

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK & FINISH PANEL
HELD ON MONDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2019
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.00 - 8.05 PM**

Members Present:	L Burrows (Chairman), S Rackham (Vice-Chairman), C McCredie, R Morgan, S Neville, C C Pond, M Sartin and D Wixley
Other members present:	N Avey
Apologies for Absence:	None.
Officers Present	Q Durrani (Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services)), J Warwick (Service Manager (Contracts)) and V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

13. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Panel noted its Terms of Reference which had been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16 July 2019.

14. MINUTES

The notes of the meeting of the Task and Finish Panel held on 4 November 2019 were agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendment from Councillor C C Pond, to read at Min no (2c), paragraph 3, opening sentence:

“There was no uniformity amongst members for not collecting garden waste in certain months of the year.”

Councillor D Wixley observed that there was only one bin where people could recycle litter in Bricklamps Path (Loughton). Furthermore, The Broadway (Loughton) did not have recyclable bins (Min no 9 (2e)).

15. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

The work programme was noted.

16. WASTE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT- REVIEW

(a) To provide further information for a third wheelie bin District-wide

The Service Manager (Contracts), J Warwick, introduced the next steps on the options detailed in the report. Research into wheelie bin contamination levels with other neighbouring authorities had proved to be difficult as comparison data had not been forthcoming. Accurate implementation costs (operational and contractual) would be required from Biffa. The next step for members was to decide whether to pursue the option of a third wheelie bin through the Waste Management Partnership Board and an innovation forum. An innovation forum could be formed at the discretion of the Board, which would consist of officers from Biffa and the Council.

Councillor M Sartin remarked that during the tour of Biffa's Edmonton depot in September, it was discovered that there were greater levels of contamination in wheelie bins. Therefore, Biffa needed to provide information on the contamination levels to help the Panel reach a decision. Councillor C C Pond also agreed with this observation.

The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services), Q Durrani, advised that very few local authorities achieved an income from recycling, and they had not been willing to share such information because of the sensitivity of the data as it was not in the public domain. The cost of sacks was rising and although the cost of bins was initially higher, people tended to use a bin more, thus bin based collections captured more recycling. This would need to go to an Innovation Forum for consideration and Cabinet would need to look at the business case. There could be a caveat that subject to a viable financial and environmental business case, the Council would have a third wheelie bin.

Councillor M Sartin replied that the Panel would only be interested in the figures, not the local authority that had sent the information, so the data could be anonymous.

Councillors C C Pond and S Neville agreed that members needed a forward projection of costs otherwise members could not make any accurate evaluation.

Councillor S Rackham remarked that elderly residents preferred to use a bin and that more vermin were attracted to the recycling sacks.

Councillor D Wixley commented that not one size fitted all and that some elderly residents might need assisted collections.

Councillor C McCredie said that elderly people were less able to access distribution outlets for the sacks, and Councillor C C Pond added that sacks used to be delivered to residents.

Councillor S Neville advised that commercially sensitive information could be restricted when an agenda was published. There were merits for both ways of collecting recyclable waste but scrutiny needed to be undertaken on a third wheelie bin.

The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) said that contamination of wheelie bins had not been reported as a major issue. Sacks were stickered if they were contaminated. More work needed to be done over the next six months and it might be that too much work was required so this could be revisited in one or two years. He explained that under the 20-year contract with Biffa, the mechanism to allow the Council and Biffa to work together was with the Waste Management Partnership Board. This would allow for both the financial and technical side of the proposal to be looked at closely so the financial implications and any changes to the contract could be ascertained. It would go on to Cabinet thereafter.

The Panel agreed to take a vote on having a third wheelie bin in principle, subject to the caveat for a viable financial and environmental business case. The result of the vote was that a majority of the members were against this proposal.

Councillor M Sartin recommended the proposal for a third wheelie bin be reviewed later, perhaps closer to the end of the contract with Biffa, which was agreed.

(b) That the Panel consider a review of street cleansing arrangements with a view to achieving improvements in cleansing standards

The Service Manager (Contracts) reported that the new cleansing arrangements would comprise 3-weekly cleansing of specifically identified areas, and that the trial would continue until the end of January 2020. This would include the entire road and the seven areas of cleansing in that road. Waste Management officers were working with Biffa and monitoring the trial to see how 3-weekly working was progressing and what was being recycled. It was proposed that the interim results of the trial be sent to Panel members ahead of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the end of January, as there would be sufficient data to present at the meeting.

Councillor S Neville asked which roads were part of this trial? The Service Manager (Contracts) replied that he would circulate this information to the councillors.

Councillor C McCredie was concerned that roads could not be swept by the mechanical sweepers where cars were parked.

Councillor M Sartin queried what would happen if the weather was atrocious in January. Would this trial be extended? The Service Manager (Contracts) replied that the parameters for the trial had been agreed to meet the Panel's deadline to make recommendations to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 January 2020.

Councillor D Wixley did not understand what some of the technical terms used in the report to identify the seven areas of a road to be cleansed meant, e.g. backlines and York stone? The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) replied that backlines meant edge-to-edge and referred to the cross section of a road. It would include from the edge of a shop, across the pavement to the edge of the road, the channel (gully) and the road itself.

Councillor D Wixley asked about the frequency of cleaning roads in relation to emptying bins, as he had recently reported eight overflowing bins last week, and would the new cleansing trial make the situation worse, particularly if it was a dog waste bin? The Service Manager (Contracts) replied that the normal requirement was still in effect, to which Councillor D Wixley replied then this was not good enough as it was not working.

Councillor C C Pond stated that the issue was to do with the capacity of litter bins. Therefore, bins needed to be looked at frequently and dealt with there and then. The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) replied that problems arose where residential and commercial waste was put into street bins. The Council could display notices and enforce this problem. If this problem was District-wide, then the issue could be investigated and problem areas monitored.

Councillor S Neville reported that it had happened in Lower Queens Road in Buckhurst Hill and dog waste was on the ground and he had also notified the Portfolio Holder, Councillor N Avey. The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) asked if members could contact officers with these problems so that officers could assess which bins were affected.

Councillor D Wixley remarked that he frequently reported problems to the Waste and Recycling Manager, D Marsh. The bin on Great Eastern Path by the London Underground Station car park was always overflowing because of the footfall from Loughton Station.

Councillor C C Pond added that the dog litter issue was exacerbated by Forest dog walkers who would pick up dog waste and put it in the bins. Why not plan where the Council could site larger litter bins and increase the frequency of collections?

The Chairman said there was a case for larger litter bins near schools, and Councillor M Sartin added there were also sporadic problems with boat owners.

Councillor C McCredie asked if the Council could raise awareness and publicise that people could dispose of dog waste in their own bins. It was unsightly to see dog waste bags hanging from trees in the Forest. Also, the situation could be helped through enforcement.

Councillor C C Pond asked if joint enforcement with the Forest Conservators might be an option to explore.

There was concern that the trial should be completed and the data reviewed by members first. The Panel agreed that a further meeting in February would be required before members could make any recommendations. Therefore, this item would be deferred and reported to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 March 2020.

(c) That the Panel consider improvements in the provision of waste and recycling containers and cleansing operations on the high street, including segregation of recycling materials

The Service Manager (Contracts) explained that manufacturers of 'double' litter bins that provided two compartments, one for general use and one for recyclables, had been researched and detailed in this report. He asked members if they had a preference on style and type of bin?

Councillor D Wixley said that Waltham Forest Borough Council used the bin shown on page 22. The rubbish that could be put in the bin was illustrated on the sides and there was another section for chewing gum and cigarette ends. Also, the bin on page 21 incorporated litter and dog waste. He remarked that there had been problems with the wooden bins in Loughton High Road, as the doors did not always shut and they were not very practical.

Councillor M Sartin asked about the choice of wording that could be put on bins. The bin on page 22 was not very suitable for a village whereas the bin of page 19 was a neater model. Also, what resetting costs would there be for bins? The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) replied that the Brunel bins used currently allowed everything to be put in one bin. They were expensive but robust. Some of the proposed bins were made from recycled material, or were more suitable to high food areas. A bulk purchase could be made on one to three preferences, so it would be useful for members to identify their three preferred options.

The Service Manager (Contracts) asked if members could identify areas and their preferred selection of bins for Waste Management to carry out a pilot.

Councillor C C Pond suggested Loughton High Road was done last as it had timber bins and there might be opposition to these bins being removed. A trial with a new bin would be useful in The Broadway, Loughton, and possibly in Epping and Ongar.

The Panel supported segregating waste. The Service Manager (Contracts) asked members to send their selections on the bin designs to him, and the areas where these bins would be required.

Councillor C McCredie asked about the sizes of residents' bins. The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) replied that the black and green bins had 180-litre capacity. If these were not suitable for residents, then they should contact the Council as an officer could assess their bin requirements.

Councillor C C Pond queried what happened to leaves that were not removed by mechanical sweepers when the whole of a street was being cleansed as the leaves became very slippery, and were they manually swept or scraped? The Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) replied that he would find out and reply later to the councillor.

Resolved:

- (1) That the proposal for a third wheelie bin be reviewed later or closer to the end of the contract with Biffa;
- (2) That a further Panel meeting be organised for February after the completion of the street cleansing trial to enable the data to be evaluated and a final report provided to members;
- (3) That the Panel's review of the street cleansing arrangements be deferred and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 March 2020;
- (4) That Panel members send the Service Manager (Contracts) their selections on bin designs and the areas where these bins were required, to help improve the provision of waste and recycling containers including the segregation of recyclables from general waste; and
- (5) That the Service Director (Contracts & Technical Services) advise Councillor C C Pond how streets were cleansed of leaves that were not removed by mechanical sweepers.

17. DATES OF FUTURE MEETING

A further meeting of the Panel was organised for 27 February 2020 at 7.00pm.

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