

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the East Devon Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board, held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 20 May 2008

Present:

Councillors:

David Cox – Portfolio Holder, Street Scene Services (Chairman)
Mike Green
Philip Skinner

Honorary Alderman - Ron Mudge

SITA
Rick Aldridge

EDDC Officers
Mike Baker – Chief Engineer
Paul Deakin – Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager
Karime Hassan – Corporate Director
Steve Joyce – Waste Management Officer
Mark Reilly – Head of Street Scene Services
Nick Stephen – Communications Officer

Rachel Perram – Democratic Services Officer

Apologies:

Dave Swire, SITA
Derek Smith – Legal Executive, EDDC

The meeting started at 2.05pm and finished at 3.25pm

1. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting of the Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board held on 30 April 2008 were agreed.

2. Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Philip Skinner to the Board and was delighted with his appointment. Steve Joyce, Waste Management Officer was also introduced and welcomed to the meeting.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

‘Your New Recycling and Refuse Collection Service’ Leaflet

The Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager advised the Board that unfortunately there had not been any space on this leaflet to add the wording that it was also available in large print. However this would be added to the 8 page leaflet containing further information, which was in the process of being designed and artworked.

Proposed Visit to South Somerset Partnership

In response to an update on the progress in arranging this visit, the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager advised the Board that the Partnership had been contacted and they would be very happy for EDDC to visit them. The Board discussed possible dates and requested that the Chairmen of the Scrutiny Committee and Overview Committee might also like to attend.

RESOLVED

- 1 that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager arrange a visit scheduled for the morning of 11 June 2008.
- 2 that once scheduled, Cllr Roger Giles and David Key be invited to attend the visit on behalf of the Scrutiny and Overview Committees.
- 3 that both Cllr Giles and Key be invited to attend the Ward Members' briefing day on 27 May 2008, at Knowle.

4. Update from EDDC

Press Launch 19 May – Feedback

The Board were advised by the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager that the day had gone well, but that the numbers of attendees from all areas (press, officers of EDDC and ward members) had been disappointing.

The Chairman requested an update on how many responses had been received from the invitation for Parish Councils in the Phase One area to attend an information session on 27 May. The Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager advised that only one council had confirmed attendance so far, but promised to get in touch with all parish clerks and ward members to remind them of the session and to confirm attendances. The Chairman suggested that where Parishes had a particular problem in attending they could be offered a visit from EDDC to give them further information and answer any questions that they may have.

RESOLVED

that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager contact all Members and Parish Councils in the Phase One area to stress the importance of the launch event on 27 May and also to confirm attendances.

The Board was informed that in response to a leaflet drop in the Phase One area, the Customer Call Centre had received 252 calls in one day regarding the information provided and changes proposed for residents. It was clear that further communication and clarification work was needed to drive the messages home to all sectors of the community. The next leaflet delivery was scheduled to take place next week.

Wheeled Bin Order

The Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager advised the Board that orders for both the wheeled bins and the kitchen waste caddies had been placed for the Phase Two area, thus ensuring secure delivery dates and fixing prices.

5. Open Question and Answer Forum

The Corporate Director, Karime Hassan, asked the team whether there had been any questions asked at the press/staff/members launch day that they had been unable to answer.

He was advised that there had been two questions:

1. How much were the compostable bags to buy?
 - A. The manufacturer had been contacted to give a recommended retail selling price.

Open Question and Answer Forum cont'd...

2. Are smaller gull sacks going to be made available, in addition to the current larger size?

A. The Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager advised the Board that this was possible as there were a number of bag sizes which could be purchased.

4. Update from SITA

Rick Aldridge updated the Board on the progress of the contract.

'WRAP' Battery Bags

The bags had now arrived from WRAP and were being distributed to householders.

Re-routing and maps

Rick Aldridge was disappointed to advise the Board that he had yet to receive the maps from ICT, (that were promised for 2 May 2008) were still not with them. He was concerned at this situation as it was so close to launch and this information was vital to SITA.

(Following discussion with the ICT department during the meeting, the maps were duly presented to Rick Aldridge, to take back with him)

Green Recycling Boxes

SITA hold these boxes in stock and distribute them to householders on demand via EDDC. It was noted that the average demand for these boxes was in the region of 400 boxes per month. However demand had increased recently due to publicity and leaflets issued regarding the new recycling collection scheme. It was agreed that SITA should order further supplies to ensure adequate stocks are held to cover demand during the introduction of phases 1 & 2 and for the ensuing 12 months.

RESOLVED that SITA place an order now for 5-6,000 green recycling boxes.

5. Open Question and Answer Forum

There were no questions for SITA. However, one Board member asked the Board for further information with regard to how budgets were being controlled for items authorised at Board meetings. The member was assured that budgetary control was the responsibility of the Head of Street Scene and that everything was within the limits agreed.

6. Communications Update

The Communications Officer updated the Board as to the press, officer and member launch event the previous day for Phase One of the new recycling and refuse contract. The Express and Echo and Archant Newspapers had attended and the Chairman of the Board had been interviewed by two radio stations.

Plenty of photographs had been taken both by press and for the Council's own use. Archant advised that they intended to include this news item on their website and to have a 'blog' (forum for discussion) about recycling and green matters.

Photos taken for Council use would be included in the forthcoming issue of Devon Talk, which would coincide with the launch of Phase One.

Communications Update cont'd...

It was also noted that the turnout among Ward Members had been low. The Board felt that Ward Members' support was key to getting residents involved and informed about the mechanics of the new contract.

Roadshows

The Board noted that the start of the road show events coincided with the launch of the area wide collection day change and with 'Recycle Now' week, a Government backed scheme.

The Waste Management Officer advised the Board that officers from the Customer Service Centre should be coming along to the road shows, which would be helpful to everybody.

The Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager advised the Board that the Ward Members and Parish Councils would be e-mailed to encourage attendance at the road show events and EDDC would also provide plenty of information on the new contract and how it would work for residents. The Communications Officer also advised that there would be a ½ page advertisement in the Midweek Herald advertising these events.

Feedback

The Communications Officer reported that very positive feedback had been received regarding the proposed weekly food waste collections. The fact that the methane produced as a bi-product from this waste in turn generated electricity was a great green message.

7. Deed of Variation

In the absence of the EDDC Legal Executive, the Head of Street Scene advised the Board that a meeting was due to take place with SITA on 21 May, to discuss a couple of points that were outstanding. If these items were agreed, the final document should be available within a couple of weeks.

8. Training/Information days

This item had already been covered, with details published in the latest version of the Communications Plan, which had been distributed with the meeting papers.

The Board was advised that a brainstorming session between SITA and EDDC officers/Customer Service Centre staff was scheduled for 21 May. This would help to iron out any issues and deal with any questions that both parties may have about the contract.

9. Micro Recycling Sites - An option for Flats

The Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager reminded the Board that a request for further information had been made at the last meeting, with regard to possible transport requirements to facilitate this service in a cost effective manner.

Micro Recycling Sites - An option for Flats cont'd...

Rick Aldridge advised that SITA would look at the proposal and would come back with costs so that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager could prepare a report for submission to the Board. At this stage it was felt that a dedicated vehicle capable of holding three different materials would be the most suitable and economic method of collecting dry recyclables.

- RESOLVED** 1 that the Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager submits a further report to the Board by the end of July 2008.

10. Any other Business

ICT

The Waste Management Officer advised the Board that the ICT team were endeavouring to upgrade the Lagan system to facilitate the collection of data via the Customer Service Centre.

In addition, the upgraded database of all East Devon properties will hold a 'history' record of bins supplied to residents. This information was required by the Waste Management Officers dealing with complaints and queries and it was felt that access to the database whilst out of the office via a PDA/laptop would be invaluable and reduce reliance on paper records.

- RESOLVED** that the Chairman should arrange a meeting with the Head of ICT to discuss options for mobile working by the Waste Management Officers.

The Board discussed the issue of logging bin deliveries onto the computer system, with the issue of proof of delivery being an important factor – to overcome situations where residents subsequently claim that bins have not been delivered.

SITA advised that they would keep a list of each day's bin deliveries and this checklist would be supplied to the Council so that records could be updated. The Board expressed a desire to have a verification note from SITA which would confirm that these had actually been delivered. This is particularly relevant as many householders would not be at home when deliveries take place. This would mean the note being initialled or signed by the crew member to confirm delivery: the Board agreed that this was required to monitor deliveries and ensure households do not receive bins that were in addition to the standard allocation.

- RESOLVED** that SITA be requested to provide a record of bins delivered and that the paperwork should include details of the recipients addresses and be signed by the SITA crew member responsible for the delivery.

SITA Depot at Greendale Barton

The Board was advised that the application had been recommended for approval by the EDDC Development Control Committee and will be determined by Devon County Council.

Specification for the provision of Forensic Accounting and Audit of the Recycling and Refuse Contract.

The Head of Street Scene advised the Board that the invitation to tender for the SITA audit had been sent to a number of firms for quotation purposes.

Any other Business cont'd...

East Devon Household Waste – Annual Statistics - 2007/08

The Interim Recycling and Refuse Manager was delighted to report that the draft figures received from Devon County Council showed a reduction of 9.15% for District waste and an increase in the recycling rate to 21.88% (up 2.52%) These figures would be confirmed in July.

11. Future Meetings

The Chairman proposed that a number of the additional meetings, previously scheduled, be cancelled as a number of matters regarding the launch for Phase One had been resolved and bi-weekly meetings were not required. Accordingly, the Board decided to cancel meetings for 11 June, 9 July and 6 August.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for 23 June 2008 in the Committee Room, Knowle.

Chairman

Date.....