



Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee held at Virtually - Public Meeting on 1 December 2022

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

In Attendance: Jo Chauhan, Joint Waste Solutions
Alex Davies, Joint Waste Solutions
Adrian Flynn, Surrey Heath Borough Council
Kelly Goldsmith, Joint Waste Solutions
Ismina Harvey, Mole Valley District Council
Ray Lee, Elmbridge Borough Council
Richard Parkinson, Surrey County Council
George Pargeter, Amey
Nick Steevens, Surrey Heath Borough Council
Mark Tabner, Woking Borough Council
Danielle Wright, Amey

Apologies: Councillor Colin Dougan, Surrey Heath Borough Council (Chairman)

VICE-CHAIRMAN IN THE CHAIR

16/JW Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee held on 29th September 2022 be agreed as being a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17/JW Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

18/JW Joint Waste Solutions Performance Report Quarter 2 (July to September 2022)

The Committee received a report summarising the position of the joint contract in respect of recycling and operational performance at the end of the second quarter (July to September 2022) of the 2022/23 financial year.

It was noted that some discrepancies had been identified in the county wide data and this would be updated and recirculated to the Committee.

It was reported that across the joint contract area there had been a decrease in the amount of residual, dry mixed recycling (DMR), food and garden waste collected with tonnages now at levels comparable with pre-pandemic levels. Whilst the disruption to the

garden waste collections continued to impact rolling annual tonnages, the September tonnages were what was considered to be seasonally normal levels in all areas. The following key data for each partner area was noted:

Tonnes collected as at September 2022 (Rolling rate year on year)					
	DMR	Food Waste	Garden Waste	Residual Waste	12 month Rolling Recycling rate
Elmbridge	-9.6%	-11.6%	-34.0%	-6.1%	49.2%
Mole Valley	-9.0%	-8.6%	-20.9%	-5.0%	54.0%
Surrey Heath	-7.0%	-7.7%	-21.1%	-4.9%	60.9%
Woking	-4.8%	-8.6%	-24.8%	-4.5%	49.9%

It was thought that there were a number of reasons behind the fall in tonnages including residents spending less time in their homes following the removal of pandemic related restrictions, an increased emphasis on consuming less and retailers moving away from unnecessary packaging. Work to increase the number of households recycling their food waste across the partnership area was also resulting in lower levels of residual waste.

The Committee noted the report.

19/JW Amey Contract Improvement Plan

The Committee received a presentation on the progress made by Amey towards achieving the aims, priorities and objectives set out in the contract improvement plan.

Following the recent spate of industrial action, Amey's Business Continuity Plans had been reviewed; it was subsequently felt that due to the similarity of the plans developing a single plan that covered all four areas would be an appropriate way forward. The updated Plan had now been shared with Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) and once the Plan had been finalised an independent consultant would be brought in to test the plan's robustness. It was expected that this process would be completed by March 2023.

To ensure that repairs to vehicles were able to be made in good time and vehicle downtimes reduced a review of how parts were ordered had been carried out and processes put in place to enable staff to order stock directly from suppliers as well as sourcing parts from the Trafford depots covered by Amey's other waste contract.

There had been a noticeable increase in the number of reports of aggression and verbal abuse towards collection crews from members of the public. When the behaviour did put crews and other road users at risk these incidents were reported to the police and videos of incidents were publicised on social media to raise awareness of the problem. It was agreed that video footage would be shared with partners so that awareness of the problem could be raised further.

In September 2022, food waste collections had been expanded to an additional 3,000 properties (predominantly flats and communal properties in Surrey Heath) that had not been receiving a food waste service. Initial feedback had been positive and performance would continue to be monitored. The project was now being expanded across the joint contract area.

Following concerns from staff about the rising cost of living, a new scheme had been introduced that provided staff with advance access to up to 50% of the wages earned in

that month as an alternative to employees turning to high interest pay day loans. The scheme had been received positively and employees accessing the service were provided with support through Amey's Human Resources section.

It was clarified that a technical issue had meant that emails concerning resubscribing to the garden waste service had not all been delivered to those residents who had two or more garden waste bins and letters had subsequently been sent to all residents who may have been impacted by this to provide accurate information. It was stressed that no bins were being removed where subscriptions were renewed.

Due to a significant increase in price, a decision had been made to not subcontract leafing work to a third party and two additional mechanical sweepers had been hired for each area during the three month leafing period. Due to employee absences commencement of the leafing work in Mole Valley had been delayed and an additional caged vehicle and leaf blower had been deployed in the area to catch up. It was noted that the use of a caged vehicle accompanied by an employee with a leaf blower was producing a higher quality of finish on paths and roads than a mechanical sweeper on its own. It was agreed that the possibility of sharing the routing timetable with residents so that cars parked on the roads could be moved in advance to give sweepers a clearer route would be considered as part of the post leafing review.

It was noted that eight mechanical sweepers and ten street cleansing caged vehicles were, under the terms of the contract, scheduled for renewal and work was underway to explore the range of options available and develop business cases for the preferred options. It was clarified that the vehicles were financed by the individual local authorities and then operated by Amey. It was stressed that whilst electric vehicles were being considered the current range of an electric sweeper was not suitable for the more rural areas and it was imperative that the most appropriate vehicles were purchased for the jobs concerned.

The Committee noted the update.

20/JW Joint Waste Solutions Quarterly Budget Report (July to September 2022)

The Committee received a report summarising the budgetary position of Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) at the end of the second quarter (July to September 2022) of the 2022/23 financial year.

It was reported that the Contract Management Office (CMO) budget was, by the end of the financial year, projected to have an overall underspend of £60,909 against an agreed budget of £2,390,850. It was noted that of this £35,935 was attributed to the presence of a number of vacant posts and new staff joining JWS on lower salary points than their predecessors. There had also been a £10,100 reduction in the finance support costs and a projected £10,536 underspend on the Communications and Engagement budget.

The Core Contract budget was, by the end of the financial year, projecting an overspend of £329,607. A situation that was attributed to a discrepancy between the inflationary uplift that was applied when the budget was developed (4%) and the actual inflationary figure in January 2022 that was applied at the start of the 2022/23 financial year (6.71%). It was noted that the garden waste budget was expected to be underspent due to the suspension of the service earlier in 2022 and the savings made here would be sufficient to offset all the variable overspends with the exception of the driver market supplement.

The Committee noted the report

21/JW Joint Waste Solutions Programme Progress Update

The Committee received a report providing an update on the progress made on individual projects and activities within the joint contract work programme during the second quarter (July to September 2022) of the 2022/23 financial year. The following key areas of work included:

- The completion of a training video focusing on reducing contamination of DMR that would be used by Amey as part of their staff induction programme.
- The roll out of food waste collections to 2,700 flats and communal properties in Surrey Heath which had not been receiving the service.
- Targeted work in Elmbridge to reduce contamination in communal recycling bins used by around 350 properties.
- The delivery of recycling guides to all households in the joint contract area.
- The delivery of the 'Own your Impact' campaign to encourage residents to reduce and recycle as much food waste as possible.
- Completion of work to map the complaints received, review processes and identify key constraints. Recommendations for process changes were being developed for implementation in early 2023.
- Work was taking place to refresh the website and make it easier to find the pages used most searched for by the public.
- At the end of September 2022, 1,740 households had signed up to the ReThink Waste Recycling Incentive Scheme. An email promoting the scheme sent to all subscribers to the garden waste service in Elmbridge resulted in an additional 700 households joining the scheme.

The Committee noted the report.

22/JW Joint Waste Solutions Budget Proposal 2023/24 Financial Year

The Committee considered a report setting out a proposed budget for Joint Waste Solutions for the 2023/24 financial year.

The Committee was informed that JWS's staff and overhead costs were projected to be £205,548 higher in 2023/24 than in 2022/23. Within this, salary costs were expected to increase by £193,325 to £2,049,825 predominantly due to the recent 8% pay award agreed by Surrey Heath Borough Council. Office costs totaled £107,725 and work was underway to establish whether relocation might be an option to reduce cost, although it was recognised that this would incur costs which would impact budgets in the short to medium term. The Communications Budget had been increased by £13,000 to cover the increased cost of producing and distributing the annual Service Guide.

An inflationary uplift figure of 10% had been used to develop the budget for the contract costs and this would be reviewed and the budget updated in March 2022 using the published January figures. It was agreed that the calculations used to track inflation would be shared with the Committee.

It was clarified that there had been no increase in salaries at Surrey Heath Borough Council in recent years and the 8% pay award brought salaries inline with those of the other partner authorities.

It was noted that the individual partners' Section 151 Officers had been consulted during the budget setting process and all had confirmed that they considered the budget to be appropriate.

RESOLVED that the 2023/24 Joint Waste Solutions staff and overheads and joint contract budgets be agreed and commended to their individual authorities for approval.

23/JW Dates of Future Meetings

It was agreed that, subject to the availability of the Chairman, the next meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee would be rescheduled to Wednesday 8th March 2023.

It was agreed that meetings of the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee would take place at 11.30am on the following dates in the 2023/24 municipal year.:

- 29th June 2023
- 28th September 2023
- 14th December 2023
- 21st March 2024