

ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting No 064
MINUTES
Tuesday 7 December 2021

Members Present:

Councillor A Bennington	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor M Goodman (<i>Deputy Chair</i>)	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Alderman A McDowell	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Alderman R Gibson	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 R Burgess	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Members' Apologies:

Councillor R Kinnear	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Alderman A Carson	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor F Ferguson	Belfast City Council
Councillor P McReynolds	Belfast City Council
Councillor JJ Magee	Belfast City Council
Alderman R Cherry	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor I Friary	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor D Reid	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor K Owen	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor W Clarke	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers Present:

T Walker	arc21
G Craig (<i>Secretary</i>)	arc21
H Campbell	arc21
K Boal	arc21
J Green	arc21
M Lavery	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
C Matthews	Belfast City Council
H Moore	Lisburn & Castlereagh Borough Council
D Carey	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
P Thompson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

The Chair welcomed Councillor Burgess, the new representative from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, to the meeting.

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 061 held on 28 October 2021

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the minutes of Joint Committee meeting 061 held on 28 October 2021.

Action: Agreed

Item 4 - Matters Arising

Mr Craig discussed the Declaration of Members Interests forms to be completed by Members and reported that at this time, there were only two forms outstanding.

He advised that he would be following this up but noted that Councillor Clarke may be stepping down from the Committee. It was suggested that Councillor Goodman contact Councillor Clarke to confirm.

Action: Councillor Goodman

Annual General Meeting - Mr Craig advised that, following an action from the last meeting, he had received legal advice regarding the issue of the AGM and a report had been provided in the papers under Item 19, which was discussed next in the meeting.

Item 19 - Annual General Meeting

Mr Craig advised that legally, unlike a council who has a statutory requirement to hold an AGM in June, there was no requirement for the Joint Committee to have an AGM at all. However, it was the view of our legal advisor, Colin Campbell, that it is considered good practice to do so and Members agreed with his recommendation to continue this practice. .

He also recommended that, as councils hold their AGMs in June and to allow for any Member changes, that we continue to hold our AGM in September and update the Standing Orders accordingly.

Following discussion Joint Committee agreed to the recommendations.

Action: Agreed

Item 16 - Consultation - The Local Government Pension Scheme Amendments

Mr Craig presented Members with a proposed arc21 response to the Department for Communities (DfC) consultation on proposed amendments to the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI) Regulations 2022.

He reported that DfC are responsible for updating the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in NI on an ongoing basis and NILGOSC administer the scheme on behalf of local government employees and employers.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee agreed to endorse the arc21 draft response for submission to the Department.

Action: Agreed

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. These were discussed in a different order to the agenda due to issues with having a quorum.

Item 10 - Residual Waste Treatment Interim Services - Report and Decision Document.
Action: Agreed

Item 8 - Minutes of Meeting 061 held on 28 October 2021 ‘in committee’
Action: Agreed

Item 9 - Matters Arising
Action: Noted

Item 11 - Residual Waste Treatment Project
Action: Agreed

Item 12 - HR Support - the report was presented and the recommendations approved later in the meeting

Item 14 - Council Covid-19 Waste Management Financial Losses
Action: Noted

OUT OF COMMITTEE

After Item 14, the meeting returned to the main agenda due to being inquorate. The recommendations for Item 12 and the report in relation to Item 13 were discussed later in the meeting.

Item 7 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Ms Boal updated Members on the services and supplies contracts.

She reported that we continue to operate with the protocols that all of the contractors have in place in relation to COVID-19. She noted that some of the contractors had begun to ease some of their protocols but unfortunately had to reintroduce these as and when they were hit with spikes of covid, but services had continued to run with little noticeable change.

Ms Boal reported that the health and safety audits continue and there had been some site visits. Arising out of the audit Bryson Recycling has some issues to follow up.

She reported that we are also heavily focussed at this time of the year on the Christmas arrangements to make sure that appropriate requirements are in place to suit the councils’ varied working patterns. In addition, contact lists are gathered for those on call those days to deal with any issues which may occur.

In relation to service status, Ms Boal she reported that things were generally good, the only issue being with fridges. She noted that it was understood that the fridges situation had

eased but there were some issues with some areas still feeling pressure and we are working with the contractor to try and resolve this.

In terms of the rejected loads, there were two rejected loads into organics delivery sites in October 2021 and one rejected load into Bryson Recycling in October 2021.

She advised that we were working closely with the contractors particularly around the MRF as the overall contaminations levels had risen. She reported that arc21 officers were working closely with Bryson and we would be inviting council officers to a session to try and focus on the contamination issue.

Referring back to the earlier discussion on communications, Ms Boal reported on things we can do when we have the resource there to produce articles such as the recent organics item produced for councils to use as a press release.

The contract tonnages were presented in the report and she noted that there had been decreases in the mixed dry recyclables but it was too soon to see an obvious trend.

In terms of the Organics Contract, there was a decrease for Type 1 which is the garden waste normal for this time of year and the Type 2 tonnages for October 2021 were almost the same in comparison to October 2020 last year, which shows a steady amount of food waste being collected in the bins with garden waste falling off at this time of the year.

Ms Boal noted that again there was an opportunity here in terms of the wider communications plan in messaging around getting the organic waste out of the more expensive bins which could be drawn upon.

In terms of the landfill contract, she reported that there was a decrease again and hopefully that would continue to be the trend but there was normally a rise in December which would be monitored.

She reported that the stats had come out for last year for overall tonnages which is growing at 2.1%, a sharper increase than in the past. In addition, as previously noted, the recycling rate had fallen slightly from the previous year, so there was work to be done.

Ms Boal reported that we would be starting to look at the revenue share to go back to councils and because the market had been quite good in terms of materials, there should be revenue share on MRF for cardboard, paper and tin cans.

She noted that one of the highlights on the variation on the organics contract was the revenue share on gate fees, and we will be reporting back shortly on this. She noted, however, that a CPI rate increase is due and this has been on the rise.

On a general note, Ms Boal advised that the NI Audit Office were doing a review of waste management generally and noted that she had provided an overview of the value of the contracts, amount of waste in the market generally and the issues faced.

In terms of supplies, she reported that a large number of orders were being placed, deliveries are coming in as planned and we haven't had any non-conformances, however a few issues now on prices on orders placed some months ago which we are working through.

Following discussion the Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Item 15 - ISO Audit

Ms Boal reported that last year, due to covid, the external audit process had been put back to January but had now returned to the normal pattern of being audited in October/November.

She advised that we have a new external auditor and she was happy to report that we had been re-certified with no areas of improvement, no observations or no non-conformances.

She noted her thanks to the team at arc21 who supported her in achieving this result.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Item 17 - Audit Committee Meeting 9 December 2021 Report

Mr Craig advised that the next Audit Committee meeting would be held on 9 December at which they would be welcoming the new Chair, Councillor Bennington, and the new member, Councillor Owen.

He advised that the focus of the next committee meeting would be a workshop specifically designed to meet the needs of the Audit Committee members.

A copy of the Executive Summary was also provided which provides an overview of all the areas to be discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

Councillor Goodman advised that he would be happy to join the Audit Committee and Mr Craig welcomed him, and advised that he would circulate the invite and papers for the next meeting accordingly.

Action: Mr Craig

Following discussion the Joint Committee noted the report and the Executive Summary.

Action: Noted

Item 18 - Waste Management Plan

Mr Walker provided an update on the progress of the review of the Waste Management Plan (WMP) being undertaken by the 11 councils.

He reported that as previously advised the 11 councils were considering how to work together to create a single waste plan.

He noted that over this in the summer it had been identified that it would not be possible to produce a single document at this time and three shorter Waste Management Plan (WMP) addenda were being planned instead.

He reported that this was being overseen by the Waste Forum which had approached DAERA about supplementary funding and support, but this has been declined as DAERA do not have the resources to provide this in the current financial year.

The Waste Forum met recently to progress the addenda for the councils using a single consultancy and they are now considering how such a service could be procured and the likely cost on a council-by-council basis.

Following discussion the Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Councillor Burgess re-joined the meeting and therefore the meeting was again quorate and the meeting returned to 'In Committee'.

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move "in committee" for Items 12 and 13 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*" there were two matters discussed as follows:

Item 12 - HR Support	Action: Agreed
Item 13 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues	Action: Agreed

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Item 5 - Minutes of AGM Meeting 062 held on 9 November 2021

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the minutes of the AGM meeting 062 held on 9 November 2021.

Action: Agreed

Item 6 - Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Action: Noted

Item 20 - Joint Committee Attendance Report

Mr Craig presented a report to provide Members with the opportunity to consider how best to maximise Member attendance at meetings considering the recent levels of attendance.

He reported that at the last two special meetings we had struggled to get a quorum so the issue of attendance needs to be considered going forward as it is important that we have as many Members in attendance as possible.

The Chair advised that he would be discussing this with the Deputy Chair and Chair of the Audit Committee as an action from the meeting.

Action: Chair

Following discussion it was suggested that the Chair writes to the Chief Executives of the councils advising of the recent difficulties of achieving a quorum at meetings through non-attendance of Members.

The Chair also noted that he intended to call the individual Members of the Joint Committee to discuss further.

It was also suggested that the Chair write to the Group Party Leaders and the Chair advised that he was happy to progress with that.

Action: Chair

Following discussion the Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Item 21 - AOB


There was no further business discussed

Item 22 - Next Meeting

The Chair advised that the next Joint Committee meeting would be held as scheduled on Thursday 27 January 2022 commencing at 10.30am and wished everyone a very merry Christmas and happy new year

Action: Noted

The Chair requested that Councillors Goodman and Bennington and Mr Walker stay online after the meeting for a further discussion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. D. P.', written over a horizontal line.

Date: 27 January 2022

Chairman: