

At a meeting of the West London Waste Authority held on Friday 22 March 2024 at 10.00 am at the The Auditorium - Harrow Council Hub, Kenmore Avenue, Harrow, HA3 8LU.

Present:

Councillor Deirdre Costigan (Chair)

Councillor Stephen Greek, Councillor Guy Lambert, Councillor Eddie Lavery and Councillor Julia Neden Watts

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Krupa Sheth

96. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Krupa Sheth.

97. Declarations of interest

RESOLVED: To note that no interests were declared.

98. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2024

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2024 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

99. Membership

Members were informed that Councillor Krupa Sheth had been re-appointed to the Authority by the London Borough of Brent but that, due to illness, Councillor Sheth had submitted apologies.

RESOLVED: That (1) it be noted that Councillor Krupa Sheth had been re-appointed to the Authority by the London Borough of Brent;
(2) in accordance with Rule 5 of the Authority's Standing Orders, Councillor Krupa Sheth's illness as a reason for absence be approved.

100. Waste Composition Analysis Report

Members received a report which provided an update on the Authority's residual waste composition analysis and the impacts and opportunities arising from upcoming legislative change.

Peter Tilston, Projects Director, advised Members of the background to the waste composition analysis on all the residual waste which was carried out every 15 months so as to see the fluctuations across the year. The report set out the findings of the analysis and looked at recycling capture rates. Officers were looking at the impact on the Authority of the waste composition given the forthcoming legislative changes, Extended

Producer Responsibility (EPR), Deposit Return Scheme Systems, Simpler Recycling and Emissions Trading Scheme.

In response to a question about EPR Timelines, Emma Beal, Managing Director, reported that although the date did move, the Authority would find out in November 2024 what money would be paid in April 2025 and that the requirement in terms of the collection of flexible plastics was 2027. This would be a significant change for the Authority.

Members sought clarification in terms of EPR discussions with the industry in that they would not want to invest in infrastructure that was not suitable. The Projects Director advised that it was expected that EPR would change quite considerably during the first couple of years but that this would be monitored.

In response to a question in relation to Embedded Carbon, the Projects Director advised that only carbon emanating from fossil fuels would be taxed and that the Authority would be taxed on any carbon produced as a product of its activities. There was a detailed discussion about embedded versus embodied carbon and Members were advised that the source of the carbon could be determined by carbon 14.

Members were advised that textiles were a significant issue for the Authority in that they were largely comprised of plastics.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

101. Food Recycling Projects Update

Members received a report which provided an update on the Authority's Food Waste investment in the Borough Business cases that were approved in September 2020.

Peter Tilston, Projects Director, provided an update on the projects and advised that a capture based approach had been taken with this report. The Authority was looking to expand food waste services across boroughs and he added that in terms of overall performance, there was a mix. However, it was not as simple as comparing one borough to another.

A Member commented that participation rates were important and expressed concern at the number of residents who did not use the service correctly and put food in residual waste. He asked how progress could be made as the impact both financially and environmentally was significant. The Managing Director advised that she had attended a meeting of the Authority's counterparts ie all the waste disposal authority Chairs and Managing Directors, with RE London to see how this issue could be addressed on a London wide scale. One of the ideas was that, either through the Greater London Authority, RE London or individually the aim should be to create a food waste recycling culture so as to normalise it. The Projects Director added that as part of the Authority's strategic priority, there was a focus on the residents' perception of the service and what they understood about the waste they were putting out for collection.

Members acknowledged that the methods and frequency of collection varied across boroughs. A Member advised that she had received messages from residents that food waste that they had carefully segregated had been mishandled by the collection crew and been put in the incorrect compartment on the truck. The Projects Director advised that, in the past, a 'tool box talks' training to develop the understanding of collection crews in terms of the different forms of waste and waste system had been provided but that this was a management issue for boroughs.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

102. Contracts Operations Update

Members received a report which provided an update on the Authority's waste treatment arrangements and procurements.

Tom Beagan, Assistant Director of Operations, in introducing the report focussed on two key areas – the transfer stations and HRRC improvement project. He had previously reported on the issue in relation to Victoria Road and HS2 but the trains were now running again. The contingency arrangements that involved hauling the waste via road instead of rail had worked well and the impacts on tipping time had been minimal. This was encouraging in advance of the frame replacement works commencing on 1 April for which similar arrangements would be used. He outlined the other arrangements in terms of where different boroughs waste would be directed whilst the works were underway and Members would be kept informed until the end of the works on 20 April 2024.

In terms of the HRRC, Members were advised that the intention of the improvement programme was to deliver in-year investment of £1.2 million to improve performance across all of the west London sites. Spend on improvements by boroughs had been slow for a variety of reasons and much of the funding had been rolled over from the previous year into 2023/24 but diversion rates had nevertheless improved. A best practice study had been commissioned in order to move all HRRCs to a best practice model in order to define what this looked like on the ground, to residents and also to establish performance targets. The outcome of the study would be reported to the next meeting.

A Member requested that confirmation be sought that the works at Victoria Road caused by Network Rail in relation to HS2 were now complete given the resultant disruption.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;
(2) the remaining Household Re-use and Recycling Centre (HRRC) improvement funds be approved for ringfencing by each Borough to deliver improvements identified by the best practice report.

103. Annual Procurement Plan 2024/25

Members received a report which provided details of the Authority's Annual Procurement Strategy for the year 2024/25.

Beth Bayley, the Contracts and Procurement Manager, introduced the report and advised that it was likely that two procurements in 2024/25 would exceed £1,000,000 and therefore require approval by Chief Officers and Members. She also reported on a number of strategic procurements and some of the challenges that would face the Authority.

In response to a question as to whether there would be any improvement to the booking system for residents, the officer indicated that they would work with boroughs and that they were aware of an issue being experienced currently in that a resident could only see available timeslots once they had completed all their details.

In terms of IT projects a Member asked whether the costs were acceptable and realistic and whether the Authority had the correct specialist support. The Finance Manager

advised that consultants had looked at the overall structure and suggested the move to a cheaper alternative.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Procurement Plan for 2024/25 be approved.

104. Finance Update January 2024

Members received a report which provided an update on financial and operational matters.

Sapna Dhanani, Finance Manager, outlined the content of the report and drew attention to both the amber and red Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

In response to a Member's concern in relation to PPP income, the Managing Director explained that it was important to recognise that this might stop without notice and that there was a need to reduce residual waste. The Authority was facing significant challenges as had previously been referred to, including those in relation to flexible plastics,

The Treasurer commented that the responses from some boroughs had been slow in terms of the investment by the Authority in HRRCs and food waste and he hoped that collectively both officers and Members could encourage action on this. The Chair indicated that there had previously been a proposal to hold an away day to discuss this and she requested that this be progressed.

RESOLVED: That (1) the current financial position and forecast for 2023/24 be noted;

(2) a reserve be approved to carry forward unspent Household Reuse and Recycling Centre (HRRC) funding so it remained available for boroughs to use in 2024/25;

(3) a reserve be approved to carry forward unspent programme budget from the PPP income retained by the Authority so it remains available for use in 2024/25;

(4) the Treasury Management Plan for 2024/25 be approved;

(5) the KPIs to date be noted;

(6) it be noted that there had been no delegated decisions.

105. IT Strategy Update

Members received a report which provided an update on the Authority's IT Strategy.

RESOLVED: That the IT Strategy set out at Appendix 1 to the officer report be approved.

The meeting finished at 11.57 am.

The minute taker at this meeting was Alison Atherton.