

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held at Online via the Zoom app on 29 January 2025

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.00 am

19 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2024 were agreed as a true record.

20 Declarations of interest

Declarations of interest.

Councillor Geoff Jung, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Ward member for Woodbury and Lymptstone, which includes Greendale Business Park.

21 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

22 Joint operations and contract report

The Recycling and Waste Service Manager and the SUEZ Contract Manager gave the Board a joint contract and operational update for the third quarter of 2024/25.

Throughout the quarter excellent service levels had continued. The main focus had been on preparing for the Christmas period, with the usual communications as well as the usual suspensions of the green waste service and bulky collections service over the Christmas catch-up period to allow for the reallocation of resources. The Christmas collection period went without any reportable issues.

A key highlight of the quarter was the completion of the 12 week absorbent hygiene product (AHP) trial which had gone smoothly.

Missed collections remained low, below contract thresholds, with missed assisted collections down 12% for the same quarter for 2023. Missed assisted collections were continuing to be addressed by identifying the newer crews and offering them support where needed from an experienced supervisor team.

Agency staffing levels were at a year to date low, with most staff being inducted into the SUEZ model. There continued to be ongoing development of staff within SUEZ. The Board noted the significant reduction in sickness levels, down from 11.09% in December 2023 to 2.7% in December 2024. The SUEZ Contract Manager was congratulated on the improved figures and he reported that this had improved moral amongst the teams, as well as improving collections, performance and overall creating a smoother operation.

Work was continuing well in the MRF, which was fully staffed due to a successful recruitment drive. Electric forklifts were being used in the depot, with positive feedback received. It was noted that revenue for materials were falling across the market nationally. Joint commodity markets were reviewed monthly due to the volatility.

In response to questions relating to the health and safety statistics the SUEZ Contract Manager reported that all road traffic accidents and personal injuries were reported, no matter how minor. The two Riddor accidents were individual errors, not operational errors and were lost time riddors. Incab cameras were used as well as CCTV around the vehicles, which had full trackers. The health and safety statistics were low for a municipal contract. A request was made for a benchmark comparison to be made across the industry nationally.

RECOMMENDED: that the SUEZ Contract Manager benchmark the EDDC/SUEZ contract's personal accident figures across the industry nationally and report back to the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board.

23 **Performance framework**

The Board noted the performance report which showed performance across the contract. It highlighted eight parts of the contract that officers focused on and allowed officers to look for areas of improvement and put plans in place if necessary. The Recycling and Waste Service Manager highlighted the overall good performance and reported that the contract had never invoked a penalty.

24 **Absorbent Hygiene Product trial update**

The Recycling and Waste Operations and Projects Officer provided the Board with an update on the absorbent hygiene product (AHP) trial, including the three different containers used, resident feedback and the potential for district-wide rollout. The trial covered 200 properties in the Cranbrook and Exeter area. It began in September and concluded after 12 weeks in December. Mid Devon District Council were looking to conduct a similar trial.

The trial had been very well received by residents. A questionnaire had been sent out at the end and so far 50 responses had been received. Feedback from residents was that the communications materials were easy to understand. All were satisfied with the size of the container. Residents liked the caddies, but the crews preferred the sacks. Around a third had used the woven sack, which was more cost effective but had been prone to blowing away in windy weather. It was noted that this could be solved by using sacks with a weighted bottom, as per the existing recycling sacks. Residents were happy with the weekly collections and found them more convenient than using the black waste bins. 12 tonnes of waste had been collected, which equated to 1 tonne per week, or 7 kg per household, which was as anticipated.

The Recycling and Waste Operations and Projects Officer advised the Board that Devon County Council (DCC) had confirmed that DEFRA would report nappy recycling in England in the same way as Wales. The whole product would be counted for recycling and it was expected that at least 60% would be recycled. This meant that DCC would pay the recycling credits and recycling rates would increase. It was noted that the Nappicycle recycling plant gate fee was the same as the energy from waste plant gate fee.

The Recycling and Waste Operations and Projects Officer also reported that Nappicycle were very close to receiving a lifecycle valuation of their entire process. The SUEZ Permitting Manager had submitted a new permit the day before to the Environment Agency which included AHP. There had been a very positive site inspection in November 2024.

It was noted that the next steps were to put together costings and potential income into a business case which could be shared and discussed at the next meeting of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board. The EDDC communications team were keen to issue press releases regarding the success of the trial. Members agreed that it was a great initiative and that reusable nappies should also be promoted.

On behalf of the Board the Chair thanked the Recycling and Waste Operations and Projects Officer for his update and the positive issues coming forward.

25 **SUEZ organisational changes**

Vincent Masseri, SUEZ General Manager introduced himself to the Board and updated those present on SUEZ organisational changes. He explained that SUEZ had been reorganised regionally within the UK, with all municipals now under one umbrella and reporting to one managing director. Vincent Masseri was a manager for the south west region and would be working more closely with the East Devon Contract Manager in the future. The SUEZ General Manager reported that the organisational changes within SUEZ was a positive move.

On behalf of the Board the Chair thanked SUEZ for its good working relationship with East Devon District Council.

26 **Green waste accounts**

The Recycling and Waste Service Manager presented the green waste accounts to the Board and introduced and thanked the accountant for producing them. It was noted that the total profit for the service was £394,762. A request was made for a high level summary of the costs involved in collecting the green waste.

The Recycling and Waste Contract Manager advised the Board that it was his last Board meeting as he was leaving the organisation. He thanked the Board for all their support and engagement and gave particular thanks to the Democratic Services Officer for all her help over the years.

Attendance List

Board Members:

Councillors present:

P Fernley
G Jung (Chair)
M Rixson
T Olive
M Goodman

Officers present:

L Hodges, Recycling & Waste - Service Manager
A Wood, Director of Place

Suez present:

V Masseri, General Manager
J Gatter, Contract Manager

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
C Brown
C Burhop
R Collins

Officers in attendance:

Gareth Bourton, Recycling and Waste Contract Manager
Jessica Prosser, Recycling Officer
John Hudson, Accountant
Steve Joyce, Recycling & Waste - Operations and Projects Officer
Steve Maclure, Recycling & Waste - Operations and Projects Officer
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

Suez representatives in attendance:

Jessica Prosser, Recycling Officer

Board Member apologies:

Andrew Hancock, Assistant Director – Streetscene, EDDC

Chair

Date: