

ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting No 066
MINUTES
Thursday 24 February 2022

Members Present:

Councillor A Bennington	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor M Goodman (<i>Deputy Chair</i>)	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor R Kinnear	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Alderman A McDowell	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Alderman D Drysdale (<i>Chair</i>)	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor M Gregg	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor S Lee	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor D Reid	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor K Owen	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor R Burgess	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Members' Apologies:

Alderman Robert Gibson	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Alderman Angus Carson	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor F Ferguson	Belfast City Council
Councillor JJ Magee	Belfast City Council
Councillor P McReynolds	Belfast City Council
Alderman R Cherry	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor I Friary	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor D Murphy	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers Present:

T Walker	arc21
K Boal	arc21
M Laverty	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
N Martin	Ards & North Down Borough Council
C Matthews	Belfast City Council
H Moore	Lisburn & Castlereagh Borough Council
S Holgate	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
J McBride	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers' Apologies:

J Green	arc21
H Campbell	arc21
G Craig	arc21
G Girvan	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
D Lindsay	Ards & North Down Borough Council
P Thompson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

Item 1 - Conflicts of Interest Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest Statement. There were no conflicts noted.

Action: Noted

Item 2 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 3 - Minutes of Special Joint Committee Meeting 065 held on 27 January 2022

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the minutes of the Joint Committee meeting 065 held on 27 January 2022.

Action: Agreed

Item 4 - Matters Arising

Ms Boal confirmed that the meeting for Newry, Mourne & Down District Council had not yet taken place and confirmed that an update in relation to the NWP meeting with officers and the consultation on Digital Waste Tracking would be provided under the main agenda.

Action: Noted

Item 5 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Ms Boal provided an update on operational matters affecting several contractors, including the current situation regarding COVID cases, the return to normal at Bryson after the regular increased volumes arising during Christmas.

Issues concerning site induction at the Biffa site had now been resolved and Ms Boal suggested that Members may wish to take an opportunity to visit the site.

Further updates were provided by Ms Boal including the newly refreshed Performance Table, rejected loads at the MRF facilities were highlighted and that these make up a minor proportion of the total tonnage managed; an update on the tonnages at these and other facilities was also provided. She drew attention to the issue of rogue textile banks and offered to work with councils to progress their removal where appropriate.

When covering NWP performance, Ms Boal highlighted that if councils could further increase the kerbside tonnage sent through the Organic Waste Contract, there may be an opportunity to increase the rebate on the gate fee. She highlighted that a recent presentation had been held between councils' technical and communication officers and NWP was useful.

Ms Boal covered developments which are emerging with WEEE and to changes arising from DEFRA advice re the separation of certain streams. Advice had been issued to councils and no concerns had been raised to date.

Turning to supplies, Ms Boal referred to issues regarding increased costs due to transportation and material costs. The ESPO supplies contract was being closely monitored in terms of these changes.

A Member asked about contamination and that, while at minor levels, how this could be improved. Ms Boal highlighted that this was a Fleet issue and had requested that councils review their policies regarding RCV release only when the hoppers and bodies were satisfactorily clean.

Following this exchange the Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move “in committee” which was agreed.

Matters of a confidential and commercially sensitive nature were discussed under these agenda items.

Following discussion on the commercially sensitive matters, the Chair recommended that the meeting would now return to the main agenda, which was approved, but whilst “in committee” during this section of the meeting, there were six matters discussed.

Item 6 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 065 held on 27 January 2022 ‘in committee’	Action: Agreed
Item 7 - Matters Arising	Action: Noted
Item 8 - Residual Waste Treatment Project	Action: Noted
Item 9 - General Communications including Public Relations	Action: Noted
Item 10 - Commercially Sensitive Contract and Procurement Issues	Action: Agreed
Item 11 - Education Service Update	Action: Agreed

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Item 12 - Consideration of key aspects of the consultation on the introduction of mandatory digital waste tracking

Ms Boal provided a verbal report concerning a current nationwide consultation exercise which was proposing a replacement system for the existing WasteDataFlow, eDoc and season ticket system used for duty of care. She stated that proposals within the consultation extend to the introduction of proposals to track hazardous and non-hazardous wastes using unique identifier codes.

These proposals will not affect individual households’ kerbside collections but, once the waste has been consigned, the theory is that the unique identifiers will allow waste to be tracked through each step of the supply chain until it reaches its final treatment or disposal facility.

At each interface, where waste is aggregated or disaggregated, a new unique identifier will be generated and, from a council perspective, the implications are likely to have an impact on resource and operations. The impact in terms of the management of Household Recycling Centres, especially if it is anticipated that each individual waste stream will have its own unique identifier, are likely to be significant.

The objective of these proposals, which promise significant changes to the tracking of wastes throughout the supply chain and will generate a considerable body of analysable data, is that regulators will be able to check what wastes are going to which sites through to their end destinations and producers will have greater visibility on what happens to their waste.

DEFRA considers that in councils much of the likely costs/resource implications can be offset against the demands which arise from inputting to the current WasteDataFlow system or through its trade collection charges. There is scepticism of this within local government which considers this likely to be an under-estimate but Ms Boal said she would provide a draft response to the Joint Committee at its next meeting for consideration.

Action: Ms Boal

Item 13 - Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP's) in Soft Furnishings

Ms Boal provided a brief update concerning another item which is receiving nationwide interest. A DEFRA Working Group has been considering managing the end-use of older soft furnishings (e.g. sofas, armchairs) and are likely to conclude that current disposal methods to landfill are not suitable. Given the volumes and environmental problems associated with the uncontrolled release of hazardous POPs in the natural environment, this DEFRA working group is considering preparing national guidelines regarding how to manage the separate collection of these items at Household Recycling Centres for incineration.

From a council perspective, the requirement to collect, store, transport and dispose of soft furnishings is likely to involve additional costs but these could be minimised if a collective approach to their management is adopted. She reported that there would be further information forthcoming during the year and that Members would be kept apprised of developments.

Action: Noted

Item 14 - HM Treasury Landfill Tax Call for Evidence

Mr Walker presented a report on a consultation paper seeking views on key design features of the Landfill Tax, including the rate that applies to different materials and the circumstances in which exemptions and discounts can be claimed. As the deadline for the response was 22 February the Joint Committee was being asked to provide retrospective approval of the arc21 response. Members ratified the report.

Action: Noted

Item 15 - AOB

Ms Boal highlighted the forthcoming regular Customer Survey and requested that kindly Members consider this and respond.

Action: Members

The Chair drew Members' attention to the ongoing work of the Sub-Group and paid tribute to the work being done by its Members. He highlighted a recent meeting with the Chief Executives who were supportive of the work being undertaken and commented that much had changed in local government governance during the 20 years since arc21 was first established. He said that the work of the Sub-Group was continuing and further reports would be submitted to the Joint Committee in due course. With regards to communications, he asked both Officers and Members attending arc21 meetings to ensure they relayed the content of the meetings to their respective Chief Executives.

Item 16 - Next Meeting

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and advised that the next Joint Committee meeting would be held as scheduled on Thursday 31 March 2022 commencing at 10.30am.

Action: Noted

Date: _____

Chairman: _____