

## **Notes from the meeting of the Community Liaison Group on Tuesday, 3 December 2024, at 6pm at the Manvers site.**

### **Attendance**

### **Non-members**

### **Apologies**

There were no apologies.

Written updates from Biffa, BDR, and the CELO 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 and thanked everyone for their attendance following the postponed meeting scheduled for 19 November - cancelled due to adverse weather. The acting chair said he was happy to chair the meeting pending CLG agreeing a new chair from the group.

**2. Notes from the last meeting on 21 May 2024.** These were agreed as a true record.

**3. Issues arising.** There were no issues arising.

### **4. Biffa BDR update**

The Biffa BDR Contract Director summarised and updated the written report and highlighted recent staff changes. In the first half of 24/25 there had been an increase in contract tonnage from the previous year (23/24) over the same period (April – Sept) of approximately 1,300t. It was projected that contract tonnage would likely be higher by the end of the year:

22/23 = 207,700t

23/24 = 209,300t

25/25 = estimated to finish circa 210,000t.

The site had accepted around 3,000t of third-party waste between April and September this year.

Recycling performance had risen to 15% YTD (April – Sept) compared to FY 23/24 of 13.8%. The continued performance of organic fines recovery had given this improvement. This had resulted in slightly better green energy production from the CHP. Glass and stone recovery remained low due to the need to maintain high quality levels.

Following the fire at the Barnsley transfer station a CAPEX had been applied for, and approved, to complete the work to rebuild the transfer station. The work had started and was expected to be completed by December. While the work was being completed the transfer station remained fully operational due to the minimisation of the rebuild area and night works.

Ferrybridge FM1 had dealt with several issues resulting in long queuing times. Biffa had continued to liaise with Ferrybridge to see if the situation could be improved. Tipping slots had been introduced but queueing had resulted in the slots being missed. The tipping bays had been fully repaired and are in operation.

The transition into Biffa was underway and the integration process was progressing well. Fundamentally not much would change due to the contract in place. The next 6-12 months would see the legacy Renewi facilities fully integrated with Biffa. Items such as signage and PPE were planned to be changed in the coming months. The partnership was now known as 'Biffa BDR.'

## **Biffa Contract Director**

### **The Councils' (BDR) Waste Team**

The BDR Manager summarised and updated his written report and informed CLG he was now the full-time manager of the BDR contract. His role would be focussed on performance management of the contract and ensuring high plant maintenance standards.

The BDR councils had continued to successfully deliver waste services and collect all waste streams as scheduled. The councils had seen a slight increase in the amounts of household waste tonnages collected at kerbside and HWRCs, but within acceptable parameters.

All councils continued to seek improvements and efficiencies in their current collection service. These included: -

- Continued review of kerbside collected routes and rounds, aiming to achieve optimisation to include the increased numbers of households/new build seen in each borough, whilst ensuring the most cost-efficient routes that crews can take to achieve saving on fuel and time and reducing the carbon footprint
- Testing of alternative fuel collection vehicles – electric, hydrogenated fuel and hydrogen
- Introduction of smaller vehicles to help gain access to back allies and narrow lanes
- Aiming to enhance the collections by offering more recycled material collection at the kerbside (in line with potential requirements from new waste legislation anticipated to be introduced) and looking to introduce collection of recycling materials for businesses
- Introducing initiatives to tackle and prevent contamination of recycling through resident engagement and education
- Ongoing procurement of disposal contracts for kerbside recycling, bulky items, fly-tipping, business, and garden waste
- Initial drafting of a South Yorkshire Municipal Waste Strategy.

From the 1 October 2024 the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) had reverted to their winter timetables with reduced opening hours (This was different for each council and would see later opening hours and earlier closing times due to decreased daylight). The new HWRC contractor, HW Martin, had successfully taken over the contracts and through new management of the sites had seen an increase in material recycled.

As previously advised the UK government had announced new waste initiatives and changes to its environmental policies. Not all the information and direction had been announced, and the BDR Councils had written to the Secretary of State for Environment to push to gain further clarity and confirmation of legislation changes and requirements.

The government had released more detailed information regarding the policies just before the CLG meeting and the councils were still in the process of assessing the likely impact. The policies included the introduction of the Extended Producer Responsibility (March 2025), a Deposit Return Scheme (October 2027), and a new “Simpler Recycling Policy”.

The BDR councils initially felt they were in a great position to fulfil the aims, requirements, and specifications of the new government directive, but were still in the process of confirming and analysing the finer details. BDR would advise the group of the outcomes for simpler recycling as more information emerged.

The Councils were working with the contractor on updates and changes to the facility to meet contractual requirement and environmental permits. These included work on the anaerobic digestion pasteurisation, ammonia scrubbing system, reduction in emissions, enhanced fly management/suppression, and infrastructure improvement/repair work.

As mentioned at the meeting, Renewi UK Services, the contractor which ran the waste treatment facility, had been acquired by Biffa PLC in October 2024. The BDR Council Team had been working closely to scrutinise the sale and undertake its due diligence but was confident that the acquisition should have no detrimental effect to the residents of the region and the BDR councils. The contract would remain the same under the new owners and should not result in any changes to service delivery. The councils were looking forward to Biffa's new input and hopefully improvements to the running of the contract.

A CLG member commented that Doncaster Council needed to make a recycling bin available for paper and card collection.

**Action – BDR Manager to update the group on the implementation of the new waste and environmental policies.**

**BDR Manager.**

### **Community Education Liaison Officer (CELO) report**

The CELO summarised and updated their written report. The team had undergone a few changes as staff returned from maternity leave and interim staff had left. Since the last meeting in May, work had continued on the 2024-25 CELO plan:

1. Social media and website content. Posts continued to be posted regularly on a variety of topics, with the aim to promote waste reduction, reuse and repair and correct recycling. Topics had included International Compost Awareness Week, Recycle Week, Take charge (battery recycling) and International E-Waste Day. Regular blog posts were made on Waste Less South Yorkshire and updates to the BDR online website.
2. Education work. Education visits at schools across the area had taken place and in the visitors' centre. A brownies group and a beavers/cub's group had attended Rubbish Adventure workshops in the visitors' centre. Feedback was positive. Visits to schools to deliver sessions on waste and recycling in the school's area and the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse

and Recycle) had been successful. Some of the schools had also signed up to the national Let's go Zero campaign after the visits. This is a pledge to reduce carbon in schools. In total, the team had engaged with over 180 young people across the area so far this year.

3. Site tours. Interest in site tours was still high. Since May the team had hosted five tours of the facility and there was a waiting list, which would be fulfilled once the team was back to full staffing strength. The next public tour was in December and was fully booked.

4. Community talks. In August, the team had spoken to a group in Doncaster about clothes waste and the Love Your Clothes campaign. The team had also carried out two talks for groups based in Barnsley about waste and recycling in Barnsley, including information about the facility.

5. Waste composition analysis. In October, the bi-annual waste composition analysis had taken place. This sampled kerbside, trade, and household waste recycling centre waste (both residual and recycling) to find out what it was made up of. The Councils and the CELO team use the data to look for future areas of focus and potential campaigns.

A CLG member asked if schools and nursing homes were encouraged to recycle and whether recycling facilities were available. Another CLG member commented that investment was needed to support recycling in schools.

## **Assistant CELO**

### **Communications report**

Over the past six months press releases covering key waste reduction topics had been issued. This year's Corporate Social Responsibility Fund donation to three Community Fridge groups in the Dearne Valley catchment was also promoted.

In line with BDR member priorities the problems of bin contamination had been addressed and information and advice offered about correct waste disposal. This had included:

- Supporting the national Recycle Week campaign Rescue Me which this year was themed around residents recycling everyday items, such as shampoo bottles, rather than placing in household waste bins.
- Encouraging residents to recycle e-waste such as mobile phones and household gadgets rather than place them in household waste.
- Highlighting the danger to waste collection staff and plant from placing used batteries in household bins. A battery was believed to have started a fire at our Barnsley waste transfer station in April.
- Warning about the dangers of placing disposable BBQs in household waste bins.

The benefits of home composting garden waste were promoted together with the International Compost week in April. Advertising of the new cycle of public tour dates for the Manvers site received a positive response. Press releases were posted on the BDR website and circulated to the councils.

## **JWSMedia.**

## **8. Any Other Business**

A CLG member asked about the future of the CLG following previous discussions around the role of the group. The BDR Manager said although the function of the group had changed over the years it remained an important community asset and BDR and Biffa were happy to support members to take the group's ideas forward. He encouraged CLG members to contact BDR if they had any queries about the Biffa BDR operations.

**9. Date, time, and venue for next meeting.** This will be at the Visitor Centre at Manvers on Tuesday 13 May 2025 at 6pm. (To be confirmed)