MINUTES OF RECYCLING CENTRES TASK GROUP

28 MAY 2013

PRESENT:

Councillors Coles, Miss Lawrence, Mistry, Mrs New, Mrs O’Rourke, Pacey-Day, Ms Robbins and Sandison

Sean Lawson (Head of Environmental Services), Andy Smith (Works Services General Manager), Paul Ansell (Scrutiny Officer) and Linn Ashmore (Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer)

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED THAT – Councillor Miss Lawrence be appointed Chairman of the Task Group for the 2013/14 municipal year.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs O’Rourke and Mrs New declared non-pecuniary interests by virtue of their employment by Warwickshire County Council.

Councillor Sandison declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of his involvement on the battery recycling project for Sustainable Rugby.

3. REVIEW FOCUS

The Task Group received a presentation from officers concerning the background and future challenges for waste collection and recycling. A copy of the presentation is attached at annex 1 to the minutes.

Further to the presentation, the following points were made:

All homes in the borough now have the three bin service and recycling levels are good.

Since the three bin scheme was introduced there has been continuous growth in property development which has had a significant ongoing impact on waste collection. These are largely as a result of building infill sites. Large development projects such as Eden Park have already been built into the budget for 2015/16.

It is no longer possible to transport waste and recycling to Ling Hall. Due to contractual and economic reasons the County Council now directs that waste is principally sent to the EfW incinerator site at Coventry. This is much further for RCV’s to travel and creates issues with time, additional fuel costs, and wear and tear on vehicles. The RCV’s undertake this journey up to three times per working day which with tipping time can add up to four hours.

The County Council has no contract or arrangement to use the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) plant due to be constructed at Malpass Farm, though it was agreed this maybe a matter for the next phase of the review.
Other areas for consideration during Phase 2 of the review included facilities to support the new round scheduled for 2015/16, the additional resources needed, and ways these should be funded, including any potential effect on council tax. This will also provide an opportunity to influence the planning process at the right stage.

4. INTRODUCTORY PAPER AND PRESENTATION

The Task Group considered the introductory paper and received a further presentation from officers concerning recycling centres focusing on Phase 1 of the review. A copy of the presentation is attached at annex 2 to the minutes.

Further to the presentation, the following points were made:

The schools recycling scheme will not be affected by this review.

The majority of recycling centres (bring sites) are used infrequently but still require checking on a regular basis. RCVs travelling to the recycling centres, particularly those in outlying areas such as Barnacle and Shilton, waste crew time and fuel.

The bins under review at the recycling centres (bring sites) are the blue lidded co-mingled waste bins. They are used for the same categories of recyclable waste that can be recycled in residents’ own blue lidded wheelie bins.

The unnecessary journeys have an impact on the environment.

The time spent by crews clearing up fly tipping at the centres takes them away from other duties and keeping local streets clean of litter etc.

Contamination is an ongoing problem. It is difficult to see if a bin has been contaminated with the wrong materials and this can result in complete loads being rejected at the MRF site and being put back into landfill.

Prior to the change to the domestic three bin service the recycling centres were well used and produced a valuable income. This is no longer the case and the facilities are now often abused.

Members asked about the recycling centre based at Sainsbury’s, supported by Rokeby School to raise monies for charity. They were informed that this arrangement ended a number of years ago.

Concerns were raised that if the centres were removed this could result in increased levels of fly tipping. Fly tipping could potentially happen anywhere but fly tipping at recycling centres seems to demonstrate some degree of conscience and it was hoped this meant the individuals responsible would dispose of their waste responsibly if the bins were removed.

Since the centre at Tesco’s on Leicester Road was removed there had been no reports of fly tipping there, or of it appearing elsewhere.

The review should not be used for campaigning from a predetermined viewpoint. The meeting began to speculate on whether certain centres might be retained while most were closed. However, it was agreed that it was too soon to discuss options for the removal of any, or all, of the centres and decisions must be evidence based.
Members asked about recycling bins belonging to other organisations and charities. If they do not have permission to place them on Council owned land notices may be served for their removal within 28 days.

The Task Group discussed what additional information and evidence was required for the next meeting including:

- Information on level of use of recycling centres - There is little data available for the sites but officers agreed to produce a report based on anecdotal evidence.
- Responses from the consultation.
- Information on any other local authorities practice with regard to local recycling centres, including those who have removed their local recycling centres including Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council.

The Task Group reviewed and agreed the one-page strategy appended to the agenda, subject to the following changes:

**What is the specific topic area?**

The wording of the first paragraph be amended to read “Phase 1 – Examination of the future need for ‘bring’ recycling centres, in the light of the alternative ways of recycling in existence.”

**What is the ambition of the review?**

The wording of the paragraph be amended to read “Create additional capacity for the refuse and recycling service, thereby saving money and delaying the cost to the council tax payer of a new collection round.”

**Who shall we consult about the current service and about how we can improve it?**

Include reference to information on other local authorities’ practices and experiences.

Anecdotal evidence of where the ‘bring’ sites are being abused should also be included.

The Head of Environmental Services circulated copies of a draft consultation document. The Group agreed that a consultation would add useful evidence to the review. During discussion the following points were made:

The deadline for responses should be just prior to the next meeting to enable the responses to be considered.

Members suggested some changes to the draft consultation document and agreed the Chairman would meet with the Scrutiny Officer regarding the final content. The final version will then be forwarded by email to members of the Task Group and submitted to the Communication, Consultation and Information Manager for his attention.

Members were invited to email any comments or suggestions on the consultation document to Democratic and Scrutiny Services officers by the morning after the meeting.
In addition to publishing the consultation on the Council website the following ways of engaging with the public were agreed:

Publish the consultation in the Rugby Advertiser and Rugby Review on Thursday 6th June. A letter regarding the consultation should be sent to the Rugby Observer.

The WCC Area Partnership Team be requested to pass on details of the consultation via any community forums meetings being held before the deadline for responses.

Details of the consultation be sent to the following organisations:

- Rugby FM
- Parish Councils
- Warwickshire CAVA
- Libraries

QR codes and information will be placed on the recycling centre bins.

The Task Group needs to complete Phase 1 of the review by the end of July to enable a report to be submitted to Cabinet on 19th August 2013. This short timescale means it will not be possible to report to Corporate Performance Committee beforehand. It was therefore agreed that Corporate Performance Committee on 27 June would be asked to authorise its chairman Councillor Ish Mistry, who is also a member of the Task Group, to agree the recommendations of the review on behalf of the committee so they can then be submitted direct to Cabinet.

5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Task Group will be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 19th June 2013. Items for discussion were agreed as minuted above.

CHAIRMAN
Background & History

• 1988 wheeled bins introduced
• 1998 kerbside paper trial 1000 homes
• 2002/3 Borough wide kerbside glass, cans and paper
• 2003 Garden waste collection
• 2009 3 bin service

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Current Position

• All homes have opportunity of 3 bin service
• All flats / sheltered housing have recycling facilities
• Additional bins are provided for recycling / garden & food
Results 2012/13

- Top Quartile
- 2012/13 50.4%
- 10275 tonnes dry recycling
- 10610 tonnes green / food composting
- Total waste collection down 5% per head on previous year

- Unaudited figures Wastedataflow

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Challenges…

• Refuse / green crews at maximum capacity
• Continued growth in property development
• 2,500 homes in last 5 years
• Still building - Eden Park, Cawston, Projects Drive etc
Challenges...

• WCC decision to change tipping point

• Further to travel – Coventry EfW site
Capacity

- Next complete new round planned 2015/16

- Projected 1200 more new homes in next 2 years
The Future

- Innovation
- Underground storage
- New sites only

- Who should fund the provision of the collection system(s) and how?

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Summary

We can plan for the future
but
We cannot wait until 2015/16
We need to do something now!
Recycling Centres Task Group

Phase 1 - Introduction
Bring Sites

• Bring sites are those operated / serviced by Rugby Borough Council

• This review does not include Hunters Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre

• The review is ONLY focussed on the co-mingled (blue lid) bins, not textiles or WEEE
Performance

• Peaked in 1997/98 - Nearly 1400 tonnes
• Representing 97.4% of dry recycling rate

• Steady decline if performance as “kerbside” services have been introduced
• 2009/10 implementation of 3 bin new service
• 2012/13 approximately 350 tonnes
• Representing 3.5% of dry recycling rate
Schools Recycling

• Began 1990’s paper only
• Significant expansion around 2010 allied to decline of bring sites
• All schools participate and collect comingled material for recycling
• Supports behavioural norms in the classrooms which are taken back in to the home
Challenges Associated with Bring Sites

- Very low usage of most sites
- Significant misuse of other sites
- Significant contamination
- Frequent Fly-tipping
- Impact on Street Cleansing service
- Unlawful commercial waste disposal
- Unlawful trade recycling
Fly-tipping…

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Fly-tipping...
Contamination

- Can affect the whole load
- High reject rate at MRF
- “Spoiling” of high quality materials

- Additional sorting at WSU
- Labour intensive
- Increased costs

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Contamination

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Cost Comparison
Bring site v Kerbside

£171 per tonne  £76 per tonne

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Potential Key Lines of Enquiry

• Now residents have access to the 3 bin service, are recycling centres/bring sites necessary?
  
• If they are necessary, what for?

• Is there a different / better / alternative way to meet these needs?

• Who uses these sites and why?