WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD MINUTES

Date of Meeting: Location: Time:	03 September 2012 Conference Room, Civic Offices, Epping 2.00 pm	
Attending:	Cllr W Breare-Hall – Env. Portfolio Holder & Board Chairman Qasim Durrani, Assistant Director, Technical Josie Falco, Waste Services Development Officer Paul Madden, SITA UK Melvin Dhorasoo, SITA UK	(WBH) (QD) (JF) (PM) (MD)
Also present:	Stella Forster (Minutes)	(SF)

		Action
2.	Apologies for Absence - Cllr Mrs S Stavrou, John Gilbert, Steve Holgate, David Marsh.	
3.	Declarations of Interest - None	
4.	Draft minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2012 - Agreed	
5.	Matters arising P2 monitoring report - PM stated that this will be sent in advance of the next meeting, as requested by WBH.	РМ
6.	Review of current contract performance (operational & financial) PM: P4, profit margins - comparison of Q4 2011/12 and Q1 2012/13. There is a big improvement in operating margins and SITA are close to making a profit on the contract. Some indexation due from December was built in to Q1, as well as a release on a maintenance accrual, and Q2 will show a truer picture.	
	P5, profit margins; full contract & year to date from April '12. Again, the contract year to date from April is a little misleading due to the releases that were made this quarter, but the overall position is a very positive one.	
	P6, cost split monthly. July '11 was included so that a full 13 month comparison could be made. Vehicles & equipment in June reduced to £15k due to a major release that month. Fuel prices are beginning to increase again now but the figures show the benefit of the decrease earlier in the year. Deductable damage (DD) as always is a random figure that controls the overall costs. SITA are to provide a breakdown/explanation of DD's before the next scheduled meeting.	РМ
	'Other costs' include the disposal of green waste, which goes to an external site, a haulage element, management charges at the depot, and tools and equipment. A full list will be given in the next monitoring report. It was noted that other costs in September were extremely high but dropped drastically in October, which may be due to adjustments made by SITA accountants.	
	P7, quarter on quarter split. Very little changed between the quarters, with the exception of DDs. Again, SITA has not been hit too hard by fuel increases as better driving habits and a reduction in wasted journeys has had an effect on fuel consumption. SITA have recently moved their bulk arrangement from Esso, who refused to deliver if the drivers had to reverse, to Halls Fuel. Diesel from plastics will be available from early next year. PM will bring SITA's total fuel purchase figure to the next meeting.	РМ

KPIs

PM: P9 waste flows. As the tonnages and recyclable lines are misleading the graph will be made clearer for the next meeting. The figures cover a 13 month period and the recyclable figure for July '12 is marginally ahead of the same month last year. The increase in green waste is due to the late growing season because of the wet weather earlier in the year. The aim is to see residual waste decreasing, but this may be difficult to achieve. Epping are performing well but Rochford are currently No 3 in the country, with South Oxford at No 1.

PM

SF

PM

WBH said that it is encouraging that the percentage is being maintained but it would be worth making comparisons with better performing contracts to see where the volumes of recyclables going into residual might be reduced.

JF replied that these are reducing slowly. QD suggested that supplying a container for recyclables, as at Rochford, could be considered as this may make a difference JF responded that it may be that an amount is lost because residents forget, or are unable, to pick up a roll of sacks. Although dry recyclables can be collected in other containers, they seem to be reluctant to use anything but the sacks. Distributors are difficult to find as they are not paid by the Council and sacks take up valuable stock space. Supermarkets are not willing to take them and EFDC outlets are not open when the working population require them. Although many properties would not have space for a third bin, the storage of sacks can also be a problem for some and they are considered unsightly. In addition to using outlets an annual distribution of sacks had historically been enacted but proved unsatisfactory as residents appeared to use them for other purposes, and the budget had to be increased. QD advised that currently 5.5 million sacks are given out, at a cost of £200,000 per year. A bin rollout would cost approx. £1m. WBH asked if a direct correlation could be drawn between the delivery of a bin and an increase in recycling and QD replied that this would be difficult to prove.

Another option to consider is the reduction of residual bin sizes, perhaps limiting families of more than 4 to a 180L, and smaller families to 140L. However this would also be disruptive to residents, and there would be a cost implication. QD said that the recycling message is continually being reinforced, and although this is important and has some effect a meeting between himself, JG, WBH and DM to discuss other options would be arranged before the next meeting.

It was agreed that SITA would put together a list of possible actions, drawing on their experiences of other contracts, to bring to the next meeting.

MD: P10 missed bins. Although there appears to be an increase from the same period last year 37 bins per 100,000 collections is still a good result. However the problems associated with residents having second and third bins which appear after the first has been emptied and are then listed as missed are being addressed. These properties are gradually being identified and an extensive list is being compiled in conjunction with the waste team.

PM: P11 accidents. Again the graph looks serious but it represents one accident in July 12. There have been no Riddor accidents this year. Even taking into account that it has been an ice-free year the number of lost days due to personal injury are still pleasingly low. Generally 50% of accidents can be expected in the first three months of the year. When looking at reports country-wide most recent accidents appear to be as a result of crew members carelessly jumping from the cab. There are no cameras and their claims to have had 3 points of contact cannot be contradicted. Some longer service staff become complacent over time and the safety message is being reinforced.

	The average length of time an employee stays with SITA is 6 years. PM stated that the induction process, currently largely a tick box exercise completed in one day, is being restructured. Another new initiative being introduced is random drugs & alcohol testing, to include management. At present there is an amnesty period; if staff admit they have a problem they are offered help and advice. A crew member, not the driver, was recently disciplined over an alcohol related offence.	
	In terms of statistics the same process currently applies to all accidents, major or very minor and the system should be changed to give greater weight to more serious incidents. The time limit for reportable accidents is now 7 days but SITA are still using the old guidelines of 3 days.	
	PM: P12 overtime & agency hours. There are no concerns about the figures and the 40 hours of agency hours in July is a good result. A slightly higher rate is to be expected in the holiday period but generally annual leave is covered. It is unexpected and long term sickness that can mean an increase in agency hours, and some staff were given leave for the Olympics. PM and MD agreed that the Epping workforce is non-militant, and the crews are generally compliant and willing to work.	
7.	Government funding of 'weekly' collections The final bid to introduce a food collection from flats was submitted by the due date. JF has been advised that it has been classified as Cat 3 (the lowest of the 3 categories) as the main focus is on taking residual to weekly collections. She has been asked for the background calculation behind the carbon figure, which is	
	encouraging. It will not be known how much more staff time will be required until it has been advised that the bid has been successful.	
8.	Health & Safety issues JF circulated the Q2 internal Waste Contractor audit results. This has been introduced as a result of the last HSE visit, and results are encouraging. The few red areas are slightly misleading, e.g the PPE & welfare only failed because toilet maps were not evident in vehicles, which is being tackled.	
	JF also handed out a summary of Q1 and Q2 results, and it was noted that some of the issues identified in the first quarter had been addressed. Having now completed two quarters the audits show that procedures were being followed and in particular vehicle service compliance & maintenance was being well managed.	
	Audits are now carried out quarterly, monthly and at random times when officers are out in the district. The quarters were calculated working back from the next HSE visit, and will in time move to the usual financial year timeline. The HSE made it clear that, if an accident occurs, the Council is equally liable with the contractor. Every road has been risk assessed and waste officers check that the crews are carrying out their duties correctly. The men are now aware that checks are being made by both SITA and EFDC and appear to be happy to comply.	
	PM and MD agreed that there is a good understanding between the two parties and working together can only result in safer working practices.	
9.	Recycling in flats JF: Waste officers have worked hard on embedding this service. A door stepping campaign was run last year, aimed at trying to encourage clear sack recycling as well as bulk bin recycling. However the problems continue, with some blocks having limited space, some with bin stores waiting to be built, and some managing agents being reluctant to cooperate even when residents are	

	enthusiastic. Enforcement is limited with the changes to Section 46, but it may be possible to force the issue by introducing a fortnightly residual collection.	
	QD: Without a weekly food collection, this would be difficult to justify and result in complaints about vermin, maggots, smells etc. Housing are supplying recycling facilities where possible, and they are built in to new developments. However some managing agents favour a weekly collection and can be difficult. They have a financial responsibility to provide the storage areas and bins for recycling, which they maintain are ugly and affect the value of the property. For some residents who are keen to recycle there is an understanding with the Council to pile the sacks in an agreed position for collection, but this can lead to fly tip issues.	
	MD said that when caretakers were responsible for the condition of blocks of flats there would not have been the same problems. Managing agents do not have the time, and this is a national, not just local, problem. Old blocks would have had chutes and should have space for extra bins.	
	JF: Waste officers are now working with ENOs to tackle the problem of contamination in the blocks where recycling facilities have been built. Some agents are refusing to take responsibility for contamination and are asking for the bins to be removed.	
	WBH said that contamination was bad practice and he had more sympathy with those blocks where space is restricted. Each block has individual problems which must be addressed on that basis.	
	Ian Almond has identified 9 blocks where facilities can be installed but the agents are being obstructive. WBH suggested that the agents and residents of these blocks are contacted to give them an opportunity to put their point of view but, unless this was compelling, the work should be carried out.	
	It was agreed that SF was to arrange a meeting between WBH, QD, JG and DM to discuss how to address this issue.	SF
10.	Government waste strategy Referrring to the article from the MJ Journal circulated by JG, WBH said there could be huge implications if new regulations require local authorities to discontinue comingled collections. However, JF said that the article was written by the solicitor that has made the challenge and therefore could be biased. She passed around a contradictory article which indicates that the European Commission may accept comingled as long as the material collected is of high enough quality. As both articles are dated August 2012 it is uncertain which was printed first. Although the quality of material separated at source is generally higher, JF said markets vary. France for example will accept recycling from MRFs, while the English paper market will only take A1 material.	
	PM stated that household comingled is of better quality than commercial. Whilst it would be of obvious benefit to have material segregated at source, SITA have the facilities to deal with comingled and are happy to continue.	
	WBH said that as this matter could affect the next contract, the situation would be monitored closely.	
11.	Depot relocation QD: It has now been concluded that the NWA site is unsuitable for a new depot, mostly because of the uncertainty over the future development of the airfield. Three other locations are currently being considered by Estates & Valuations, none of which are owned by the Council and they must be bought or leased from	

	the landowners. The difficulty is finding a site with suitable drainage.	
	Members must decide whether to ask the incoming contractor to supply a depot or not. SITA is of the view that the Council should own their own depot to give it more control. However, it is largely dependant upon the Langston Road development and if sufficient income will be generated to build a new depot. Time is of the essence as planning permission must be sought, and it can be underestimated how long the process will take.	
	JF: It is important to find a site that the workforce can commute to easily, particularly since street cleansers begin work at 6am, and that there is a large enough car park to accommodate those wishing to drive. MD confirmed that at present a large percentage of staff live in the local area and walk to work, or commute by underground.	
	PM: Much will depend on the distance from the present place of work, which currently in the staff terms and conditions is Debden, although some arrangement can be made with the workforce. However, the more rural the site, the harder it will be to attract future employees.	
12.	Date of next meeting It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on 5 November, again in the Conference Room.	
13.	Any other business JF passed around the revised liverage. This was accepted and work will proceed on placing it on the vehicles.	
	QD: On street parking, which is a function currently supplied by the Council, is to be taken over by The North East Parking Partnership (NEPP) in the district from 1 October. Until they make their permanent arrangements, NEPP have asked if office space for their operatives could be provided for a short time. The old WRVS office at the depot has been identified as a possible base for them. As they are in the district most of the time they would only require it early morning and evening, possibly using SITA's toilet and canteen facilities. If this is agreed they would have to adhere to the opening and closing times of the front gates. MD: SITA and EFDC have introduced a new joint initiative where crews are invited to meetings where they can put their point of view on working practices etc. One such meeting was held last week and proved very successful. The focus is on food and garden staff at the moment but in time it will be extended to the whole workforce. It will generate more work, but it is hoped that it will increase productivity over time. JF said that although some of the men were sceptical initially, they were generally receptive and appreciative of engaging in a two way discussion. Some are already reporting properties with two bins, which are being investigated. Generally it is a very positive move.	