

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 24 April 2019

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.50 am

42 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board meeting held on 30 January 2019 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

The Chairman welcomed Rebecca Boulton, SUEZ Recycling Officer to the meeting and invited those present to introduce themselves.

43 Contract and operational report

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager and the SUEZ Interim Contract Manager gave the Board a joint presentation on a contract review and operational update. The main operational events were the January catch up period, which had gone very well, and the commencement of the Woodbury cardboard sack trial.

It was noted that there had been a very small number of complaints in relation to the suspension period of the green waste scheme. As a result wording on the terms and conditions had been amended and the messaging regarding future suspension periods would be made clearer.

Performance on missed collections had been excellent over the first quarter of the year, despite January typically being a difficult month. Missed collections in March were the lowest since recording had begun with Core. There were still improvements to be made with regards to litter and spillages. SUEZ were developing an enhanced training package for littering and spillages, which would initially be delivered to the crews that were felt needed it most.

In response to a question following recent windy weather it was noted that it was possible to replace the lids only of the newer recycling bins. However if a customer had an older style receptacle both the box and the lid would be replaced.

The Interim Contract Manager introduced Rebecca Boulton, newly recruited SUEZ Recycling Officer. He reported that the SUEZ driver recruitment had been positive with all driver vacancies currently filled. The driver apprenticeship scheme would be continued so that SUEZ had a contingency.

The Woodbury cardboard sack trial had begun and was progressing very well. All sacks had been delivered and collections were taking place. Overall participation was high (approximately 80%), separation of materials was going well and SUEZ had seen an improvement in quality and volume. It was too soon in the trial to determine productivity savings. Credit was given to ward member Councillor Geoff Jung for being a great ambassador of the trial.

There had been an increase of 40 tonnes of materials sold, compared with the previous quarter, although material value had declined. Cardboard value dropped significantly in

February due to a processor shut down. In late March the plant suffered a breakdown due to equipment failure so it was likely that a further loss in material revenue would be experienced as some materials would be sent as a mixed grade. It was noted that the equipment was still under warranty and a claim for loss of revenue would be pursued.

On behalf of the Board the Chairman thanked the teams for all their efforts and thanked the Recycling and Waste Contract Manager and the SUEZ Interim Contract Manager for their report.

RESOLVED: that the contract review and operational update be noted.

44 **Performance framework**

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager reported that performance had been good. Performance on missed collections had been excellent, with March being the best performing month since the contract had begun.

There continued to be a few issues with littering and spillages, but SUEZ were aware of the crews concerned, who would be targeted with training.

Councillor Brian Bailey commented that the performance of the crews in the Withycombe area of Exmouth was first class and he thought that they did an excellent job.

RESOLVED: that the performance framework/penalty calculator statistics be noted.

45 **Risk register**

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager reported that the risk register had been reviewed and updated. Risk A3, lack of Strata design capacity to meet deadlines for communications materials, continued to be a problem, causing a blockage in developing and improving the service.

New items had been added as a result of the Government's Waste and Resources strategy. Scoring and narratives would be added to once more information was known and consultation process progressed.

RESOLVED: that the risk register be noted.

46 **Green waste collection service update and year end accounts**

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager updated the Board that the customer base was now 10,200, with a year end revenue just over £470,000. Sales had continued over the winter months and were increasing towards the spring gardening season.

The highest priority lately had been the subscription renewal process in order to retain the current customer base. Renewal notices had been sent out in batches, predominantly electronically where possible.

Prices for new vehicles to replace the old fleet had been obtained. A capital allocation had been made to purchase two RCVs with RFID equipment fitted at manufacture and one RFID equipment to be retrofitted to an existing RCV. Orders had been placed, with delivery expected in October/November. The service would need to continue to be

maintained with the old fleet in the interim. It was noted that the new fleet had been ordered in green, with advertising fitted to keep the service in high profile.

A member of the Board questioned whether SUEZ had considered the use of bio gas to run their vehicles. The Director of Municipal Services explained the reasons why this was not possible at present, but that SUEZ were conscious of it and would keep this under review.

The core marketing plan for 2019 was an advert on the council tax reminder envelope, door drop deliveries in spring and autumn and the Christmas bin hanger. It was hoped to improve the presence of the service on social media.

It was noted that the target for the 2019/2020 financial year was to achieve a customer base of 13,000. The team were confident that most of the existing customers would renew their subscriptions and the presence of the green bins on the streets would encourage others.

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager explained the year end accounts summary and the Board were asked to decide if and how the profits for 2018/2019 were taken by the partners.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve that 100% of the profit be distributed on the 60/40 (EDDC/SUEZ) split.

47 **Participation programme 2019 update**

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager reported that over the quarter the recycling team had made presentations and carried out question and answer sessions at:

- Colaton Raleigh
- Cranbrook
- Axminster
- Exmouth
- Budleigh Salterton
- Umbourne

There had also been two joint sessions with SUEZ in Woodbury for the cardboard sack trial.

Previously a metal matters campaign had been carried out. A joint door drop leaflet with the Salvation Army (who would fund 50%) was planned for summer 2019 to promote the recycling of textiles at the kerbside. Composition analysis showed that 3% of the refuse stream was made up of textiles and the campaign would be aimed at capturing more of this.

A focus had been made on improving poorly used communal bin stores. The team had worked with some of the major registered social landlords and EDDC's housing team to improve the appearance and organisation of a series of bin stores, including clearing fly tipped waste and installing racking.

The recycling team had also designed a reusable in-door bag intended to make the storage of dry recyclables in properties such as flats and houses of multiple occupation, that have very restricted storage space easier. These would be distributed and trialled in June. Use of the new bag was intended to be an incentive for residents who used

communal recycling facilities and it was also intended to compliment the work done on improving communal bin stores.

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager informed the Board that the recycling team were working closely with Cloud 9 to produce a 'Recycling Skill' for the Amazon Alexa product. The Skill would put comprehensive recycling information into residents' households making it even easier for them to access details on the service. The Ask East Devon project was in an advanced stage of development and had passed its first stage of testing. It was hoped that it would be available to residents in the summer of 2019 and would be well publicised at launch.

The Board agreed that these were good examples of demonstrating that the recycling team was not complacent, but always looking for ways to improve the service.

RESOLVED: that the participation programme update be noted.

48 **Woodbury trial update**

As reported earlier in the meeting the Woodbury cardboard sack trial was going well, with participation high. It was too early to quantify efficiency savings, but the quality of the material had improved. A resident survey had been conducted, with a response rate of 43% of questionnaires being returned. The results were currently being collated.

49 **Tipping point update**

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager explained that the tipping point in the contract was 70,000 properties. An additional sum on the monthly base payment was due via agreement that the number of properties receiving recycling and waste collections in accordance with the contract was at or over 70,000 properties at 1 April. However, if this occurred later in the year payments would not be made until 1 April 2020. SUEZ believed that at least 70,240 properties were receiving standard collection services across the district and had provided data sets to the Council for ratification. SUEZ requested that the monthly base payment should be amended to period 4, effective from 1 April 2019 once all data had been reviewed and an outcome on the number of properties agreed. The increase in payment would allow SUEZ to continue to invest in its partnership with EDDC.

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager reported that the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) figure for council tax banded properties receiving standard collection services was 69,632 at 31 March 2019. There were three other groups of properties that needed quantifying and the recycling team were currently going through them one by one. This was a time consuming task for the team but necessary in order to reconcile the figures. It had been stalled due to the green waste service subscription renewals, but would commence again as soon as possible.

The Director of Municipal Services reiterated that SUEZ had not yet made any money on the contract with EDDC. It was critical that the number of properties receiving collections at 1 April was agreed to be over 70,000 as the additional payment would not take effect until the following April, not when the tipping point was hit.

Officers assured SUEZ that they would do a proper reconciliation of property figures as soon as possible and report back to SUEZ. The Chairman agreed that there was a very positive feeling across the Council towards SUEZ and that they would want to be fair.

50 **HM Government strategy consultation**

The Chairman advised the Board that he had attended a consultation event on the Government's Waste and Resources strategy. The Devon wide forum had concentrated on four areas:

- EPR – Extended producer responsibility. It had agreed with the principles but it was hard to see how this would work in practice with the information available at present.
- DRS – Deposit return scheme. The group was against this as it was felt that it duplicated the existing system. An 'on the go' system was preferred for a limited range of materials.
- Free garden waste service – The forum felt that this was a bad idea. Most people were willing and/or already paying for such a service.
- Collection scheme with consistency – consistency in materials being collected across the country would be a good thing.

The SUEZ Director of Municipal Services informed the Board that SUEZ had worked with DEFRA early on in producing the strategy. The driver behind the strategy was to encourage recycling. EPR was the biggest challenge to the industry. He also explained why he thought that the Government were considering introducing a free garden waste collection service. The biggest risk to the waste stream for local authorities was the DRS as the high value material would be removed from the waste stream.

The Chairman recommended that the Director of Municipal Services be invited to sit on the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board. As the new government strategy progressed his input would be very valuable.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve that the SUEZ Director of Municipal Services be invited onto the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board.

51 **Hard to recycle items/Terracycle**

Following a Board member raising the issue of hard to recycle materials the Recycling and Waste Contract Manager had met with SUEZ's Recycling Officer to do some research. Recycling things like crisp packets tended to be driven and funded by specific manufacturers, for example Walkers. Different materials tended to be collected at different times. It was brand determined and brand specific. It was noted crisp packet collection points existed in some schools across the district. There was a danger that if EDDC got involved in collecting hard to recycle materials as it would require a lot of time and effort for something that would not increase the overall recycling rate. If a service was provided but the manufacturers decided to stop funding it EDDC could be left with funding the service.

The Board agreed that the Council could encourage and promote the collection of hard to recycle items in schools in East Devon working, where appropriate, with Terracycle. It was noted that the collection containers were specific to the collector and that they would supply the containers on request.

The Board were warned not to tie the partnership into any specific collections until more was understood about how EPR would work.

RESOLVED: that the Terracycle scheme be promoted in all schools across the district.

52 **Any other business**

Councillor Gazzard reported that an audit of the content of the bins in the Magnolia Centre, Exmouth had been conducted on Saturday 9 February. The results had been interesting highlighting the need for better recycling facilities in the town centre. Some of the materials disposed of included:

- Coffee cups
- Crisp packets
- Bottles
- Tins
- Dog waste
- Shoes

Another audit would be carried out during the summer for comparison. Following this there would also be a study of seafront bin material.

Attendance List

Board Members:

Councillors present:

T Wright (Chairman)
B Bailey
S Gazzard
M Hartnell

Officers present:

G Bourton, Recycling and Waste Contract Manager
J Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment

Suez present:

S Jellings, Senior Contract Manager
M Canning, Regional Manager

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

Officers in attendance:

Tammy Down, Streetscene Budget and Equipment Monitoring Officer

Suez representatives in attendance:

Rebecca Boulton, Recycling Officer
Steve Holgate, Director of Municipal Services
Harry Mcleman, Interim Contract Manager

Board Member apologies:

Councillor Geoff Jung
Andrew Hancock, Service Lead, Streetscene
Nick Browning, General Manager Municipal Operations, SUEZ

Chairman

Date: