



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Waste
Collection Services Committee held on 28
September 2023**

Present: Councillor Ashley Tilling, Elmbridge Borough Council (Chairman)
Councillor Peter Graves, Woking Borough Council (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Rosemary Hobbs, Mole Valley District Council
Councillor Morgan Rise, Surrey Heath Borough Council

In Attendance: Jo Chauhan, Joint Waste Solutions
Jean Cole, Surrey Heath Borough Council
Kelly Goldsmith, Joint Waste Solutions
Ray Lee, Elmbridge Borough Council
Richard Parkinson, Surrey County Council
Nick Steevens, Surrey Heath Borough Council
Mark Tabner, Woking Borough Council
Seonaid Webb, Mole Valley District Council
Danielle Wright, Amey

Apologies: Councillor Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council

10/JW Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee held on 29th June 2023 be approved as being a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11/JW Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

12/JW Waste Management Internal Audit Annual Report

The Committee received a report setting out the outcomes of the annual audit of Joint Waste Solutions (JWS).

The audit, which had been completed by Woking Borough Council's Internal Audit Team during March and April 2023, had concluded that the joint waste contract was being managed in accordance with the principles set out within the agreements and no recommendations had been identified.

It was noted that the Joint Waste Partnership Board had agreed that future audits would be completed on a rota basis and Elmbridge would be completing the annual review in 2023/24.

The Committee noted the report.

13/JW Quarterly Waste and Recycling Performance Report (Quarter 1: April to June 2023)

The Committee received a report summarising the quarterly position of both recycling and operational performance at the end of the first quarter (April to June 2023) of the 2023/24 financial year.

It was reported that across Surrey the tonnages of residual waste, dry mixed recycling (DMR) and food waste collected had decreased when compared to the same period in the previous year; a trend that was reflected across the four partner authorities. In respect of the joint contract authorities the following year on year changes in tonnages for each waste stream was noted:

Moving Annual Tonnages Collected to June 2023 (Year on Year percentage change in brackets)					
	DMR	Food Waste	Residual Waste	Garden Waste	Total Waste
Elmbridge	12,725 (-9.1%)	4,374 (-9.1%)	22,173 (-1.4%)	11,251 (46.5%)	53,026 (3.3%)
Mole Valley	8,243 (-7.5%)	2,782 (-5.8%)	13,125 (0.0%)	6,824 (37.0%)	32,715 (2.5%)
Surrey Heath	8,784(-8.5%)	3,477 (-5.7%)	11,442 (-1.0%)	5,935 (41.7%)	31,761 (2.3%)
Woking	8,264 (-3.3%)	3,702 (-4.7%)	14,935 (-3.7%)	7,585 (48.2%)	37,125 (5.3%)

The increase in missed collections per 100,000 collections (KPI 1) in Elmbridge from 127 in May to 216 in June and missed collections not rectified (KPI 3) from 112 in May to 302 in June was attributed to non-completion of garden waste rounds due to vehicle breakdowns which had been exacerbated by long lead times for replacement vehicle parts. It was agreed that the missed collection KPI targets would be included in future reports.

It was clarified that performance against KPI 13, customer contact response times, related to the call centre's ability to deal with a query and was not area specific.

It was reported that approximately 8% of the materials sent by the joint contract authorities for recycling through Grundon were rejected and approximately 9% was rejected by Viridor; figures which were in line with the reject rates of Surrey authorities outside the joint contract area. Levels of contamination and rates of rejected loads from across Surrey were increasing and the Surrey Environment Partnership would be focusing on this as part of their work in the coming year.

The Group noted the report.

14/JW Quarterly Budget Report

The Committee received a report summarising the financial position of Joint Waste Solutions at the end of the first quarter (April to June 2023) of the 2023/24 financial year.

The Committee was informed that at the end of the 2023/24 financial year there was a projected underspend of £82,353 on the agreed budget of £2,642,190. Material budget variances included a projected underspend of £75,000 on staff salaries due to vacant posts, an underspend of £409,907 in the Core Contract budget and £78,206 in the Variable Contract budget due to the inflationary uplift figures which had been applied to the contract from January 2023 being lower than the percentage budgeted for (6.85% compared to 10%).

It was noted that whilst some of the vacant posts would be reviewed as part of a before a decision was taken as to whether they would be either deleted or filled recruitment to other posts had to date been unsuccessful.

The Committee noted the report.

15/JW Amey Improvement Plan Update

The Committee received a presentation summarising the progress made by Amey towards achieving the aims, priorities and objectives set out in the contract improvement plan for 2022/23/24.

Amey continued to be concerned about aggressive behavior directed towards operatives by members of the public. This cumulated on 31st July 2023 when a loader was knocked down by a third party vehicle which had attempted to overtake a waste collection vehicle. Fortunately the employee had not been seriously injured however this was the second time that a loader had been hit in the joint contract area. A review of safety measures in place had found that there were already sufficient lights and safety beacons on the vehicles to alert people to the presence of staff operating in the vicinity of the vehicle however vehicle dust curtains would be replaced with new ones with improved signage on them. It was agreed that all partner authorities would support any publicity messages and campaigns around loader safety.

It was reported that notwithstanding vehicle breakdowns, which had impacted on the completion of the garden waste collection rounds, the service had across the partner area had been subject to minimal disruptions since the Committee's last meeting. Leafing routes had been scheduled and two additional large mechanical sweepers would be deployed to each depot the week commencing 16th October 2023. An external review of the street sweeping programme had been completed to ensure that the best use of resources was being made and the learning from this would be applied to the leafing work in the coming months.

The pay offer had been accepted by the Mole Valley depot and the pay uplift had been applied and back pay paid. Unions representing workers at the Elmbridge, Surrey Heath and Woking depots had balloted their members about strike action and the outcome of these ballots was awaited. Feedback from the unions had confirmed that the workforce was happy with the conditions and the pay rates were the main concern.

A review of the sweeper and caged vehicle provision as part of work to replace the fleet was underway. Within the vehicle replacement programme, thirteen 3.5tonne sweepers and nine compact sweepers were scheduled for replacement before the end of the contract in 2027. A proposal to maintain the 3.5tonne vehicles until the end of the contract, reduce the number of compact sweepers across the joint contract area and bring in two additional large sweepers to supplement the fleet was under consideration. It was noted that the proposal to replace compact sweepers with large sweepers would enable further distances to be covered and bigger loads to be collected in a single round thus introducing efficiencies into the contract. The larger sweepers were operated by two members of staff so staff numbers would remain the same.

It was clarified that the turnaround time on replacement bins was governed by a Service Level Agreement. Where an order for a single bin had been placed by a resident then a replacement should be delivered within five working days. Bulk orders from developers would require a longer lead time. Delivery of new bins in Woking took slightly longer because delivery had been contracted to a third party whereas in other areas deliveries were supported by the Street Cleansing teams.

It was agreed that the Garden Waste Subscription Renewal pages on the website would be reviewed to improve their user friendliness.

Reports of incorrect liners being used in the dual waste bins had been followed up with supervisors and JWS had been carrying out spot checks to ensure the situation had not recurred.

It was thought that a recent incident in Elmbridge which had resulted in a dead fox being left on the roadside for a number of days had occurred because it may not have been reported properly and the matter would be followed up. The integration of Elmbridge's customer service forms into Whitespace would ensure that any future reports were followed up in a timely manner.

The Committee noted the update and asked that their best wishes be conveyed to the employee injured on 31st July 2023.

16/JW Joint Waste Solutions Work Programme Progress Update

The Committee received a report summarising the progress made towards delivering the aims and objectives within the Joint Contract Work Programme for the 2023/24 financial year.

The Group was informed that the report's format had been reviewed to improve its clarity and a RAG status had been added to provide an easy visual reference as to whether tasks were on target or not. Following feedback from the Committee Objective 1 had been revised to make specific reference to carbon reduction work. The following key pieces of work had been completed since April:

- Completion of the Quarter 1 litter and detritus surveys in Elmbridge, Mole Valley and Surrey Heath.
- Elmbridge's Waste and Street Cleaning Forms had now been fully integrated into WhiteSpace.
- Dual recycling bins had been installed in Elmbridge and Surrey Heath.
- Reviews of the assisted collection service in Elmbridge, Surrey Heath and Woking had been completed. The review of the service in Mole Valley was due to be completed by the end of September 2023.
- The food waste recycling service had been rolled out to approximately 1,873 flats in Mole Valley during August and the outcomes of this were being reviewed.
- Textile and WEEE contracts had been extended for a year.
- A funding bid to Materials Focus to enable the expansion of the WEEE and battery collections across the joint contract area had been successful.

Currently a significant amount of data analysis was required to generate invoices correctly and work was taking place to try and automate this process through WhiteSpace. It was clarified that whilst the contract to use WhiteSpace was between Amey and Whitespace it was an industry specific piece of software and it was considered likely that it could continue to be used when a new contract was let after 2027.

It was reported that Rethink Waste scheme, which aimed to encourage residents to reduce their waste and recycle more, had been launched across the Joint Contract area. Since June 2023, 73 residents in Elmbridge, 164 residents in Mole Valley, 362 residents in Surrey Heath and 394 residents in Woking had signed up to join the scheme without any direct marketing having occurred. It was noted that due to the pilot scheme having been run in the area there were significantly more residents participating in Elmbridge

than in other areas. The success of the pilot scheme had been influenced by the introduction of a competition between schools for cash prizes and the possibility of repeating this across Surrey was being explored.

The Committee expressed disappointment about the Government delays to the introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging. It was noted that that there was still a significant amount of uncertainty over what exactly would be required when the EPR scheme was launched consequently it might be necessary to rescope any activities associated with the scheme.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and commended its new format.

CHAIRMAN