3 it was agreed to amend the wording where it states 'there are plans to introduce and handle thin film in recycling centres' to "Somerset Waste Partnership are in the early stage of exploring possible ways of recycling thin plastic films".

In the same section at bullet point 5 where it refers to the recycling of mattresses to add for clarification "At Recycling Centres waste like mattresses, which cannot be processed through the Energy From Waste has to go into the landfill skip".

On page 14 regarding the reference in the paragraph to the government public sector pay freeze and Somerset West and Taunton, it was clarified that the reference was in fact to central government staff and not referred local authority staff. Negotiations were still ongoing with regard to local government pay increases.

With these amendments being made the minutes of the meeting were confirmed as a correct record.

Members received the confidential annex to the minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2020 and they confirmed that these were a correct record.

Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions.

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green to provide a verbal update on the Performance Report Quarter 3 October 2020 to December 2020. This report summarises the key performance indicators for the period from October 2020 to December 2020 and compares these to the same period last year.

The following was highlighted:

- Business Plan: Recycle More had been successfully implemented in Mendip following completion of the remodelled Evercreech Depot which opened in mid-October 2020.
 - Waste Minimisation: Overall household arisings were down by almost 950 tonnes, or 0.54% compared to the same period in 2019-20. This was made up of an increase in kerbside arisings of just over 6,600 tonnes and a reduction at recycling centres of slightly over 7,550 tonnes
 - It is worth noting that the response of people in Somerset to how they look after their waste during lockdown has been favourable compared to the national average (data from NAWDO spell out), with kerbside refuse going up by less than average and recycling (particularly food) going up by more:
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- Recycling: Recycling rate remained below that of Q3 last year at 52.76% (1.62% lower than 2019-20), a result of the ongoing effects of Covid-19.
 - End use: SWP continues to see strong demand from UK based reprocessors for the high-quality materials we collect. In Q3 just over 97.0% of materials stayed in the UK, with the amount that was reprocessed in Somerset also being more than 54.0%.
 - Missed collections: There was a decrease in missed collections in Q3, compared to Q2 (0.419 per 1,000 collections against 0.588 in Q2), which shows the successful outcome of the work put into reducing this number by both SWP and SUEZ staff
 - Risk: In addition to the corporate risk register there are detailed risk registers for Recycle More and Covid-19.
 - GDPR: As agreed at the December Board there will be a report to the Board at each meeting on progress in implementing the agreed actions that resulted from the internal audit

During the debate the following points and comments were raised:

- More information was asked about a reported accident on a resident property and the outcome of the accident. Somerset Waste Partnership contracts manager Colin Mercer updated the board regarding an accident that had been referred to and explained this was not on the resident's property but on the highway and had resulted in a broken wrist . The board would be updated of the outcome of this.
- In the performance report it states in the background 'These duties are in turn contracted to Kier (collection services) and Viridor Plc (recycling sites, landfill sites and waste disposal)'. It was confirmed this should be changed to SUEZ.
- In the business plan with reference to delivering excellent services there was a request to include planned activity in the quarterly performance report understand how much is completed within the quarter. It was confirmed this would be included in future.
- Reference was made to the increase in fly tipping which was concerning and the tonnage percentages which were down. Flytipping was currently high but was being monitored, it was acknowledged that the pandemic had an effect on this and the decrease in recycling amounts.

Somerset Waste Partnership contracts manager Colin Mercer updated the board regarding an accident that had been referred to and explained this was not on the resident's property but on the highway and had resulted in a broken wrist . The board would be updated of the outcome of this.

The Board resolved to noted the performance results in the Third Quarter 2020/21 Performance Management Report.

The Chair invited Strategic Finance Manager Christian Evans to provide a verbal update on the financial performance against the approved Annual Budget for the first 9 months of the current financial year from April to the end of December.

The following was highlighted:

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- Overall, the end of December position shows that the Somerset Waste Partnership budget is forecast to be overspent by £18,000 (0.04% of the current budget).
- Covid-19 costs are being charged to all partners as appropriate so are not included in the reported forecast outturn position. All partners include these Covid-19 costs on their individual MHCLG returns. The total Covid-19 additional spend for Somerset Waste Partnership committed as at the end of December is £2,984,300 (£698,000 SCC, £2,286,300 District Partners). This is for the delayed roll out of Recycle More, re-opening of HWRC sites and associated costs, changes to tonnages, additional

collection costs and head office costs such as PPE and the undeliverable element of the Slim my Waste, Feed my Face campaign.

- The collection position is £134,000 underspent, which is an improvement of £54,000 from the £80,000 underspend reported at the December Board, this does however still include some elements that through ongoing analysis of recycle more spend will be attributable to the recycle more reserve as agreed previously by the board.
- The waste disposal figure as at the end of December showed an overspend of £151,000 which is an adverse movement on the figures reported to the December Board of an underspend of £332,000.
- The Annual Budget reflects the latest information regarding garden waste customers, bulky collections, containers and other contract cost changes.
- The SCC savings built in to the 2020/21 budget total £361,100. All these savings have either been made or are on target to be achieved by the end of the financial year except for 20% of the Slim my Waste, Feed my Face saving.
- No savings as a result of the new contract will be taken from the Somerset Waste Partnership until all roll out costs have been fully funded.
- The prices which recycle is achieving have dropped significantly since the = original forecasts and so despite more recycling and keeping 98% of it in the UK, it is likely that this means that anticipated breakeven point forecast for quarter 2 of 2022/23 will slip later in the 2022/23 financial year

During the debate the following points and comments were raised:

- Further clarification regarding 2.1 of the report about the summary of variances and the head office cost of £98,000,00 increases
- In 3.1 the final budget salaries increase of 2% and whether this applied to everyone does or just central government

The Strategic Finance Manager explained the salary costs for local government staff have not yet been decided however there has been mention of zero percent across local government. The 2% figure referred to central government. .

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green explained that the head office cost overspends were primarily to do with staffing and ICT related issues along with some legal costs in regard to the new aligned CRM equipment.

The Board resolved to:

- **Note the summary financial performance for 2020/2021 to date as contained in this report, and how this will impact on the budgetary requirements for 2021/2022.**
- **Approve a final budget of £47,045,658 for 2021/2022 as set out in Appendix 1 taking into account the savings requests from the County Council as set out in paragraph 3.2.**

84 **Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2021-2026**– Agenda item 7

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green to provide a verbal update on the Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2021-2026. The draft Business Plan for partner consultation was approved by the Somerset Waste Board (SWB) on 4th December 2020. This report updates the board on the partner consultation and seeks approval to the final Business Plan 2021-26.

The following was highlighted:

- The consultation undertaken in the table shown in 3.1.
- Somerset Waste Partnerships business plan explains how SWP will work towards their Vision over the next five years, with a particular focus on next year. It contains three outcomes, beneath which sit a range of inter-linked activities which contribute to these outcomes:
- SWP/Suez leased supervisor vans initially so that advantage of maturing technology to procure electric vans suitable for operation across Somerset.

During the debate the following points and comments were raised:

- The anticipation on the carrying capacity on the electric vehicle.
- The amount of urban and rural areas in the county and how that affected the use of vehicles and where the overnighting depots were located for the vehicles.

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green explained that it was anticipated there would be further discussion about this at the June meeting and the trials were taking place for new electric vehicles. There were depots for the vehicles in Evercreech, a small depot in Yeovil and Williton also two in Bridgwater and Taunton. An fuller update will be provided at the meeting in June.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- **Note and considers feedback from the partner consultation process as set out in paragraph 3.1**
- **Approve the Business Plan 2021-2026, noting the significant ongoing risk of Covid-19 to implementation of the Business Plan**

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green to provide a verbal update on the Advice and Support and Enforcement Policy. The report set out the proposed steps to approve and implement it.

The following was highlighted:

- With the start of the new collection contract there were more options to identify issues and provide advice and support to residents, helping to resolve problems before they become serious issues:
- Use of in-cab technology - Crews can identify, photograph and record all resident non-conformances with the service rules, such as contaminated recycling, excess waste and additional unauthorised bins.
- The systems can record how many times a customer has been tagged (where the customer needs to take action) and if the customer is tagged multiple times for the same issue within a period of time then a letter can be sent and an officer visit arranged to help the customer overcome their difficulties.
- Once the Policies are approved by SWB, then the final sign off for the delegations can happen at the Districts and the Advice, Support and Enforcement policies will start being used. This does not mean that officers will immediately start issuing fixed penalty notices, as before this can happen, there needs to be a strong, clear evidence trail of persistent problems, and efforts that have been made to resolve them.

During the debate the following points and comments were raised:

- Were there a number of people that had action taken against them? Mr Green explained that currently there were none but when the system was robust enough there may be a few but the key was having the enforcement in place to issue the penalties.

The Board RESOLVED to note the progress made and agrees the proposed approach for sign off.

86 **Recycle More Update** -Agenda Item 9

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green to provide a verbal update on Recycle More. The first phase of Recycle More was rolled out to around 52,000 homes in Mendip on 26 October as planned. This report set out the successful roll-out, lessons learnt, and updated on the approach to future roll-out phases, noting that risks remain (especially due to Covid-19).

The following was highlighted:

- Updated tonnage figures for the first 8 weeks of Recycle More were set out. This eight-week period runs to Sunday 20th December, to avoid data

which include the post-Christmas period, as it wouldn't provide an accurate picture on the impact of Recycle More alone.

- Every time SWP has rolled out a major service change it has phased the changes as it is not practical or desirable to make a change to 250,000 households recycling and waste collection services at one time.
- As agreed by the Board in July 2020, communal properties in Mendip were not included within phase 1, but the plan to extend the range of materials that can be recycled on 8 March 2021 (adding plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays and ensuring all can recycle cardboard, on top of paper, glass and metal existing recycling). For phases 2-4 there will be a roll-out of communal services at the same time as kerbside changes. This may need to be reviewed dependent upon the Covid-19 pressures on waste services nearer the time.
- Recycle More will ensure that all communal properties where there is space will be able to recycle glass, paper, metal cans, cardboard and plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays. Where properties use the existing kerbside food waste service this will be retained. The plans are for a roll out of the communal food waste service during 2022.
- There are a total of 3,270 households which are communal properties across 210 properties/sites – mostly flats, HoMOs and retirement developments.
- Most have communal collections from a shared space. Picked up when 80% full, usually every 2 weeks (some more often).
- SWP's website has had a dedicated page on Recycle More for many months, and content has been regularly updated and added to. It has been used to host information and guidance, video and animation content and an FAQ.

During the debate the following points and comments were raised:

- The cardboard shortage currently and whether there was an opportunity to get any income regeneration from this
- Encouraging recycling in communal areas.

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green explained that the recycled cardboard was recycled back into cardboard. The end use register that SWP have is to show exactly where the recycling goes and to summarise what effectively it's used for.

SWP have refreshed their housing developer's guidance that is available on their website and the link for this will be recirculated around the councils. Developers were being asked to build housing developments so that people will have access to the curb side services although it was acknowledged it would be different if in buildings such as retirement village and block of flats but there should be adequate space for people to put their individual boxes. Also, measures are in place to have pre-application discussion with developers to raise the awareness as well as the developer guide.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- **note the successful progress made in implementing Recycle More,**
- **note the update on planning for future roll-out phases (and the ongoing risk due to Covid-19)**
- **agree to defer the roll-out to Somerset's schools given the impact of Covid-1**

86 Somerset Waste Board Forward Plan– Agenda Item 9

The Board agreed the Somerset Waste Board Forward Work Plan

88 Information Sheets issued since the last meeting- Agenda item 10

The Board noted the Recycle More update and Festive collection information sheets that had been sent out since the last meeting. There were no questions about these.

89 Any Other Urgent Items of Business - Agenda Item 11

There was none.

(The meeting ended at 11.25am)

CHAIR