

Update for 'virtual CLG meeting on 8th June, 2020

1. Message from chairman to all CLG members. This is our 'second' virtual meeting when instead of meeting face to face we will receive written reports from Renewi, BDR, the Community Education Liaison Officer and Stratiji. As you will see, the Coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on work in every area and it is good to get an update on the implications for waste services across the three authorities. Hopefully we will be able to have a Vera Lynn (we'll meet again!) meeting in the not too distant future, but in the meantime it is important that the group continues to function, even if it is in this remote way. Please take care, stay safe, and let Stratiji know if you have any issues arising from these written updates.

Mike North, chair of the CLG.

2. Notes from last 'virtual meeting on 30th March 2020. Attached.

3. Issues arising. Please contact Stratiji if there are any issues arising.

4. 3SE update. Stable operations have continued throughout the period although absence levels increased in the early stages of the pandemic. Absence levels have now levelled off with only a small number of frontline staff currently shielding on medical advice. Two staff members have been tested for Covid-19 after showing symptoms, but neither tested positive. Although the facilities have continued to receive waste, the types of waste streams have changed. Household waste from the three authorities has increased sharply during the lockdown due to the cessation of some collection services and the temporary closure of HWRCs. The increased tonnage has been offset by the lack of HWRC waste and a reduction in commercial inputs. There was an increase in the number of fly complaints in May and the management team are in regular communication with the Environment Agency. The planned shutdown at Ferrybridge FM1 in April was reduced from three weeks to one week due to travel restrictions for foreign specialist contractors. The remainder of the shutdown will now take place in September with FM2 planned to go offline in October for three weeks for maintenance work. **Simon Lund, Daniel Tadd.**

5. BDR update. Kerbside collection services across the region have stabilised after the initial impact of Covid-19. They have now seen a return to work of most staff who were self-isolating and many services are back to business as usual. **Barnsley** – kerbside residual waste, both recycling streams and bulky items are being collected as normal. Barnsley plan to re-introduce garden waste collections within the next few weeks. **Doncaster** – kerbside residual waste, both recycling streams and bulky items are being collected as normal. The council are now looking at plans to re-introduce garden waste collections but no current date has yet been agreed. To assist householders while the HWRC network was closed, Doncaster offered a half price bulky removal service, this has now reverted to the original price. **Rotherham** – there was a temporary suspension of green waste collections but all services, kerbside residual waste, both recycling streams, subscription garden waste, clinical and bulky items are now being collected as normal.

The Councils have worked closely with Renewi to ensure there was no delay, reduction or impact on the collection and disposal of residual waste and its treatment at Bolton Road. The BDR Councils have thanked Renewi for ensuring the site remained open and operational through the current crisis whilst giving the upmost priority to the safety of not only their own staff but also all the Councils' drivers, crews and staff who deliver waste to the site.

Councils have seen large increases in volumes of residual and recycling waste collected kerbside, above levels seen over a Christmas period. Initially levels were between 20% to 30% up. Levels are starting to reduce but with many people remaining at home the tonnages are still above average for this time of year.

All HWRCs across the three councils have re-opened with social distancing requirements (a maximum of five vehicles on site at one time and only one person from the vehicle allowed to dispose of waste) and councils have advised residents only to make essential travel and only dispose of essential waste. There are some limitations on the type of waste currently being allowed on site. This is necessary to comply with social distancing measures and to allow additional residual and garden waste skips on site to cope with potential high demand. Some material off-takers are currently not operational due to their own Covid-19 issues (textile recyclers for example) and others have limited capacity due to changes in their operating procedures necessary to maintain social distancing at their facilities. Traffic management has been introduced outside sites to maintain safety on the highways and manage any queuing traffic. Staff managing the queues are liaising with residents to help inform them what waste can be brought to the HWRCs.

Due to Covid-19, many contingency plans are still in place but all councils are working to return as many services back to business as usual. Regular conference calls across the BDR councils take place to share information and good practice and ascertain the resilience of services across each borough.

The BDR Team have re-introduced inspections of the BDR site (adhering to social distancing requirements) and are working with Renewi, monitoring the contract on day to day operations, contact with the Environment Agency, Health and Safety, together with performance and seasonal issues such as fly complaints etc. **Beth Baxter, Paul Hutchinson.**

6. CELO update. All school visits, site tours and community visits scheduled for the CELOs from the end of March until the start of September have been cancelled and where possible will be arranged for later in the year. As yet, no schools have re-arranged as they are unsure when they will be able to have visitors in school. We have been working with the Doncaster Waste Education Officer to develop education resources for schools to use from September. We are also investigating the possibility of creating a 3Rs video for schools which could be shown across multiple classes in place of a school assembly visit. Whilst it has not been possible to undertake our usual school visits I have had a meeting with a school's Eco-group via Zoom to allow them to ask questions about what they can do at home to promote composting and recycling. While schools are unable to have visitors and we are

unable to run the Rubbish Adventure we will offer online sessions to any interested schools.

Although it may not be possible to offer site tours of the facility in their current format we are looking at how these could be offered with a lower number of people by utilising a PA system or as a virtual session. In place of community talks we are confident that we are also able to offer these sessions as a virtual session so that groups such as WIs or Rotary Clubs who are now meeting online could still have a Love Food Hate Waste talk or a talk about the facility.

The re-use campaign kicked off in April with a focus on shopping bags, May saw a focus on reusable food storage options and in June we are highlighting waste free tea and coffee. The social media has had a reasonable amount of interest and press releases for each theme have been distributed to the local media.

During lockdown we have also regularly been creating and sharing social media content about ongoing waste issues such as the disposal of personal waste, suspension of Council collections, safe disposal of masks and gloves and the risks of disposable BBQs.

Throughout April and the start of May our home composting campaign ran online with families encouraged to compost at home. Prizes included a Hotbin worth £200. The competition for adults received 591 entries, a dramatic improvement on the previous year. The winners have been selected and informed and their prizes ordered. The children's Creative Compost Challenge received only 11 entries, with none from Barnsley or secondary age pupils. The winners have been selected and contacted and will be receiving their prizes on Friday 12th June. A small prize, an age appropriate composting or gardening book, will also be given to each runner-up. Home composting has proved quite popular during lockdown and due to the ongoing suspension of some garden waste collections the Councils have asked that we continue to promote home composting until their services resume.

Due to lockdown a number of the establishments selected for the Corporate Social Responsibility Fund have been closed. The funds for the BDR area winner have been transferred and the individual area funds will be transferred once these have staff back in to provide the necessary information. **Abi Cox.**

7. Communications update. We have continued to liaise with local authority comms teams and the media to publicise Covid-19 related messages including bin handle hygiene and advice about how to dispose of disposable barbecues safely. Press releases have been drafted and issued to local and regional print and broadcast media on food storage (ditch the clingfilm), and avoiding waste created by tea bags and coffee pods. These are also being publicised on local authority websites and the BDR website. A press release on the successful composting competition winners will be drafted and issued later this week. **Eileen Brooks, Stratiji.**

8. Any other business.

9. Date and time for next meeting. The provisional date for this will be Tuesday, 1st September.