



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Waste
Collection Services Committee held
Virtually - Public Meeting on 14 July 2022**

Present: Councillor Colin Dougan, Surrey Heath Borough Council
Councillor Rob Leach, Woking Borough Council
Councillor Caroline Salmon, Mole Valley District Council
Councillor Ashley Tilling, Elmbridge Borough Council

In Attendance: Paul Anderson, Mole Valley District Council
Aghogho Ateh, Joint Waste Solutions
Sarah Beck, Joint Waste Solutions
Adrian Flynn, Surrey Heath Borough Council
Kelly Goldsmith, Joint Waste Solutions
Evelyn Gyandoh, Amey
Ray Lee, Elmbridge Borough Council
George Pargeter, Amey
Nick Steevens, Surrey Heath Borough Council
Mark Tabner, Woking Borough Council
Neil Thompson, Joint Waste Solutions
Danielle Wright, Amey

Apologies: Councillor Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council
Richard Parkinson, Surrey County Council

1/JW Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Colin Dougan be elected Chairman of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.

COUNCILLOR DOUGAN IN THE CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Ashley Tilling be elected Vice-Chairman of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.

2/JW Minutes of Last Meeting

Minute Correction: 30/JW Budget Monitoring Quarter 3 (October to December 2021)

It was noted that the wrong figure had been included in Minute 30/JW Budget Monitoring Quarter 3 for the projected overspend on the Core Contract Budget which should have been £193,253, not the £1.9million stated in the minutes.

RESOLVED that, subject to the correction set out above, the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee held on 3rd March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3/JW Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

4/JW Joint Waste Contract Recycling and Waste Performance

The Committee received a report summarising the position in respect of recycling and operational performance across the joint contract area at the end 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 7.2% decrease in the total tonnages collected when compared to the end of the 2020/22 financial year and dry mixed recycling (DMR), food waste and residual tonnages had decreased by approximately 6.4%, 5.4% and 2.7% respectively. The following year on year changes in tonnages for each waste stream were provided:

	Year on year tonnage changes				
	DMR	Food Waste	Residual Waste	Garden Waste	12 month rolling recycling rate
Elmbridge	-6.2%	-8.5%	-3.9%	-37.05%	51.2%
Mole Valley	-6.5%	-7.0%	-4.7%	-30.9%	54.1%
Surrey Heath	-7.5%	-2.0%	-0.5%	-29.1%	59.1%
Woking	-6.0%	-5.9%	-3.0%	-36.4%	51.0%

The fall in the tonnages collected was noted however tonnages were still higher than in 2019; it was considered that the fall was due work life patterns reverting back to their pre-pandemic arrangements and was not something that was considered to be intrinsically concerning at this time.

It was reported that recycling targets for 2022/23 had originally been set at 61% (this had been the recycling rate before pandemic restrictions were imposed) however following challenge at a Scrutiny Committee the target had been increased to 63%. There were a number of activities scheduled during 2022/23 including rolling out food waste collections in 3,000 flatted properties in Surrey Heath and targeted intervention work at single household properties to improve the quality and quantity of DMR.

The large variations in fly tipping being recorded were noted however there was no clear reason why this varied so much from quarter to quarter.

It was considered that the fall in tonnages could be seen in a positive light because it meant that less waste was being produced.

The Committee noted the report.

5/JW Joint Contract Update

The Committee received an update on the delivery of the collection service across the partnership area. It was reported that the core service i.e. residual waste, dry mixed recycling and food waste collections were currently all stable. The garden waste collection service had been reinstated on a fortnightly basis in early May 2022 although it was noted that there was a lack of resilience in the service currently.

The Committee was informed that ballots for strike action had been held with GMB members with Elmbridge and Surrey Heath employees voting for industrial action and Amey had approached ACAS with regard to overseeing negotiations. Only a small number of employees at the Mole Valley Depot were members of a union and those that were were members of UNITE; at the current time, there had been no ballots in Mole Valley.

It was noted that unions had to give Amey two weeks' notice of any industrial action and, whilst no notice had been received to date, Amey was developing contingency plans to ensure disruption to core services was minimal and staff were being kept up to date on any developments. Amey and Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) were meeting on a weekly basis to ensure that any developments were addressed in a timely fashion. It was agreed that the Committee would be kept updated on a weekly basis.

The Committee noted the update.

6/JW Amey Annual Report and Contract Improvement Plan

The Committee received a presentation summarising Amey's key areas of work during the 2021/22 financial year in the joint contract area.

It was reported that whilst the shortage of HGV drivers had made 2021/22 a challenging year, Amey had made significant progress in delivering a number of projects that had previously been delayed including the implementation of the new ICT system Whitespace and the introduction of digital tachographs. The driver shortage had been a significant concern throughout 2021/22 and a number of different strategies had been employed to improve the recruitment and retention of drivers including the development of an in house training scheme and the use of recruitment and retention bonuses.

Following a significant period of suspension the garden waste collections had been reinstated in full on the 2nd May 2022 however there continued to be concerns over the sustainability of the service with depot managers having to assist with collections, the need for weekend collections in some areas and the sharing of staff between depots to ensure that all rounds were resourced appropriately. It was noted that 22 drivers were required to deliver a full garden waste service; whilst there were currently 5 vacancies in the service, 2 new drivers would shortly complete their induction programmes and this would alleviate the pressure on the service. The salary uplift, which had been applied from 28th June 2022, had had a positive impact on recruitment and it was hoped that the increased number of enquiries would translate through to applications.

It was confirmed that all vehicles were subject to a six weekly inspection programme. Due to the age of the fleet, the inspections were identifying similar faults across the same models and where a problem was identified then this was rectified across the fleet. One round in Mole Valley was consistently being left incomplete due to breakdowns and it was noted that the 7.5tonne vehicle required to complete the restricted access round was struggling with the demands placed on it.

Wherever possible old and damaged containers were collected and refurbished before they were reused. This refurbishment work was currently carried out in bulk by a contractor but depot staff were being trained to refurbish the smaller capacity containers.

Following a high level of near misses and accidents at the start of the year, additional safety training had been implemented and all accidents were reviewed to identify any trends and learning was shared with crews.

It was questioned whether the use of electric sweepers might not be practicable in rural areas however it was acknowledged that the use of electric vehicles was still at an early stage and any learning would be shared with JWS.

The Committee noted the update.

7/JW **Bi-Annual Indexation Proposal**

The Board considered a report setting out proposals to change the method used to calculate contract indexation.

Under the terms of Clause 10.1 of the joint waste contract inflationary indexation was applied on 1st April each year with the amount to be applied to contract pricing currently being determined by multiplying the relevant amount, or sum, by the product of:

- a) The percentage increase or decrease in each applicable index published for the 12 months ended on the January 31st immediately preceding the relevant adjustment rate; and
- b) The relevant weighting for that applicable index as set out in the table below:

	Index	Proportion of costs subject to the index in percentage or as a decimal
Labour	Average Weekly Earnings Index (EARN01) as published by the Office of National Statistics	76.59%
Fuel	Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel (ULSD) contained in the Weekly Road Fuel Prices published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change	10.29%
Other	CPI	13.12%

The Committee was informed that basing annual indexation calculations on a single fixed point in time, meant that the rate was subject to unexpected external pressures for example the recent blockage of the Suez Canal or Russia's invasion of the Ukraine and this could result in either the partner authorities over paying for the year or Amey being unable to recover increased costs. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the January average weekly earnings index was not published until mid-March; consequently the indexation value was not known until a few weeks before the adjustment date.

To reduce uncertainty, make the indexation value more forecastable and improve the budget setting process it was proposed that future contract indexation would be based on a bi-annual calculation based on six monthly averages with averages being calculated on:

- 1st April - Calculation based on the average value between July 1st to 31st December
- 1st October – Calculation based on average value between 1st January to 30th June each year.

It was agreed that this was a sensible way forward and the proposed change would be supported. It was noted that template reports would be provided for officers to tailor before the decision was taking through the decision making process of partner authorities.

RESOLVED that:

- i. The proposed amendment to the indexation mechanism be supported.
- ii. Partner authorities progress the proposed changes through their decision making processes.

8/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 29th September 2022 at 11.30am.

CHAIRMAN