

Notes from the meeting of Community Liaison Group on Tuesday, 16 May 2023, at 6pm at the Manvers site.

Attendance

Non-members

Apologies

Written updates from Renewi, BDR, the CELO and JWSSMedia had been circulated previously. Brief summaries and further updates were given verbally at the meeting and CLG members had the opportunity to ask questions.

- 1. Welcome and introductions.** The Acting Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. Notes from the last meeting on 22 November 2022.** These were agreed as a true record.
- 3. Issues arising.** There were none.

4. Renewi BDR Ltd update

The Renewi BDR Contract Director summarised and updated his written report. There had been very low levels of covid infections recently which had not impacted on operations. There had again been a reduction in Contract waste volumes compared to last year with a total of 224,463 tonnes of waste handled. This was 800 tonnes lower than the prior year. Waste processed through the main facility was circa 208,000 tonnes.

Recycling had recovered slightly in the last quarter due to the restart of plastics offtake. The full year recycling figure was 14.47%. The regular offtaker had temporarily stopped accepting waste due to a change in legislation relating to Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). This material is made up of soft furnishings treated with fire retardant chemicals. The new legislation prohibits the disposal of POPs in landfill due to concerns about the risk of the chemicals entering ground water and water courses.

Moisture loss for the year had been good but dipped significantly in March due to waste stock levels in the pits. The full FY23 figure was 29.53% against a target of 29.6%.

It was reported that a major project was underway in the Anaerobic Digestion plant to repair the failing concrete in one section of the facility. The project commenced in December and was scheduled to finish at the end of June. As the affected area of the process was pasteurisation, digestate had been sent to a third party for pasteurisation and onward deployment.

Since the last meeting, the Manvers facility had been inspected by both the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Barnsley Transfer Station also had a visit from the Environment Agency. No issues were identified by either regulatory authority.

Ferrybridge had confirmed the shutdown schedule for FY24. FM1 had no major shutdowns but instead would have 2 x 4 day 'pit stop' outages. Inputs from BDR would be unaffected by these outages. FM2 had a scheduled major shutdown commencing 4th September lasting three weeks. During this period inputs would be reduced by 50%. Again, BDR would be unaffected, **Contract Director.**

Action: Quarterly figures on waste received and amount recycled to be reported at each CLG meeting.

5. The Councils' BDR Team update

The BDR Manager summarised and updated his written report. The BDR councils had continued to successfully deliver waste services and collected all waste streams as scheduled.

The councils had seen the predicted lowering of household waste tonnages collected having reverted to pre-Covid levels.

All councils were looking to improve current collection service. This included undertaking detailed Route Round Optimisation to ensure the most cost-efficient routes that crews can take - saving on fuel and time and reducing their carbon footprint. They were looking to enhance collections by offering more recycled material collection at the kerbside, such as introducing the collection of recycling materials for businesses. They were also seeking to tackle and prevent contamination of recycling through engagement and education of residents.

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) had continued to deliver a full service and from the 1 April had opened for their extended summer timetable. The councils had continued to procure their new HWRC Service Provision Contracts from October 2023. Barnsley and Doncaster (joint 8-year contract) had evaluated the Tenders submitted and would be notifying the successful bidder. This would allow for the commencement of the mobilisation period. Rotherham had decided to tender for a contract alone and aimed to eventually take their service in-house. They were evaluating Tenders for a partner to deliver the service provision in the short term and help them transition into an in-house service.

The Environment Bill entered UK law in November 2021 and secondary legislation from the Act was still waiting to be laid before Parliament for approval. The secondary legislation will drive policy and legislation changes which will have a major impact on councils and how they must deliver their waste collection and disposal services. After four major consultations around the Resource and Waste Strategy, the Government had still only published one set of findings and recommendations. The BDR councils had lobbied the Government directly, as have many other councils, organisations, and businesses, highlighting that the delay in publishing responses to the consultation and any new or changed legislation requirements was seriously impacting on the ability to plan, budget and maintain a continued high standard of service delivery. It was hoped the remaining reports would have been published in autumn /winter 2022/23 but this had not been the case. It was anticipated / hoped that they would be published soon after May's local elections had taken place.

A CLG member asked about the implications of the new Environment Bill and how quickly councils will be expected to initiate changes once the secondary legislation is introduced. It was explained that preparations had already been made, where possible, but that further details from the government were awaited, **BDR Managers.**

6. Community Education Liaison Officer update

The CELO summarised and updated her report. Since the last CLG meeting an extensive campaign had been completed about waste through the festive period encouraging people to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost with key messages about seasonal foods, planning, preparation and storage and use of leftovers.

The 2022/23 social media programme had been delivered with regular content about reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting on our social media pages. This can be followed on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The first two phases of the food waste campaign had been completed including initial waste composition and resident's surveys, distribution of the interventions and short-term follow up waste composition and resident's surveys. Phase three had been pushed back slightly due to the availability of waste sampling which had been completed and the phase three resident surveys were expected to be returned and collated by the end of May. The scope of the current project had been expanded slightly and as such would be finalised in the 23/24 financial year. In the first phase surveys a discrepancy between knowledge and behaviour had been identified. Several questions in the phase 3 surveys were tailored to explore this in more detail and this would be followed up with some in-depth interviews of households who had completed all three rounds of surveys to understand why these differences existed and how that might impact future communications. It was expected these interviews would take place in late May and June with the final project written up in September / October 23. Due to the change in staffing the year 2 project had been postponed until 2024/25.

Rebecca began her maternity leave in January and she and her new baby were both well. As a result of this change some changes were made to the CELO Plan for the year including taking no further bookings for talks, tours and school sessions as these targets had all been met.

In March, a new CELO Plan for 23/24 had been agreed and as part of this it was agreed not to restart tours, talks and school sessions this year. The main focuses for 23/24 would be a communications campaign tackling contamination that would predominantly comprise vehicle, on-street and social media advertising encouraging residents to check their collection information prior to disposal and to stick to the items stated. In addition to this the CELO would continue to manage the social media channels and websites, run waste composition studies, assist with Carbon Literacy training, and support national campaigns including Recycle Week, Food Waste Action Week, International Compost Awareness Week, the Take Charge electronics campaign.

A CLG member asked about the disposal of low-grade fabrics, broken laptops and discarded wooden furniture. Information was given about possible collection points including local charity shops, textile banks, HWRCs and local organisations such as Laptops-for-All. Local recycling information can also be found by using the recycling locator tool at www.recyclenow.com , CELO.

7. Communications update

JWSMedia summarised and updated their report. Communications support had continued to promote key recycling messages across BDR. The Christmas campaign focussed on getting the most out of recycling bins by the correct disposal of items such as folding cardboard and crushing cans/bottles. The campaign also looked at how to cut down on Christmas food waste and save money by planning ahead.

In the new year, the dangers of disposing of batteries in recycling bins was highlighted and the safe disposal of electrical goods promoted. A press release was issued which encouraged the repair/care of unused clothing. It highlighted how the fashion industry is a major polluter and user of natural resources.

The national WRAP campaign 'Win. Don't bin' was supported. This promoted the correct storage of food and the understanding of Best By dates to help reduce food waste.

As a result of the cost-of-living crisis it was agreed to use the CSR Fund to make donations to three foodbanks operating in the Dearne Valley area. A press release was issued giving details of the recipients and their positive feedback.

With the start of Spring, there was a focus on the benefits of home composting for the environment. A press release supporting International Compost Awareness Week was issued in May.

Press releases were posted on the BDR website and circulated to the three local authorities.

JWSMedia

8. Any other business

The Acting Chair thanked members for their attendance. In the absence of a permanent Chair, he said the Acting Chair arrangement would continue until a new Chair was in place. The CELO said it was intended to promote membership to the CLG in a recruitment drive at the end of the summer.

9. Date, time, and venue for next meeting this will be at the Visitor Centre at Manvers on Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 6pm.