

**WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD
MINUTES**

Date of Meeting: 03 September 2012
Location: Conference Room, Civic Offices, Epping
Time: 2.00 pm
Attending: Cllr W Breare-Hall – Env. Portfolio Holder & Board Chairman (WBH)
 Qasim Durrani, Assistant Director, Technical (QD)
 Josie Falco, Waste Services Development Officer (JF)
 Paul Madden, SITA UK (PM)
 Melvin Dhorasoo, SITA UK (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.	PM
6.	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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. Deductible 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.</p> <p>'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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>PM</p> <p>PM</p> <p>PM</p>

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.

10. Government waste strategy

Referring 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

SF

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 livery. 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.