

ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting No 77
MINUTES
Thursday 23 February 2023

Members Present:

Councillor A Bennington
Councillor R Kinnear
Alderman R Gibson
Alderman D Drysdale (*Chair*)
Councillor S Lee
Councillor R Burgess
Councillor C Bowsie

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Ards & North Down Borough Council
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Members' Apologies:

Alderman A Carson
Alderman A McDowell
Councillor M Goodman (*Deputy Chair*)
Councillor F Ferguson
Councillor JJ Magee
Councillor R McMullan
Councillor M Gregg
Councillor D Reid
Councillor I Friary
Alderman R Cherry
Councillor J Brennan

Ards & North Down Borough Council
Ards & North Down Borough Council
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Council
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers Present:

T Walker
H Campbell
J Green
K Boal
B McKeown
M Lavery
D Lindsay
N Martin
C Matthews
J McConnell
S Holgate

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Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Ards & North Down Borough Council
Ards & North Down Borough Council
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Council
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

Officers' Apologies:

G Craig
B Murray
H Moore
W Muldrew
P Thompson
A Cassells

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Belfast City Council
Lisburn & Castlereagh Borough Council
Lisburn & Castlereagh Borough Council
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Item 1 - Conflicts of Interest Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest Statement.

Action: Noted

Item 2 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 3 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 076 held on 26 January 2023

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the minutes of the Joint Committee meeting 076 held on 26 January 2023.

Action: Agreed

Item 4 - Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Action: Noted

Item 5 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Service Status

Ms Boal reported that all services were operational during the month of January.

She reported that Biffa continued to use a temporary weighbridge throughout January and their new permanent weighbridge is now delayed to the end of February 2023. She advised that Irish Waste had installed their new weighbridge but need to organise the calibration etc. and it should be operational around 20 February.

She noted that the increased tonnage diverted to storage at Christmas by Bryson had now been brought to their site and processed.

Performance - January 2023

Ms Boal reported that service credits had been applied to Biffa and NWP this month for failing to meet their contract turnaround times.

She advised that overweight vehicles relating to the Haulage contract continue to be monitored and that most vehicles are not weighing as overweight as they leave the Ards site based on the weighbridge information at that site. A recalibration of the Ards weighbridge was due so a review will be undertaken again once this has been completed. Heatricks had some minor issues with their reports for Lot 1 and after discussions and review by arc21, these issues had now been resolved.

In terms of the service contracts for the bring backs in January, she reported that there were 7 bottle bank sites that did not have the specified capacity available. The contractor had been notified, and these banks were serviced and no Service Credits were applied this month.

In terms of the next contract, she advised that we will put in rectification periods so there is a timeframe when we notify that the site needs collection.

Health & Safety

Ms Boal reported that during January 2023, there was only one Health & Safety matter reported which related to a lorry door not closing properly and waste being dopped out over the site entrance.

She also provided an update on the three near miss incidents at Bryson and advised that arc21's Health & Safety consultant had visited Bryson to investigate and following the investigation, a report was compiled, and recommendations were suggested and accepted by Bryson.

Rejected Loads

Ms Boal reported that there were 4 rejected loads delivered into the Organics delivery sites in January, and one rejected load delivered into Bryson which consisted of high amounts of glass. She advised that of the 29.4% contamination, 18.9% was glass. Officers were requested to continue to review their protocols to ensure that systems are in place so that vehicles are fully emptied before collecting another material stream.

arc21 Contract Tonnages

Ms Boal presented the contract tonnages for January and advised that most of the contracts were down in comparison to January 2022 apart from the landfill as follows:

- a minor decrease of 2% for MDR material delivered into Bryson;
- an 8.7% decrease for the MRF Lot 2 for material sent to ReGen;
- a decrease of 14.1% for the organics Type 1 material;
- a decrease of 3.3 % for the organics Type 2 material; and
- a 3.5% increase for the landfill residual waste.

Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

In terms of persistent organic pollutants (POPs), Ms Boal reported that the last correspondence from the NIEA confirmed that an internal meeting had taken place to progress this matter, but they were unable to confirm the timescale for issue of guidance on the disposal of Domestic Upholstered Seating as it needed to go the Permanent Secretary. She advised that a request for an update was made on 31 January 2023, but no response had been received to date.

At a recent contracts meeting, she reported that Biffa referred to the ongoing receipt of this material and stated that they intended to write to arc21 formally and that this correspondence had not yet been received. To date, no loads have been rejected by the contractor.

She also noted that Biffa had confirmed that in England there appeared to have been a relaxation on shredding before incineration which had eased some of the concerns raised by councils.

She advised that she would continue to follow up with the Department and advise on any developments accordingly.

Report on link between Household Waste Booking Systems at HWRCs and increased Fly Tipping

Ms Boal provided some information on a recent report produced by Air and Space Evidence in relation to research carried out to shed light specifically on links between HWRC booking systems and fly-tipping in England. This focused on the following four main areas:

- (i) What are the pros and cons of HWRC booking systems to councils (why are they using them or not using them)?
- (ii) Was there any published literature on HWRC booking systems (and potential links to fly-tipping)?

- (iii) Do local authorities have any evidence that shows links between HWRC booking systems and fly-tipping?
- (iv) What other key factors have influenced fly-tipping that have not been identified in previous research?

The report documented the research methods that were used which included a literature review, a review of those councils that do and do not have booking systems in place, engagement with local authorities and other bodies such as NAWDO, LARAC and the National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group.

The general conclusion from the data available was that *“a link between fly-tipping and booking systems cannot be ruled out, but from a look at some of the data (not all of the data) there is clearly no indication that such a link exists.”*

It concluded that a more complete study would be required to look at national trends at sites with booking systems and those without to see if the statistics post-pandemic show linkages.

The report also explored the view of councils on what factors were perceived to influence fly tipping. These included criminality, rogue contractors, householders not willing to pay for collections, fewer people perceiving they will be caught.

Supplies

In terms of supplies, Ms Boal advised that a number of orders had been placed and one delivery.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

Item 6 - Waste Tonnage Trends

Ms Boal presented the monthly tonnage graphs showing the tonnage comparisons for material processed through arc21 contracts over the last four years.

She noted the following:

- Landfill – a minimal increase in January when compared to January last year and generally coalescing across the four years. It is hoped that this will reduce over time as we divert more and more material away from landfill through the DPS.
- Organics Type 1 – over the last four years there is a coalescence between the period November to January in terms of the tonnes coming through the civic amenity sites and is expected to start to rise again from March.
- Organics Type 2 – a coalescence in January over the last four years and this also is expected to rise.

She reported that arc21 is undertaking a mass balance reconciliation with NWP which would look at the volume of material deposited and treated at Glenside and determine if arc21 could reduce councils' gate fee for any materials for Type 2 which were over 100k for the year. Secondly, any monies due back to councils would also be calculated, and it is expected that this will be reported to the March committee.

- MRF – the tonnages were down and not as high as during COVID when arc21 saw an increase in cardboard and similar materials coming into the system.

The rest of the contract tonnages tables were presented for information.

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 five matters discussed.

Item 7 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 076 held on 26 January 2023 ‘in committee’ - *approved*

Item 8 - Matters Arising - *noted*

Item 9 - Residual Waste Treatment Project - *noted*

Item 10 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues - *approved*

Item 11 - Discussions with the Chief Executives - *noted*

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Item 12 - Draft Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland

Mr Walker reported that the Department for the Economy (DfE) had launched a public consultation on the draft Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland which sets out the vision to create an innovative, inclusive and competitive economy, with responsible production and consumption at its core.

The Department states that a Circular Economy will be a key enabler of its 10X Economic Vision including building resilience to face any economic shocks. It will support innovation that will drive more responsible growth, creating new economic opportunities that reduce waste and carbon emissions.

He advised that they are engaging with stakeholders across Government, business, academia and the third sector in developing this Strategy and the closing date for submissions is 20 March 2023.

He advised that the draft Strategy builds upon the earlier Circular Economy Strategic Framework (CSEF), and at that time, arc21 had prepared a comprehensive response, which was presented in the papers, and he advised that he intended to include a copy of this submission in the arc21 response.

He reported that the Strategy seeks to align with a number of others underway in Northern Ireland. It is precise in highlighting the volumes of materials that Northern Ireland imports and extracts and that the majority of this (that not used for buildings and infrastructure) ends up as waste. In support of this draft Strategy, he advised that a Response Template had been prepared.

The Chair discussed how wide this goes and that the 11 councils were probably doing their own thing with no connectivity, which he felt needed to be addressed at some stage.

Mr Walker suggested that he would speak to NILGA to see if they were doing a collective response and to see if it may be useful with our commentary to help inform their response.

He advised that it was up to each council to take a response individually and that several councils had been asking for the arc21 position to help inform their response.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the response subject to any further comments prior to submitting the final response by the deadline of 20 March 2023.

Action: Agreed

Item 14 - AOB

Local Government Elections May 2023 – Mr Walker advised that it is intended that the Joint Committee will continue to convene and operate the regular scheduled meetings during the purdah period coming up to the elections.

Action: Noted

arc21 Online Seminar – Ms Campbell advised Members that arc21 were intending to hold an online seminar on the afternoon of 30 March and that a programme of speakers was in train and details would be sent out in due course.

Action: Noted

Item 15 - Next Meeting Thursday 30 March 2023

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and advised that the next Joint Committee meeting would be held virtually as scheduled on Thursday 30 March 2023 commencing at 10.30am.

Action: Noted



Date: 30 March 2023

Chairman: