



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Waste  
Collection Services Committee held  
Virtually - Public Meeting on 3 March 2022**

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**Present:** Councillor Kevin Davis, Woking Borough Council (Vice Chairman)  
Councillor Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council  
Councillor Robin Perry, Surrey Heath Borough Council  
Councillor Caroline Salmon, Mole Valley District Council  
Councillor Ashley Tilling, Elmbridge Borough Council

**In Attendance:** Paul Anderson, Mole Valley District Council  
Marco Arcangeli, Surrey Heath Borough Council  
Jo Chauhan, Joint Waste Solutions  
Kelly Goldsmith, Joint Waste Solutions  
Pat Hindley, Joint Waste Solutions  
Ray Lee, Elmbridge Borough Council  
Kingsley Lu, Joint Waste Solutions  
Geoff McManus, Woking Borough Council  
Martin Pugh, Amey  
Tina Siddiqui, Amey  
Nick Steevens, Surrey Heath Borough Council  
Neil Thompson, Joint Waste Solutions  
Lara White, Amey  
Danielle Wright, Amey

**VICE CHAIRMAN IN THE CHAIR**

**28/JW Minutes of Last Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**29/JW Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**30/JW Budget Monitoring Quarter 3 (October to December 2021)**

The Committee received a report providing an update on the position of the Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) budget at the end of the third quarter of the 2021/22 financial year.

It was reported that the Contract Management Office was projecting at year end an expenditure of £2,175,564, which represented an underspend of £312,937 against the agreed budget. The majority of this underspend was attributed to a combination of vacant posts and new staff joining on lower salary points; in addition a 1% cost of living increase which had been built into the budget had not occurred.

The Core Contract budget was projecting an overspend of £1.9million due to the final inflationary uplift figure from January 2021 being 2.64% instead of the 1% that had been estimated when the budget was originally set. The Committee was informed that although the 2022/23 budget had been set using a 4% rate for inflation the actual indexation rate in April was expected to be closer to 5.7%.

The Committee noted the report.

### **31/JW Quarterly Performance Update**

The Committee received a report summarising recycling performance in the joint contract authorities at the end of the third quarter (October to December 2021) of the 2021/22 financial year.

It was reported that across Surrey tonnages collected continued to be higher than pre-pandemic levels however there had been a 2.4% decrease in waste collected across all waste streams. The following year on year changes in the tonnages for each waste stream collected by joint contract authority were provided:

	Year on Year change in tonnages				
	Dry Mixed Recycling	Food Waste	Residual Waste	Garden Waste	12 Month rolling recycling rate
Elmbridge	Unchanged	-2.2%	-1.2%	-26.8%	52.3%
Mole Valley	-0.9%	-2.8%	-1.8%	-23.6%	54.5%
Surrey Heath	-5.6%	-0.4%	+3.1%	-24.3%	59.2%
Woking	-0.5%	-0.5%	Unchanged	-26.5%	52.4%

It was clarified that although Surrey Heath's recycling rates had fallen significantly, compared to the other joint contract authorities, they had traditionally had the highest recycling rates in the County; consequently their twelve month rolling recycling rate continued to be higher than the other joint contract areas. It was unclear why Surrey Heath's recycling rates, were higher than the other joint contract authorities however it was considered that the mix of recycling collected and the fact that residual waste bins were smaller in Surrey Heath could influence people's behaviour and encourage greater levels of recycling.

The Board noted the report.

### **32/JW Joint Contract Work Programme 2021/22**

The Committee received and noted a report providing an update on the progress made on delivering the key aims, objectives and projects set out in the 2021/22 Joint Contract Work Programme.

It was reported that to date 972 households in Elmbridge had signed up to participate in the Greenredeem recycling incentive scheme. It was acknowledged that although this was a disappointing number when compared against the total number of households in the Borough the roll out of the scheme had been delayed due to illness and to date advertising materials had only been distributed to approximately 40% of households. Where the scheme had been advertised, both with individual households and through schools, a significant increase in the numbers signing up to the scheme had been

recorded and work to raise awareness of the scheme would continue. The Committee commended the scheme and it was requested that it be rolled out across Mole Valley.

Work to develop baseline data for the handling of complaints had commenced and this would be used to inform a review of the complaints process in the coming year.

The Committee noted the report.

### **33/JW Joint Waste Solutions Draft Work Programme for 2022/23**

The Committee considered a report setting out the proposed JWS Work Programme for the 2022/23 financial year.

It was proposed that, due to the delays in delivering a number of pieces of planned work caused by the pandemic restrictions, the majority of the objectives and activities in the 2022/23 work programme would remain broadly the same as in the 2021/22 work programme. Notwithstanding this the following four significant changes had been made to the objectives in the 2021/22 work programme:

- Objectives 1 and 2 had been merged to reflect the significant overlap between the activities which aimed to deliver service improvements and those which sought to improve customers' experiences of services.
- Objective 6 had been updated to emphasis service resilience and recovery plans.
- The activities under Objective 8 had been updated to include robust financial management.
- A new objective reflecting the need to identify potential savings opportunities, service efficiencies and budget reductions had been added.

It was noted that improving the management and reuse of containers was a long term project for Amey and JWS and the introduction of the new WhiteSpace ICT system would enable officers to keep better track of the stock that was held so that when a household's requirements changed it would be able to respond in a timely manner.

It was agreed that targets and measures of success would be added to the Work Programme to enable performance to be tracked.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed Work Programme for the 2022/23 financial year be approved.

### **34/JW Amey Garden Waste Service Update**

The Committee received a presentation providing an update on the status of the Garden Waste Collection Service across the joint contract area.

It was reported that between December 2021 and February 2022 there had been a net increase of six drivers employed leaving a total of eleven driver vacancies across the joint contract area. The introduction of a market supplement to improve the salaries offered to drivers had resulted in a significant increase in interest from those seeking work; ten applications had been received in the two weeks after the announcement of the market supplement and 49 applications had been received in the first two months of 2022. Of the 23 applications received by Amey since the end of January 2022 five had been successful and remained working for Amey, six were currently working notice periods with other organisations and two were working their way through Amey's induction process. This

increase in the number of drivers meant that it would be possible to establish garden waste collections on a four weekly basis by the end of April 2022 ahead of the timeline set out in the agreed service recovery plan.

Notwithstanding this increase in the number of applications it had been found that many of those applying had lower than expected levels of experience and many drivers were turning down the opportunity to work for Amey citing the inherently transient nature of the market supplement which could be removed after a year leaving them on a lower basic rate than could be earned through an agency. In addition, with the recovery of the travel industry, airports were offering premium rates to drivers seeking work increasing competition for drivers. It was confirmed that the salary uplift had been initially agreed as being for one year with the need to continue it being reviewed on a quarterly basis.

The Committee was informed that eight candidates had been accepted onto Amey's Driver Apprentice Programme. Over the course of the nine month programme, apprentices had up to five opportunities to pass the theory test and four opportunities to pass the practical tests. If an apprentice failed to successfully complete the course then, if they had previously been employed as loaders, they returned to a loader position. External applicants were employed on a nine month probationary period and this was not extended if they were unsuccessful. It was reported that the length of time that it was taking to obtain provisional licences from the DVLA was impacting on apprentices' ability to start training with some licences being returned in days whilst other were taking weeks to be returned for no apparent reason.

It was clarified that whilst the garden waste service had historically operated with driver vacancies, these had generally been short term vacancies and it had been possible to engage agency staff to cover these periods. Increasingly agencies were reporting that staff were only looking for work on a short term basis between longer jobs and consequently they did not have as large a pool of staff that could be utilised, consequently vacancies were being unfilled for more extended periods of time.

Exit interviews were conducted with drivers leaving Amey's employment and the reasons given varied. Some stated that they considered that the job wasn't for them or they didn't enjoy driving a rear steer vehicle while others had found the induction process to be too intensive.

The Committee acknowledged the work that was taking place in an effort to restore the Garden Waste Collection Service and stressed that the service should be restored in its entirety as soon as possible and that care should be taken to ensure that the service that had been restored to date did not deteriorate again.

### **35/JW Amey Contract Improvement Plan Update**

The Committee received a presentation providing an update on Amey's work to implement the objectives and projects set out in the Contract Improvement Plan.

It was reported that phase one of the roll out of the Whitespace ICT system was complete and new in-cab technology had now been installed across the fleet. Phase two work had started on the development of the Residents' Portal and JWS and Amey were working to ensure that the online forms were working correctly before these were uploaded to the portal. Residents' feedback on the new Portal had been positive and the ability to track a request being particularly appreciated.

Other areas of work that had taken place since the Committee's last meeting included the implementation of digital tachographs to improve compliance with driver hours and

regulations and improve audit processes, improvements to the reporting and management of close calls, a biofuel pilot to establish the cause and effect of 3 biofuels before a potential expansion of biofuel use across the joint contract area, a review of the container ordering process to enable better stock management and improvements to the street cleansing schedules.

The Committee noted the update.

### **36/JW Any Other Business**

The Committee noted that Councillor David Mansfield had stepped down from Surrey Heath Borough Council and expressed their thanks for the support he had given to the Committee and the Joint Waste Contract over the years and wished him well for the future.

The Chairman noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would take place after the local elections in May and thanked all those who would not be standing for re-election for their support and input into the joint waste contract.

### **37/JW Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee would take place on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 11.30am.