

Recycling & Waste Policy Development Advisory Group
15 MARCH 2022

Present: Councillors: Toni Bradnum (Chairman), Karen Burgess, Paul Clarke, Michael Croker, Ruth Fletcher, Richard Landeryou, John Milne, Mike Morgan and Diana van der Klugt

Apologies: Councillor Tim Lloyd
Absent: Councillor Christine Costin

Also Present: Councillor Christian Mitchell, Councillor Alan Britten

8 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The record of the previous meeting , held on 19 January 2022, was noted

9 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Tim Lloyd

10 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman advised the meeting on two matters:

- Noted that the Interim Head of Waste, Larry Wolfe, has now completed his contract. A new permanent appointment to this role has been made. The new Head of Waste will be Laura Parker, who brings extensive experience in commercial waste management and neighbouring authorities. Laura will take up her post in April
- Also noted that the Recycling & Waste Strategy Manager, Gemma Wallace-Jones has secured a new post at West Sussex County Council. The meeting asked for their grateful thanks to Gemma for all her support and hard work be recognised, and wished her every success in her new role.

11 **RE-USE PILOT**

The meeting received a presentation from the Director of Community Services updating on the Re-Use Trial. The meeting was reminded that this trial was to assess demand for the re-use of hard and soft furniture to reduce disposal through landfill. Items accepted into the scheme are sold for a modest cost. The overall aim was to divert 49 tonnes of furniture from waste. The trial commenced at the Hop Oast Park & Ride in August 2021 with an on-line sales platform from January. 66 items have been sold for a total of £2,400, with a further 70 items still available. Overall cost of the project is £49,700, in line with projections. Working toward trial wrap-up in mid-April.

The discussion that followed included the following points and clarifications:

- Significant difference between cost and return. The principal elements of cost were staffing and communications. Experience elsewhere in West Sussex shows that where there are existing staff there is potential for cross-skilling, reducing the need for additional staff resources and significantly cutting costs.
- West Sussex County Council are committed to continuing this service with one site per District and is working with a contractor that is well equipped to deliver. The potential for additional sites within the District is under consideration.
- A key factor for success of this sort of operation is adequate storage. Charities struggle to deal with larger donations since they cannot house all that is offered to them. Hop Oast does have significant storage that could be used as a holding area for furniture and larger items.
- HDC is committed to looking at how best to work with Charities going forward.

12 **SMALL ELECTRICAL GOODS, TEXTILES AND BATTERIES TRIAL**

The Director of Community Services updated the meeting on the Trial for collection and disposal of small electrical items, textiles and batteries, launched in May 2021. The objective of the trial was to divert these materials away from waste with specific targets of 80-160 tonnes of textiles, 13-26 tonnes of Small Electrical Goods (WEEE) and 2 tonnes of batteries. Over 4000 collections have been made, with 94% of bookings for collections arranged on-line. The targets were recognised as challenging and collections to January 2022 have comprised of 11.5 tonnes of WEEE, 21 tonnes of textiles and nearly 5 tonnes of batteries (above target). This trial has been popular and well used, and has cost £46,270 to date. Options for continuation are under review.

Discussion highlighted and clarified a number of aspects, including:

- Projected cost for continuing the scheme is around £50k per annum – largely staffing and vehicle costs – but an extension into coffee pod collection, already proving successful in Chichester, could offset a significant part of the wider cost.
- There is no significant revenue scheme achievable from this activity (no significant income could be generated from the recycling process itself) so it is regarded for its service and environmental benefits. It is expected that this will become a mandated duty in the near future, at which time the council will have a duty to provide this service.
- An aspect of this service that will be explored is the potential carbon insetting that might arise from the reduction in landfill, leading to a potential carbon credit that will save money.
- Noted that there is an existing duty on retailers to accept these items as part of their normal business practice. This is not well understood or taken up by the public, so working with retailers to ensure they are fulfilling their own duties, and further encouragement to the public, is an alternative whilst it is not a required duty for the Council.

13 **FOOD WASTE TRIAL**

An update on West Sussex County Council's plans for food waste disposal was shared with the meeting. Our own trial concluded in December but was on a small scale and one of a number across the county that have contributed to the

Countywide thinking. Current proposals are to invest in the Mechanical Biological Treatment facility to process food waste within the bounds of their current contract. This is expected to be a dedicated line for food waste, processed through an anaerobic digester. It is expected this will be set up as a waste transfer site - which Horsham district does not currently have - and associated infrastructural requirements are being assessed and considered as part of this. Timings are uncertain at present since the Government's food waste timetable is not yet clear.

Further clarification offered, including:

- Our food waste trial in Billingshurst was contributory but a much larger trial was conducted in Arun, with another large trial planned for Mid Sussex. The planning is in line with our own findings. In particular the 1-2-3 collection system is seen generally as the most effective method, although a number of other approaches have also been tested in the Arun trial.
- Horsham currently receives funding from West Sussex County Council as compensation for not having a Waste Transfer Site locally. Although this would be lost under the proposed arrangements, the consequent saving in transportation costs will be a significant offset.

14 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE RECYCLING & WASTE**

The Forward Plan, dated 1 March 2022, was noted. The Director of Community Services that the continuation of WEEE, Textiles and Batteries is expected to be added to the updated Plan.

The meeting closed at 6.32 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN