

South Yorkshire Waste Partnership Board**Monday 23 September 2024**

Present: Councillor James Higginbottom (Chair), Councillor Mark Houlbrook and Cllr Saghir Alam. Also in attendance were Gill Charters, Kellie Brookes, Sam Barstow, Paul Hutchinson, Rhonda Fletcher, Carl Hewlett, Huw Russell and Neil Townrow

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Joe Otten, Andrew Bramidge and Paul Castle.

Action RF - Andrew Bramidge can be removed from the meeting invite.

102. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this meeting.

103. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 14 March 2024 AND MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising to consider.

Resolved - That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 March 2024 be approved as a true and correct record of proceedings.

104. SOUTH YORKSHIRE MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Cllr Higginbottom advised that the approvals for the rotation of the chair will be considered and agreed upon in the BDR meeting.

For the Record Cllr Mark Houlbrook (DMBC) will rotate to Chair, with Cllr Saghir Alam (RMBC) becoming Vice-chair.

105 Meeting Attendance / Frequency

Consideration was given to the report presented by the BDR Manager which had been circulated as part of the agenda. PH reported he had reviewed the Boards terms of reference and IAA3 regarding the arrangements around BDR and SY meetings. Advice had been taken from RMBC governance and legal in respect of his proposal to rationalise all PFI meetings to be more equally scheduled and conducive to improve attendance through more suitable frequency. For the Board, Governance was happy with the proposed change in meeting frequency from 4 times a year to 3 times a year commencing from April 2025. Governance advised that these meetings were still required to be held face to face (although the government is considering the possibility of allowing them to be held online, nothing formal has yet been agreed). Request to all if in approval to the proposed meeting frequency changes.

NT provided apologies from Cllr Otten and stated if SY meetings could be held online it would be beneficial for SCC's attendance, but that they are fully supportive of the partnership and are committed to attending these meetings going forward.

Resolved - All agreed to support the proposed change in meeting frequency to 3 a year and if a member cannot attend deputies need to attend on their behalf and amalgamation of the SYWPB and JWB into 1 meeting with SCC as guests and to remain at Rotherham Town Hall due to the governance arrangements in place.

Action - PH to liaise with Secretaries and PA's to draft a meeting schedule to submit at the next board for commencement from April 2025.

106 **SY Joint Working - Waste & Resource Strategy/Legislation Changes**

PH due to upcoming changes in legislation and the fact that we are still awaiting the outcomes of the consultations from the government the S Y waste strategy has been put on hold pending final decisions around any changes and timelines for these.

HR has no further updates or timelines and there is no desire for the new government to make changes from the previous government policies and that ETS will have a big impact on EFW projects.

NT SCC's appetite is to develop an S Y waste strategy overarching with council policies.

SB has spoken about using the 4 to 5 known themes and areas of SR, EPR, R&WS, etc, so these known areas can be worked up in the interim starting with these council objectives.

Cllr Houlbrook all have environmental strategies to work towards and will need to link in best practices and it is important to do as a partnership approach and all to buy into the process.

GC BMBC is supportive of joint working but an important key issue is the lack of recycling infrastructure in the region and viable markets and emphasised involvement of the SYMCA.

Cllr Higginbottom good to hear all are happy to support joint working and linking into SYMCA so will take these points away and bring it back for further discussion at the next meeting.

Action – PH. Following on from SB's request, to commence work on drafting an initial strategy incorporating the 4 or 5 general themes to be used as a statement to support/supplement to other Council Plans around Carbon/Sustainability, etc in the S Y Waste Strategy.

107 **Portfolio Updates**

- **BMBC**

GC is trialling smaller vehicles on collection rounds, due to identifying challenging areas to access as H & S number is a priority and to avoid

abandoned bins. Also trialling a new Mercedes electric vehicle next week, with their first entry into the market and will feedback once completed. Continue to bid in the new HWRC contract

- **DCC**

KH in the process of working through their waste contract to determine if going out to full procurement or extending with Suez should be approaching a decision point within the next month. Had some success with contamination levels which in December last year was 30% and since working with Suez and undertaking a borough-wide exercise this has reduced to 11% and generated savings for the council and Suez., which they achieved through extensive comms around bin tagging and in turn a reduction in complaints. Suez continues to perform well with good collection rates across the borough.

Cllr Houlbrook had success with reducing blue bin contamination, due to great advertising around making residents aware of expectations, despite some resistance they are pleased to say contamination has reduced significantly, learned lessons from this, and is a testament to the officers ensuring continuity in delivering that service.

- **RMBC**

SB significant work is needed around potential government changes and funding available. Route optimisation taking place and will update at the next meeting. Embedding narrow access vehicles into collection rounds around carbon reduction and have concluded the trial of using hydrogenated oil in vehicles which has proved hugely successful and are finalising results so will share when completed.

Cllr Allam is good to share good practices within councils.

- **SCC**

NT going through industrial strike action with Unite members since mid-August which relates to a desire for joint recognition within Veolia and GMB needs to accept and encourage discussions between Unite and GMB. Have 35 out of 190 taking part in strikes. Are up to date on black, blue and brown bin collections but have had to suspend garden waste. Out for public consultation around simpler recycling including an option for a larger blue bin, as have seen capacity issues and will be looking at adding plastic pots, tubs, trays and foil, the deadline for consultation is October. Doing carbon impact modelling with a view to take to their committee next year as well as the outcome of the consultation results.

108 Letter to Secretary of State

PH The draft letter to the Secretary of State asking for clarity regarding possible legislation changes has been circulated individually to members and AD's who had requested this under the previous government, which has been updated based on comments to take into account the new government and asked if all happy to approve and asked if SCC want to be included

Cllr Houlbrook asked if all had seen the letter and proposed to do as a collective and suggested including the SYMCA in the response, which shows all are working in partnership together.

Cllr Alam agreed if all members sign up as a united front it would be good for ministers to see good practice.

NT Cllr Otten has seen the letter and has raised some queries but is supportive of it.

Cllr Higginbottom is supportive of the letter and points to a need to reset the relationship between councils and government. Need to iron out the approvals process which should come from waste portfolio holders by clarifying with their governance.

Action – PH to recirculate the letter to members.

Action – Members to check on their governance approval process and advise PH of these.

109. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to consider.

106. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 17 December 2024 at 9.30am in Rotherham Town Hall.