

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the East Devon Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board, held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 9 April 2008

Present: Councillors:

David Cox – Portfolio Holder, Street Scene Services (Chairman)
M J L Green

Honorary Alderman
Ron Mudge – Honorary Alderman

SITA
Rick Aldridge
Dave Swire

EDDC Officers
Mike Baker – Chief Engineer
Paul Deakin – Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager
Mark Reilly – Head of Street Scene Services
Derek Smith – Legal Executive
Nick Stephen – Communications Officer

Diana Vernon – Democratic Services Manager
Hannah Jarvis – Democratic Services Support Officer

Apologies: Councillor B Nicholson
Councillor A Moulding
Karime Hassan – Corporate Director
Diccon Pearse – Corporate Director

The meeting started at 10.15 am and finished at 12.25 pm

1. Minutes from last

The report of the last meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board held on 3 March 2008 was noted.

2. Update from EDDC on progress towards new scheme

The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager advised the Board commencement of Phase One would now be 4 August 2008. Outstanding issues had been ironed out, with a commitment in place to start round changes week commencing 2 June followed by the delivery of the bins and containers commencing at the beginning of July. The Board was advised that it would take 3 weeks to distribute the wheeled bins and two weeks to distribute the kerbside and food containers. It was suggested that a number of extra bins would be ordered to compensate for possible mis-reporting and anomalies. 180 litre bins would be issued as standard. Applications could be made for a smaller or larger bin. The approach would be to supply larger bins by exception as the introduction of separating food waste from general waste would reduce the waste to landfill and the subsequent required bin size.

Update from EDDC on progress towards new scheme cont...

A meeting was to take place to discuss the distribution of the wheeled bins, with a meeting scheduled Wednesday 16 April to discuss the distribution of the kerbside and food bins. The option of using the same distributor for both the wheeled bins and the containers had been considered. However due to the wheeled bins needing to be assembled on delivery and issues with the loads this was not a feasible option.

The board felt there was a need to co ordinate the delivery of the kitchen containers with that of delivery of the wheeled bin and 8 page booklet, so households were not receiving the kitchen containers without any form of explanation or instruction.

Roadshows

Dates for the roadshows had been agreed and were due to commence on the 2 June. This would start the launch of Phase 1 to both the residents and press and was felt appropriate with it also being 'Recycle Now' week. The dates given were (waiting on confirmation on paper work for a couple of car parks but verbally all agreed):

- Monday 2 June (Full Day) – Axminster, Tesco Car Park
- Tuesday 3 June (Full Day) – Seaton, Co-Op Car Park
- Wednesday 4 June – No roadshow
- Thursday 5 June (½ Day) – Beer; (½ Day) – Colyton
- Friday 6 June (Full Day) – Musbury and Uplyme

A trailer for the roadshows was to be provided by SITA. It was felt that District, Town and Parish Councillors should be encouraged to attend these roadshows to show their commitment and support to the new recycling and refuse service.

A nappy advisor would be on hand at the events to give advice on alternatives to non-biodegradable nappies. For those residents who were finding that the 180L wheeled refuse bin was not large enough, it would be possible to ring and request a larger 240L wheeled refuse bin instead.

Training

The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager advised they were aiming to hold an open workshop for Councillors and Staff to ensure they were fully aware and up to date with the operation of the new scheme. It was hoped this would enable them to answer any questions on the new service they might be faced with. It was intended for a similar workshop/briefing to be arranged for Parish Councillors, after the roll out of Phase One had begun. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' sheet was being prepared.

Following the results of a survey carried out, all properties in seagull problem areas, where wheeled bins were not appropriate, were to be provided with Gull bags. These properties/areas would be excluded from the first delivery. It was advised that the surveys had been carried out by talking to residents and walking around known problem areas.

Flats provided with 1100L wheeled refuse bins worked on the theory of 180L per flat. It was noted that there were a few flats (4-5) where storage space for these bins was an issue. It was advised in extremely rare cases such as these weekly collections might need to be continued. It was stressed this would need to be strictly controlled.

Concern was raised over the distributed bins and containers being used before the start of the new scheme. It was queried whether a sticker could be fixed on the bins and containers requesting that they were not used until the start of collections in August. The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager would speak with the manufacturers to see whether this would be possible.

Update from EDDC on progress towards new scheme cont...

The service would be a kerb side collection which would require the public to make changes in the way they used the service and their expectations. Bins would need to be at kerb side and ready for collection by 7.00 am. Recycling and Refuse collections would be made the same day. No side waste would be collected.

SITA had approached the Council to ask whether the roll out of the same day collections for their area could be bought forward from the 2 June. This had been decided against, as it was felt it might cause confusion due to the number of bank holidays in May. It was hoped by the August Bank Holiday residents would have adjusted to the new collection days.

Resident Information Leaflet – First Draft

The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager presented the first draft of the proposed leaflet to advise the residents of Phase One of the new recycling and refuse service. The leaflet was designed along the same lines as standard WRAP leaflet to keep consistency with the icon images being used in other publicity and the media. The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager asked if the Board could let him know of any amendments or comments, which would then be taken back to the designer. It was suggested that the leaflet was a little bland and was in need of being brighter, along with a larger font size, as the current size was difficult to read. It was felt that although there was a lot of information within the leaflet there was not enough about recycling. In response, the Communications Officer stressed the key to any kind of communication was being clear, and not overfilling the leaflet with too much information. There was a need to ensure the public understood why this new service was being launched – local and global reasons for recycling.

The Board discussed whether there was a need for a “warm up” before this leaflet was delivered, either through another leaflet or press releases. With a leaflet due to go out advising of re-routing changes it was felt using another leaflet could risk “leaflet overload” leading to residents not reading all of them. The leaflets would all have a similar look with enough differences to make sure that the public didn’t think that the new leaflet was just a re run of one already read. Also there was the added costs producing a new leaflet would involve. The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager advised the Council had yet to hear whether Devon County Council would be making a contribution. However it was felt relying on this contribution for Phase One could cause problems, as there was no guarantee it would be available in subsequent years. It was stated that the proposed leaflet had been used in other areas and had worked. Pre distribution information could not go out with the Battery leaflet as this was not due to be distributed by SITA until late July and therefore would be too late. It was suggested that “Get it sorted” should be approached to see if any other additional leaflets had been produced before.

Members discussed the implications of the leaflet being A3 folded to A4 rather than A4 folded to A5. This would allow a larger font size and make the content a little less compacted. It was believed it would not increase post costs as the leaflet could still go into an A5 envelope, however collating costs would rise. The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager will look into costings of having a larger leaflet printed.

The possibility of having posters on the Street Scene vehicles, to promote the new service was discussed. No promotion material was due to go on the vehicles until later in the year, so potentially it would be possible to have something on them for the summer. The issue was raised over what would be put on the vehicles, to avoid confusion by having vehicles covering the whole district promoting a new service that was being rolled out in certain areas/phases. The Board agreed that the posters should act as a ‘recycle now’ campaign, to encourage recycling and act as a warm up for the new service. To keep consistency the posters would use the same icons / images as those used on the leaflet distributed to households.

Update from EDDC on progress towards new scheme cont...

Schools recycling

The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager advised it was County wide policy to provide recycling for Primary Schools. It was reported that it was a slow process but recycling was now being collected from 30 out of the 55 Primary Schools in the District. The Primary Schools were currently being treated as commercial buildings at a cost of £9 per bin, which would come out of their rates. The drive would be to encourage the schools to work in the same way as residential properties. The service was not currently being provided to Secondary Schools, however due to the scale, recycling banks might be used in the larger schools.

- RECOMMENDED**
- 1 that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager find out how feasible it would be to have stickers asking residents not to use the bins before the agreed start date
 - 2 that the Board let the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager know of any amendments to the proposed leaflet as soon as possible
 - 3 that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager speak with 'Get it sorted' to find out what leaflets have been produced for other authorities
 - 4 that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager look at costings for an A3 leaflet to be printed and collated
 - 5 that the Streetscene vehicles be used to promote recycling for the summer

3. Open Question and Answer Forum

Concerns were raised over service monitoring. The Board agreed it was crucial a system was put into place to show whether properties were being missed or if the resident was failing to put the bin out before the agreed time. Having this information would allow for essential service improvement and keep costs down. The system would enable the Customer Service Centre to see which areas the different crews collected from, allowing them to 'home' in on certain crews where for example there were a lot of missed collections. The Head of Street Scene advised he would raise the issue with Corporate Director, Karime Hassan to take to Strategic Management Team as a key issue. The Chairman emphasised that this was of great importance for the roll out of the new service and for performance management. It would also allow the Council to keep track of second orders for boxes. He was concerned that the system was not yet in place.

The Communications Officer had been unable to secure local sponsorship of the bins.

- RECOMMENDED**
- that Corporate Director, Karime Hassan be asked to raise with the Strategic Management Team the importance of having a robust data collection system in place for monitoring purposes

4. Update from SITA on progress with recycling and refuse contract

Rick Aldridge updated the Board on the progress of the contract, with a number of stages being finalised.

Day Change Leaflet

It was reported that a consultation had been held with the workforce concerning the new service and impending day changes. From this the workforce had asked if phase 5 (Exmouth area) to be collected on Friday could be moved to Thursday, with Phase 4

Update from SITA on progress with recycling and refuse contract cont ...

(Budleigh/Broadclyst) being moved to Friday. Budleigh Salterton was a smaller area than Exmouth and it would be less likely to cause any problems at the end of the week. Bank Holidays added to week-end problems of collections and disposal of collected waste. The Board could see no problems with this and agreed it was a sensible suggestion. It was advised this now meant they would be looking to get the re-routing finalised by the end of the month. The Board all agreed they would like to pass on their thanks to the workforce for their suggestions and would like it made known their input was valued.

Discussions had taken place between Rick Aldridge and The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manger regarding the distribution of the day change leaflet. It was felt that to ensure all households received the leaflet; it should be distributed through walksort at the Post Office instead of by SITA as originally considered. This would be at a cost of roughly £12,000 and was felt it should be a shared cost (50:50) by the partnership. This was agreed by SITA, as there would be cost benefits in the future. It was advised that the Day Change leaflet was to be labelled to the property and as there was limited information on it the content was to be big and bold.

The Head of Street Scene advised that there was money in place to increase the number of staff in the Customer Service Centre to deal with the rise in calls they were likely to receive.

It was suggested that all Post Masters in the district should be provided with a Frequently Asked Question sheet, as it was felt this was somewhere people went when they had concerns/questions. This was agreed by the Board and suggested liaising with the Post Offices Member Champion.

New depot at Greendale Barton

Rick Aldridge confirmed they would have the use of Unit 21 at Greendale Barton, which would see them through Phases 1 and 2. The planning permission for the construction of a new larger building had been re-submitted and it was hoped that if it was agreed they should be able to move in within 12 months.

New Vehicles

There would be two 7.5 tonne and three 12 tonne vehicles for the start of the new service. A trial had been undertaken with the 12 tonne vehicle to determine its manoeuvrability around the streets. From this it was reported 80% of the district would be serviced by the larger vehicle. An order had been placed for the full fleet and it was hoped that the vehicles would be ready by the end of December. Some of the current fleet was to be converted to take kitchen waste through from August to December. It was advised it would not be a major conversion.

SITA was asked to share the technical specification with the Head of Street Scene to check whether it was a 'greener'/lower emissions fleet, as it was felt that this would be good for publicity.

Vehicle Livery

The Communications Officer asked if there was any update on the vehicle livery. It was advised by Dave Swire that the livery could go on the doors or on the back panel only as the rest of the stillages would be open. It was agreed that SITA and the Communications Officer would liaise with regard to the vehicle livery.

Update from SITA on progress with recycling and refuse contract cont ...

- RECOMMENDED**
- 1 that the collection day for Phase 5 (Exmouth area) be changed from Friday to Thursday
 - 2 that the route changes be put in place before the roll out in August as requested by SITA to overcome any potential problems as they arise
 - 3 that use be made of the Post Office “walksort” service for delivering information leaflets to all households to explain the roll out be confirmed with costs being met 50:50 with SITA
 - 4 that the Post Office Champion be advised of the Council’s intention to provide Post Masters in the area with Frequently Asked Question sheets and for him to suggest how the Post Office could be further utilised
 - 5 that SITA share the technical specifications of the new vehicles with the Head of Street Scene
 - 6 that SITA and the Communications Officer liaise to finalise vehicle livery

5. Open Question and Answer Forum

There were no questions.

6. Marketing and Time Plan

Time Plan

The Time Plan for the new waste collection system was shown to the Board by the Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager. It was hoped that this would provide a guide for the members of the Board as to when each of the processes would be taking place, ensuring the smooth and efficient roll out of the new service. The Board was asked to let the Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager know if they had any queries or if there were any processes that had been missed and would need to be added. The plan now referred to phases rather than trials.

Marketing Plan

It was noted the Market Plan had been updated, as issues had been resolved. It was advised that the plan was only intended as an internal document to focus the Board on achieving what they set out to do. It was agreed that it was a useful document and should be referred to on a regular basis.

- RECOMMENDED** that the Board let the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager know of any amendments to the Time plan

7. Report on Deed of Variation and the following stages

The Legal Executive advised that following this meeting of the Board a meeting would be taking place between Dave Swire, SITA's Solicitor and himself with the intention of finalising the document. There were no contentious issues left to resolve and they were now tying up any loose ends and agreeing wording.

The Head of Street Scene sought clarification of financial monitoring. Members were advised that once an agreed accountancy firm had been appointed a methodology of reporting would be agreed and a formal contract would be in place for the roll out of the new service.

8. Issue of containers – numbers and charges

The Legal Executive queried how postponing the start of Phase One to 4 August had affected the roll out of Phase Two. The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager advised that they were aiming for the roll out of Phase Two to be January/February 2009. The time between the two phases was essential for the monitoring of Phase One. This would allow time to tweak any issues that might arise, ensuring a better service.

The Chairman asked whether the bin manufacturers had been spoken to with regards to having a slot for Phase Two. It was felt with the current exchange rates of the Euro and the Pound it was ideal to get a slot with the current manufacturer based in England. The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager advised a meeting was taking place that afternoon with the bin manufacturers to talk about a slot for Phase Two. It was reported by the Head of Street Scene that the manufacturers had agreed to hold the costs for 6 months, however from April there would be an 8-9% increase in costs. Members queried if it would be possible to forward order. However not having agreed when the roll out Phase 3 would be, it could cause major storage problems. The Interim Refuse Recycling Manager and the Head of Street Scene would see what could be arranged with the container manufacturers to secure the best possible deal for the Council.

The charging for replacement boxes was discussed. Rick Aldridge advised that they had recently delivered a large number of recycling boxes and it was clear they were not all being used. This emphasised the need for a system to be in place to allow these types of situations to be monitored. It was important that any action did not discourage recycling. There was already an agreed policy in place with regard to replacement boxes/bins and this should be followed.

It was raised that there was some conflicting wording on the proposed leaflet with regard to replacements boxes for recycling. It was suggested that the wording should be changed to, "If one recycling box is not enough for all your recyclables, you will be able to purchase a second box". It was thought that by not having a price stated it would encourage people who were truly interested to ring in.

It was advised by the Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager that the exact details of what would go on the bins had not yet been decided. The use of the word 'Landfill' on the refuse wheelie bins in the leaflet was supported and the wheeled refuse bins would now be referred to as "Landfill bins".

A member of the Board asked who would be providing the liners for the food containers. It was advised 10 free liners would be given to households with the delivery of the container. The leaflet accompanying the food containers would give details of outlets for the purchase of additional liners. It was advised that there wasn't necessarily a need for the liners as the food could be wrapped in newspaper or nothing at all. Residents needed to be aware that only the recommended compostable liners could be used. This would need to be clear on the leaflet. Any other liner/bag would interfere with the recycling process. It was agreed that they should be referred to as "compostable liners" in all communication.

Issue of containers – numbers and charges cont ...

The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager reported tags would be used on items not taken by the crew explaining why. It was hoped a label would be going on to the 'Landfill' bins to advise residents what not to put in the bins, such as paper and plastic bottles. It was reported improvements in recycling had been seen in areas using these labels. The Communications Officer advised if he were made aware of areas not recycling correctly he would send a press release to the newspaper targeting that area, naming and shaming.

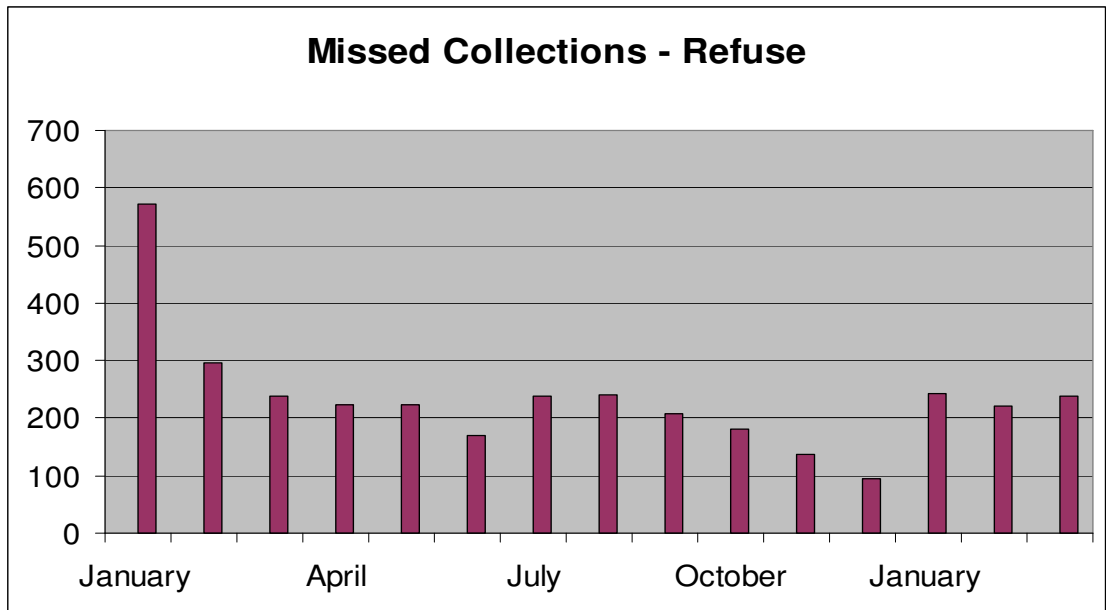
The Head of Street Scene presented an article from the Local Government website. The article highlighted the strategy being adopted by the EDDC and SITA Partnership was the right one. The article outlined WRAP, funded by DEFRA, was supporting 19 Councils to conduct weekly food waste collection trials and develop good practice guidance in the design and operation of food waste collection schemes. The trials were with 19 Councils although they had originally intended to his attention that WRAP's Business Plan stated there should in fact be work with 20 Councils, and they were keen to get a 20th on board. The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager advised he was in the process of getting an application to WRAP to be the 20th authority. If successful it was hoped that waste analysis and other information collected by WRAP would provide concrete evidence that the new service was working.

- RECOMMENDED**
- 1 that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager and the Head of Street Scene speak with the bin manufacturer about securing prices and a production slot for Phase Two
 - 2 that the wording be changed on the proposed draft leaflet to, "If one recycling box is not enough for all your recyclables, you will be able to purchase a second box"
 - 3 that the wheeled refuse bins be referred to as "Landfill bins"
 - 4 that the liners to be used in the kitchen containers be referred to as "compostable liners"

9. Any other business

Missed Collections

The Interim Refuse and Recycling Manager gave a verbal report of the missed collections. It was noted that the number of refuse collections being missed was levelling out at around 200 per month. The percentage of missed collections for March was down to 0.087%.



Any other business cont...

Dave Swire commented that these results didn't take into account where collections were reported as missed but collected before 12.00 pm. This was not a missed collection. It was also the case where a collection was reported missed after 12.00pm and picked up the following day. Therefore it was likely there were less than 200 missed collections.

It was reported there had been a dramatic reduction in the number of missed collections for recycling and was felt that a lot of praise was due. In January last year there were 400 reports of missed collections, and for March 2008 there were 50. This translated to 0.06% missed collections for March, a considerable improvement.



The Communications Officer advised a booklet was due to be distributed to all the district's households in May, to inform of Service Improvements within the Council. A page had been dedicated to recycling, advising there would be service changes and to keep watch for leaflets.

10. Date of next meeting

To be held on Wednesday 30 April 2008 at 2.00pm in the Committee Room, Knowle

Chairman

Date