

## **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE**

### **Meeting No 057**

### **MINUTES**

**Thursday 27 May 2021**

#### **Members Present:**

Councillor M Goodman	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor A Bennington	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Alderman R Gibson ( <i>Chair</i> )	Ards and North Down Borough Council
Alderman A Carson	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor A McDowell	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor F Ferguson	Belfast City Council
Councillor M Gregg	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Alderman D Drysdale	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor S Lee	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor W Clarke ( <i>Deputy Chair</i> )	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor K Owen	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

#### **Members' Apologies:**

Councillor R Kinnear	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor P McReynolds	Belfast City Council
Councillor JJ Magee	Belfast City Council
Alderman R Cherry	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor D Reid	Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor H McKee	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor I Friary	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

#### **Officers Present:**

T Walker	arc21
G Craig ( <i>Secretary</i> )	arc21
H Campbell	arc21
J Green	arc21
K Boal	arc21
M Lavery	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
J McConnell	Belfast City Council
H Moore	Lisburn & Castlereagh Borough Council
P Thompson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
J McBride	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

#### **Officers' Apologies:**

G Girvan	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
D Lindsay	Ards & North Down Borough Council
S Toland	Belfast City Council

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting along with the new member Councillor Alan McDowell from Ards and North Down Borough Council. He advised that he had written, on behalf of the Committee, to Councillor Gavin Walker who had stepped down as the representative from Ards and North Down Borough Council thanking him for his contribution and support.

He also welcomed Councillor Carson back to the meeting following his recent illness.

He advised that he would be leaving the meeting at 11.30am and the Deputy Chair, Councillor Willie Clarke, would be taking the Chair for the rest of the meeting.

### **Item 12 - Remote Meetings**

Mr Craig presented a report to propose arrangements for holding both Joint Committee and Audit Committee meetings remotely following the expiry of the legislation permitting the hosting of remote meetings, for approval by Members.

He reported that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Joint Committee and Audit Committee have had to meet remotely to ensure that Public Health Agency guidance was followed. The authority to meet remotely is governed by S78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and this act became effective on 1 May 2020.

However, the legislation expired on 6 May 2021 and there had been no provision made to extend the regulations resulting in the Joint Committee and Audit Committee being required to be "*physically*" present to make decisions.

He reported that the Department was working on the introduction of legislative changes to extend powers to operate remotely but, in the meantime, arrangements needed to be put in place to enable decisions to be made when meetings are held remotely.

Following legal advice, it was proposed to amend the Standing Orders to permit the hosting of remote meetings of both the Joint Committee and the Audit Committee to continue. Mr Craig explained the proposed process for decision-making which would in effect mean that Members would make recommendations to the Acting Chief Executive who would have delegated authority to make the decisions, taking into account the views of the Members of the Joint Committee or Audit Committee present whilst remote meetings were taking place

Discussion ensued around the potential for holding physical or hybrid meetings should this situation persist, along with the potential for video conferencing facilities, and Mr Craig advised that the flexibility for this would be considered going forward, health and safety permitting.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended the changes to the Standing Orders and Mr Walker approved the recommendation. Mr Walker advised that if he had a conflict of interest he would advise the Committee accordingly.

**Action: Agreed**

### **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 Joint Committee Meeting 056 held on 29 April 2021**

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended the approval of the minutes of Joint Committee meeting 056 held on 29 April 2021 and Mr Walker approved the recommendation.

**Action: Agreed**

#### **Item 4 - Matters Arising**

**Letter to Chief Executives** - Mr Walker advised that a letter had been issued to the Chief Executives outlining some of the issues raised at the last meeting on the state of the NI waste management landscape etc.

**Investment Strategy Northern Ireland (ISNI) 2021-2031 - Call for Evidence** - Mr Walker confirmed that a response had been submitted by the deadline taking into consideration the concerns raised by Members.

**CIWM and IEMA webinars** - Mr Walker advised that he had circulated details to Members accordingly.

**Site Visits** - Mr Green advised that, following discussion at the last meeting regarding the potential for site visits he was, given the current constraints, investigating the possibility of being able to undertake some relevant facilities including the potential for virtual tours.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended that the matters arising from the last meeting be noted and Mr Walker approved this recommendation.

**Action: Noted**

#### **Item 5 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report**

Ms Boal provided an overview of issues pertaining to contracts and operations.

She reported that services were running well with COVID-19 measures still in place at the various sites. There were a number of rejected loads, three loads to organics facilities and one to a MRF facility, during the month.

A review of contract tonnages was provided for information and an indicative calculation on NILAS.

Some information was presented regarding the use of the NWP compost across the arc21 area and local community projects. She suggested that if councils had ideas for local projects or indeed collective projects, these should be put forward for consideration.

An overview of supplies orders and deliveries was also supplied for information.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended that the report be noted and Mr Walker approved this recommendation.

**Action: Noted**

#### **Item 6 - Waste Tonnage Trends**

Ms Boal provided a report showing the tonnage comparisons for material processed through arc21 contracts over the last four years.

The graphs showed the waste trends for each of the arc21 contracts and the trends in terms of tonnage delivered and the impact of COVID-19. Overall, the tonnages handled by the arc21 contracts rose by 6% rising to 366,415 tonnes.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended that the report be noted and Mr Walker approved this recommendation.

**Action: Noted**

## IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would be held “in committee” for items 7 to 11 of the Agenda and Mr Walker approved this recommendation.

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 Mr Walker approved, but whilst “*in committee*” there were five matters discussed as follows:

<b>Item 7 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 056 held on 29 April 2021 ‘in committee’</b>	<b>Action: Agreed</b>
<b>Item 8 - Matters Arising</b>	<b>Action: Noted</b>
<b>Item 9 - Landfill Tax Scheme Update</b>	<b>Action: Noted</b>
<b>Item 10 - Commerciality Sensitive Contact &amp; Procurement Issues</b>	<b>Action: Noted</b>
<b>Item 11 - Residual Waste Treatment Project</b>	<b>Action: Agreed</b>

## OUT OF COMMITTEE

### **Item 13 - Consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging**

Mr Walker presented a first draft of the proposed arc21 response to Defra’s consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging launched on 24 March and closing on 4 June 2021.

He reported that the “*Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging*” consultation is a nationwide exercise and one of three currently underway. This is a second-round consultation document which, when combined with the Environment Bill due for final consideration by Parliament in the autumn, and the other consultation(s) is likely to radically change the operation of the UK market for secondary materials/recyclate.

The other consultation is the “*Introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales & Northern Ireland*” which is addressing specifically all types of drinks containers and the reduction of litter.

The “*Consistency in Household & Business Recycling in England*” consultation is not relevant to Northern Ireland.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended that the arc21 response to the consultation be submitted by the deadline subject to any final comments so that they can be taken into account in the final response. Mr Walker approved the recommendation.

**Action: Mr Walker**

## **Item 14 - DEFRA Consultation on the Draft Policy Statement on Environmental Principles**

Mr Walker presented a proposed arc21 response to Defra's consultation on the Draft Policy Statement on Environmental Principles launched on 10 March and closing on 2 June 2021.

He reported that Government has committed itself to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than when they took office. Government has stated that environmental protection must be factored into policy across all Departments through consideration of environmental principles.

Following Brexit, Government has now proposed a raft of legislation within the Environment Bill which is currently proceeding through the Parliamentary process. Government proposes that this Bill will be underpinned by a number of environmental principles and has identified the mechanism by which their application will be assessed. This consultation paper identifies these principles and reservations about their application and Members were requested to provide any feedback.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended that the proposed arc21 draft response be submitted by the deadline of 2 June taking into account any further comments in the final response. Mr Walker approved the recommendation.

**Action: Mr Walker**

## **Item 15 - Consultation on Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland**

Mr Walker presented the Joint Committee with a first draft of the proposed arc21 response to Defra's consultation on Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland launched on 10 March and closing on 4 June 2021.

He reported that in response to the 2019 consultation, noting the high level of public and stakeholder interest in introducing a deposit return scheme for drinks containers, Government committed to continuing to develop proposals and stated that it was minded to implement a scheme from 2023, subject to further evidence and analysis on the costs and benefits of such a scheme.

This second consultation builds on the first, offering a chance to explore further what the continued appetite is for a deposit return scheme in a 'post-Covid' context. The second consultation will also inform how a future scheme can be designed in the best and most coherent way possible to deliver on the objectives set out for introducing such a policy.

It is anticipated that the introduction of a deposit return scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland would be in late 2024 at the earliest.

The Joint Committee was presented with a draft response to the consultation as far as Q53. Mr Walker advised that he was still to complete the response and hoped to finalise in due course and circulate to Members accordingly.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee recommended that, subject to the complete response being circulated in advance of the deadline to allow time for Members to review and comment, that the response be submitted by the deadline. Mr Walker approved this recommendation.

**Action: Mr Walker**

## Item 16 - Waste Management Plan

Mr Walker provided an update on the progress of the review of the Waste Management Plan.

He reported that the arc21 Waste Management Plan was adopted in 2016 and following several developments in Northern Ireland and nationally since then and, in line with the support being provided by DAERA, it was now timely that a review of “our” Waste Management Plan is undertaken to update it accordingly.

Following the establishment of a small working group to work with WRAP to undertake the DAERA-funded review of the councils’ Waste Management Plans (including the arc21/ constituent councils’ version that contextualises waste and resources management in the sub-region and determines the programme of work for contracts), there have been two meetings held with WRAP.

The NI WMP Group, made up of Mr N Martin, Mr M Lavery and Mr T Walker as the arc21 representatives, are attending update sessions that are scheduled for every three weeks (or so) and they commenced mid-April. The programme is that in order to meet the tight timescale of completing the arc21 review in September 2021, the Group will keep to this rolling schedule.

WRAP has appointed a number of consultants that are screening arc21’s Waste Management Plan on a chapter-by-chapter basis and noting where there have been developments.

Given the pace of the Waste Management Plan review, it may be necessary to hold some Special Steering Group meetings to consider the results from this screening exercise. The Joint Committee will be kept apprised of developments as appropriate as the WMP progresses

The Joint Committee recommended the approach being adopted by the NI WMP Group and also supported the approach being used by the arc21 representatives to progress the review of “our” Waste Management Plan. Mr Walker approved this recommendation.

**Action: Agreed**

## Item 17 - AOB

Mr Craig discussed the Declaration of Members Interests forms to be completed by Members and advised that he would reissue forms to those who had not returned their form and encouraged all to complete and return as quickly as possible to either [george.craig@arc21.org.uk](mailto:george.craig@arc21.org.uk) or [heather.campbell@arc21.org.uk](mailto:heather.campbell@arc21.org.uk)

**Action: Mr Craig & Members**

## Item 18 - Next Meeting

The Chair advised that the next scheduled meeting of the Joint Committee is due to be held, once again in a virtual format, on Thursday 24 June 2021 at 10 30am.

**Action: Noted**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_